



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Adopted by SJCOG Board on February 22, 2024

1.0 Overview

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58, also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”) provides \$550 billion of new federal investment in infrastructure. The IIJA expands and continues the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) from its predecessor FAST Act. STBG one of the cornerstones for transportation funds distributed to regions. San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), acting in its role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), is programming future federal transportation revenues that will come to the San Joaquin region. STBG funds are reimbursable federal aid funds, subject to the requirements of Title 23, United States code. Eligible costs include preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, capital costs, and constructions costs associated with an eligible activity. These guidelines describe the policy, standards, criteria, and procedures developing, managing, and adopting of SJCOG’s STBG program.

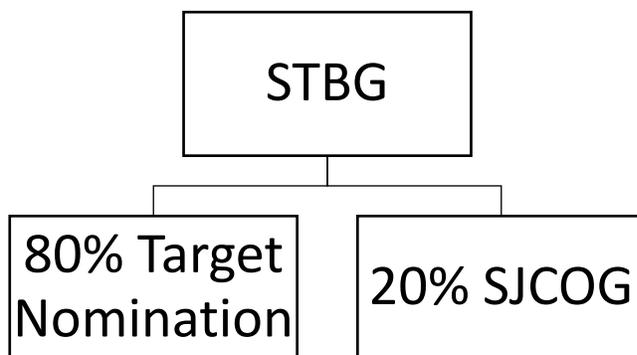
Once projects have been approved by the MPO, they are included in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) prior to federal reimbursement.

2.0 Program Purpose

The STBG program provides flexible funding that localities may use for projects to preserve and improve conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals. STBG promotes flexibility in local transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address regional and local transportation needs.

3.0 Funding

3.1 Distribution



SJCOG “off the top”: 20% of total annual allotment will be programmed by the SJCOG Board for regional priority projects. The assignment of these funds will come after a collaborative planning process, which allows partner agencies to provide input on recommendations.

Partner Agency Target Nomination: 80% of total annual allotment will be

programmed based on nomination targets. Nomination targets establish a provisional amount of funds for each City and the County, each year. These targets are based on a combination of metrics relevant to the delivery of federal funds, particularly: maintained miles, vehicle miles of travel, and housing. Final funding allocations will account for factors such as overall project scoring (beyond target amounts) and project readiness.

SJCOG staff recommends that nomination targets should be no less than \$200,000 per year, as funding amounts below this level are generally not representative of meaningful surface

transportation projects. Should an agency's nomination target be calculated to be less than \$200,000, the remainder will be filled using funds from SJCOG's "off the top" balance. Final funding allocations will account for factors such as overall project scoring (beyond target amounts) and project readiness.

3.2 Partner Agency Target Nomination Methodology

Each agency's nomination target is calculated as a percent share of this overall nomination total, using the following factors:

- Maintained Miles: (30% of the nomination target) proportion of total maintained miles, which accounts for all of the features of a given roadway. This data will be taken from the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS), via Caltrans' California Public Road Data report.
- Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel: (40% of the nomination target) proportion of vehicle miles traveled, which helps to identify areas experiencing the highest level of travel. This data will be taken from the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS), via Caltrans' California Public Road Data report.
- Housing Supply: (30% of the nomination target) each agency's share of regional housing supply.

Using data for the metrics described above, nomination targets will be computed for the following geographies:

- City of Escalon
- City of Lathrop
- City of Lodi
- City of Manteca
- City of Ripon
- City of Stockton
- City of Tracy
- San Joaquin County

It should be noted that targets are established for geographies, and that any agency eligible to deliver projects outlined under Title 23 USC Section 133 may be considered for funding. To ensure a sufficient pool of projects for regional selection, SJCOG is encouraging all partner agencies to submit project requests beyond their nomination target. This allows for a pool of contingency projects to proceed, should a funded project experience delays.

Application of Nomination Targets will occur in the following way:

1. Ahead of each STBG "call for projects," SJCOG will compute (and refresh) nomination targets and evaluate the proportional share of performance metrics, and circulate this information to local partners.
2. SJCOG will hold an STBG "call for projects." All partner agencies will be encouraged to submit projects for consideration – including submissions beyond their nomination target. Agencies may plan to combine multiple years of funding (under their anticipated nomination target amounts) to deliver a large project.

3. Projects should be submitted via the City Manager's office / County Public Works Director's office. This allows each jurisdiction to consider their own priorities in developing their project submissions.
4. SJCOG will review all project submissions using its newly developed scoring criteria, which aligns with the latest feedback and requirements of the Federal Highway Administration and the California Department of Transportation – specifically, the scoring criteria aligns with recently established Performance Measures 1, 2, and 3. All project submissions will be ranked/prioritized based on their overall score.
5. Upon completing the review process, SJCOG will consider the calculated nomination targets when assigning funds for programming. Each agency's projects will be assigned funds against their nomination target for programming based on their overall scoring. Projects scoring too low to be accounted for in the agency's nomination target will be compiled in a regional contingency list.
 - a. Example: If a given city has a nomination target of \$3M, and submits \$5M in applications in the call for projects, the top scoring projects among the \$5M in submissions will be assigned funds for programming under the \$3M target. The remaining \$2M in project submissions will be placed in the contingency list based on its score.
6. If an agency has a programmed project within its nomination target amount, and is unable to meet its project schedule (i.e., experiences delays), then those funds may be made available to projects within the contingency list (prioritizing the same agency, then considering project from other agencies) to ensure consistent delivery of apportionment and obligation authority in the region.
7. Before the end of each fiscal year, SJCOG staff will work with partner agency staff to address any potentially unobligated funds, and develop a plan to obligate funds under the nomination target. If a plan cannot be developed, unobligated funds from a prior year may not roll over to the next year. SJCOG is responsible for obligating STBG funds in a timely manner to prevent the loss of the region's STBG funding, as defined Assembly Bill (AB) 1012 (1999).¹

4.0 Project Selection Process

4.1 Project Eligibility

Details related to eligible projects and activities are taken from Title 23 USC Section 133, as described below:

¹ AB 1012 states that STBG funds not obligated within the first three years of Federal eligibility are subject to reprogramming by the California Transportation Commission in the fourth year to prevent the funds from being lost by the State.

- Location of Projects (23 U.S.C. 133(c)): STBG projects may not be undertaken on a road functionally classified as a local road or a rural minor collector unless the road was on a Federal-aid highway system on January 1, 1991, except-
 - (1) For a bridge or tunnel project (other than the construction of a new bridge or tunnel at a new location);
 - (2) For a project described in 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(4)-(11) and described below under "Eligible Activities" (b)(4) through (11);
 - (3) For transportation alternatives projects described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) before enactment of the FAST Act (these are described in 23 U.S.C. 133(h) and in separate TA Set-Aside guidance.); and
 - (4) As approved by the Secretary.

- Eligible Activities (23 U.S.C. 133(b)): Subject to the location of projects requirements in paragraph (a), the following eligible activities are listed in 23 U.S.C. 133(b):
 - (1) Construction, as defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(4), of the following:
 - i. Highways, bridges, and tunnels, including designated routes of the Appalachian development highway system and local access roads under 40 U.S.C. 14501;
 - ii. Ferry boats and terminal facilities eligible under 23 U.S.C. 129(c);
 - iii. transit capital projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code;
 - iv. Infrastructure-based intelligent transportation systems capital improvements, including the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment;
 - v. Truck parking facilities eligible under Section 1401 of MAP-21 (23 U.S.C. 137 note); and
 - vi. Border infrastructure projects eligible under Section 1303 of SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 101 note).

 - (2) Operational improvements and capital and operating costs for traffic monitoring, management, and control facilities and programs. Operational improvement is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(18).

 - (3) Environmental measures eligible under 23 U.S.C. 119(g), 328, and 329, and transportation control measures listed in Section 108(f)(1)(A) (other than clause (xvi) of that section) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7408(f)(1)(A)).

 - (4) Highway and transit safety infrastructure improvements and programs, including railway- highway grade crossings.

 - (5) Fringe and corridor parking facilities and programs in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 137 and carpool projects in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 146. Carpool project is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(3).

 - (6) Recreational trails projects eligible under 23 U.S.C. 206, pedestrian and bicycle projects in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 217 (including modifications to comply with

accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), and the Safe Routes to School Program under Section 1404 of SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 402 note).

(7) Planning, design, or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

(8) Development and implementation of a State asset management plan for the National Highway System (NHS) and a performance-based management program for other public roads.

(9) Protection (including painting, scour countermeasures, seismic retrofits, impact protection measures, security countermeasures, and protection against extreme events) for bridges (including approaches to bridges and other elevated structures) and tunnels on public roads, and inspection and evaluation of bridges and tunnels and other highway assets.

(10) Surface transportation planning programs, highway and transit research and development and technology transfer programs, and workforce development, training, and education under chapter 5 of title 23, United States Code.

(11) Surface transportation infrastructure modifications to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, and access into and out of a port terminal.

(12) Projects and strategies designed to support congestion pricing, including electronic toll collection and travel demand management strategies and programs.

(13) Upon request of a State and subject to the approval of the Secretary, if Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) credit assistance is approved for an STBG-eligible project, then the State may use STBG funds to pay the subsidy and administrative costs associated with providing Federal credit assistance for the projects.

(14) The creation and operation by a State of an office to assist in the design, implementation, and oversight of public-private partnerships eligible to receive funding under title 23 and chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, and the payment of a stipend to unsuccessful private bidders to offset their proposal development costs, if necessary to encourage robust competition in public-private partnership procurements.

(15) Any type of project eligible under 23 U.S.C. 133 as in effect on the day before the FAST Act was enacted. Among these are:

- i. Replacement of bridges with fill material;
- ii. Training of bridge and tunnel inspectors;
- iii. Application of calcium magnesium acetate, sodium acetate/formate, or other environmentally acceptable, minimally corrosive anti-icing and

deicing compositions for bridges (and approaches to bridges and other elevated structures) and tunnels;

- iv. Projects to accommodate other transportation modes continue to be eligible pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 142(c) if such accommodation does not adversely affect traffic safety;
- v. Transit capital projects eligible for assistance under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, including vehicles and facilities (publicly or privately owned) that are used to provide intercity passenger bus service;
- vi. Approach roadways to ferry terminals to accommodate other transportation modes and to provide access into and out of the ports;
- vii. Transportation alternatives previously described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) and described in 23 U.S.C. 213;
- viii. Projects relating to intersections having disproportionately high accident rates, high levels of congestion (as evidenced by interrupted traffic flow at the intersection and a level of service rating of "F" during peak travel hours, calculated in accordance with the Highway Capacity Manual), and are located on a Federal-aid highway;
- ix. Construction and operational improvements for any minor collector if the minor collector and the project to be carried out are in the same corridor and in proximity to an NHS route; the construction or improvements will enhance the level of service on the NHS route and improve regional traffic flow; and the construction or improvements are more cost-effective, as determined by a benefit-cost analysis, than an improvement to the NHS route;
- x. Workforce development, training, and education activities discussed in 23 U.S.C. 504(e);
- xi. Advanced truck stop electrification systems. Truck stop electrification system is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(32);
- xii. Installation of safety barriers and nets on bridges, hazard eliminations, projects to mitigate hazards caused by wildlife;
- xiii. Electric vehicle and natural gas vehicle infrastructure in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 137;
- xiv. Data collection, maintenance, and integration and the costs associated with obtaining, updating, and licensing software and equipment required for risk-based asset management and performance-based management, and for similar activities related to the development and implementation of a performance-based management program for other public roads;
- xv. Construction of any bridge in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 144(f) that replaces any low water crossing (regardless of the length of the low water crossing); any bridge that was destroyed prior to January 1, 1965; any ferry that was in existence on January 1, 1984;
- xvi. Actions in accordance with the definition and conditions in 23 U.S.C. 144(g) to preserve or reduce the impact of a project on the historic integrity of a historic bridge if the load capacity and safety features of the historic bridge are adequate to serve the intended use for the life of the historic bridge. Not subject to the Location of Project or any road bridge that is

rendered obsolete as a result of a Corps of Engineers flood control or channelization project and is not rebuilt with funds from the Corps of Engineers. Not subject to the Location of Project requirement in 23 U.S.C. 133(c);

4.2 Applicability of Planning Requirements (23 U.S.C. 133(d)(5)):

Projects must be identified in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) and be consistent with the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan(s). When obligating sub-allocated funding (discussed below), the State must coordinate with relevant metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) or rural planning organizations (23 U.S.C. 133(d)(3)). Programming and expenditure of funds for projects shall be consistent with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135.

STBG projects for eligible planning purposes must be reflected in the statewide SPR work program or Overall Work Program. Further, these projects must be in the FTIP unless the State DOT or MPO agree that they may be excluded. (23 CFR 420.119(e))

4.3 Applicability of 23 U.S.C. 217(i) for Bicycle Projects:

23 U.S.C. 217(i) requires that bicycle facilities “be principally for transportation, rather than recreation, purposes.” However, 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(6) and 133(h) list “recreational trails projects” as eligible activities under STBG. Therefore, the requirement in 23 U.S.C. 217(i) does not apply to recreational trails projects (including for bicycle use) using STBG funds. Section 217(i) continues to apply to bicycle facilities other than trail-related projects, and Section 217(i) continues to apply to bicycle facilities using other Federal-aid highway program funds (e.g., NHPP, Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program). The transportation requirement under Section 217(i) is applicable only to bicycle projects; it does not apply to any other trail use or transportation mode.

4.4 Tentative Scoring Criteria:

Based on feedback provided by Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration, the expectation as that each MPO’s STBG program be aimed toward projects that emphasize existing system preservation. Other factors set forth in the IIJA (BIL) guidelines that are important and are emphasized include: system integration and connectivity; safety and security; accessibility, mobility, and efficiency; energy conservation; environmental protection; and support for economic development activities. The overall STBG program is aimed to meet the performance of our long-term planning goals. Thus, SJCOG’s scoring process will consider the following:

4.4.1 Project Details

Partner agency will describe the scope of the project or program, the delivery work plan, funding plan, and a detailed timeline with key milestones demonstrating the capacity to deliver in timely manner. Additionally, partner agency will describe how the project or program delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impacts. Connects to local area plans and is a good investment of resources.

4.4.2 Performance Assessment Metrics

Per direction provided by Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration, scoring is meant to focus on three categories of performance assessment measures, which include the following.

- Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Replacement (Preservation)
- Safety/Security
- Congestion Relief
 - Regional Congestion Management Program

Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Replacement (Preservation) – Max Points (70)

The applicant should explain how the project addresses preservation of existing infrastructure. Describe current condition of roads/assets and how the project will improve current condition, including PCI rating within past two years, if applicable. Points would be assigned based on the judgement of the project offering high, medium, or low impact.

- High impact (70 pts): projects making substantial improvements to a location considered to be in poor/failed condition (i.e., Pavement Condition Index with a score below 50, and local bridges or NHS bridges classified in poor condition). Examples typically include reconstruction and resurfacing, but may also consider alternative modes of travel that substantially reduce impacts to the surface transportation network.
- Medium impact (45 pts): projects making moderate improvements to a location considered to be in an at-risk condition (i.e., Pavement Condition Index with a score between 50 and 69, and local bridges or NHS bridges classified in fair condition). Examples typically include reconstruction, resurfacing, and overlays, but may also consider alternative modes of travel that moderately reduce impacts to the surface transportation network.
- Low impact (25 pts): projects making improvements to a location considered to be in good condition (i.e., Pavement Condition Index with a score of 70 or above, and local bridges or NHS bridges classified in good condition). Examples typically include chip seals and slurry seals, but may also consider alternative modes of travel that reduce impacts to the surface transportation network.

Safety and Security – Max Points (15)

The applicant should explain how the project addresses safety and/or security issues and demonstrate how the project improvements will remedy safety hazards and have a potential to reduce fatal and serious injury collisions. Include data to clearly demonstrate these issues (examples of data sources includes SWITRS or FARS). Points would be assigned based on the judgement of the project offering high, medium, or low impact.

- High impact (15 pts): any project that makes a substantial improvement for safety and security over existing conditions. Examples may include grade separations, median barrier when crossover median accidents are an issue, geometric improvements, shoulders, curve corrections, new signals, drainage improvements, sight distance improvements, profile grade improvements.

- Medium impact (10 pts): any project that makes a moderate improvement for safety and security over existing conditions. Examples may include widenings, auxiliary lanes, left-turn pockets, minor shoulder widenings.
- Low impact (5 pts): any project that makes a minor improvement for safety and security over existing conditions. Examples may include signage, restriping, intersection improvements.

Congestion Relief – Max Points (10)

The applicant should explain how the project relieves congestion and/or improves travel reliability. Examples include expanding the current infrastructure system without negatively affecting conformity requirements. Points would be assigned based on the judgement of the project offering high, medium, or low impact.

- High impact (10 pts): Any project that makes a substantial improvement for congestion relief over existing conditions. Projects such as signal coordination of multiple (>3) signals, traffic operations system, roundabout, left-turn pockets or other intersection improvements.
- Medium impact (5 pts): Any project that makes a moderate improvement for congestion relief over existing conditions. Examples may include a new signal where none currently exists and is warranted by volume or delay, ramp metering with HOV bypasses (when shown not to adversely affect surface streets).
- Low impact (3 pts): Any project that makes a minor improvement for congestion relief over existing conditions. Examples may include HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes.

Congestion Management Program – Max Points (5)

Additionally, the applicant should explain how the project may improve congestion and/or travel reliability of the deficient segments identified in the most recent RCMP Monitoring Report. Points would be assigned based on the judgement of the project offering high, medium, or low impact.

- High impact (5 pts): Projects that address congestion and/or travel reliability on one of the deficient segments.
- Medium impact (3 pts): Projects that address congestion/or travel reliability on a non-deficient segment.
- Low impact (1 pts): Projects that do not address congestion/or travel reliability.

Scoring Category	Max Points	High Impact Score	Medium Impact Score	Low Impact Score
Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Replacement (Preservation)	70	70	45	25
Safety and Security	15	15	10	5
Congestion Relief	10	10	5	3
Congestion Management Program	5	5	3	1
Total	100			

4.5 Project Nominations

As noted, after circulating partner agency targets, SJCOG will hold a call for projects. Partner agencies will submit project nominations electronically. To ensure a sufficient pool of projects for regional selection, SJCOG is encouraging all partner agencies to submit project requests beyond their nomination target. This allows for a pool of contingency projects to proceed, should a funded project experience delays.

SJCOG will score all project nominations using the scoring criteria described in 4.4. All project nominations will be ranked based on their overall score. Upon completing the review & scoring process, SJCOG will consider the calculated nomination targets when assigning funds for programming. Projects for agencies will be assigned funds against nomination targets for programming based on their overall scoring. Projects scoring too low to be accounted for in the agency's nomination target will be compiled in a regional contingency list. Projects in the regional contingency list may be advanced when unprogrammed funds are available.

4.6 FTIP Amendments

Federal regulations require adherence to the projects and schedules contained within the adopted FTIP. Amendments are used to make necessary changes to projects within the FTIP. Amendment procedures are available in the most recent FTIP document.

