

Program Website

<http://www.sandag.org/grants>

Program Contact

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Available Funding

\$3 million – Smart Growth Incentive Program

Funding Requirements

Max Grant Award

\$500,000 maximum per project

Match Requirement:

A match is not required; however, points are awarded based on evidence of matching funds.

Eligible Applicants

Cities in the County of San Diego and the County of San Diego

Example Projects

- Overlay zones
- Specific plans
- Complete street designs manuals

Other examples can be found in the 'Eligible Section' of this CFP.

Overview

Program Description

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is soliciting applications for its Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP). The goal of this program is to fund comprehensive public infrastructure projects and planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and increase housing and transportation choices.

At this time, SANDAG is soliciting applications through this Call for Projects (CFP) for planning projects only.

Funding Source

TransNet Extension Ordinance

Fiscal Year of Funding: 2021

Minimum Eligibility

- Project area must include a regionally defined priority area for smart growth.
- Jurisdiction must have adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- Provide adequate Civil Rights Assurances
- Adhere to SANDAG Board Policy No. 035

Timeline

Activity	Date
Release of the CFP	11/24/2021
Applicant Workshop	12/07/21
CFP Question Deadline (by 5 p.m.)	2/11/2022
Responses to all questions released in BidNet	2/18/2022
Application Deadline (by 5 p.m.)	2/28/2022
Notice of Intent to Award (PAC Recommendation)	04/01/22
Notice of Award (Board Approval)	04/08/22
Grant Agreements Executed/Notices to Proceed Issued	05/09/22

Attachments

- Attachment A – Smart Growth Incentive Program Application
- Attachment B – Smart Growth Incentive Program Sample Agreement

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Contents

- I. Glossary of Key Terms..... 1**
- II. List of Resources2**
- III. Background..... 1**
 - A. About SANDAG.....1
 - B. Smart Growth Incentive Program1
 - 1. Overview1
 - 2. Goals and Objectives1
- IV. Eligibility.....2**
 - A. Eligible Applicants and Projects2
 - 1. Eligible Applicants.....2
 - 2. Eligible Projects and Project Types3
 - B. Eligible Expenses..... 4
 - C. Ineligible Activities and Expenses.....5
- V. Funding.....5**
 - A. Available Funding5
 - B. Minimum and Maximum Grant Awards.....5
 - 1. Per Project.....5
 - 2. Per Applicant.....5
 - C. Partial Awards6
 - D. Match Requirement6
 - 1. Minimum Match Requirement.....6
 - 2. Eligible Matching Funds.....7
 - E. Indirect Costs.....7
 - F. Expenditure Deadline/Grant Term.....7
- VI. Other Program Requirements 7**
 - A. SANDAG Board Policy No. 035.....7
 - 1. Resolution7
 - 2. Grant Agreement Execution 8
 - 3. “Use It or Lose It” 8
 - B. Progress Reports, Invoices, and Matching Funds..... 8
 - 1. Progress Reports..... 8
 - 2. Invoices..... 8

3.	Matching Funds	9
C.	Public Record and Record Retention Policy.....	9
D.	Insurance Requirements	9
E.	Notice of Prevailing Wage.....	10
F.	Required Forms.....	10
VII.	Application and Submittal Process	10
A.	Application Materials.....	10
B.	Applicant Workshop and Questions	11
1.	Pre-Application Workshop.....	11
2.	Call for Projects Questions.....	11
C.	Submittal Process.....	11
VIII.	Application Evaluation Process and Awards	11
A.	Eligibility Screening	11
B.	Scoring, Ranking, and Awarding of Funds	12
1.	Qualitative/Subjective Scoring.....	12
2.	Quantitative/Objective Scoring	12
3.	Ranking and Funding Recommendations	13
4.	Minimum Average Score.....	13
5.	Tiebreakers	13
6.	Social Equity Analysis	13
7.	Awards and Funding Contingency List	13
C.	Protests.....	14
D.	Grant Agreement Execution.....	14
IX.	Evaluation Criteria	14
X.	Scoring Rubric.....	15

I. Glossary of Key Terms

Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a comprehensive policy document that outlines the actions a local jurisdiction is taking or will take to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is a detailed statement prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that describes and analyzes the significant environmental effects of a project and discusses ways to mitigate or avoid the effects.

General Plan A policy document required of California cities and counties by state law that describes a jurisdiction's future development in general terms. All land use decisions must be derived from this document. The General Plan contains a set of broad policy statements about the goals for the jurisdiction, and it also must contain seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, Safety, and Environmental Justice.

Grantee is an organization that has been awarded funding through the Smart Growth Incentive Program and has entered into a grant agreement with SANDAG.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) The release of water vapor, ozone, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, chlorofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride that influence global climate change.

Grant term is the period of time in which expenses for project-related activities can be incurred to be eligible for reimbursement.

Matching funds is the amount of funding other than the grant award that goes towards the total project cost. It is often represented as a percentage of the total project cost.

Match percentage is calculated by dividing the total match amount by the sum of the matching funds and the grant award.

Mixed Use The combining of commercial, office, and residential land uses to provide easy pedestrian access and reduce the public's dependence on driving. It can be implemented in multistory buildings containing businesses and retail stores on the lower floors, and homes on the upper floors.

Mobility Hubs are communities with a high concentration of people, destinations, and travel choices. They provide an integrated suite of mobility services, safe roads, and supporting amenities and technology to help people reach high-frequency transit or make short trips around a community. Mobility Hubs can span one, two, or few miles, and each hub is uniquely designed to fulfill a variety of travel needs while strengthening sense of place

Smart Growth A compact, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive pattern of development that provides people with additional travel, housing, and employment choices by focusing future growth away from rural areas and closer to existing and planned job centers and public facilities, while preserving open space and natural resources.

Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) is a competitive grant program funded by the *TransNet* Extension Ordinance that provides funding for transportation-related infrastructure

improvements and planning efforts that support smart growth development in Smart Growth Opportunity Areas

Smart Growth Opportunity Areas are locations of existing, planned, or potential smart growth areas that can support smart growth, transit, walking, and biking. Transportation and planning professionals from all jurisdictions have provided recommendations for these locations.

Total Project Cost is calculated as the sum of the grant award and the matching funds.

Vehicle Miles Traveled The total number of miles traveled on all roadways by all vehicles. Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) can help ease traffic congestion and improve air quality.

II. List of Resources

Below is a list of resources referenced in this CFP and a description of how to use these resources.

Resource/Links	What to do?
SGIP Grant Program Webpage	Learn about the program, including program requirements, past grant awards, and SANDAG performance monitoring
SANDAG Contract Webpage	Access the Grant Program Protest Procedures
BidNet Direct	Access the CFP materials, submit and receive responses to questions, receive any updates to the CFP, and submit completed application(s) for consideration
SANDAG Board Policy No. 035	Review the Board Policy that governs SANDAG's Competitive Grant Programs. An overview is provided in this CFP.
TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program	Provides resources and relevant information on the Smart Growth Incentive Grant Program.
Smart Growth Incentive Program Project Summary	Provides information on all grant-funded projects to date.
Smart Growth Incentive Program Interactive Map	Provides an interactive map that shows some of the projects funded by the <i>TransNet</i> Smart Growth Incentive Program to date.

III. Background

A. About SANDAG

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the primary public planning, transportation, and research agency for the San Diego region, which consists of the 18 cities and County of San Diego. SANDAG serves as the public forum for regional policy decisions about growth, transportation, environmental management, housing, open space, energy, public safety, and binational collaboration.

SANDAG's vision is to pursue a brighter future for all people living, working, or recreating in the San Diego region. To this end, SANDAG plans and implements projects that seek to use land more wisely, build a more efficient and accessible transportation system, protect the environment, improve public health, promote a strong regional economy, better manage our access to energy, incorporate equity into the planning process, address pressing needs on tribal lands, and support a vibrant international border.

SANDAG receives local, state, and federal funds to implement regional policies, programs, and projects that advance its vision. SANDAG passes through a portion of the funding it receives through several [competitive grant programs](#). These grant programs provide local, state, and federal funding to local jurisdictions, nonprofits, and other partners to accomplish regional goals at the local level. Grants awarded range from infrastructure projects to habitat management and monitoring efforts to specialized transportation services for senior and disabled populations. While each individual grant program maintains a particular focus, all work together to enhance our region's quality of life.

B. Smart Growth Incentive Program

1. Overview

The TransNet Extension Ordinance provides funding for a competitive grant program that supports local efforts to increase walking, biking, and transit use throughout the region: the Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP). The SGIP provides funding for transportation-related infrastructure improvements and planning efforts that support smart growth development in Smart Growth Opportunity Areas as shown on the Smart Growth Concept Map (updated May 2016). The goal is to fund planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and increase housing and transportation choices.

2. Goals and Objectives

The goals are to encourage comprehensive public infrastructure projects and planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use development focused around public transit, and that aim to increase housing and transportation choices, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and improve public health. The SGIP seeks to fund projects that can serve as models around the region and attract private development.

Projects funded by this program must support the objectives outlined below, derived from the goals in San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan (Regional Plan), and create great places in the San Diego region. SGIP provides funding for transportation-related

infrastructure improvements and planning efforts that support smart growth development. The program funds two types of projects: capital projects and planning projects. This CFP only is for planning projects.

Objectives:

- Implement a comprehensive approach to influence land development by improving the public realm and encouraging private smart growth projects that, in combination, create great places, advance mobility hub concepts, and leverage advanced technologies.
- Serve as model examples for smart growth in a variety of settings throughout the region.
- Contribute to the reduction in GHG emissions and vehicle miles travelled, and improve public health by encouraging travel by means other than single-occupant vehicle. In particular, proposed projects should support public transit usage by improving access to transit and be located in areas served by transit.
- Support future housing development.
- Fund proposed capital projects that are “ready to go” and serve as catalysts for further smart growth development.

IV. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants and Projects

1. Eligible Applicants

- **Individual Jurisdictions:** Eligible applicants include the 18 incorporated cities in the SANDAG region and the County of San Diego.
- **Partnerships:** Jurisdictions can opt to work together on an application to conduct eligible activities consistent with the goals and objectives of this program. Jurisdictions also may partner with a community-based organization (CBO) or nonprofit providing services in the San Diego region to ensure the benefits of their activities are realized by a broad population and in an equitable manner. Only the 18 cities and County of San Diego are eligible to serve as the lead applicant and grantee.
 - Applicants forming partnerships must provide a letter of support from each jurisdiction, CBO, or nonprofit.

Only one application may be submitted per jurisdiction as an individual jurisdiction. Up to two applications may be submitted for jurisdictions forming partnerships.

To be eligible to receive grant funds, an applicant must comply with all of the following:

- Have the technical and financial capacity to implement the proposed project if awarded.
- Have established Civil Rights Assurances that include adequate methods for ensuring that the benefits of the project are distributed equitably.

- Be eligible to do business with the government. SANDAG will conduct a pre-award risk assessment, including but not limited to, verifying the suspension or debarment status of the applicant using SAM.gov.
- Comply with the provisions of the grant agreement.
- Be willing to provide the required insurance and execute a grant agreement for a SGIP project in the same form (Attachment B) as attached to this CFP within the timelines noted in this CFP.

2. Eligible Projects and Project Types

The SGIP provides funding for transportation-related infrastructure improvements and planning efforts that support smart growth development in Smart Growth Opportunity Areas as shown on the [Smart Growth Concept Map \(updated May 2016\)](#) or regionally identified [employment centers](#). The goal is to fund planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and increase housing and transportation choices. Eligible projects should fall within the below categories. Some examples are provided for each category, but are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Additional examples of eligible projects can be found in [SGIP Eligible Planning Projects](#).

- Comprehensive planning efforts:
 - Specific area plans or community plans
 - Amendments/updates to general or specific plans
 - Updates to climate action plans
 - Updates to complete streets policies
- Smaller-scale neighborhood planning activities:
 - Traffic calming or mobility plans
 - Feasibility studies for future capital improvements
 - Parking management plans
 - Form based codes or design guidelines
 - Planning efforts required to make smart growth zoning changes
 - Health Impact assessments (HIAs) to inform development of local planning efforts funded by the SGIP, such as specific plans, area plans, or specific plan amendments. Any proposed HIAs must be directly connected to a proposed SGIP planning project
- Complete Streets Design Manuals
- Financing Tools
- Smart Growth Studies
- Transit Oriented Development Overlay Zones
- Transit Oriented Concept Plans
- Mobility Hub Plans

To be eligible, a project must also meet all of the following criteria:

- Jurisdiction has an adopted Climate Action Plan (CAP).
- The application must be signed by an authorized representative of the lead applicant(s), such as the city manager or other authorized individual under the applicant's policies and procedures and demonstrate the applicant's willingness to participate and fulfill the program requirements. If applying in a partnership, each jurisdiction under the partnership must have an authorized representative sign the application.
- Applications must include a project budget and a clear description of how funding will be used in the project budget table included in Attachment A of this CFP. Applicants are encouraged to add budget detail that includes quotes for products and services.
- The project(s) must be completed within thirty-six months of receiving the written Notice to Proceed.
- Project activities must illustrate their reach to the entire project area and describe the effort that will be made to reach low-income, disabled, and minority communities within the project area.
- Funded projects must not have alcohol, political, religious, or discriminatory themes or affiliations.

B. Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses must be directly related to the execution of the scope of work proposed in the application and finalized in the executed grant agreement. Projects that are already underway are eligible to apply ONLY if the application requests funds for additional work beyond the scope of the current project, the *TransNet* funds will not supplant another funding source, and the application meets the SGIP requirements:

- Direct Costs. Grant funds may be used toward local agency salaries, professional services, or planning project activities, and other direct expenses incurred on behalf of the project.
- Indirect Costs. Grant funds may be used toward indirect costs (including overhead) if they are related to the project. If the budget includes indirect costs, Grantees will be required to submit an Indirect Cost Allocation Plan prior to the grant agreement execution. (Indirect costs typically include rent, insurance, copying expenses, fringe benefits, and other costs not directly charged to the grant project, and are typically supported by the local jurisdiction's general fund.)
- Contingency. Grant funds may be used toward project contingency.

SANDAG will only reimburse costs that were actually incurred for the project after the Notice to Proceed has been issued, and only up to the amount awarded in the Grant Agreement. In the event of project cost overruns, SANDAG will not pay more than the original amount specified in the grant agreement.

C. Ineligible Activities and Expenses

Ineligible projects and activities are those that do not align with program goals and objectives. The following activities and expenses are ineligible through the grant program:

- Capital financing, operation or funding related to programs of individual development projects (a.k.a. “capital projects”)
- Administrative costs of persons employed by the grantee for activities not directly related to the preparation and adoption of the proposed activity or activities;
- Costs for work performed prior to SANDAG issuing a Notice to Proceed to the grantee; or
- Claims or litigation costs.

V. Funding

A. Available Funding

Approximately \$3 million is available through this CFP. This funding is available for planning projects only.

SANDAG reserves the right to partially fund grants, and to fund less than the amount available in a given grant cycle. See the section entitled “Partial Awards”.

B. Minimum and Maximum Grant Awards

There are limits to the amount of funding that may be awarded per project and per applicant. Funds will be allocated based on a competitive process to the highest scoring projects, up to \$500,000 per project.

1. Per Project

The maximum grant awards per project type is included in the table below.

Project Type	Maximum Award
<i>Per Project</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>

2. Per Applicant

Applicants may choose to propose multiple projects for funding consideration and request up to the maximum grant award for each project proposed. The maximum amount an individual applicant may be awarded, however, is \$500,000. If the combined grant request amount of projects proposed by an individual applicant that are recommended for funding exceeds the maximum “per applicant” grant award, then a partial award may be awarded for one or more of the applicant's projects.

C. Partial Awards

Given the competitive nature of the grant program and the finite amount of funds available through this CFP, applicants may receive partial awards. Additionally, SANDAG may choose to rollover any remaining funds not awarded through this call for projects to a future CFP. SANDAG handles partial awards differently based on the scalability of a project. Below are descriptions of scalable and non-scalable projects:

- Scalable projects. A scalable project is a project whose scope of work can be reduced and still further the grant program goals while providing significant value to the public intended to benefit from the project. SANDAG staff will consider how the project would have scored in the competitive process if the scope of work were reduced. If the project would have scored substantially the same with the scaled-down scope of work and the scaled-down project would further the grant program goals and provide significant value to the public, then the project may be scaled.
- Non-scalable projects. A non-scalable project is a project whose scope of work cannot be reduced because doing so (a) is not possible, (b) would create an incomplete project that contributes little to the grant program goals or provides little value to those intended to benefit from the project, and/or (c) would have scored substantially differently in the competitive process with a reduced scope of work.

SANDAG at its sole discretion will determine whether a project is scalable or non-scalable using the definitions listed above.

Applicants whose projects are recommended for partial award and are scalable will be required to work with SANDAG staff prior to grant agreement execution to alter the scope of work, budget, and schedule submitted as a part of the application to reflect a reduced scope of work.

Applicants whose projects are recommended for partial award and cannot be scaled will be asked if they would like to accept the partial funding award with the condition that the entire project as proposed in the scope of work included in the application must be completed. Applicants will be required to contribute a larger amount of matching funds than proposed to complete the project scope of work or “make the project whole.” If an applicant cannot come up with the necessary matching funds and declines the partial funding award, the award will be offered to the next highest-ranked project on the ranked project list. (See the section entitled “Application Evaluation Process”.) If no applicant accepts the funding, the funding will be kept within the grant program and may be rolled over to future funding cycles.

D. Match Requirement

1. Minimum Match Requirement

There is no match required; however, points will be awarded based on evidence of matching funds.

2. Eligible Matching Funds

Matching funds must be from a source other than the grant funding source. Eligible match sources include:

- Cash
- Local funding sources (e.g. developer contributions, non-profit contributions, TransNet Local Street and Road Program funds)
- State or federal funding sources
- In-kind services

Applicants are required to provide adequate documentation of matching funds and the match source(s) in the application.

E. Indirect Costs

Grant funds may be used toward indirect costs (including overhead) if they are related to the project. If the budget includes indirect costs, grantees will be required to submit an Indirect Cost Allocation Plan prior to the grant agreement execution. Indirect costs typically include rent, insurance, copying expenses, fringe benefits, and other costs not directly charged to the grant project and are typically supported by the local jurisdiction's general fund.

F. Expenditure Deadline/Grant Term

SANDAG has flexibility in executing grant agreements and issuing a Notice to Proceed, which marks the beginning of the grant term. The grant agreement execution window is anticipated to occur in Spring 2022. SGIP funds must be expended within 36 months of the written notice to proceed.

See the section entitled "SANDAG Board Policy No. 035", Use It or Lose It subsection for additional provisions related to the grant term.

VI. Other Program Requirements

A. SANDAG Board Policy No. 035

[SANDAG Board Policy No. 035](#) "Competitive Grant Program Procedures" applies to all grant programs administered through SANDAG.

1. Resolution

Per Board Policy No. 035, applications must include a resolution from the applicant's governing body that:

- commits to providing the amount of matching funds set forth in the grant application; and
- authorizes applicant staff to accept the grant funding and execute a grant agreement if an award is made by SANDAG.

Failure to provide a resolution that meets the above requirements will result in rejection of the application and the application will be dropped from funding consideration. Per Board Policy No. 035, signed resolutions are due at least two weeks prior to the review of the funding recommendations by a policy advisory committee.

Applicants are encouraged to use the sample resolution included in this CFP.

2. Grant Agreement Execution

Board Policy No. 035 requires grantees to sign a grant agreement within 45 days of receiving the grant agreement from SANDAG. Applicants are encouraged to review the sample grant agreement included in this CFP to ensure compliance with this provision of Board Policy No. 035. Failure to sign and return the grant agreement promptly may result in revocation of the grant award.

3. “Use It or Lose It”

Board Policy No. 035 includes a “use it or lose it” policy, which requires that grantees make diligent and timely progress toward the completion of the grant project within the timelines set forth in the project schedule. Failure to meet project milestones and deadlines may result in the early termination of the grant agreement.

Per Board Policy No. 035, grantees may request and be granted up to a six-month extension at the SANDAG staff level. For time extensions longer than six months, grantees must request and receive approval by the appropriate policy advisory committee. In all instances, a grantee seeking an extension must document previous efforts undertaken to maintain the project schedule, explain the reasons for the delay, explain why the delay is unavoidable, and demonstrate an ability to succeed in the extended time frame the grantee proposes.

B. Progress Reports, Invoices, and Matching Funds

1. Progress Reports

Grantees must complete and submit quarterly progress reports with documentation in conjunction with an invoice in order to receive reimbursement. Subcontracts with consultants or contractors must be submitted with the first report containing their work. Grantees may be required to use specific report templates and an online platform for submissions to SANDAG.

SANDAG will measure grant performance against the stated project goals and deliverables in the project scope of work included in the grant agreement. Poor performance may be grounds for termination of the grant agreement and revocation of the grant.

Final reports should detail project activities, challenges, successes, and a description of how the project is expected to promote smart growth.

2. Invoices

Grant funding is by reimbursement only. Funds will not be disbursed until a grant agreement has been approved and fully executed by SANDAG and the grantee. Project

expenses incurred by the grantee prior to execution of a grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement. To be reimbursed for project expenses, grantees must submit an invoice packet consisting of an invoice, documentation of all project expenses, and a progress report. Grantees are required to submit invoices quarterly. Grantees may be required to use specific invoice templates and an online platform for submissions to SANDAG. Grantees must conform to the following in order to qualify for reimbursement:

- Staff costs must be submitted with certified payroll reports.
- Consultant or contractor invoices must be submitted with proof of payment.
- Receipts or invoices must be detailed, dated, and be directly related to the project scope of work.

SGIP funds must be expended within thirty-six months of the written notice to proceed. Invoices that are received after this deadline are not guaranteed to be reimbursed by SANDAG. Expenses must be directly related to the contracted scope of work and paid during the eligible project implementation period.

3. Matching Funds

If the grant agreement contains matching funds, Grantees must provide a cumulative match amount such that the actual match amount provided is equal to or greater than the match percentage required under the grant agreement. Grantees will forfeit the grant award and be responsible for repayment of grant funds to SANDAG if the cumulative match percentage falls below the required percentage specific to the project or if grantees fail to provide sufficient documentation of project expenses.

SANDAG will measure grant performance against the stated project goals and deliverables in the project scope of work included in the grant agreement. Poor performance may be grounds for termination of the grant agreement and repossession of grant funds.

C. Public Record and Record Retention Policy

All applications submitted in response to this CFP become the property of SANDAG and are considered a public record. As such, applications and other project-related documentation may be subject to public review per [SANDAG Board Policy No. 015: Records Management](#).

Grantees must retain project-related documents for at least three years after receipt of final payment and make these documents available to SANDAG upon request.

D. Insurance Requirements

Awarded applicants will be required to provide proof of insurance. The required insurance certificates (or proof of self-insurance for public entities) and endorsements must comply with all requirements included in the grant agreement and must be provided prior to grant agreement execution. Grantees are encouraged to submit their certificate(s) of insurance following issuance of the Notice of Intent to Award to ensure there is no delay in executing a grant agreement.

E. Notice of Prevailing Wage

California law requires that public works projects pay prevailing wages for workers. As applicable, grantees are required to comply with the provisions of California Labor Code Sections 1775 et seq, which includes the payment of prevailing wages to all workers performing prevailing wage work. Additional details can be found in the grant agreement.

F. Required Forms

Applicants are required to submit the following forms. These forms are included in the Application.

- Public Contract Code Section 10162 Questionnaire
- Public Contract Code Section 10232 Statement
- Equal Employment Opportunity Certificate

VII. Application and Submittal Process

A. Application Materials

Application materials are available online at <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/sandag/sandag-grants>. Applicants are responsible for downloading relevant application materials for their use in developing and submitting an application.

Applicants will submit their completed application (Attachment A) with all required signatures by the Application deadline.

- The application shall address the Eligibility and Submittal Requirements and indicate which program goal and objective(s) the proposed project will align with.
- The application will indicate which eligible activity category the proposed project falls under and indicate as to whether the jurisdiction would like to use the related consultant on-call to conduct the proposed project.
- If submitting a partnership application, the application will list all partner jurisdictions and include the required representatives' signature(s) from each jurisdiction.

An incomplete application may be disqualified. For an application to be considered complete, it must include the following documents:

- Application (see Attachment A) with signature of authorized representative
- Scope of Work
- Budget
- Resolution

SANDAG reserves the right to cancel or revise, for any or no reason, in part or in its entirety, this CFP. If SANDAG revises and/or cancels the CFP prior to the deadline for applications, applicants will be notified by email.

B. Applicant Workshop and Questions

1. Pre-Application Workshop

SANDAG will host a public workshop on December 7, 2021 to provide an overview of this CFP, the application process, and to address any questions. SANDAG staff will also provide information and address questions on the eligibility, approval, contracting, and specific requirements of this grant program. This workshop will be held virtually. SANDAG will post the virtual meeting link and other details on BidNet.

2. Call for Projects Questions

Potential applicants may submit questions through the SANDAG web-based vendor portal BidNet Direct, available at <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/sandag/sandag-grants>. Questions submitted after the Question Deadline or outside of BidNet will not be answered.

See the Timeline for the date of the public workshop and the deadline to submit questions.

C. Submittal Process

Applicants shall submit application documents via the SANDAG web-based vendor portal BidNet Direct, available at <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/sandag/sandag-grants>. Applications submitted by mail, facsimile, or email in lieu of electronic copies uploaded to the online web-based portal will not be acceptable and will not be considered. Any application that is missing pages or cannot be opened for any reason may be considered unresponsive.

Applicants are responsible for fully uploading their entire application before the stated deadline. It is the applicant's sole responsibility to contact the SANDAG bid management provider, BidNet, to resolve any technical issues related to electronic submittal, including, but not limited to, registering as a vendor, updating password, updating profiles, uploading/downloading documents, and submitting an electronic offer, prior to the submission deadline. BidNet Direct's Vendor Support team is available Monday-Friday from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time at (800) 835-4603 or e-procurementsupport@bidnet.com.

VIII. Application Evaluation Process and Awards

A. Eligibility Screening

SANDAG staff will perform an eligibility screening of all submitted applications. An eligibility screening involves verifying that an applicant and the proposed project(s) meet the eligibility requirements included in this CFP as well as performing a pre-award risk assessment. A pre-award risk assessment is an examination of an applicant's fiscal and operational capabilities to specifically assess the risk associated with allowing the applicant to expend grant funds. A pre-award risk assessment may include accessing SAM.gov to verify that an applicant has not been suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded from receiving government contracts. It also may include reviewing the applicant's financial statements, audit findings, and past performance in managing previous grant awards from SANDAG or other sources.

During the eligibility screening process, SANDAG reserves the right to request additional information and/or clarification from any or all applicants, but is not required to do so. Staff also may seek input from a policy advisory committee to determine eligibility, but is not required to do so. Projects that pass the eligibility screening will be scored (see the section entitled “Scoring and Ranking”).

Any applicants who have been deemed ineligible or whose projects have been deemed ineligible during the eligibility screening will be notified in writing at the time the determination is made. Applicants may protest the eligibility determination pursuant to the protest procedures (see the section entitled “Protest Procedures”).

This CFP does not commit SANDAG to award a contract, defray any costs incurred in the preparation of an application pursuant to this CFP, or to procure or contract for work. SANDAG may reject applications without providing the reason(s) underlying the rejection. Failure to award a funding agreement to applicants will not result in a cause of action against SANDAG.

B. Scoring, Ranking, and Awarding of Funds

Eligible projects will be scored using qualitative and quantitative criteria approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors. Definitions of qualitative and quantitative criteria are provided below.

1. Qualitative/Subjective Scoring

Qualitative or subjective criteria are those criteria in which discretion is needed to provide a score. Often qualitative criteria seek to evaluate how well an applicant responded to an application question or how well the proposed project will achieve a stated goal.

An external evaluation panel will score a proposed project based on qualitative criteria. Evaluation panel members typically consists of 3-5 members of the public that have a strong familiarity with the San Diego region and the grant program goals and objectives. To avoid conflicts of interest, all evaluation panel members will be screened to be sure they do not have an affiliation with any of the applicants or proposed projects.

2. Quantitative/Objective Scoring

Quantitative or objective criteria are those criteria that a formula or conditional statement is used to provide a score. Often quantitative criteria seek to evaluate a project-related data point or metric against a range or scale and assign a point value based on where the data point or metric falls within the range or scale. Other quantitative criteria assign a point value based on responses to a conditional statement such as a yes/no question or the presence or absence of a condition.

SANDAG staff will score a proposed project based on quantitative criteria. Points associated with quantitative criteria undergo a quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) review to ensure data used in the quantitative scoring process are accurate and points are awarded appropriately.

3. Ranking and Funding Recommendations

An application's quantitative score will be added to the scores it received from each evaluation panelist (evaluator), forming a total score from each evaluator.

Funding recommendations will be based on project rankings, using a "Sum of Ranks" approach. For each evaluator, the total scores for all projects will be ranked. For example, the project an evaluator scores the highest will rank number one; the second-highest scoring project will rank number two; and so on. Then the rankings an application receives from each evaluator will be summed to produce an overall project ranking (sum of ranks). Projects with the lowest overall sum of ranks will be considered to have performed the best.

The ranked project list will be used to recommend funding allocations in order of rank. Projects will be recommended for funding in descending rank order until funding is exhausted.

As previously stated, partial awards may be recommended (see the section entitled "Partial Awards").

4. Minimum Average Score

To ensure grant funds support quality projects, a project must receive an average score that is equal to or exceeds 50 points to be eligible to receive funding.

5. Tiebreakers

In the event that two or more projects receive the same overall ranking, the following criteria, in descending order, will be used as tiebreakers:

- Highest score on the furthering Regional Mobility Hub Goals question
- Highest score on the Smart Growth policy implementation question
- Highest score on the Smart Growth equity question

6. Social Equity Analysis

Prior to award of funding, SANDAG will conduct a social equity analysis to determine whether the funding recommendations, if approved, will result in an equitable distribution of funding and benefits resulting from the funded projects between low-income and minority areas of the region and non-low-income and non-minority areas.

7. Awards and Funding Contingency List

Funding recommendations from the evaluation panel will be presented to the relevant policy advisory committee for recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will consider the funding recommendations and approve awards.

SANDAG will provide a Notice of Intent to Award to all applicants that will contain the projects recommended for funding. The Notice will be sent when the agenda is posted for the meeting in which the funding recommendations will be presented. See the Timeline for the anticipated Notice of Intent to Award date.

When considering the funding recommendations, the Board of Directors also is asked to authorize staff to offer funding with the next highest ranked project(s) on the ranked project list if a selected project is unable to use its awarded funds or more funding becomes available. This contingency list is usually available until the next CFP is issued, but in some cases may be sooner.

C. Protests

SANDAG grant program protest procedures may be obtained online at sandag.org/contracts.

D. Grant Agreement Execution

If awarded funds, an applicant will enter into a grant agreement with SANDAG for the approved project scope of services and become a “grantee.” A sample grant agreement is included in the CFP.

Applicants are encouraged to review the sample grant agreement within their organization prior to submitting an application. Aside from any potential errors or omissions, the terms of the grant agreement will be in substantially the same form as those in the sample grant agreement and are non-negotiable. Failure to sign and return the grant agreement within 45 days of receiving the grant agreement from SANDAG may result in revocation of the grant award. See the section entitled “SANDAG Board Policy No. 035.”

A grant agreement will not be executed until all certificates of insurance and any other necessary forms are received and deemed in compliance with the requirements of the grant agreement.

SANDAG will not reimburse the grantee for costs incurred prior to the executed grant agreement or the Notice to Proceed.

IX. Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be scored based on how well the applicant responses meet the criteria below. All criteria are Quantitative. See the section entitled “Quantitative Scoring and Qualitative Scoring” for more details.

No.	CRITERIA	POINTS POSSIBLE
1.	RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL TRANSIT	
A.	Project area includes or is within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned Rapid and/or rail stop (10 points) OR	10
B.	Project includes or is within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned major transit stop (non-Rapid/non-Rail) (5 points)	
2.	FURTHER REGIONAL MOBILITY HUB IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	
A.	Project implements a land use strategy that facilitates VMT reduction and includes zoning for a higher density of housing than is currently allowed and/or improves jobs-housing balance.	10
B.	Project proposes housing policies, pro housing activities, and/or transportation/mobility improvements to better connect housing to the existing/planned regional transportation network.	10

No.	CRITERIA	POINTS POSSIBLE
3.	SMART GROWTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	
A.	Land Use	20
B.	Urban Design	
C.	Mobility	
D.	Sustainability	
E.	Resilience	
4.	SMART GROWTH EQUITY	
	Planning activities that advance equity	20
5.	PARTNERSHIPS	
A.	Interjurisdictional Prohousing partnership	5
B.	Community-based organization or nonprofit partnership	5
6.	SUSTAINABILITY	
A.	Project is in a climate resilient area (areas with lower risk of fires, flooding, and impacts of sea level rise) OR includes plans to minimize the impacts of climate change.	5
B.	Project includes measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement a jurisdiction's Climate Action Plan	5
7.	MATCHING FUNDS	
	Projects will be awarded points based on evidence of matching funds	10
TOTAL		100

X. Scoring Rubric

The Rubric is a guide for SANDAG staff and the evaluation panel to assist with awarding points based on the Evaluation Criteria.

1. RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL TRANSIT (10 POINTS POSSIBLE)
 - A. Project area includes or is within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned *Rapid* and/or rail stop, as defined in the adopted [6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment \(RHNA\) plan](#) and shown in Figure 4.2 on page 19 of that document. **10 points**
 - OR*
 - B. Project includes or is within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned major transit stop (non-Rapid/non-Rail projects), as defined in the adopted [6th Cycle RHNA plan](#) and shown in Figure 4.2 on page 19 of that document. **5 points**
2. FURTHER THE REGIONAL MOBILITY HUB IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (20 POINTS POSSIBLE)

Up to 20 points may be awarded to programs that further planning to support the Regional Mobility Hub Implementation Strategy in San Diego Forward: the 2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan. Up to ten points will be awarded in two separate categories as shown below:

A. Category 1: Land Use Strategies that Align with SGOA or Mobility Hub

Project implements a land use strategy that facilitates VMT reduction and includes zoning for a higher density of housing than is currently allowed and/or improves jobs-housing balance. **10 points**

B. Category 2: Projects that Connect Housing with Transportation

Project proposes housing policies, Prohousing activities, and/or plans for transportation/mobility improvements to better connect housing to the existing/planned regional transportation network. **10 points**

3. SMART GROWTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION (20 POINTS POSSIBLE)

SANDAG seeks to promote a pattern of development with whole communities that feature a convenient mix of travel choices, safer streets, and support amenities.

Applicants will be awarded 5 or 10 points, as indicated below, for each smart growth activity up to **20 points cumulative**. Applicants may choose to implement multiple smart growth activities in a single category or in multiple categories.

A. Category 1: Land Use

Activities worth **10 points** each:

- Increasing density within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned *Rapid* and/or rail stop, as defined in the adopted [6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment \(RHNA\) plan](#)
- Planning Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zones with incentives for affordable housing
- Creating Smart Growth & Housing Overlay Zones — A set of zoning ordinances specifying land use and/or design standards for a designated district; to ensure architectural character and urban form align with best practices in Smart Growth and support the development of range of housing options including moderate and affordable housing options
- Implementing density bonus that is >20% more than state requirements
- Eliminating parking requirements

Activities worth **5 points** each:

- Increasing density within 0.5 miles of an existing or planned major transit stop, as defined in the adopted [6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment \(RHNA\) methodology](#)
- Implementing density bonus that is >10% more than state requirements
- Establishment of Workforce Housing Opportunity Zone (WHOZ) or housing sustainability district
- Modify development standards to promote more density
- Establishing density minimums
- Reducing parking requirements

B. Category 2: Urban Design

Activities worth **10 points** each:

- Comprehensive Smart Growth Design Guidelines — A set of standards that aims to promote walkability, active transportation, multimodal transportation options, and a unique community character through features such as building façades, public spaces, or landscaping.
- Creating zoning districts that allow mixed-use, mixed income development by right (i.e., without the need for a rezoning or special discretionary approval process).
- Permit residences in the upper floors of buildings in appropriate existing commercially zoned districts

Activities worth **5 points** each:

- Design guidelines to promote street-oriented buildings, with reduced or eliminated setbacks, building heights at least 50 percent of the street width, and locating vehicle entrances behind or on the sides of buildings.
- Design guidelines that promote attractive building entrances and frontages through requiring awnings, canopies or arcades that offer shade and weather protection for pedestrians, and other standards to enhance the pedestrian realm.
- Walkability Plan that includes design improvements to the public realm such as street trees, increased crosswalk visibility, wider sidewalks, street benches, wayfinding signage, etc.
- Bike Plan includes provisions for bicycle parking near building entrances using racks that can support the bicycle's frame at two points, protected bikeways, reduced vehicle speed limits, etc.

C. Category 3: Mobility

Activities worth **10 points** each:

- Developing Smart Growth Street Design Standards to promote walking and multimodal transit options. Plans may include narrowing travel-lane width, increase bicycle lanes, decreasing on-street parking, medians, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, bulbouts, and accessibility ramps.
- Developing a comprehensive active transportation plan citywide, or within a targeted transit rich neighborhood
- Implementing Vision Zero plan city wide
- Project will offer people access to shared, on-demand transportation services that provide convenient and personalized travel options

Activities worth **5 points** each:

- Measures that reduce costs for transportation related infrastructure or that encourage active transit or other alternatives to cars
- Measures that reduce costs for transportation related infrastructure or that encourage active transit or other alternatives to cars
- Increasing transportation options (such as bus/rail service, micromobility, active transit, etc.) that connects existing or planned housing to other land uses
- Project will connect all adjacent roads to its internal street network and provides for future connection with adjacent properties, and street network is a highly connected grid, with streets spaces no further than 350 feet apart on average

- Increasing transportation options (such as bus/rail service, micromobility, active transit, etc.) that connects existing or planned housing to other land uses. Plan to connect most adjacent roads to its internal street network
- Plan to provide amenities to improve mobility such as trip-planning kiosks, complimentary WiFi, mobile device charging options, electric vehicle charging options, parcel delivery lockers, mobile retail services, passenger loading areas, and secure parking and charging for bikes, scooters, and rideable electric vehicles.

D. Category 4: Sustainability

Activities worth **5 points** each:

- Plan to promote developments that achieve the highest level of certification from a green building certification system
- Plan to promote green building, including increasing reliance on renewable energy
- Plan to reduce building waste through recycling/reuse materials

E. Category 5: Resilience

Activities worth **10 points** each:

- Developing a comprehensive resiliency plan for the city, county, or targeted residential growth area, that addresses impacts of climate change such as wildfire, drought, and sea level rise

Activities worth **5 points** each:

- Working with emergency first responders to develop emergency response plan for compact neighborhood development.
- Developing development standards for mitigating risks of climate change

4. SMART GROWTH EQUITY (20 POINTS POSSIBLE)

In February 2021, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted the following statement of Commitment to Equity.

Our Commitment to Equity

We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systemically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society. We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone.

In accordance with SANDAG's Commitment to Equity, applicants will receive five points for each planning activity that advances housing equity. Five points will be awarded for every item, up to **20 points maximum**.

- Policies and plans that improve transportation choices in lower opportunity areas. Such areas include, but are not limited to, Low Resource and High Segregation & Poverty areas designated in the most recently updated [California Tax Credit Allocation Committee \(CTCAC\)/HCD Opportunity Maps](#), and disadvantaged communities pursuant to California Senate Bill 535 (2012).

- Rezoning and other policies that result in an increase of low- and moderate-income housing in high and highest resource areas, designated in the most recently updated CTCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps
- Rezoning and other policies that result in a net gain of low- and moderate-income housing while concurrently mitigating development impacts on or from Environmentally Sensitive or Hazardous Areas.
- Plan promotes equitable community engagement, for example through collaboration with community-based organizations or other nonprofits connected to disadvantaged communities or a public outreach plan that seeks to engage a diverse range of existing and future residents in the plan area.

5. PARTNERSHIPS (10 POINTS POSSIBLE)

To leverage resources and create consistency across the region, SANDAG is encouraging localities to partner to share information, plan and adopt policies together and to partner with a CBO or nonprofit. Partnerships must be evidenced by a letter of support.

- A. Interjurisdictional Prohousing partnership letter provided **5 points**
- B. CBO partnership letter provided **5 points**

6. SUSTAINABILITY (10 POINTS POSSIBLE)

- A. Is this project in a climate resilient area (areas with lower risk of fires, flooding, and impacts of sea level rise) OR does the project include plans to minimize the impacts of climate change? **5 points**
- B. Does the project include measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement a jurisdiction’s Climate Action Plan? **5 points**

7. MATCHING FUNDS (10 POINTS POSSIBLE)

Projects will be awarded points based on evidence of matching funds. Only funds with evidence of enforceable commitments will be considered matching funds.

MATCH PERCENTAGE	POINTS
0%	0
0.01-9.99%	2
10.00-19.99%	4
20.00-29.99%	6
30.00-39.99%	8
40% or more	10

*Match percentage is calculated by dividing the matching funds committed to the project with the total project cost and multiplying by 100.