



Regional Surface Transportation Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Regional Surface Transportation Program?

The Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) was established by California State Statute utilizing Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds that are identified in Section 133 of Title 23 of the United States Code. This program provides flexible funding that may be used by local agencies for projects to preserve and improve the transportation system consistent with regional priorities.

The funds may be utilized on any Federal-aid highway, including the National Highway System (NHS), bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG) is responsible for the distribution of RSTP funds. Each agency within StanCOG's jurisdiction receives a fixed funding allocation (based on a StanCOG Board approved formula) for the local agency to use.

The formula is based upon 70% population and 30% roadway miles, with a minimum of \$100,000 for each local agency. StanCOG works with local agencies to identify and program projects that adhere to the funding allocation for the agency and meet the RSTP project eligibility guidelines.

What is the StanCOG Board approved formula for RSTP distribution?

What types of projects or programs are eligible for RSTP funding?

RSTP funds are reimbursable federal aid funds, subject to the requirements of Title 23, United States code. Eligible costs for funds include preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, capital costs, and construction costs associated with an eligible activity. In the Stanislaus region, RSTP is utilized primarily for local roadway rehabilitation. However, a complete list of eligible uses under federal guidelines

include:

- Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational improvements on:
 1. Federal-aid highways (i.e., on any highways, including NHS and Interstate Highways that are not functionally classified as local or rural minor collectors).
 2. Bridges (including bridges on public roads of all functional classifications), including any such construction or reconstruction necessary to accommodate other transportation modes, and including the seismic retrofit and painting of and application of calcium magnesium acetate on bridges and approaches and other elevated structures.
- Mitigation of damage to wildlife, habitat, and ecosystems caused by a transportation project funded under RSTP.
- Capital costs for transit projects eligible for assistance under the Federal Transit Act and publicly owned intracity or intercity bus terminals and facilities.
- Carpool projects, fringe and corridor parking facilities and programs, and bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways on any public roads in accordance with Section 217 of Title 23, U.S.C.
- Highway and transit safety improvements and programs, hazard elimination, projects to mitigate hazards caused by wildlife, and railway-highway grade crossings. Safety improvements are eligible on public roads of all functional classifications.
- Highway and transit research and development and technology transfer programs. Capital and operating costs for traffic monitoring, management and control facilities and programs.
- Surface transportation planning programs
- Transportation enhancement activities.
- Transportation control measures listed in Section 108 (f)(1)(A) (other than clauses xii & xvi) of the Clean Air Act.
- Development and establishment of management systems under Section 303 of Title 23, U.S.C.
- Wetlands mitigation efforts related to RSTP projects.

Is preventative maintenance eligible?

Preventative maintenance activities are eligible for federal-aid participation provided:

- The local agency certifies that it has a Pavement Management System (PMS). This certification is to be completed biennially, with a copy attached to the Field Review Form for all Preventive Maintenance Projects.
- The decision process used by the city or county to determine project strategies was based on the established PMS. Items to be covered and noted in the Field Review.
- The PMS determined the project strategy to be cost effective and have a service life of five years or more.

StanCOG will provide RSTP funding distribution notifications to its local agencies. Local jurisdictions will then submit a project list for the funds. After StanCOG reviews the projects for RSTP eligibility and compliance, StanCOG will include the projects in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) prior to any reimbursement of these federal dollars. RSTP projects are identified as a "lump sum" or "group" listing in the StanCOG FTIP. This type of listing groups projects in a category to give local agencies the utmost flexibility in making project changes in the FTIP.

How is a project nominated (selected) for RSTP funds?

How much RSTP funding is available for this call for projects?

The RSTP programming "call for projects" period covers FY 14/15 and FY 15/16. Approximately \$6.17 million is available in each year for local jurisdictions' RSTP projects.

How does an agency secure its RSTP funding?

A project nomination (application) form must be filled out for each project by the local jurisdiction. StanCOG will review each submitted RSTP project application to ensure that it meets the federal funding program requirements. Once approved, StanCOG will work with local agencies to

ensure that the funds are obligated within the required multi-year time period identified in the FTIP.

Once a project has been approved by StanCOG in the FTIP, then the local jurisdiction will need to:

- Implement the project in the Fiscal Year Programmed through a Request for Authorization submittal to Caltrans District 10 Local Assistance Office first.
- Submit monthly progress report information to StanCOG describing the status of the project (i.e. RFA date, schedule). Interagency communication (between StanCOG and project lead agency) is essential to better assist in project implementation.
- Comply with all federal and Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual requirements.

What is the local jurisdiction's responsibility in the RSTP project implementation?

What is the maximum funding an applicant can request for a single project?

The maximum funding request cap will be based on the allocated amount to the local jurisdiction in each fiscal year.

An agency is responsible for delivering the apportioned RSTP funds in the year programmed. If there are delays in the Request for Authorization or if the agency wants to advance its funding, it must negotiate with other agencies for funding capacity. The FTIP is financially constrained and any delays or advances can generally be accommodated if the same amount of funds (from another agency(ies)) moves forward or back in the TIP programming years. Projects can be advanced using EPSP (Expedited Project Selection Procedures) if funding capacity is available in the year the funds are to be advanced.

What if an agency wants to advance some funding or, conversely, delay the use of an RSTP apportionment?

Is there a local match requirement?

Yes. The local match requirement is a minimum of 11.47%. This means, for a project with a total project cost of \$100,000, the RSTP funding request would be \$88,530 with a local match of \$11,470. Subject to StanCOG approval and availability, “toll credits” may be used to relieve the local agency of the local match requirement.

For additional RSTP questions, please contact:

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