

FY 2017-2018 Discussion Draft Grant Application Guide
Additional Sustainable Communities Grants from Senate Bill 1
Comment Form

Thank you for reviewing the FY 2017-2018 Discussion Draft Grant Application Guide document. Listed below are directions for submitting your input, ideas and comments specific to the Discussion Draft Grant Application Guide document. The public comment period for this document begins Wednesday, July 12, 2017 and ends Tuesday, July 25, 2017, 5:00 PM PST.

Directions for submitting comments:

1. Fill out your contact information (type preferred)
2. Fill out your comments individually, providing as much detail as possible (type preferred). Please reference chapter and page numbers.
3. Submit your comments via:
 - a. E-mail: Regional.Planning.Grants@dot.ca.gov
 - b. U.S. Mail:
Priscilla Martinez-Velez
Division of Transportation Planning, MS-32
California Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 94274-0001
 - c. Fax: (916) 653-0001
Attn: Priscilla Martinez-Velez
 - d. In person: 1120 N Street, Sacramento, CA
Attn: Priscilla Martinez-Velez - Division of Transportation Planning MS-32

Contact Information

We ask for your information so that we can contact you for clarification, if needed.

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Please provide as much detail to your comment as possible (attach multiple pages if necessary).

Page: 1

Begin here:

- 1) **Page 9 – Competitive Funding:** In the draft guidelines, non-MPO jurisdictions are only eligible for funding under the statewide program. To encourage geographic equity, Caltrans should consider whether these non-MPO jurisdictions should receive special consideration over jurisdictions within MPOs under the statewide competitive funding program.

- 2) **Pages 10 & 11 – Eligible Uses:** The language in SB 1 is broad as to the type of planning activities that can be supported, recognizing the link between land use and transportation. The guidelines also intend to give priority to jurisdictions with HCD-approved housing elements in recognition of the fundamental link between development patterns and land use policies on transportation. Despite this recognition, the guidelines seem to be focused on a narrow interpretation of transportation-related planning. For instance, the sole land-use focused example included in the list of “example sustainable communities grant project types” is “station area plans.”

Many local jurisdictions need to update their general plans and specific elements within these plans, to promote consistency with sustainable communities strategies and adapt their local plans to reflect state regulatory changes, including implementation of SB 743. Accordingly, the guidelines and example projects should explicitly include general plan updates, circulation element updates, housing element updates, and any related specific plan updates, as eligible uses of funding. Within MPOs, any local land use plan that is being updated to better align with an SCS should explicitly be eligible. Outside of MPOs, any land use plan being updated to align with statewide planning goals should be eligible.

- 3) **Page 12 – Special Considerations & Page 5 – Disadvantaged Communities:** The guidelines include a statement that a minimum threshold of 50% of sustainable communities grants is expected to benefit disadvantaged communities. The guidelines also recognize that there are a variety of metrics to define disadvantaged communities. Such considerations are warranted given that a substantial portion of the state, especially in areas outside of MPOs, communities with high poverty are not designated as disadvantaged pursuant to CalEnviroScreen. The guidelines should clarify that metrics in addition to those listed on page 5 can be used to designate disadvantaged communities, and that grant awards benefitting any such communities can count towards the desired 50% threshold.