



# Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities



## What is the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program?

AHSC is a competitive program that provides grants and affordable housing loans for capital projects and community programs that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Projects can include:

- Compact, transit-oriented affordable housing developments (new construction or renovation)
- Housing-Related Infrastructure;
- Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure;
- Transportation-Related Amenities; and/or
- Community Benefits Programs.

### Who is Eligible to Apply?

Local governments, transportation and transit agencies, housing developers, joint powers authorities, schools, college and university districts, nonprofits, federally recognized Native American tribes.

### What is an Eligible AHSC Project?

To be eligible, all projects must be within one mile of a transit stop (or a half-mile for projects with affordable housing components) and generally must demonstrate a reduction in vehicle miles traveled and include components that significantly reduce GHG emissions. Eligible projects must also include **at least two** of the following:

#### Affordable housing development and/or housing related infrastructure

Housing projects must meet minimum density requirements, include at least 20% of total rental or owner-occupied residential units as affordable units and be located within 0.5 miles of a rail station or bus stop

that serves a transit line with two or more departures during peak hours.

#### Sustainable transportation infrastructure and/or transportation-related amenities

Transportation infrastructure projects must have a “qualifying transit” stop or station with at least two departures during peak hours. Eligible transportation infrastructure projects include bike lanes, pedestrian crossings, improved walkways to transit stations, upgraded stations and technology and other improvements that encourage residents to walk, bike and/or use public transportation.

#### Community benefits programs

Besides transportation and housing, eligible projects can also incorporate programs that provide community benefits by promoting safety, increasing ridership, decreasing air pollution and developing the workforce.

## What Does a Successful AHSC Project Look Like?

### PATH Metro Villas Phase 2, City of Los Angeles (\$13.7 million)

This 100% affordable housing project will provide 122 residential units. Sustainable transportation infrastructure,



services and amenities include metro, bus rapid transit, sidewalk improvements and a bike-enhanced network that includes sidewalk repair, curb ramps, tree replacement, pedestrian signals and bike-sharing. The project will also provide significant case management and supportive services for residents transitioning out of homelessness.

### **San Diego Downtown Mobility Plan and 14/ Commercial TOD Apartments (\$19,999,999)**

This project will implement a phase of the Downtown San Diego Mobility Plan that will provide bicycle connectivity throughout downtown San Diego by installing over two miles of Class IV Cycletrack, over a half mile of walkway upgrades and a road diet treatment (roads designed to accommodate all potential users including bicyclists, drivers, transit riders and pedestrians of every age and ability). The project will provide 407 units, 270 of which will be permanent supportive housing units, next to a transit station. Circulate San Diego will provide workshops on bicycle and pedestrian safety, as well as transit access programming for residents.

### **What is the Anticipated Application Timeline?**

Round 5 of AHSC funding is expected to begin soon. Interested applicants should start planning now to meet the following key milestones:

- Revised program guidelines: Summer 2019
- Notice of funding availability (NOFA): Fall 2019
- NOFA workshops: Fall 2019
- Application due: late 2019/early 2020
- Award: Summer 2020

### **How Much Funding is Available?**

In 2018, the program awarded \$255 million to 19 projects. The maximum award amount cannot exceed \$20 million. Projects that are located in and benefit the top 25% disadvantaged communities per CalEnviroScreen3.0 and AB 1550 low-income communities will receive priority funding. At least 50% of the AHSC program funds will be awarded to projects with an affordable housing component. During the first four cycles, funds were awarded to projects with an affordable housing component.

### **How can Applicants Maximize Their Score?**

**Go Green.** Reducing GHGs in a cost-efficient manner compared to other applicants could boost the application score.

**Coordinate Housing and Transportation.** A significant portion of points will be awarded based on meaningful housing and transportation collaboration.

**Engage your community and address climate resiliency.** Applicants should engage community stakeholders early to identify community needs and the project components that can potentially address them.

### **After Selecting an Eligible Project — What's Next?**

#### **Start Early**

- Read the program guidelines to identify application requirements and scoring criteria.
- Review past successful applications to understand the scope and complexity of previously awarded projects.
- Identify potential community partners and leveraged funding.
- Check out the **AHSC Benefits Calculator Tool** (available on CARB website) that you will need to estimate your project's GHG and VMT reductions.

#### **Stay Informed**

- Sign up for the Strategic Growth Council e-Lists to receive timely information about technical assistance workshops, webinars, deadlines, updated program guidelines, etc. <http://sgc.ca.gov>

#### **Make Sure Your Project is "Shovel Ready"**

- Demonstrate site control, including environmental and land use compliance.
- Adopt resolutions and sign partnership agreements.

#### **Set Aside Time to Prepare Budgets and Complete the Application**

- You will need to submit separate budgets for each component of the project.
- The AHSC application may require up to 40 hours to complete.

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Contact Coral Abbott at the Strategic Growth Council with questions regarding your potential project (916) 322-6072  
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For more detailed information regarding project eligibility, scoring criteria and related requirements refer to the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program guidelines: <http://sgc.ca.gov/programs/ahsc/resources/>

