

TIRCP Common Guidance, Themes, and Frequently Asked Questions

December 15, 2017

Tell the Whole Story

Applicants are encouraged to communicate their application proposal within the context of their vision and overall program of projects. To understand the broader impacts, applicants are encouraged to show how their proposal impacts their overall network, both existing and planned. The agency should also discuss the overall impact, both favorable and unfavorable, on other rail and transit networks including projects planned or underway in a parallel or connecting corridor.

The need for the project(s) proposed should be clearly documented including existing and future variables that drives the need for investment. When possible, show the vision and scalability as the demand grows, identifying the path to funding for all scalable components and the preferred priority of funding if only partial funding of the application is available. Where future land use development is connected to the project(s) proposed, such as transit oriented developments, clearly identify the connection with these developments and how planned land use may drive the need for investment.

In addition to demonstrating the need, applicants should clearly demonstrate the benefits before and after implementation. Applicants are encouraged to identify benefits system-wide, both for the applicant's network and connecting networks. Applicants are also encouraged to review State planning documents such as the State Rail Plan to connect their vision to the State's overall vision for an integrated multi-modal transportation network.

Project readiness for all project components should be clearly identified as well as coordination and collaboration efforts that will occur to ensure successful project implementation.

Eligible Applicants

To qualify as an eligible applicant, the applicant must be a public agency, including a joint powers agency, that operates or has planning responsibility for existing or planned regularly scheduled intercity, commuter passenger rail, urban rail transit, or bus or ferry service.

Eligible applicants may choose to partner with other agencies as part of their application submittal but if co-applicants are not considered eligible applicants, only the eligible applicant may assume responsibility for the use and expenditures of program funds.

Scalability

Applicants are encouraged to submit projects with scalability or phasing. When scalability or phasing is possible, applicants should identify the preferred prioritization and its basis.

Funding Plan and Matching Funds

Applicants are encouraged to identify a clear path to funding for all scalable components and project phases. Applicants should identify flexibility in funding and cash flow needs during project implementation. If funding is being leveraged to secure additional funds, this should be identified in the application.

For all funding sources identified, it should be noted if funds are secured and committed to the project or if there are pending contingencies. When contingent funds are identified as part of the funding plan, applicants should also identify any alternative funding available for use if the contingent funds are not secured.

If funds have already been spent on the project(s) proposed, the applicant should clearly identify these funds in their funding plan. While applicants need to demonstrate the ability to fund and sustain operations connected to the proposed project(s), operating costs are not eligible expenses and should be excluded from the funding plan.

Any funding identified as committed to the project may be required as a funding match at the time of project selection.

Eligible Expenses & Cost Savings

Integration planning and project development costs are eligible expenses provided the overall project(s) proposed are eligible projects as defined in the TIRCP Guidelines. Operation costs are not considered eligible expenses. Applicants are encouraged to identify how they propose any cost savings be expended.

Modeling Ridership

When modeling ridership for new service, include the before and after comparison. If ridership modeling already exist, there's no need to do a new model run. If the model run projections for future ridership are less than the full useful life, additional calculations may need to be documented to extrapolate future ridership through the full useful life of the project.

Acknowledge Connections to Other Transit and Rail Services in the Benefit Calculation

Applicants are required to use the California Air Resource Board's updated TIRCP Quantification Methodology and TIRCP Calculator tool for FY 2017-18.

Applicants should acknowledge connections to other transit and rail services in the TIRCP Calculator. If a proposed project involves new or expanded service, or increased ridership, and the agency collects data on the number of additional riders that connect to other transit services, applicants are advised to reflect these impacts in the TIRCP Calculator tool. Documentation of the approach used to develop these estimates should be included, and any off-model calculations needed to develop the inputs to the TIRCP calculator should be provided. Including the services and trip distances in the TIRCP benefit calculator will allow the agency to demonstrate how changes in ridership resulting from the project have benefits to other local and regional systems and results in greater benefits such as greenhouse gas reductions.

Letters of Support

All applicants are encouraged to include letters of support that clearly identify the infrastructure and implementing agency, including letters from State legislative representatives, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, regional planning agencies, project partners, community organizations or community members, and any additional stakeholders. Additional recommendations can be found in the TIRCP guidelines and TIRCP Call for Projects.

Application Submission

Applications must be submitted electronically to tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. PST, January 12, 2018. A copy of the electronic file must also be submitted by mail on a single disk or flash drive postmarked by January 12, 2018.