



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director
DATE: March 31, 2020 
SUBJECT: YR 2023-2024 Regional Grant Program - Call for Projects

AT A GLANCE – INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the available regional federal grant program funds and propose that RTC Board of Directors issue a 2023-2024 call for STBG Urban, STBG Rural, and CMAQ projects.

BACKGROUND

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Clark County region, RTC is responsible for selecting and programming projects for the regional share of the Federal Highway program. RTC also has responsibility for ensuring the obligation of these federal funds. The federal programs managed by RTC include the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), and Transportation Alternatives (TA).

The need for regional transportation investment exceeds the available revenue; existing regulations compel MPOs to implement a competitive process for federal fund awards. Therefore, RTC has implemented a competitive grant selection process to implement projects identified in the Regional Transportation Plan.

The purpose of this action is to outline the available regional federal grant program funds and propose that the RTC Board of Directors release a 2023-2024 call for STBG Urban, STBG Rural, and CMAQ projects (*call for projects*). The next call for Transportation Alternatives (TA) program will occur in 2021.

At the March Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) meeting, RTAC members recommended that a call for STBG and CMAQ projects be issued.

AVAILABLE FEDERAL FUNDS

Recently RTC has received our 2020 allocation totals for federal STBG, CMAQ, and TA programs. The figures show an allocation increase of \$200,000 per year in the STBG urban funding and a \$300,000 per year decrease in CMAQ funding. The CMAQ decrease was due to the Tacoma-Pierce County region being designated a nonattainment for PM 2.5.

STBG-Rural funds are allocated for projects in rural portions of Clark County, and in cities/towns with population below 5,000. This currently would include portions of unincorporated Clark County, Ridgefield, La Center, and Yacolt. With the 2020 U.S. Census,

new boundaries will be released approximately 3 years after the Census year (around year 2023). Those seeking STBG-Rural funds need to understand that if a project is selected for STBG-Rural funding and becomes located within the urban area; all unobligated rural STBG funds will be removed from that project.

The following table provides a break down by programming year of available dollars:

Year	STBG-Urban	STBG-Rural	CMAQ	Totals
2023	\$1,444,000	\$1,045,000	\$0	\$2,489,000
2024	\$6,164,000	\$450,000	\$2,176,000	\$8,790,000
Totals	\$7,608,000	\$1,495,000	\$2,176,000	\$11,279,000

CALL FOR STBG AND CMAQ PROJECTS

The call for project is proposed to include two separate application processes (urban and rural). They will follow the same timeline but submit different grant applications. Both grant applications are available on the RTC website. For the urban CMAQ and STBG program agencies are limited to four project applications.

RTC staff is proposing to issue a call for projects on April 8, 2020. The call will be for years 2023-2024 allocation of funds, as listed on the table above. Project applications will be due to RTC on Friday, July 17, 2020.

Once project applications are submitted, projects will be evaluated by adopted regional selection criteria and then selected by the RTC Board to receive grant funding. The call for projects will be conducted consistent with the policies and procedures outlined in the adopted Transportation Programming Guidebook. The RTC Board will select projects at their October 6, 2020 meeting.

PROPOSED ACTION

Staff recommends that the RTC Board of Directors authorize the release of a call for STBG and CMAQ projects.