

Appendix 4
CARE Program Cycle 1
Participatory Budgeting and Implementation (PBI) Program Guidelines

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1. Overview

The Participatory Budgeting and Implementation (PBI) Program, which is part of MTC's [Community Action Resource and Empowerment \(CARE\) Program](#), will provide funding for three primary buckets of projects:

1. Implementation of projects from Community-Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs), participatory budgeting (PB) processes, or other substantive community-driven planning efforts
2. Development of CBTP plans
3. Implementation of PB processes

PB is a process through which community-selected needs and priorities align with investment decisions. Traditional PB is multi-stepped and involves a steering committee of community representatives. Residents are involved in developing project ideas and voting for priorities and local jurisdictions implement “winning” projects. CARE’s PBI Program builds directly on PB pilot projects funded through CARE’s predecessor program, Lifeline Cycle 5 in 2018, which constructed community priorities from the Bayview community in San Francisco and the City of Vallejo, such as increased bus service, bus shelters, crosswalks, and wayfinding. The program now seeks to expand these pilot efforts and incorporate lessons learned as part of the CARE program.

This program also builds directly on the long-standing [CBTP Program](#). Established in 2002, CBTPs are community-driven plans funded by MTC and administered by County Transportation Agencies (CTAs). These plans emphasize robust engagement with residents of Equity Priority Communities¹ (EPCs) with the goal of identifying transportation needs and recommending improvements that reflect local priorities. Over more than two decades, CBTP efforts have generated a wide range of mobility solutions and community-identified project concepts across EPCs, some of which have been implemented through MTC-funded PB pilots in San Francisco’s Bayview and Solano’s Vallejo alongside their CBTP activities.

Building on these prior efforts, the PBI Program is intended to strengthen the pipeline between community-driven planning and project implementation, helping to realize the full objectives of the broader CARE Program. The Power-Building and Engagement (Pb&E) component focuses on building community capacity and strengthening partnerships to support meaningful civic engagement; the CBTP Technical Assistance (TA) component advances community-identified projects from planning to construction-ready status; and the PBI component provides the resources needed to deliver those projects.

By aligning planning outcomes with project development and implementation pathways, the CARE Program helps advance community priorities identified in CBTPs and supports communities in identifying additional high priority projects. Program outcomes include, but are

¹ Equity Priority Communities are census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved populations, such as households with low incomes and people of color. A combination of additional factors helps define these areas. For more information, please visit MTC’s [website](#).

not limited to, enhanced active transportation options, improved transit access, and strengthened multimodal connectivity, addressing persistent mobility barriers experienced by historically underserved populations across the Bay Area.

2. Key Information

This program is administered by MTC in partnership with CTAs. While MTC oversees the overall process and reviews final project selections, CTAs are responsible for managing the project nomination process and determining an allocation of flexible funds. The program seeks to provide flexibility for CTAs to balance funding for planning and implementation based on community needs and priorities at each CTA's discretion.

Considering the flexible use of funding between CBTP planning and implementation, project nomination and implementation timelines will be phased. Each CTA will be required to report their desired breakdown of funding between CBTP planning and implementation to MTC along with their implementation project nominations. The program will include a small funding set-aside of \$400,000 to support PB processes in the region. If CTAs are interested in opting in for a portion of the set aside for a PB process, they should submit their PB process implementation plan and budget to MTC by July 1, 2026 for consideration. If CTAs require an alternative timeline, they should also submit this request to MTC for consideration by July 1, 2026.

MTC will accept project nominations for implementation projects in two phases. The first project nomination deadline will be October 31, 2026. Phase 1 is coordinated with the fourth round of the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG 4) County Program Call for Projects and the CBTP TA Program nomination deadline. The second project nomination deadline will be June 30, 2027. These implementation project nomination deadlines also serve as the deadlines for CTAs to submit their desired amount of funding for CBTP planning.

Please note that CBTP Program Guidelines are not included in this document. The opportunity to opt into funding amounts across CBTP planning, PB processes, and implementation is intended to give CTAs as much flexibility as possible for project prioritization. Specific guidelines for the CBTP program are forthcoming.

For questions, contact Kate Fosburgh at kfosburgh@bayareametro.gov.

3. Funding Overview

\$12 million in non-federal and federal² funds will be distributed among the nine Bay Area counties for the PBI Program. Each county will receive 30 percent of available funds as a base allocation, with the remaining 70 percent distributed based on the county's share of the region's low-income population, defined as households earning below 200 percent of the

² Federal funds through OBAG 4 will be used for planning only, not construction projects.

federal poverty level. An additional \$400,000 will be made available specifically for PB processes on an opt-in basis.

Of this \$12M, CTAs will be eligible to opt in to spend up to \$2M for CBTP planning. Each county has a maximum allocation of CBTP planning eligible funding following the above formula. MTC strongly encourages each CTA to set aside sufficient funding to complete at least one CBTP in order to ensure a continued pipeline of relevant projects. If a CTA opts to not dedicate any funding to CBTP planning, the CTA must submit to MTC their rationale for doing so.

CTAs shall nominate projects consistent with their assigned funding targets. At their discretion, CTAs have the option to adjust their CBTP TA funding amount by up to +/- 30 percent, with any adjustment reflected as an equal and opposite change to their PBI funding targets. For example, if a CTA requires less funding for CBTP TA, their PBI budget will be increased by an amount equal to the reduction in CBTP TA. The +/- 30 percent funding amount will add to or be removed from implementation funding.

CTAs allocated less than \$200,000 in CBTP planning funds may flex CBTP TA funds to supplement their allocation, in order to reach a maximum of \$200,000 total available for CBTP planning. Otherwise, the maximum CBTP planning allotments may not be flexed.

County-specific funding targets, along with the corresponding 30 percent maximum flexible funding available for PBI, are presented in the table below.

Nominated capital transportation improvement projects must meet the \$50,000 minimum project amount threshold. Project nominations may include bundled projects to reach the minimum threshold, such as bus stop improvements at multiple locations within a community.

Please note that this program cannot fund any post-award cost increases. Project sponsors will be expected to deliver the approved project scope within the awarded funding amount.

County	CTA	Total Funding	CBTP Planning Maximum*	30% Flexible Funding (CBTP-TA or PBI)
Alameda	Alameda County Transportation Commission	\$2,379,000	\$396,000	+/- \$713,700
Contra Costa	Contra Costa Transportation Authority	\$1,692,000	\$282,000	+/- \$507,600
Marin	Transportation Authority of Marin	\$668,000	\$111,000	+/- \$200,400
Napa	Napa Valley Transportation Authority	\$562,000	\$94,000	+/- \$168,600
San Francisco	San Francisco County Transportation Authority	\$1,456,000	\$243,000	+/- \$436,800
San Mateo	City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County	\$1,095,000	\$182,000	+/- \$328,500

Santa Clara	Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority	\$2,110,000	\$352,000	+/- \$633,000
Solano	Solano Transportation Authority	\$1,044,000	\$174,000	+/- \$313,200
Sonoma	Sonoma County Transportation Authority	\$994,000	\$166,000	+/- \$298,200
Opt-In: Participatory Budgeting Process		\$400,000	N/A	N/A
<i>Total</i>		<i>\$12,400,000</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>	<i>\$3,600,000</i>

* CBTP Planning Maximum funds are included within Total Funding and do not add to the total funding available. Counties with a CBTP Planning Maximum of less than \$200,000 may use a portion of their 30% Flexible Funding to increase their CBTP Planning Maximum to \$200,000.

4. Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants

Bay Area cities, counties, transit agencies, federally recognized Tribal governments, and CTAs are eligible to apply for PBI funds.

Non-profit organizations are only eligible if they partner with an eligible OBAG recipient (e.g., CTA, transit operator) that is willing to serve as the recipient of the funds.

Eligible Projects – Implementation Funds

To qualify for project delivery funding, projects must meet the following criteria:

- Consist of capital transportation improvements, as defined in MTC Resolution No. 4740 under Complete Streets and Community Choice. Operational investments may be eligible for funding, subject to MTC review.
- Located within an EPC. If a project is not physically located within an eligible geography but is designed to serve the intended beneficiaries of the program, such as older adults, people with low incomes, people with disabilities and communities of color, the project sponsor must clearly demonstrate a nexus between the project location and the community served. Visit [the interactive web map](#) for EPC locations.
- Originate from a CBTP, MTC-funded PB³, a locally led PB process⁴, or a comparable community-driven planning effort that includes community voting or project prioritization.
- Provide clear and verifiable evidence of current community support, particularly from historically underserved populations and organizations representing these communities.
- Have full funding secured, through this program alone or including others, for implementation.

³ MTC-funded participatory budgeting pilots in 2018 through the Bayview and Vallejo CBTPs.

⁴ Examples of participatory budgeting efforts include Marin County, the City of Oakland, and San Francisco’s District 7.

- Be construction ready at the time of nomination, or in the case of a project planned for CBTP TA funding, by the conclusion of CBTP TA activities.

The required documentation varies based on the project’s origin and the recency of the engagement process:

- **Projects originating from a PB process completed in 2022 or later** must include the originating planning or engagement document and do not require supplemental documentation.
- **Projects originating from a PB process completed in 2021 or earlier** must include the originating planning or engagement document and at least one additional form of supplemental documentation.
- **Projects not generated by a PB process** must include the originating planning or engagement document and at least one supplemental documentation item, depending on the age of the originating plan:
 - **CBTPs or other community-driven plans from 2022 or later:** At least one type of supplemental documentation demonstrating current community support is required.
 - **CBTPs or other community-driven plans from 2021 or earlier:** At least two types of supplemental documentation demonstrating current community support are required.

Projects that do not meet the minimum documentation requirements will be deemed ineligible.

Applicants may submit any of the following forms of required supplemental documentation:

- **Letters of Support:** Minimum of three letters from separate community-based organizations (CBOs), non-profit organizations, or local elected officials.
- **Collective Petitions or Sign-On Letters:** At least ten signatures from trusted organizations broadly representing the community (e.g., CBOs, non-profits, Parent Teacher Organizations, food banks, faith-based groups).
- **Formal Endorsements:** Minimum of two official endorsements from community councils, boards, commissions, or advisory committees (e.g., Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Equity Advisory Committee).
- **Community Prioritization Workshops:** Documentation showing that CTAs, city staff, CBOs, and members of the public participated in reviewing and prioritizing candidate projects.
- **Engagement Reports or Completed Plans:** Reports or plans with documented engagement may be submitted in combination with other types of documentation to strengthen evidence of community support.

In the case that a CTA applies to fund a project through both CBTP TA through PBI:

- The criteria above are the same as the criteria within the CBTP TA Guidelines. Therefore, there is no need to resubmit proof of the above requirements.

- In this case, if the project will advance to construction readiness through participation in the CBTP TA program, the project does not need to be construction ready to be awarded funding for construction through PBI.
- The CTA acknowledges responsibility to complete implementation as described in the application, including identifying additional funding to cover any costs exceeding the amount applied for and awarded.

Eligible Projects – Participatory Budgeting Funds

To qualify for funding to support PB process, projects must meet the following criteria:

- Have identified a framework for conducting the PB process
- Must meet, at a minimum, the engagement requirements identified above

Eligible Projects – Community-Based Transportation Plans

MTC anticipates issuing guidance for CBTPs in Summer 2026.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible activities include:

- Construction of eligible projects
- PB process to identify eligible priority projects
 - Staff salaries are not an eligible expense for the PB process set-aside
 - Eligible expenses include stipends, materials, venue rentals, and contracts with consultants or CBOs
- CBTP planning
 - Eligible expenses for CBTP planning will be detailed in updated CBTP Program Guidelines planned for adoption in Summer 2026

Project sponsors will be responsible for selecting their own consultants to carry out project development activities as listed above. Sponsors may choose to utilize MTC’s on-call Construction Management consultant bench to support their work.

5. General Program Requirements

The following general MTC programming requirements apply to the project nomination process.

- **Public Involvement.** MTC is committed to a public involvement process that is proactive and provides opportunities for continuing involvement, comprehensive information, timely public notice, and public access to key decisions. MTC provides many methods to fulfill this commitment, as outlined in the [MTC Public Participation Plan](#). Additional details on CTA public involvement requirements for a call for projects are available in the OBAG 4 project selection and programming policies (MTC Resolution No. 4740).
- **Adherence to MTC’s Complete Streets Policy ([MTC Resolution No. 4493](#)).** Sponsors must comply with MTC’s Complete Streets Policy, and its successor, including the

requirements to submit a Complete Streets Checklist and solicit input from a local Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee for each applicable project. The Complete Streets Checklist is only required for projects seeking \$250,000 or more in CARE funds.

- **Adherence to MTC’s Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways ([MTC Resolution No. 4739](#))**. Sponsors must comply with [MTC’s Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways](#) (TPPR), and any updates or successor policies. TPPR transit agency review requirements are incorporated into the updated Complete Streets Checklist online portal. Once the regional Transit Priority Network (TPN) is adopted (anticipated no sooner than early 2027), projects along the TPN should incorporate reasonable best-practice transit-supportive design elements. TPPR transit agency review is only required for projects seeking \$250,000 or more in CARE funds.

6. Project Review and Evaluation – Implementation Funds

CTAs, in coordination with MTC, will nominate implementation projects, evaluate projects for program eligibility, and score and/or rank projects. CTAs will develop evaluation materials, deadlines, and procedures for their project nomination process. At minimum, CTAs must incorporate the following regional criteria into their project evaluations:

- **Eligibility:** CTAs should review projects and potential sponsors for eligibility.
- **Alignment:** CTAs should evaluate projects for alignment with relevant regional plans and policies. Additional weight should be given to projects that demonstrate consistency with one or more of the following regional plans and policies:
 - Current iteration of [Plan Bay Area](#) at the time of submittal to MTC
 - [Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan](#)
 - [Regional Safety/Vision Zero Policy](#) (MTC Resolution No. 4400)
 - [Equity Platform](#)
- **Level of Community Support:** CTAs should evaluate projects based on the demonstrated level of community support. Beyond meeting eligibility requirements, additional consideration should be given to projects that include support letters and other documentation, as described above, that reflect meaningful community endorsement.
- **Scope:** CTAs should assess projects based on scope, prioritizing construction ready, community driven projects for implementation, or plans that prioritize engagement in a new, robust PB process to identify priority projects.
- **Deliverability:** CTAs must evaluate projects for potential deliverability issues, deprioritizing or excluding projects as needed based on risk. CTAs should ensure that potential projects sponsors have sufficient capacity and technical expertise to complete projects in accordance with MTC’s Regional Project Delivery Policy and meet expenditure deadlines, which will be developed as part of the funding agreement process.

CTA project evaluation criteria must be approved by both MTC staff and the CTA’s governing board prior to initiating the project nomination process.

Project Nominations

CTAs will submit project nominations, evaluations, and associated documentation to MTC for review. CTAs have been encouraged to coordinate project nominations for CBTP TA with the OBAG 4 County Program Call for Projects as part of a single, integrated nomination packet due October 31, 2026. The Phase 1 deadline for PBI project nominations is October 31, 2026, to align with CBTP TA and OBAG 4 Call for Projects.

CTAs opting into a PB process or that otherwise need more time for project nominations may wait for the Phase 2 deadline of June 30, 2027. Any alternative project nomination approach and timeline must be approved by MTC staff. Nomination lists must be approved by the CTA's governing board prior to submission to MTC. Regardless of the project nomination approach used, CTA project nomination packets must include the following elements:

- **Nomination List:** list of eligible projects for the PBI Program, ranked or scored according to the evaluation criteria developed by the CTA and approved by MTC staff. The list must include the CTA's final funding recommendations as well as projects that were considered but not recommended for funding.
- **Scoring Documentation:** supporting materials, such as project scoring sheets, demonstrating that project selection was conducted in accordance with adopted criteria and procedures, with consistent and equal consideration of all projects.
- **Board Approval:** signed resolution documenting CTA governing board action approving the project nomination list.
- **Community Support Documentation:** materials verifying project eligibility as described above.

Regional Project Review

Using the nomination packets submitted by CTAs, MTC CARE staff will review documentation to ensure CTA, sponsor and project compliance with applicable policies for the PBI Program. Any issues identified will be communicated to CTA staff, and projects with unresolved issues will be excluded from further consideration.

Using this process, MTC staff will develop a draft program of recommended projects for Commission adoption. MTC staff will coordinate with CTA staff to provide comments and feedback on the draft program of projects and may refine the recommended program of projects accordingly.

Program Approval

Staff plan to recommend PBI projects in the Implementation category to the Commission for award in Early 2027 for Phase 1, and Fall 2027 for Phase 2.

7. Project Review and Evaluation – CBTP Planning and Participatory Budgeting Funds

CTAs will determine the total amount of PBI funding for CBTP planning at the time of their chosen project nomination deadline, and will retain discretion over which communities participate in a CBTP planning process.

CTAs also have the option to opt in to receive funding from the PB set-aside. MTC will review CTA's PB process plans and award funds to projects that satisfy the conditions below.

Project Nominations for Participatory Budgeting Processes

CTAs will submit plans for Participatory Budgeting processes to MTC for review. CTAs should identify the following as part of their plans for use of PB funds:

- **PB Process Goals and Approach:** discussion of the CTA's goals for the PB process and the proposed approach for conducting the PB process, including any partnerships with community-based organizations, timeline for holding the PB outreach, and whether the process would be consultant-led or staff-led.
- **Community Summary:** description of the geographic area where PB process would be centered, including a summary of any overlap with EPCs or other relevant demographic or socioeconomic data that aligns with the EPC description.
- **Engagement Plan and Partner Organizations:** description of the CTA's plan to engage with the community before, during, and after the PB process, including any community-based organizations or peer implementing agencies (e.g., Departments of Public Works, transit agencies) that would partner in the effort.
- **Commitment to PB:** board resolution or signed letter from CTA executive director affirming the CTA's commitment to make a good-faith effort to submit eligible projects prioritized through the PB process for PBI implementation funds.
- **Prior Planning Efforts:** inventory of past planning efforts that have taken place in the community where PB is proposed, dating back at least to 2022.
- **Funding Request:** total funding requested to complete the PB process.

Regional Project Review

Using the nomination packets submitted by CTAs, MTC CARE staff will review documentation to ensure CTA, sponsor and project compliance with applicable policies for the PB set-aside. Any issues identified will be communicated to CTA staff, and projects with unresolved issues will be excluded from further consideration.

Using this process, MTC staff will develop a draft program of recommended PB process awards for Commission adoption.

Program Approval

Staff plan to recommend PB funds to the Commission for award in August 2026 and CBTP planning funds to the Commission for award in Early 2027 or Fall 2027, following the two-phased approach.

8. Post-Selection Process Roles and Responsibilities

Following program approval, each CTA will complete a Funding Agreement with MTC. The Funding Agreement would include each agency’s approved list of projects and each project’s associated tasks as well as CTA reporting requirements. If a CTA already has a funding agreement for the CBTP TA program, an amendment to the existing agreement with additional funding and associated requirements for PBI may be acceptable.

CTAs will be responsible for working with sponsors to develop a project scope of work, schedule, and budget. The scope of work must include a task to prepare a Project Evaluation Report, which will include reporting metrics and required data collection to measure project effectiveness. The Project Evaluation Report should be submitted within one year of project completion.

Projects must adhere to project delivery milestones, invoice deadlines, and funding expiration deadlines. Funding expiration dates are set by MTC. Should priorities or conditions change, or if a project is not ready to advance, funds may be reassigned to another project.

9. Schedule

Milestone	Date*
Begin Project Nomination List Development	May 2026
PB Request Deadline	July 1, 2026
MTC Committee Approval: PB Funding Approval	August 2026
CBTP Planning Request & Implementation Project Nomination List Deadline: Phase 1	October 31, 2026
MTC Review of Implementation Project Nominations: Phase 1	November 2026
MTC Committee Approval: Phase 1 Implementation Projects & CBTP Planning Funding	Anticipated Early 2027
CBTP Planning Request & Implementation Project Nomination List Deadline: Phase 2	June 30, 2027
MTC Review of Implementation Project Nominations: Phase 2	July 2027
MTC Committee Approval: Phase 2 Implementation Projects & CBTP Planning Funding	Anticipated Fall 2027
Funding Agreement Execution	May vary by county based on phased approach

**All dates are subject to change.*