



SAFE ROUTES TO TRANSIT

Frequently Asked Questions/ Program Overview Cycle III—FY 2009/2010

This document summarizes the regional Safe Routes to Transit Program (SR2T) and provides additional information for project applicants. Funding for this program comes from Regional Measure 2 (RM2), which raised tolls on state-owned Bay Area bridges by \$1 and was approved by voters in 2004. Because RM2 has strict legal criteria governing its implementation, some of the rules and regulations associated with this grant program may be different from other bike/pedestrian funding programs.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SR2T?

The goal of the SR2T program is to increase the number of people who walk and bicycle to regional transit.

Regional traffic relief improvements involving bicycling and walking are cost-effective and sustainable ways to increase transit ridership, yet many commuters cite safety and convenience as the main reason they chose to drive instead of walking or biking. SR2T projects will promote bicycling and walking to transit stations by making important bike/pedestrian feeder trips easier, faster, and safer. By improving the safety and convenience of bicycling and walking to regional transit, SR2T will give commuters the opportunity to leave their cars at home, thereby decreasing bridge corridor congestion, which is the primary goal of Regional Measure 2.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Only public agencies may apply for funding, however they may partner with nonprofits or other community organizations. Partnerships between public agencies, and between departments within an agency, are encouraged.

Projects located in the nine Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma) are eligible to receive funding from the Safe Routes to Transit program.

WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FUNDING?

Regional Measure 2 legislation outlined the SR2T program as follows:

(20) Safe Routes to Transit: Plan and construct bicycle and pedestrian access

improvements in close proximity to transit facilities. Priority shall be given to those projects that best provide access to regional transit services.

For SR2T purposes, eligible transit services are those that are regional in that they serve a corridor that crosses the Bay (e.g. a transbay bus) and those that directly link to regional service (e.g., feeder bus to Caltrain).

Therefore:

1. Only pedestrian and bicycle projects are eligible;
2. All projects must improve bicycle and/or pedestrian access in close proximity to or within existing regional transit facilities;
3. Each project must have the potential to reduce congestion on a state-owned Bay Area bridge (i.e. all Bay Area bridges except the Golden Gate) by improving bicycle/pedestrian access to existing regional transit stops and stations; and,
4. Every project must result in a “deliverable product,” which may be:
 - a. A completed planning or transit study/ environmental decision/ project approval documentation when allocating to the environmental phase;
 - b. A final design package including contract documents when allocating to the final design phase;
 - c. Title to property/ easements/ rights of entry / possession or utility relocation when allocating to the right-of-way phase; or,
 - d. A completely constructed improvement (or vehicle acquisition/ rehabilitation) available for public usage when allocating to the construction phase.

Projects and expenses that are **not eligible** for funding include:

- Non-bicycle and non-pedestrian projects
- Landscaping/beautification projects
- Projects that do not connect to existing regional public transportation
- Feasibility studies or conceptual designs alone (these may be components of projects, but are not eligible products on their own)
- Projects that result in congestion reduction only on the Golden Gate Bridge
- Operations or maintenance expenses

Note: Although both plans and capital projects are eligible for funding, SR2T will not consider combined a Plan/Capital Project proposal as a single proposal. Please separate these components into distinct applications; if the capital project depends on the outcome of the plan, please apply for funding for the plan now and apply for the capital portion in a future cycle of SR2T funding.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS HAVE BEEN FUNDED IN THE PAST?

- Pedestrian and bikeway facility construction
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements on transit vehicles and at stations

- Secure bicycle storage on transit vehicles and at stations
- Planning for pedestrian and bicycle access around transit stations

An ideal transit stop or station would have safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access from all directions, secure bicycle parking at the station/stop, and good accommodation of bicyclists and pedestrians on-board transit vehicles. Safe Routes to Transit seeks to fund projects that help realize these outcomes. Pilot and innovative projects are encouraged.

A list of the projects selected for funding in the first two cycles of Safe Routes to Transit is available at: <http://www.TransformCA.org/campaign/sr2t/sr2t-fund-recipients>

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THIS FUNDING CYCLE?

June 1, 2009—Call for Projects released

June 9, 2009—*Optional Regional grant workshop (1pm-3pm: 405 14th St, Suite 205, Oakland)—At this workshop, SR2T staff will present the grant program and application, and answer questions.*

July 28, 2009—*Optional Pre-Application Workshop (10am-12pm: 436 14th St, Suite 600, Oakland)—At this workshop, SR2T staff will be available to answer questions about applications.*

August, 12, 2009, 3 PM—Deadline for Applications

August-October, 2009—Projects reviewed by SR2T Advisory Committee

November, 2009—Recommended project list presented to relevant MTC committees

November/December 2009—MTC Commission approves Cycle III SR2T grant awards

December 2009/January 2010—Recipients begin coordinating project initiation and receipt of funds with MTC and Transform

HOW MUCH MONEY IS AVAILABLE AND WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM AWARD?

\$4.196 million is available for this funding cycle. Regional Measure 2 provides \$20 million for the Safe Routes to Transit grant program. The funds are being distributed over five funding cycles of \$4 million each (this cycle is slightly larger because it includes forfeited funding from Cycle 1 projects). This is the third of five funding cycles. Subsequent funding cycles will occur every two years, with the last cycle occurring in fiscal year 2013-14.

There is a minimum grant award of \$100,000 for capital projects and a minimum grant award of \$25,000 for planning projects. The maximum grant award for capital projects with only one sponsoring agency is \$500,000. The maximum grant award for capital projects with two or more sponsoring agencies request is \$750,000. For planning projects with only one sponsoring agency, applicants are strongly encouraged to limit their funding request to \$100,000 and, for planning projects with two or more

sponsoring agencies, to limit their funding request to \$200,000.

Grant awards are competitive and there is no guarantee of an award for projects that meet certain criteria.

IS A LOCAL MATCH REQUIRED?

No matching funds are required. However, the scoring criteria will give an advantage to projects with outside sources of funding.

IS A RESOLUTION REQUIRED?

A resolution does not need to be submitted with the application. If a project is selected, an authorizing resolution will be required. Please note that scoring takes into account demonstrated agency board support for the proposed project/plan.

WHY DO I NEED TO FILL OUT MTC'S ROUTINE ACCOMMODATION CHECKLIST?

MTC's Routine Accommodations Checklist is intended for use on projects at their earliest conception or design phase to ensure that any pedestrian or bicycle consideration can be included in the project budget. The R.A. Checklist is required for Regional Measure 2 funded projects. After completing the Checklist, your County Congestion Management Agency is required to make completed checklists available to their Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPACs) for review. Learn more and complete the checklist at:

http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/bicyclespedestrians/routine_accommodations.htm

HOW MANY APPLICATIONS MAY BE SUBMITTED?

An agency may serve as the primary project applicant for a maximum of **three (3)** different applications. Agencies are not limited in how many applications they can submit as a secondary project applicant.

HOW SHOULD MULTI-AGENCY APPLICATIONS BE SUBMITTED?

A letter of support is not enough to qualify a project for multi-jurisdictional status. Each project sponsor must demonstrate joint involvement in administering the project. The agency listed as "primary applicant" will be the one responsible for submitting the application and coordinating the funding agreement with the MTC. The "primary applicant" will also be responsible for coordinating the other co-applicants' involvement in the project completion.

Letters from secondary applicants must be submitted as attachments to an application, and must include a description of the secondary agency's role, including staffing, funding, and other commitments of participation.

WHAT MAKES SR2T UNIQUE AS A FUNDING SOURCE?

The SR2T program is not exactly like other bicycle/pedestrian funding sources. Aside from the necessary transit station/stop component of the program, there are other unique requirements. SR2T encourages project applicants to work together with neighboring jurisdictions and with transit agencies to submit broad-reaching projects. In addition, project applicants are also strongly encouraged to include both pedestrian and bicycle improvements in their project applications, resulting in transit stations to which it is generally safe to walk *and* to bicycle. Another important feature of SR2T program is the personal security aspect of the program; eligible projects include those that improve the personal security of pedestrians and bicyclists in and around transit stations/stops (ex: lighting improvements, wayfinding signage, etc).

Finally, a unique aspect of SR2T is its goal to encourage innovative projects that can serve as “models” for other communities. The SR2T program encourages projects that expand the options available for improving bicycling and walking and that may be used as a model across the region. One way SR2T encourages innovations and pilot projects is to allow an additional year (up to four years) for project completion, which provides time to resolve challenges associated with the innovation. The support for innovations does not mean that conventional bicycle/pedestrian projects are not encouraged. A well-designed bicycle/pedestrian project including commonly used facilities, such as bike lanes or high-visibility crosswalks, should receive high scores and we anticipate funding many of these types of projects.

HOW WILL THE APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED?

Program sponsors (TransForm, EBBC, and MTC) will work with applicants to clarify any necessary information about submitted projects before passing applications on to the SR2T Advisory Committee for review. The SR2T Advisory Committee will evaluate and score each application. Proposals will be evaluated using a variety of criteria, which are outlined in the Scoring Criteria document.

These scoring criteria include, for example:

- Bridge Nexus
- Personal Safety and Security
- Appropriate Solution for Conditions/Project Design
- Total Trip
- At-risk/Under-served communities
- Local support
- Implementation (Project Readiness)
- Multi-jurisdiction projects
- Multimodal projects
- Cost effectiveness
- Significant leveraging of outside funding
- Innovation

- Traffic Safety/Calming

These scoring criteria alone will not determine which projects are funded. Equity criteria and innovation, among other criteria, will be considered to determine the final list of recommended projects, including:

- *Modal Equity:* A balance of bicycle and pedestrian projects over the life of the funding program.
- *Geographic Equity:* Equitable distribution of funds throughout the region over the life of the Funding Program, roughly proportional with the number of each county's population paying the bridge tolls.
- *Innovation:* Safe Routes to Transit encourages innovative projects that go beyond the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the AASHTO Greenbook, and other applicable standards. The program seeks to fund projects that would serve as models that might be applied elsewhere, approaches safety and access issues in a new way, improves upon a standard design, and those that--if successful--might be included in standards such as the Caltrans Highway Design Manual.
- *Performance on past grant awards:* Safe Routes to Transit Advisory Committee will consider agencies' performance on past SR2T grant awards, including compliance with SR2T reporting requirements, schedule, and ability to deliver proposed project/plan.

Once the SR2T Advisory Committee has scored the applications and determined a list of recommended projects to receive funding, the MTC Commission will review and approve and final list of project to be awarded funds.

WHAT IS THE FUNDING PROCESS?

After submission, applications will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee. The Committee will submit its recommendations to MTC's Programming and Allocations Committee for recommended approval, and then to MTC's full Commission for final approval. Awardees will be notified of their selection once the MTC Committee has approved the list. At this point, project sponsors will be notified and have three years within which to complete their funded projects or plans.

Note well: Before allocations may be issued or reimbursable expenses may be accrued, the selected projects must submit an Initial Project Report (IPR), which include a refined workplan and budget. MTC and TransForm will work with the project sponsors to ensure that IPRs include enough detail for the allocation of funds. This may require TransForm to follow up with project sponsors on questions regarding specific project scope and work products in response to submitted IRPs.

Once an IPR is completed, MTC will adopt an allocation for the project and issue a finance letter to each of the project sponsors confirming the allocation and summarizing invoicing logistics. At this point, and not before, the project may begin to incur expense that may be reimbursed with SR2T funds.

Project sponsors will send invoices to MTC directly, once an IPR is approved by MTC and reimbursable expenses are incurred. MTC staff will review the invoices for eligible expenses based on the workplan and estimated budget plans. The project sponsors will summarize the billable activities within the invoices to MTC.

On a semi-annual basis, TransForm will communicate with each of the project sponsors about their progress on their individual projects for the SR2T progress report. It is the sponsoring agencies' responsibility to complete these on time and return these to TransForm. Furthermore, sponsoring agencies are responsible for informing TransForm when/if the staff contact for the project changes.

Specific funding requirements associated with RM2 and SR2T include:

- All funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis after allocation approval and subsequent submittal of invoices.
- Project sponsors may begin incurring project costs as of the date the MTC Commission approves the allocation of funds (note that this is not the same as the Commission's approval of the grant award list; allocation approval requires submittal of an IPR as discussed above). No reimbursements shall be made prior to the execution of a Funding Agreement.
- Overhead (direct staff costs associated with the project) for the implementing agency may be reimbursed up to 50% of direct staff costs. Consultant overhead costs are not subject to the 50% reimbursement limit.
- Failure to meet the timely use of fund requirements, meet the project schedule without compelling reason, file required reports, or comply with applicable regulations could result in loss or withholding of funding.
- Funded projects shall agree to use RM2 and SR2T logos on all signage, newsletters, and marketing materials associated with the project.

WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES FOR EXPENDING FUNDS?

Once MTC approves the list of grantees submitted by the SR2T Advisory Committee, the project sponsor has three (3) years to complete construction (or planning process if the award is for the creation of a plan). If your project cannot be completed in this time, please consider applying for a SR2T grant in a subsequent year. Exceptions will be made for projects that are highly innovative; in these cases, additional time will be awarded along with project's announcement of funding. For projects that are "innovative", applicants have up to four (4) years to complete construction.

WHAT ARE THE SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS?

The first page of the application includes an application checklist.

A complete application submission includes eight (8) paper copies, unbound; all material, including attachments, maps, and graphics should be printed in black and white on 8 ½" x 11" paper to ensure that easy reproduction.

Applications are due at 3:00 PM on Wednesday, August 12, 2009 at the TransForm office; post marks **will not** suffice:

**SR2T 2009 Application
TransForm, Attn: Carli Paine
436 14th St., Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94612**

QUESTIONS, WHO DO I TALK TO?

Regional Measure 2 designated TransForm (formerly the Transportation and Land Use Coalition) and the East Bay Bicycle Coalition (EBBC) as the SR2T program administrators. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the public administrator. Once projects are selected for funding, individual agencies will work directly with MTC for funding allocation.

Please consult the resources available on the website:
<http://www.transformca.org/campaign/sr2t>

If you have any further questions about the Safe Routes to Transit Program, please contact:

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