

**SANDAG**

# Specialized Transportation Grant Program

## Cycle 13 Call for Projects



### Stakeholder Engagement Summary

December 22, 2023

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# Stakeholder Engagement Summary: Needs and Goals

## 1.1 Introduction

To initiate the Specialized Transportation Grant Program (STGP) Cycle 13 Call for Projects, SANDAG began engaging specialized transportation stakeholders throughout the region between October and December 2023. The purpose of this initial outreach was twofold: (1) to gather input on the most pressing specialized transportation needs in our region today; and (2) to solicit feedback on the STGP Goal. The STGP Goal, which was developed during the STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects, is to “improve mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities by delivering effective, equitable, environmentally responsive, and coordinated specialized transportation solutions in our region.”

## 1.2 Methods

### STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects Kickoff Meeting

SANDAG began the Cycle 13 competitive process by gathering input from stakeholders during the STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects Kickoff Meeting on October 10, 2023. During this virtual meeting, SANDAG presented an overview of the STGP and the STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects, summarized stakeholder feedback received during the prior competitive process, employed an interactive polling tool, and answered questions. Presentation materials were provided in an accessible format and offered in both English and Spanish. Specifically, SANDAG asked participants the following:

1. Which theme [availability, accessibility, affordability, reliability, and adaptability] most resonates with you?
2. What other specialized transportation needs exist in our region today?
3. What, if anything, should be changed to improve the STGP Goal?

More than 50 stakeholders attended this kickoff meeting. Within about a week of the meeting, SANDAG posted the meeting video, presentation slides, questions and answers, and a summary of feedback received to the [STGP web page](#). SANDAG then notified meeting attendees and other stakeholders of these resources through its specialized transportation stakeholder email distribution list.

## Presentations to SANDAG Working Groups and Other Stakeholder Groups

Following the Cycle 13 kickoff meeting, SANDAG staff engaged SANDAG working groups and other stakeholder groups in the region, as summarized in the following table, and discussed below.

Stakeholder or Working Group Name	Meeting Date	Estimated Number of Participants
San Diego County Volunteer Driver Coalition	10/26/2023	12
SANDAG Mobility Working Group	11/9/2023	25
Council on Access and Mobility	11/14/2023	15
Age Well San Diego Transportation and Community Connections Team	11/15/2023	15
SANDAG Social Equity Working Group	11/16/2023	13
SANDAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)	11/21/2023*	Not applicable*

\*The November 21, 2023, SSTAC meeting was cancelled. See notes below.

### **San Diego County Volunteer Driver Coalition**

The San Diego County Volunteer Driver Coalition (SDCVDC) is comprised of specialized transportation providers and generally meets bi-monthly to share best practices and collaborate to promote the need for volunteer driving programs and senior transportation in San Diego. SANDAG staff presented to the SDCVDC at its October 26, 2023, meeting. More information is available on the [SDCVDC's website](#).

### **SANDAG Mobility Working Group**

Per its charter, the SANDAG Mobility Working Group (MWG) serves as a critical resource to carry out and promote cross-agency coordination on the policy, planning, development, deployment, and operations of mobility solutions that help advance the implementation of the SANDAG Regional Plan. The MWG is comprised of voting members, who are executive or senior level staff representing SANDAG member agencies, including the region's 18 cities. Non-voting advisory members include Caltrans and Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation. SANDAG presented to the MWG at its **November 9, 2023**, meeting. More information is available on the [MWG web page](#).

### **Council on Access and Mobility**

The Council on Access and Mobility (CAM) is an advisory committee to the Facilitating Access and Coordinated Transportation Board of Directors and is comprised of approximately 31 providers and transportation interest groups. CAM serves to promote coordination of transportation resources and services in San Diego County. SANDAG presented to the CAM at its November 14, 2023, meeting. More information is available on the [CAM web page](#).

### ***Age Well San Diego Transportation and Community Connections Team***

Aligned with the goals of Live Well San Diego, Age Well San Diego is a regional initiative led by the County of San Diego to make San Diego's communities better places for people of all ages to live healthy, safe, and thriving lives. The initiative is supported by teams that focus on five areas: (1) health and community support; (2) housing; (3) social participation; (4) transportation; and (5) dementia. The vision of the Transportation and Community Connections Team (TCCT) is for older adults to have access to safe and affordable transportation options that are accessible for all ages and abilities. The TCCT is comprised of specialized transportation providers, riders, and other stakeholders. SANDAG presented to the TCCT at its November 15, 2023, meeting. More information is available on the [Age Well San Diego web page](#).

### ***SANDAG Social Equity Working Group***

Per its charter, the SANDAG Social Equity Working Group (SEWG) seeks to provide ongoing public input from disadvantaged or underrepresented communities in the region into key activities associated with the development of the Regional Plan, implementation, and related planning activities with a focus on the social equity perspective. The SEWG is comprised of representatives from 11 community-based organizations or community collaboratives serving underserved and underrepresented communities. SANDAG staff presented to the SEWG at its [November 16, 2023](#), meeting. More information is available on the [SEWG web page](#).

### ***SANDAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council***

Per its charter, the SSTAC seeks to review, recommend, and promote the development and use of accessible transportation services. The SSTAC is comprised of 21 members representing social service agencies, individuals, transportation providers, and the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency. Since the November 21, 2023, SSTAC meeting was cancelled, staff emailed SSTAC members, providing an updated on the STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects and inviting them to give feedback on the region's specialized transportation needs and possible enhancements to the STGP Goal. More information about the SSTAC is available on the [SSTAC web page](#).

## **Other Methods**

SANDAG also engaged stakeholders and members of the public through e-blasts, social media, and the [STGP web page](#).

## **1.3 Themes of Feedback Received**

### **Regional Specialized Transportation Needs**

#### ***Availability***

Stakeholders reported a need for more specialized transportation services throughout the region and during off-peak periods. Some specialized transportation providers cited an increased need for non-emergency medical trips, trips spanning longer distances, and service in South Bay. During the STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects Kickoff Meeting, "availability" was the theme that most resonated with participants.

### ***On-demand Options/Flexibility***

Stakeholders reported a need for more on-demand options so that specialized transportation riders can travel as spontaneously as non-specialized transportation riders. Specialized transportation providers reported a need for multiple trips, some unplanned, following medical appointments such as picking up prescriptions at a pharmacy.

### ***Service Quality***

Stakeholders discussed needing driver sensitivity training so that drivers know how to appropriately respond to the mobility needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities. Others reported that some specialized transportation providers do not provide interpretation services, so language barriers prevent eligible older or disabled individuals from accessing service; language interpretation for multiple languages was identified as a need.

### ***Coordination***

Stakeholders reported a need for improved coordination among various specialized transportation providers, including health care centers, especially in emergency situations. One stakeholder suggested that the STGP include a requirement that grantees conduct outreach/engagement with stakeholders/community-based organizations.

### ***Affordability***

Stakeholders reported a need for affordable specialized transportation options, especially for those on fixed or low incomes.

## **STGP Goal**

The STGP Goal is to “improve mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities by delivering effective, equitable, environmentally responsive, and coordinated specialized transportation solutions in our region.” When asked what, if anything, should be changed to improve the STGP Goal, some stakeholders commented that no changes were necessary, while others suggested that it be refined to include dependable, affordable, and on-demand service. Below are a few responses received:

- “Perhaps add a reference to affordability.”
- “I would add on-demand to that to make sure it is a focal point of goal.”
- “N/A - the program goal aligns with our transportation goal.”