

## SPC 2023 COMPETITIVE FUNDING APPLICATION & PROJECT DELIVERY WEBINAR

June 20, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.

Webex

40 attendees were present. The presentation was recorded and posted on SPC's website.

### NOTIFICATION

Email blasts were distributed to SPC email lists.

### HANDOUTS

Funding Programs

Local Project Delivery Process



### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q** – Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh - Can local match for TASA (state and SPC application) be in-kind?

**A** – Dawn Schilling, McCormick Taylor - The "match" for TASA requires that the local sponsor pay all upfront (design, environmental clearance, permitting, etc.) costs.

**Q** - Jason Theakston, Washington County - Can these grants be stacked for larger projects? Could multiple grants be awarded for the same project?

**A** – Dawn Schilling, McCormick Taylor - Multiple grants can be awarded to a project, as long as the project meets the grant requirements. These grants cannot be used to meet match requirements, as the matches must be with non-federal dollars and these are all federal programs. Therefore, with multiple grants, each grant's requirements, including matching requirements, would still apply.

**Q** - Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh - Do we know if planning activities will be allowed under CRP?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – Not typically. The eligible activities that are outlined in the CRP guidance are predominantly projects, and general planning would not be eligible for CRP funds. There are portions of some of these eligibilities that may allow for TDM and freight planning activities; however, we would need specific detail in order to make an eligibility determination.

(From the Federal CRP Guidance)

G. development of a carbon reduction strategy

H. a project or strategy designed to support congestion pricing, shifting transportation demand to nonpeak hours or other transportation modes, increasing vehicle occupancy rates, or otherwise reducing demand for roads, including electronic toll collection, and travel demand management strategies and programs

I. efforts to reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement

**Q**- Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh - For the grants covered in the first part of the presentation today, can you outline for each when funds will be available to awardees.

**A** - Dawn Schilling, McCormick Taylor - There is a milestone chart on a previous slide that covers anticipated award dates. The PPT will be provided to you after the webinar. The program guidance, available on SPC's website also includes this milestone chart.

**Q** - Jason Theakston, Washington County - Follow up: Would SPC make the determination if a project is eligible for multiple grant funding? Or would the SPC just recommend one grant?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – Projects will be eligible for the categories and funding sources that they are eligible for. SPC will make the determination if projects are eligible for multiple grant funds and provide applications to the project sponsor. SPC will first assign the best CMAQ projects for the region due to the air quality component and their performance measures. Then SPC will move on to TA and CRP. It is possible for a project to receive multiple funds. There can be combinations of funds but it's not that common. It doesn't happen that often due to the funding caps and the match requirements.

**Q** – Panini Chowdhury, City of Pittsburgh - Can one entity can put multiple projects under the unified application system?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – Yes, one entity can apply for multiple projects.

**Q** – Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh - Sorry if this is in the guidance, but is there a limit to the number of projects that we can submit in the pre-application

**A**- Ryan Gordon, SPC – There is not a limit to the number of projects that can be submitted. However, you probably want to prioritize your best project or your best two projects.

**Q** – David White, Bike Share Pittsburgh - Can you clarify the grant timing? I saw the total grant awards region-wide for 2025, and 2026-28. Specifically, what year do we need to demonstrate the matching dollars are received/available?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – Applicants should include information on how the match will be funded in their application. This will be included in the budget section of the application. We trust that the sponsor has available match funding. When you sign your reimbursement agreement the local sponsor will need to have their match. SPC will select the local projects and then the sponsor receives the funds but as Dawn Schilling indicated it will take most projects a year or two to design and prepare for construction. If it is TASA funds it will take at least two years to get your project to construction. If it's a CMAQ project, there may be carryovers from prior years and it depends how the projects that are already in the program are proceeding. There is flexibility to move money around. Local sponsors should progress their project and SPC will do their best to program the project when it is ready to be constructed. CRP does not have carry-over. You may be slotted in year one for CRP. SPC tries to maximize efficiency.

**Q** – Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront - Can construction inspection costs be included in the project costs or is that an upfront cost?

**A** – Dawn Schilling, McCormick Taylor – Construction inspection can be included as part of the Federal reimbursement for construction. They are included in your construction estimate. If you set aside funds for construction inspection those funds are no longer available for physical construction even if you don't use all the inspection funds. For projects with construction costs over \$1.5 million, the inspection of construction will require a separate consultant (i.e., not the design consultant) for construction inspection services. Also, if construction inspection services are procured at the beginning of a project along with engineering services, the advertisement and selection criteria must include construction inspection language as directed and required by the PennDOT District and Contract Management. If the municipal engineer is desired to be used for construction inspection, the original advertisement for municipal engineers must have included construction inspection language and the municipal engineer must have been selected through proper advertising and selection procedures as stated previously.

**Q** – David White, Bike Share Pittsburgh - There was no mention of the STLC grant today. I do see that in the published SPC guidance...anything we need to know about that today?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – The STLC fund or SMART funds are typically not available until the Spring of the TIP development year. It is included in the guidance because the program is similar in purpose to the other programs. It is not a required Federal competitive program. These funds will have a separate application period and the application period is not open now. There may be changes to this program.

The guidance will be rereleased in the Spring of 2024. Only SPC member county governments, the City of Pittsburgh, and PennDOT Districts 10, 11, and 12 are eligible to submit one, high priority candidate project per each of their respective counties/City of Pittsburgh.

**Q-** Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh – Can you clarify the funding timeline and when the funds will be become available? TASA – Notice of Award 2024, Grant funds will be available two years after that? CMAQ/CRP are similar but there may be more flexibility.

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – You are correct in your understanding. A CMAQ/CRP project could be funded in a PE or FD phase. You could be ready for that quicker than a TASA construction. CRP does not have any carryover.

**Q** – Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh – What is the earliest CMAQ funds could be available for a PE/FD phase?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC - The earliest would be 2025. It is the earliest year for this TIP. Once we have a portfolio of projects different projects will move at different speeds. Some previously selected projects might languish and some projects this round might be ready to go. If the project is ready to go it will leapfrog the project that is languishing. SPC controls that through their TIP modifications and SPC and PennDOT staff try to have funding available in the years it is needed.

**Q** – David Wohlwill, Pittsburgh Regional Transit – In regards to the criteria for Justice40, will applicants still receive credit for a project that benefits a Justice40 community and populations even if the project is not immediately and geographically located in a Justice40 community? How would you analyze that?

**A** – Ryan Gordon and Chuck Imbrogno, SPC - Good question, this would be examined on a case by case basis. The guidance does not specifically address this question but the applicant should include information on how the project would benefit a Justice40 community. SPC could connect the dots and see the benefit. Explain in your application how the project benefits the Justice40.

**Q** – Angela Martinez, City of Pittsburgh – Is the expectation that applicants will apply to both the Statewide TASA and local TASA?

**A** – Ryan Gordon, SPC – Advised to apply to both, basically get two chances. SPC selects their projects first and tells PennDOT what they select. Often PennDOT picks up a project or two that SPC doesn't fund and that they fund. If you only apply to one fund you might not get selected for your top priority.