



Regional Early Action Planning 2021 (REAP 2.0): Regional Competitive Grant Program Draft Guidelines

Adopted: Month day, year

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Section 1 - Overview

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Government's (AMBAG) Regional Early Action Planning 2021 (REAP 2.0) Program guidelines have been developed with input from regional jurisdictional stakeholders to align with AMBAG's adopted REAP 2.0 Program Framework and the state final REAP 2.0 Program Guidelines. The AMBAG REAP 2.0 Competitive Grant Program (RCGP) Guidelines ("Guidelines") implement the REAP 2.0 Regional Competitive funding program in the AMBAG REAP 2.0 Program Framework. The state REAP 2.0 grant supports accelerating housing production, reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT), and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). The AMBAG REAP 2.0 Program Framework, infill definition, and suballocation methodology are under review by the state partners. Therefore, these REAP 2.0 RCGP guidelines remain subject to change depending on state input. These guidelines are consistent with, and when necessary, defer to, the state REAP 2.0 Program Guidelines for establishing terms, conditions, forms, procedures, and other mechanisms necessary to effectuate the program. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) released REAP 2.0 final program guidelines on July 26, 2022. The AMBAG REAP 2.0 program application is based on inclusive and broad engagement. These guidelines and program will be adjusted as necessary to comply with the state program.

In the REAP 2.0 Guidelines, the state reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to suspend, amend, or modify the provisions of the REAP 2.0 Guidelines at any time, including, without limitation, the amount of funds available hereunder. If such an action occurs, the Department will notify all interested parties. As such, AMBAG reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to suspend or amend the provisions of the REAP 2.0 RCGP guidelines in collaboration with the State, including but not limited to, grant award amounts.

Background

REAP 2.0 (REAP 2021) was established through AB 140 (July 2021) as part of the mid-year budget revise for the State's FY 21-22 budget for transformative and innovative projects that implement a region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and help achieve the objectives of more housing and transportation options that reduce reliance on cars. REAP 2.0 builds on actions completed through the 2019 REAP grant program but expands the focus by integrating housing and climate goals, and by allowing for broader planning and implementation investments, including infrastructure investments supporting housing development.

REAP 2.0 builds off the work achieved through REAP 1.0. In 2020, AMBAG set aside approximately \$8 million of REAP 1.0 funding for a grant program to fund subregional planning activities that accelerate housing production and facilitate compliance implementing a jurisdiction's 6th Cycle RHNA, including developing 6th Cycle Housing Elements. Funding was non-competitively awarded based on each jurisdiction's population size category with a minimum allocation of \$65,000. REAP 1.0 was developed to augment resources available through locally received SB 2 and Local Early Action Program (LEAP) grants and to foster subregional collaboration to take advantage of

economies of scale in meeting housing goals.

The REAP 2.0 Program is funded with \$600 million from the State General Fund. AMBAG's share of this funding is \$10,133,742.41. The REAP 2.0 Program is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) (Department), in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), and the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

In November 2022, the AMBAG Board of Directors adopted the REAP 2.0 Grant Program Framework, which outlines the core objectives, guiding principles, programmatic areas, major milestones, and schedule for allocating funds available to AMBAG through the state REAP 2.0 grant program. The REAP 2.0 Program Framework includes three core components:

- Regional Competitive Grant Program (60% - \$6,000,000)
 - Developed and administered by AMBAG. Applicant awards must support all REAP 2.0 objectives. This program will suballocate the majority of AMBAG's REAP 2.0 funds to a competitive program, granting awards to applicants that best achieve all REAP 2.0 goals, objectives and scoring criteria.
- Local Suballocation Grant Program (25% - \$2,625,000)
 - The Local Suballocation Grant Program sets aside \$125,000 per jurisdiction with eligible projects which meet all REAP 2.0 goals and objectives. The goal of this suballocation program is to provide all cities and counties with an opportunity to propose a REAP 2.0 eligible projects while allowing for both implementation and planning uses. All projects or programs must achieve all REAP 2.0 goals, objectives and pass thresholding criteria.
- AMBAG SCS Implementation, Technical Assistance, REAP 2.0 Program Development, Outreach, and Administration (15% - \$1,508,742)
 - Regional planning activities that support infill development and implement the SCS such as pricing studies, transit-oriented development and Opportunity Area planning and implementation
 - Technical assistance

The REAP 2.0 Program provides funds to regional governments to achieve the three core REAP 2.0 objectives listed below. This includes accelerating housing production and facilitate compliance with the 6th Cycle of the housing element, including regional housing need allocations. REAP 2.0 is specifically designed to provide Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and other Eligible Entities with tools and resources to help implement and advance plans, primarily including Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) as part of Regional Transportation Plans to pursue greenhouse gas emission reduction targets through land use and transportation changes.

REAP 2.0 Program Objectives

Based on input from regional jurisdictions and stakeholders the REAP 2.0 RCGP has been developed within the AMBAG REAP 2.0 Program Framework. REAP 2.0 RCGP supports implementation of the region's housing element work plans as a means of investing in actions identified at the local level that support housing production throughout the region and achieve the REAP 2.0 Program Objectives. Both AMBAG's Regional Competitive and Local Suballocation Grant Programs must meet the REAP 2.0 objectives which are:

- Accelerating Infill Development that Facilitates Housing Supply, Choice, and Affordability
 - Accelerating infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability and AFFH through various planning programs, services, or capital expenditures in a way that reduces VMT and greenhouse gas emissions, and goes beyond existing commitments.
- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)
 - Combats discrimination, overcome patterns of segregation, and foster equitable and inclusive communities
 - Includes meaningful actions to address disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replace segregated living patterns with balanced living patterns, and transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity; target funding to benefit disadvantaged and historically underserved communities.
 - Enhances mobility or place-based strategies benefitting housing that meets AFFH goals, or protects existing residents from displacement, or preserves housing choices and affordability in areas of lower- or moderate-opportunity and concentrated poverty.
 - Does the project support regional and local efforts to work toward ensuring all people have full and equal access to opportunities enabling them to lead healthy lives?
- Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
 - Support new infill housing development and shift travel away from driving by implementing or supporting pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and other alternative transportation programs
 - Realizes multimodal communities through programs, plans, and implementation actions
 - Shifts travel behavior by reducing driving through programs, ordinances, funds, and other mechanisms
 - Increases transit ridership through funding, implementation actions, and planning

*The REAP 2.0 Infill definition pursuant to State guidelines provides that:

“Infill”, for the purposes of the REAP 2.0 Program, means areas where all the following apply: (1) the area consists of unused or underutilized lands (2) within existing development patterns (3) that is or will be accessible to destinations and daily services by transit, walking, or bicycling and located in either:

- a. An urban center, urban corridor, or area with transit-supportive densities, or*
- b. An established community that meets all the following criteria:*
 - i. The area consists or previously consisted of qualified urban uses*
 - ii. The area is predominantly surrounded (approximately 75 percent of the perimeter) by parcels that are developed or previously developed with qualified urban uses. In counting this, perimeters bordering navigable bodies of water and improved parks shall not be included, and*
 - iii. No parcel within or adjoining the area is classified as agricultural or natural and working lands.*
- c. Under unique circumstances, applicants may propose an alternative definition of “Infill” subject to approval by the Department and State Collaborative Partners.*

AMBAG staff is engaging the state partners on the infill definition which is expanded to allow for projects and programs within Existing and Planned Opportunity Areas per the 2045 MTP/SCS to more clearly inform geographic and program eligibility in the AMBAG region. A final infill definition for the AMBAG region will be included upon State approval.

Section 2 - Eligibility

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Government’s REAP 2.0 RCGP is the competitive component of the suballocation funds. Regional jurisdictions proposing projects which meet the core REAP 2.0 goals and objectives such as improving housing affordability, increasing housing production, establishing housing closer to jobs, reducing VMT, addressing housing and infrastructure needs in all communities, advancing AFFH and promoting multimodal communities with the best and highest use of grant funds will receive funding.

The REAP 2.0 RCGP program will have grading criteria which mirror REAP 2.0 goals and stakeholder input in order to assure only the most qualified, high-impact, transformational projects will be funded. Project scoring metrics will assist in the project selection process including screening or thresholding criteria to focus funding in existing urban areas, evaluation criteria for infill and measuring how projects reduce VMT, whether projects implement the SCS, and criteria to evaluate whether projects are meeting AFFH goals. All project evaluation criteria will be grounded in the REAP 2.0 guidance on program goals and objectives. Once the suballocation program design is finalized, AMBAG will conduct a regional call for projects for all eligible applicants.

Activities in this phase will include preparing guidance for our subgrant, holding application training workshops, collecting applications, scoring, disbursing grants and performance monitoring.

AMBAG coordinated with our REAP 2.0 State Coordinating Group on reviewing and tentatively approving a definition of infill that largely adheres to the REAP 2.0 definition but adds some additional flexibility by using AMBAG's Existing/Planned Opportunity Areas and Potential Opportunity Areas as qualifying areas, as defined in AMBAG's 2045 Sustainable Communities Strategy.

The definition is as follows:

Projects within Cities:

Projects comply with REAP 2.0 Program goals and objectives and are in areas within an Existing/Planned Opportunity Area or Potential Opportunity Area as defined by the AMBAG 2045 MTP/SCS (Moving Forward Monterey Bay 2045) OR the State infill definition in the REAP 2.0 Guidelines.

Projects within Counties:

Projects comply with REAP 2.0 Program goals and objectives and are within an Existing/Planned Opportunity Area or Potential Opportunity Area as defined by the AMBAG 2045 MTP/SCS (Moving Forward Monterey Bay 2045) OR the State infill definition in the REAP 2.0 Guidelines. For more about these areas, see: AMBAG's [2045 MTP/SCS](#).

As referred to in these guidelines "projects" are defined as those projects included in a jurisdiction's housing element for compliance with HCD requirements. HCD requires each jurisdiction to identify specific programs in its housing element that will allow it to implement the stated policies and achieve the stated goals and objectives. Programs include specific action steps the locality will take to implement its policies and achieve its goals and objectives. Housing element programs include a specific timeframe for implementation, identify the agencies or officials responsible for implementation, describe the jurisdiction's specific role, and (whenever possible) identify specific measurable outcomes.

2a. Allocation Methodology and Eligible Applicants

Contingent on approval from the state and subject to change, up to \$6 million of AMBAG's REAP 2.0 funding allocation, totaling \$10,133,742.41, shall be available for RCGP. Funding shall be disbursed on a competitive basis based on how well applicants achieve core REAP 2.0 objectives and scoring criteria.

Eligible applicants are cities, counties, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), transit agencies, and public universities within the AMBAG region. Eligible Cities and County applicants are:

County of Santa Cruz	City of Gonzales
City of Santa Cruz	County of San Benito
City of Capitola	City of Monterey
City of Watsonville	City of Marina
City of Scotts Valley	City of Seaside
County of Monterey	City of Del Rey Oaks
City of Hollister	City of Pacific Grove
City of King	City of Soledad
City of Greenfield	City of Carmel by the Sea
City of San Juan Bautista	City of Salinas
City of Sand City	

2b. Eligible Partnerships

Eligible partners include, but are not limited to, other local governments, regional governments, housing authorities, school districts, special districts, regional transportation planning agencies, universities, transit agencies, community-based organizations, or any duly constituted governing body of an Indian Reservation or Rancheria. An eligible applicant may partner with other eligible entities to fulfill one or more projects included in the application. One or more eligible applicants may form a partnership to expend part, or all, of a recipient's RCGP funding. Partnerships are encouraged when aggregating funds creates an opportunity for leveraging additional outside funding, and for cost-efficiency addressing common needs and actions.

Applicants forming partnerships must provide a legally binding agreement between all partners. Applicants that are considering this are encouraged to discuss their proposals with AMBAG staff prior to applying to ensure projects are eligible and the work can be completed prior to the end of the expenditure period.

2c. Eligible Uses and Activities

REAP 2.0 funds are focused on implementation of policies, programs and projects, rather than only the planning processes that were the focus of REAP 1.0. The partnership approach supports housing element implementation and creates expanded opportunities for local efforts to align with AMBAG's regional plans, implement the infill and VMT reduction goals of the AMBAG 2045 MTP/SCS, and support state planning goals.

To receive funding, applicants must:

1. Submit a qualifying application that is approved by the AMBAG review committee. Applicants are not required to directly implement projects and may contract for services following state requirements, and when applicable federal requirements. Applicants are not required to apply for all funds available.
2. Demonstrate a nexus to all three REAP 2.0 Program Objectives for each project proposed:

- Accelerating Infill Development that Facilitates Housing Supply, Choice, and Affordability
 - Accelerating infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability and AFFH through various planning programs, services, or capital expenditures in a way that reduces VMT and greenhouse gas emissions, and goes beyond existing commitments.
 - Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)
 - Combats discrimination, overcome patterns of segregation, and foster equitable and inclusive communities
 - Includes meaningful actions to address disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replace segregated living patterns with balanced living patterns, and transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity; target funding to benefit disadvantaged and historically underserved communities.
 - Enhances mobility or place-based strategies benefitting housing that meets AFFH goals, or protects existing residents from displacement, or preserves housing choices and affordability in areas of lower- or moderate-opportunity and concentrated poverty.
 - Does the project support regional and local efforts to work toward ensuring all people have full and equal access to opportunities enabling them to lead healthy lives?
 - Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
 - Support new infill housing development and shift travel away from driving by implementing or supporting pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and other alternative transportation programs
 - Realizes multimodal communities through programs, plans, and implementation actions
 - Shifts travel behavior by reducing driving through programs, ordinances, funds, and other mechanisms
 - Increases transit ridership through funding, implementation actions, and planning
3. Demonstrate project is eligible for funding and describe how project meets objectives in Section 1, REAP 2.0 Program Objectives. Based on the final REAP 2.0 Program Guidelines (dated July 26, 2022) example activities include but are not limited to the following:
- Affordable Housing development programs;
 - Planning activities that lead to increased residential and/or mixed-use zoned capacity in areas identified as infill, or land use planning, related studies and/or programs that result in implementable/adoptable programs and policies (meaning subject to adoption or approval of the legislative body) required to meet the programs, projects, and commitments in draft, adopted and/or compliant 6th Cycle Housing Elements;

- Program-level environmental clearance for infill projects with AFFH components;
 - Upgrading infrastructure for sewer, water, and dry utility systems that may serve affordable infill housing;
 - Housing mobility strategies that serve affordable housing;
 - Affordable Housing unit production;
 - Reductions to barriers to higher density Housing, buildings with four or more units, and accessibility;
 - Outreach strategies to address local opposition to Proposed Use;
 - Affordable Housing unit production or preservation;
 - Anti-displacement protections;
 - Expanded Housing options;
 - Housing-supportive infrastructure;
 - Activities that develop, support, or implement land use planning, policies, or investment strategies that result in substantial changes to travel behavior from increasing population and employment densities, land use mix, street network connectivity, linkages and pathways with active transportation infrastructure, accessibility between destinations, and/or contiguousness of land uses and transportation networks; Activities, subject to applicable program funding requirements, that would develop, support, or implement transportation planning, policies, and investment strategies that support Infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability such as n. Increasing transit services and access;
 - Building at walkable community scales;
 - Enhancing pedestrian and bicycling safety measures;
 - Protecting pedestrian and bicycling amenities;
 - Multimodal infrastructure connections with multimodal-mobility transportation systems.
4. Submit a complete application along with all required supporting documents within the application period. See Section 3 for information on applying for funding.

Consultants or other external resources may be used for work on eligible activities but are not required. Applicants will indicate in their funding application whether they intend to use existing staff, temporary staff, consultants, or other resources for each activity.

2d. Ineligible Activities

- Activities where clear nexuses to all Program Objectives listed in Section 1 are not demonstrated.

- Activities that obstruct or hinder housing production, e.g., moratoriums, downzoning, planning documents with conditional use permits that significantly impact approval certainty and timing, planned development, or other similarly constraining processes.
- Administrative costs of persons employed by the grantee for activities not directly related to the preparation and adoption of the proposed Activity or Activities.

AMBAG will not accept applications for, nor reimburse for, ineligible activities or projects. Expenditure reimbursement requires prior authorization in writing from AMBAG for the eligible projects and activities. AMBAG may be subject to repayment of REAP 2.0 funds to HCD if it is found in breach of its agreement with HCD, which can occur if REAP 2.0 funds are used for ineligible activities. If AMBAG is required to repay funds to HCD, AMBAG will require reimbursement from the RCGP recipient.

Section 3 – Application Process

Funding will be made available for projects and activities after AMBAG receives approval and funding for its full REAP application from HCD, which is anticipated to occur in early 2023. All activities proposed must meet the requirements established in these guidelines and the state's REAP 2.0 Program Guidelines.

3a. Applying for Funding

Process and Timing: To apply for project funding, eligible applicants must submit a REAP 2.0 RCGP Application (Attachment 3). A jurisdiction or eligible applicant may submit multiple applications through the final due date for eligible projects and activities until it has reached its funding maximum. The minimum grant award for RCGP projects is \$500,000.

The application period will be opened after concurrence has been secured from the state on the items noted above and will close on midnight on MONTH DAY, 2023.

Application Submittal and Review: The application must include information on proposed projects and activities, key tasks and deliverables, estimated costs, and identification of the implementing agency for each project and activity, among other requirements provided in the application template.

Prior to submitting the application to AMBAG, the applicant must receive approval to apply for funding from the applicant's decision-making body or authorized signatory and agree to the reporting requirements. To the extent feasible, if the application proposes partnerships or further suballocation to jurisdictions, approval or authorization from the related decision-making bodies is encouraged. Applications will be reviewed by AMBAG staff on an ongoing basis and will be assessed for eligibility, nexus to the REAP 2.0 program objectives, and alignment with the RCGP and the State REAP 2.0 Guidelines.

Once applications are reviewed, AMBAG will provide an award letter to the subregional partner indicating whether the submitted projects are approved for funding, or a letter indicating how the application needs to be revised to be accepted. Projects that do not meet the funding criteria cannot be funded through REAP 2.0 RCGP. A jurisdiction or eligible applicant may revise its application or project scope to meet the funding criteria and resubmit the application up until the final due date.

Applications for ineligible activities or projects that do not meet the funding criteria in Section 1 will not be accepted. Applicants may resubmit revised projects that address the reasons the original submittal was rejected.

Applications will be accepted until the final date to apply, which is by midnight on MONTH DAY, 2023.

Given the schedule requirements of the REAP 2.0 Guidelines to award suballocations, conditional award letters shall be distributed within 60 days of a complete application received from an applicant for a suballocation (not inclusive of encumbrance or an executed Standard Agreement).

3b. Unallocated Funds

Remaining funds that are remaining unencumbered after the application deadline will be available for projects in the AMBAG Region through March 1, 2024 or at AMBAG's discretion.

By June 30, 2024 all REAP 2.0 funds must be fully encumbered.

3c. Funding Criteria

Funding applications are required to meet all three REAP 2.0 Project Objectives (Section 1 of the Guidelines) and shall be evaluated for funding based on the following criteria:

- Are the projects proposed are eligible uses and activities (Section 2c.)?
- Is a clear statement included demonstrating a nexus between each proposed project (or activity) and all three of the following state program objectives:
 - Accelerating Infill Development that Facilitates Housing Supply, Choice, and Affordability; and
 - Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing; and
 - Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Does the project support compliance with a jurisdiction's housing element?
- Does the project provide transformative planning and/or implementation activities?
- Does the project target funding to benefit disadvantaged and historically underserved communities?
- Does the project lead to substantial changes in land use patterns and travel behaviors?

- Does the project support California Planning Priorities? This may include promotion of infill development, supporting environmental.
- Is a project scope of work and budget provided that demonstrates an understanding of the work and financial considerations required to deliver the project?
- Has the applicant thoroughly considered risks associated with delivering the project consistent with the scope of work and budget?
- Has the applicant demonstrated realistic means for mitigating risk associated with delivering the project?

Section 4 – Contract Administration

4a. Implementing Agencies

Jurisdictions or eligible applicants are required to serve as the implementing agency of the projects and activities applied for. Implementing agencies must be entities eligible to enter into intergovernmental agreements and must demonstrate capacity to implement government grant administration tasks in a timely manner, including applications, contract execution and monitoring, funds management and transfer, and accounting and reporting, including any competitive sub-contracting if applicable. The implementing agency cannot have any unresolved audit findings from prior government contracts and cannot be party to pending land use, housing, or environmental litigation which could impact the proposed activities.

The implementing agency will be responsible for developing the scope of work for the project or activity and leading the procurement process for obtaining consultants and/or resources. The implementing agency must also manage and administer the project, which includes tasks such as monitoring activity progress, reviewing tasks and deliverables, and reviewing and processing invoices.

4b. Administrative Fee

None of a jurisdiction's or eligible applicant's allocation may be charged as administrative activities by the jurisdiction or eligible applicants. Tasks such as reviewing and processing project invoices, processing contract amendments, and preparing reports and metrics of project progress and completion are considered administrative activities. Activities such as developing scopes of work and requests for proposals (RFP), reviewing tasks and deliverables, and outreach with jurisdictions related to the project are considered programmatic and can be charged as a program activity.

4c. Expenditure Period

Per the requirements of AB 140 all funds distributed under REAP must be obligated by June 30, 2024 and expended by June 30, 2026. To meet this deadline and receive reimbursement in alignment with REAP 2.0 guidelines, AMBAG will require all funds to be obligated by March 1, 2024,

unless otherwise directed by AMBAG. All invoices associated with RCGP submitted to AMBAG no later than March 31, 2026. Invoices received by AMBAG after this date cannot be guaranteed for reimbursement.

4d. Reimbursement

All projects must submit invoices to AMBAG quarterly and a status report quarterly to receive reimbursement. Invoices must follow the requirements set forth in the Subregional Partnership contract and AMBAG's regular invoicing procedures and must comply with applicable state and/or federal requirements. Expenditure reimbursement requires prior authorization of the eligible projects and activities, and AMBAG may be subject to repayment of REAP funds to HCD if it is found in breach of its agreement with HCD, which can occur if REAP funds are used for ineligible activities. If AMBAG must repay REAP 2.0 funds to the state, AMBAG will require reimbursement from the eligible applicant or jurisdiction.

AMBAG will provide reimbursement only for costs as specified in the signed agreement(s) with the Jurisdictions or eligible applicants or designee. Costs incurred prior to the date of the grant agreement for the RCGP will not be reimbursed.

4e. Reporting Requirements

Consistent with AMBAG's Overall Work Program reporting procedures, each jurisdictional partner will be required to provide a quarterly progress report and quarterly invoices to track and measure activity progress. Project progress will be measured according to the tasks, deliverables, costs, and timeline outlined in the jurisdiction's MOU and agreement.

Technical Assistance

AMBAG staff will provide technical assistance to eligible applicants starting in early 2023 through June 2026. Technical assistance will be available to help subregional partners prioritize activities and complete the application and contracting process. After the start of subregional partnership projects AMBAG staff will be available for guidance with invoicing and reporting.

Timeline

Below is a tentative schedule and is subject to change in the Final Guidelines.

- April 2023: Released draft RCGP Guidelines for public review
- June 2023: AMBAG adopts final RCGP Program guidelines.
- August 2023: Final application and list of prioritized projects from eligible applicants due to AMBAG (*unless due date is extended*).
- September 2023: Grant applications are reviewed and evaluated
- October/November: AMBAG approves applications and awards REAP 2.0
- December 2023 – February 2024: Execute grant agreements with REAP 2.0 awardees

- March 1, 2024: Deadline to encumber REAP 2.0 funds
- March 31, 2026: All REAP projects and activities must be completed; final activity reports due to AMBAG; final project invoices due to AMBAG.

DRAFT

REGIONAL COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM - SCORING CRITERIA & METHODOLOGY

Introduction:

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) REAP 2.0 Program framework is divided into three (3) categories:

1. Regional Competitive Grant Program (RCGP)
2. Local Suballocation Grant Program (LSGP)
3. Regional SCS Implementation, Technical Assistance, Program Development, Outreach and Administration

This is the scoring methodology and instructions for AMBAG's REAP 2.0 Regional Competitive Grant Program.

AMBAG is tasked with assessing REAP 2.0 applications received from eligible jurisdictions against a variety of criteria. To accomplish this task key AMBAG staff members will review and score applications as part of a Review Committee. The Review Committee will average the scores assigned by each review committee member to advance projects to the next step.

AMBAG will submit an application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and its State Collaborative Partners for the 2021 REAP 2.0 Grant Program. Projects recommended for funding in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties must satisfy REAP 2.0 goals and objectives, including geographic equity and a blend of planning vs. implementation projects. The Review Committee will review the project scores and make recommendations to the AMBAG Board of Directors regarding geographic equity and the blend of project types. The AMBAG Board of Directors will review the work of the Review Committee, and ultimately approve projects.

Projects submitted for funding will be scored in three areas: REAP 2.0 Objectives, Primary Factors, and Secondary Factors each described below.

REAP 2.0 Objectives

The REAP 2.0 program has three major objectives that each project must satisfy. The scoring of applications will determine the degree to which each respective project satisfies each objective. The objectives include the following and questions that should be considered when scoring applications are provided.

Accelerating Infill Development that Facilitates Housing Supply, Choice, and Affordability

1. Does the project accelerate infill development near jobs and other key destinations to support housing choice and affordability that effectively reduces VMT and greenhouse gas emissions?

2. Is the project at an infill site and does it have affordability components that serve low- and moderate-income households?
3. Is the project for affordable housing development programs – which may involve predevelopment costs (studies, land acquisition, entitlements, etc.), that accelerate the supply of long-term affordable housing for lower and moderate-income households?
4. Does the project go beyond existing commitments?

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)

1. Does the project combat discrimination, overcome patterns of segregation, and foster equitable and inclusive communities?
2. Does the project include meaningful actions to address disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replace segregated living patterns with balanced living patterns, and transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity?
3. Does the project support regional and local efforts to work toward ensuring all people have full and equal access to opportunities enabling them to lead healthy lives?
4. Does the project:
 - a. Enhance housing mobility strategies that remove barriers to housing, housing-supportive infrastructure, increased transportation options, and affordability in areas of high opportunity and outside areas of concentrated poverty; or
 - b. Improve place-based strategies to encourage community revitalization; or
 - c. Protect existing residents from displacement and preserve housing choices and affordability in areas of lower- or moderate-opportunity and concentrated poverty?
5. Is the project materially inconsistent with AFFH?
6. Geographic equity – will be addressed post initial scoring.
7. Does the project target funding to benefit disadvantaged and historically underserved communities?
8. Unique equity priorities – weighting of scores addresses unique equity priorities.

Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

1. Does the applicant explain how the proposed use promotes development and aligns housing production in infill locations consistent with the state's

climate targets and goals discussed in the California Climate Change Scoping Plan?

2. Is the project consistent with the region's sustainable communities strategy (SCS) through:
 - a. Land use planning, polities, and investment strategies by infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability and is serviced by existing and planned expansions of a multimodal transportation system; or
 - b. Transportation planning, policies, and investment strategies by increasing travel options to homes, jobs, services, and other key destinations that provide, support, or enhance multimodal communities and reduce the number or length of vehicle trips?
3. Does the project support new housing development and shift travel away from driving by implementing or supporting pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and other alternative transportation programs?

Primary Factors:

The primary factors represent factors from the REAP 2.0 guidelines. In addition to providing a primary factor score, the application narratives associated with the primary factors will inform scoring for the REAP 2.0 objectives portion of the scoring matrix. Each primary factor is described below.

Housing Element Compliance

Does the project support compliance with a jurisdiction's housing element?

Transformative Planning and Implementation Activities

Does the project provide for housing, planning, or infrastructure investments supporting infill housing, and other actions that enable meeting housing goals that also result in per capita vehicle miles traveled reductions, including accelerating infill development, supporting residents through realizing multimodal communities, shifting travel behavior through reducing driving, and increasing transit ridership?

Public Outreach

1. Did the proposed project arise from or go through a public process to solicit community input?
2. If this is a planning project, does the scope of work include a public process?

Benefit to Disadvantaged Populations

Does the project target funding to benefit disadvantaged and historically underserved

communities?

Significant Beneficial Impacts

1. Does the project lead to substantial changes in land use patterns and travel behaviors, demonstrated by:
 - a. A rate of change compared to the baseline; or
 - b. The magnitude of impact relative to variables or targets; or
 - c. The proportion of need achieved; or
 - d. The impact relative to past trends, policies, and practices?
 - e. A significant regionwide benefit which is not small in scope. Project contributes to spreading REAP 2.0 projects throughout the region to ensure a regionwide benefit.

California Planning Priorities

1. Does the project support promotion of infill development and equity by rehabilitating, maintain, and improving existing infrastructure that supports infill development and appropriate reuse and redevelopment of previously developed, underutilized land that is presently served by transit, streets, water, sewer, and other essential services, particularly in underserved areas, and to preserve cultural and historic resources?
2. Does the project support protection of environmental and agricultural resources by protecting, preserving, and enhancing the state's most valuable natural resources, including working landscapes such as farm, range, and forest lands, natural lands such as wetlands, watersheds, wildlife habitats, and other wildlands, recreation lands such as parks, trails, greenbelts, and other open space, and landscapes with locally unique features and areas identified by the state as deserving special protection?
3. Does the project encourage efficient development patterns by ensuring that any infrastructure associated with development, other than infill development, supporting new development that does all of the following:
 - a. Uses land efficiently; and
 - b. Is built adjacent to existing developed areas to the extent consistent with #2, above; and
 - c. Is project located in an area appropriately planned for growth; and
 - d. Is served by adequate transportation and other essential utilities and services; and
 - e. Does the project minimize ongoing costs to taxpayers?

Secondary Factors:

A variety of secondary factors can be considered in the scoring process. These are not tied directly to the REAP 2.0 program but demonstrate the thoroughness of the application and the effectiveness of the project.

Project Scope of Work and Budget

Is a project scope of work and budget provided that demonstrates an understanding of the work and financial considerations required to deliver the project?

Project Risk Assessment

1. Has the applicant thoroughly considered risks associated with delivering the project consistent with the scope of work and budget?
2. Has the applicant demonstrated realistic means for mitigating risk associated with delivering the project?

Risks alone should not result in a deficiency, but should be considered if they are unmitigated, not fully understood, or unmanageable.

Local Support: Inclusion in Plan and Letters of Support

Projects proposing to construct something typically are drawn from adopted plans. As planning projects are also an eligible use of REAP 2.0 funds, planning projects cannot be held to the same scrutiny. If a project proposing to construct something does not indicate inclusion in an adopted plan, this should be considered in the risk assessment and public outreach sections of the scoring matrix.

Letters of support are not an application requirement. They can influence scores to the extent that they add value to any other response.

Scoring:

Scores for each project will be assigned on a 1 to 100 basis. Scores from each committee member will be averaged and converted to project rankings.

- **81-100:** Exceptional evidence of meeting or exceeding requirements
- **61-80:** Strong evidence of meeting requirements
- **41-60:** Suitable evidence of meeting requirements
- **21-40:** Limited evidence of meeting requirements
- **1-20:** Weak evidence of meeting requirements

Weighting

The scoring values for each factor were informed by public input received during

the outreach process. Though this approach, public input will affect project selection.

Scoring Factor	Weight (%)	Max. Score
REAP 2.0 Objectives		
1. Accelerating Infill Development		25
2. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing		25
3. Reducing VMT		25
Subtotal		75
Primary Factors		
1. Housing Element Compliance		3
2. Transformative Planning and Implementation Activities		3
3. Public Outreach		3
4. Benefit to Disadvantage Populations		3
5. Significant Beneficial Impacts		3
6. California Planning Priorities		3
Subtotal		18
Secondary Factors		
1. Scope of Work and Budget		4
2. Project Risk Assessment		3
Subtotal		7
Total		100

Subsequent Steps:

The project selection process will involve three steps. This document focuses primarily on the first step.

1. The scoring committee assigns scores to each application. The scores for each project are averaged.
2. The Review Committee will work to ensure geographic equity and the split between planning and capital projects is incorporated into the projects recommended for funding. The Review Committee will make a formal recommendation to the AMBAG Board of Directors.
3. The AMBAG Board of Directors will consider the work of the Review Committee and approve the projects selected for inclusion in the full application.