

Attachment A: 2024 Grant Application Resources for VTA’s Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Grant

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I. OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION RESOURCE DOCUMENT

This document is intended to be a companion to the 2024 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for VTA's Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Program. Before continuing with this document, readers should review the NOFA, which provides an overview of VTA's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy, Grant Program goals, eligibility, and descriptions of the various grant Program Areas.

II. APPLICATION PREPARATION

A. Application Components

Transit-Oriented Communities Program Grant Applications will be evaluated on the following application components, identified below.

- Administrative
 - Project Organization
 - Partnerships Statement
- Transit-Oriented Community Elements
 - Equity
 - Transit
 - Geography
- Program
 - Project Description
 - Project Outcomes and Explanations
- Local Match¹
 - Match Statement as applicable

¹A minimum match is required for Local Agency applicants: 10% for projects up to \$120,000 and 15% for projects requesting more than \$120,000.

More information regarding application components can be found below and in the VTA Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Application, in Attachment B. Descriptions of the criteria that will be used to evaluate Grant Applications can be found in Attachment C.

B. Administrative and Transit-Oriented Community Elements

Project Organization

Applicants will provide general information including contact and organization details.

This grant aims to award grant funding to implementable projects that are most likely to result in desired outcomes that further implementation of Transit-Oriented Communities. To show the implementation plan, applicants must submit a Staffing Plan, a Milestones Schedule, and a Budget. Text boxes are included in the application for applicants to respond, and supplemental materials may be submitted as attached PDFs. Templates will be provided for the Staffing Plan, a Milestones Schedule, and the Project Budget.

- *The Staffing Plan* should include a description of the responsibilities for the staff involved in the implementation of the project. This will include descriptions of the current roles of the staff members and leadership and demonstrate that staff have sufficient time to dedicate to this effort, or the funding request should be used toward acquiring or shifting staff into those positions.
- *The Milestones Schedule* should outline how the applicant plans to spend the grant funding to achieve certain milestones. After grants are awarded, the Milestones Schedule will also serve to track progress throughout the project.
- *The Project Budget* should include administrative costs and other major costs required for project implementation. Applicants should note if the project needs all the grant funding up front or spread-out overtime.

Partnerships

Applicants should, as applicable, identify at least one partner for implementation of the proposed project and describe the role of each partner during the project. Applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of partnerships, such as a letter of support or letter of intent to support the process and implementation of project.

Applicants seeking to engage in activities conducted on private or public land/property, specifically related to Program Area D: Placemaking, Arts, and Activation, are required to submit authorization from the property owner (or public agency for public right-of-way) or provide proof of a commitment from the property owner or public agency for project implementation.

Equity

Equity must be considered in the development of Transit-Oriented Communities, both in the implementation process and as a project outcome. Applications should include:

- Description of how the proposed project will specifically benefit marginalized, vulnerable and/or underrepresented groups in the community, such as Equity Priority Communities.
- Description of what disparities the proposed project will help reduce or eliminate.
- Description of how equitable processes will be incorporated into the grant implementation.
- Description of how the project will have an equitable outcome that is in alignment with the grant's Equity Mission Statement (See Section II.D. Equity Mission Statement in the Notice of Funding Availability document).

Transit

Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed project will support transit ridership and promote active transportation options to VTA Station sites, therefore reducing personal auto trips.

Geography

Applications should identify the nearest planned or existing VTA Light Rail, transit center, or Commuter Rail stations served by BART, Caltrain, ACE or Capitol Corridor to the project and state the distance to that station or transit center. Applicants may verify project location

eligibility by visiting the interactive map on the VTA Transit-Oriented Communities Grant webpage vta.org/TOCgrant, also linked [here](#).

For art installations under Program D. Placemaking, Arts and Activation, projects must meet the geography requirement first before locating within visible sight of a VTA station, transit center, commuter rail station, or bus stop.

C. Program Narrative

Application will provide two narrative prompts to describe the project. Applicants may only apply for one Program Area, but the narrative may refer to activities related to other Program Areas. For example, a local agency may apply for a grant that focuses on advancing a station area plan through Program A: Planning and Policy Implementation. This activity may include public engagement efforts but would not be eligible for funding under Program C: Education and Engagement.

Project Description

Applicants should include:

- Description of the project and its connections to the Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Goals and the Equity Mission Statement found in the Notice of Funding Availability Document (Sections Section II.C. Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Program Goals and Section II.D. Equity Mission Statement , respectively).
- Identification of the community the project plans to serve, and current relationship or engagement with the community to date.

Project Outcomes

- Applicants should use Table 1, below, to select at least one applicable expected outcomes of their project for each of the Equity, Transit, and Geography sections, as well as their Program Area. Applicants may also include additional expected outcomes for Equity, Transit, and Geography and their Program Area if it is not listed on the table.
- Applicants must provide an explanation for each of the selected outcomes.
 - The explanation for each selected outcome should align with advancing the vision for Transit-Oriented Communities and provide context to the Evaluation Panel of how the project advances the VTA Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Goals.

Note: Applicants will only be scored on selected outcomes from Equity, Transit, Geography, and their Program Area.

Table 1: Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Desired Outcomes

Category	Desired Transit-Oriented Communities Outcomes
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project addresses a specific challenge and directly produces an equitable outcome(s) for a specific population or community.
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project contributes to a reduction of personal auto trips. • Project directs pedestrian interest and flow toward transit.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project improves the perception of transit.
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project increases Transit-Oriented Community activities within a half mile of existing light/commuter rail stations and VTA transit centers.
Planning and Policy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project targets alignment with MTC Transit-Oriented Communities Policy and VTA Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Program Goals. • Project supports placemaking and public life. • Project benefits VTA-owned Transit Oriented Development Sites¹ through zoning and policy changes.
Community Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project contributes to protection, preservation, or production of affordable housing. • Project raises profile of CBO as a community development stakeholder. • Project increases CBO’s capacity for preservation of affordable housing. • Project increases CBO’s ability to mitigate displacement. • Project reduces overall transportation or housing cost burdens for limited-income individuals.
Education and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project empowers community to advocate for Transit-Oriented Communities to local decision makers. • Project overcomes public engagement barriers that limit participation of historically underrepresented groups.
Placemaking, Arts, and Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project promotes local artists, culture, history, or value. • Project aims to preserve and strengthen community identity, in an area that lacks art and activation currently. • Project enhances pedestrian experiences and safety for community.

¹To learn more about VTA TOD sites, visit <https://www.vta.org/programs/toc/transit-oriented-development/projects-portfolio>.

The narrative provided in the application will serve as a basis for the scope that will be included as part of the Grant Agreement for grant recipients.

The Evaluation Panel will use the Administrative Elements, Transit-Oriented Community Elements, and Program Narrative to assist with evaluation scoring. For more details on the evaluation process, see IV.B Evaluation Panel.

D. Local Match

Match Statement

A match is required for all Local Agency applicants, no matter the Program Area. A 10% minimum match for projects up to \$120,000 and minimum 15% match for projects requesting more than \$120,000.

III. APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

All applicants are encouraged to attend the Pre-application Workshop. At the workshop, VTA staff will review the Transit-Oriented Communities Grant guidelines, timing, and application process.

The NOFA is being published on **March 25, 2024**. In-person Pre-Application Workshops are scheduled for **April 17, 2024** and **April 30, 2024**. Online Pre-Application Workshops are scheduled for **April 25, 2024**, and **May 1, 2024**. A recording of the Pre-Application Workshops will also be made available online and can be found on VTA's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/SCVTA>.

VTA will accept written questions regarding the Application through 4:00 PM PST on Wednesday, **May 8, 2024**, and will provide a response to all applicants by Monday, **May 13, 2024**. Questions may be submitted to VTA at TOCGrant@vta.org, or through the OpenGov® Portal. VTA will answer questions regarding the Application requirements and will be making all questions and answers public for all applicants. All Q&A will be shared via e-mail to applicants who attended the workshop and posted online at vta.org/TOCgrant.

Applications must be submitted by **4:00 PM PST on Wednesday, May 22, 2024**. Applications should be submitted electronically through [OpenGov®](https://www.opengov.com). The link to the OpenGov® will also be on the VTA Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Program webpage. A fillable PDF application will be available for applicants, which must be submitted through OpenGov® by the application deadline. Any application received after the deadline will not be considered.

If digital submission is absolutely not possible, VTA will accept hard copies of Applications that are received by mail or dropped off at VTA Headquarters by the Application deadline. Applications should be addressed to:

VTA's TOC Program
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, Bldg. A
San José, CA 95134

IV. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. Eligibility and Completeness Screening

VTA's Transit-Oriented Community Program staff will review all applications for eligibility and completeness. Applications that pass this initial review will then be scored by an Evaluation Panel, which will rely on the application and related materials submitted by applicants.

B. Evaluation Panel and Project Selection

The Evaluation Panel designated by VTA will consist of multi-disciplinary VTA staff and a community member. The Evaluation Panel will review and score applications using the evaluation criteria provided in Attachment C: Evaluation Criteria. The Evaluation Panel's selection will be posted on the VTA Transit-Oriented Community Grant Program website.

The Evaluation Panel will identify final grantees for initial selection anticipated by June 10, 2024. Following the appeals process, the Evaluation Panel will select the final grantees.

C. Selection Notice and Grant Agreement

Notification of awards is anticipated to be complete by **June 10, 2024**. The notification of awards will be posted on the vta.org/TOCgrant website, and selected applicants will be also be notified via electronic mail. These projects will receive a Notice of Intent to Fund, outlining the requirements of funding, as well as a Grant Agreement specifying the terms of the grant and reporting requirements. Selected grantees will be required to sign a funding agreement with VTA as a condition of this grant.

The Narrative, Project Budget, and Proposed Milestones Schedule provided in the application will serve as the basis of the Scope of Services that will be included in the Grant Agreement for selected grantees. A draft Grant Agreement will be provided on OpenGov® prior to the application deadline. Specific comments and concerns about the Grant Agreement may also be submitted with the application.

D. Appeals

Applicants who would like to appeal the grantee selection may appeal the decision via electronic mail. Appeals should be sent to **Jessie** O'Malley Solis at jessie.o'malleysolis@vta.org.

The deadline for submitting an appeal letter is 4:00 PM PST **Monday June 24, 2024**. All appeals will be responded to within five business days of the close of the appeals process. No further appeals will occur.

V. SELECTED GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

A. Ongoing Technical Support

VTA will provide grantees with ongoing support and technical assistance during the grant implementation phase. Support would include access to experienced professionals in multiple fields of expertise in the land use and housing space and industry resources related to all Transit-Oriented Communities Program Areas. VTA will also provide technical support to selected grantees to assist in adhering to certification requirements listed in this section.

B. Grantee Cohort Participation and Reporting

Grantees will convene regularly in a Grantee Cohort that will help foster cross-community connections and help bring grant projects to life. Grantees will be required to report updates of their grant projects on a quarterly basis with a verbal report or a short slideshow presentation. Grantees will also be required to provide a financial update on a semi-annual basis. At minimum, such updates must include a summary of moneys expended on eligible activities, and any administrative costs associated with advancement of the project. Templates for reporting will be included as part of the Grant Agreements that will be required between selected grant recipients and VTA.

A final written report will be required at the end of the project, with a verbal report and a slideshow presentation to show the project's implementation, inclusion of an equity initiative, and other major milestones.

More details about the frequency of meeting, and content of the progress and final reports will be provided to selected grantees and will be described in the Grant Agreements.

C. Public Nature of Application Materials

All applications received become a matter of public record and shall be regarded as public records, with the exception of those elements in the application which are defined by the applicant as business or trade secrets and designated as Confidential, Trade Secret, or Proprietary. VTA shall not in any way be liable or responsible for the disclosure of any such application or portions thereof, if they are not designated as Confidential, Trade Secret, or Proprietary or if the disclosure is required under the California Public Records Act. Any application which contains language purporting to render all or significant portions of the application Confidential, Trade Secret, or Proprietary shall be regarded as non-responsive and, therefore, not eligible for review. If an organization wishes to designate elements of the application as business or trade secret, they must submit a letter to VTA Transit-Oriented Community Program staff at the time of application identifying the specific sections of their electronic application that the applicant defines as business or trade secret.

D. Compliance with Other Regulatory Agencies

To receive a grant from the VTA Transit-Oriented Community Program, an organization must be in compliance, as applicable, with the following agencies:

1. Listed in good standing with the IRS (this can be verified on the IRS website: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>)
2. Listed as “current” in the Office of the Attorney General’s Charity Research Tool: (<http://rct.doj.ca.gov/Verification/Web/Search.aspx?facility=Y>)
3. Listed as “active” at <https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/> with the correct business name matching the organization’s legal name.

E. Business Tax Requirements

Successful grant applicants must have a current Business Tax Certificate. Not-for-profit organizations are normally exempt from paying the local business tax but must apply for the certificate and the tax exemption.

F. Insurance Requirements

Successful grant applicants must submit a Certificate of Insurance showing:

- Commercial General Liability: minimum \$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage including products and completed operations.
- Automobile Liability: minimum \$1,000,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage for all owned, hired or non-owned vehicles.
- Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability: Workers' Compensation as required by State of California, and Employers Liability with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000.

Endorsements: The COI must include the following endorsements:

- VTA, its officers, employees, agents, and contractors are named as additional insured.

- Commercial General Liability and Worker's Compensation: Coverage shall contain a waiver of subrogation in favor of the City, its officials, employees, agents, and contractors.

VTA may waive the COI for selected projects receiving \$25,000 and under.

G. Indemnity and Defense of Claims

Successful grant applicants shall indemnify and hold harmless VTA and its board members, officers, agents, employees, and consultants (each an "Indemnitee"; collectively, the "Indemnitees") from any claims, liabilities, losses, injuries, damages, expenses, fines, penalties, liens, or fees and costs (including attorneys' and experts' fees and costs) (each a "Claim" and collectively "Claims") arising out of, pertaining to, caused by, or in any way relating to the work performed under this Contract, including compliance or non-compliance with the terms of this Contract, by Grantee and/or its agents, employees, or subgrantees, whether such Claims are based upon a contract, personal injury, death, property damage, or any other legal or equitable theory whatsoever.

Successful grant applicants agree, at its own expense, and upon written request by VTA or any individual Indemnitee, to immediately defend any suit, action, proceeding, dispute, or demand brought against any Indemnitee founded upon, alleging, or implicating any Claims covered by Grantee's indemnity obligation set forth above in subparagraph (1) immediately above and regardless of whether Grantee and/or any of its agents, employees, or subgrantees, was, in fact, liable. In the event a court of competent jurisdiction determines that any suit, action, claim, or demand brought against any Indemnitee was caused by the sole or active negligence or willful misconduct of VTA or its agents, servants, or independent Grantees who are acting on behalf of VTA, VTA shall promptly reimburse Grantee for costs of defending the Indemnitees in such action incurred by Grantee, but only in proportion to the sole or active negligence or willful misconduct of VTA or its agents, servants, or independent Grantees who are acting on behalf of VTA.

This indemnity and defense of claims provision will survive the expiration or termination of this Contract and remain in full force and effect.

H. Acknowledging VTA Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge VTA's financial support in all appropriate materials and media. The acknowledgment should read, "**Supported in part by a Transit-Oriented Community Grant Program from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority**" or similar language, unless VTA is part of a list of supporters. In the latter case, the acknowledgment may say "**Santa Clara VTA.**" Grantees must display VTA's logo whenever other sponsor logos are displayed, and in accordance with VTA logo use guidelines, found at the following link: https://vtaorgcontent.s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/Site_Content/SCVTA_Graphic_Standards_Manual.pdf.

I. Copyright law

No copyrighted musical or visual arts composition shall be performed or played, whether amplified, televised, in the form of a mechanical recording or personal rendition, or otherwise, in connection with any use of VTA property by a grantee, unless the grantee has first obtained all approvals and paid any license fee or other fee required by the copyright owner. When entering

into a Grant Agreement, a grantee indemnifies VTA and its officers and employees and agrees to keep them free and harmless from and against any and all liability and responsibility whatsoever for any infringement of and/or other violation of the right of any such copyright owner under any copyright law.

J. Compliance with the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act and Employee/Volunteer Clearance Verification

If awarded a grant and when required by federal state or local law, applicants who provide services involving minors will be required to conduct a criminal background check, including fingerprints, on each of its employees and volunteers who have supervisory or disciplinary authority over minors through the database of the California Department of Justice and an FBI criminal database or equivalent national database. Grantees must also comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act.

VI. TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The following is a preliminary schedule of the anticipated dates for key activities and milestones in the Transit-Oriented Communities Grant process, and is intended to provide an estimated timeline for applicants. Applicants should refer to the schedule posted on the vta.org/TOCgrant webpage.

Release Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)	March 27, 2024
<i>Pre-Application Workshops</i>	<i>Mid-April to Early May 2024</i>
<i>Deadline for Submission of Questions</i>	<i>May 8, 2024</i>
Deadline for Applications	May 22, 2024
<i>Publish Award Recommendations</i>	<i>June 10, 2024</i>
<i>Appeal Submittal Deadline</i>	<i>Early June 2024</i>
Notification of Awards	Late June 2024

A. Pre-Application Workshops

VTA will host four Pre-Application Workshops to help provide any clarifications and answer questions on VTA’s Transit-Oriented Communities Grant Program. Pre-Application Workshops will be held for both in-person and virtual attendees.

Applicants will be required to attend *one* Pre-Application Workshop but are welcome to attend more if desired. Registration is required for all events. Please visit vta.org/TOCgrant to register and find more event details.

Recordings of the virtual Pre-Application Workshops will be available online on VTA’s YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/SCVTA>.

A list of Pre-Application workshops is provided on the following page.

In-Person Pre-Application Workshops:

- **Wednesday, April 17, 2024**
 - Time: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. PST
 - Location:
 - VTA Customer Service Center
 - 2 North Market Street
 - San Jose, CA 95113
- **Tuesday, April 30, 2024**
 - Time: 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. PST
 - Location:
 - Gilroy Library
 - 350 W. Sixth Street
 - Gilroy, CA 95020

Virtual Pre-Application Workshops:

- **Thursday, April 25, 2024**
 - Time: 11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. PST
 - Location: Online Zoom meeting
 - zoom.us/join
 - Webinar ID: 823 2106 8646
 - Passcode: 486619
 - 1-669-900-9128
- **Wednesday, May 1, 2024**
 - Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. PST
 - Location: Online Zoom meeting
 - zoom.us/join
 - Webinar ID: 822 4698 7924
 - Passcode: 802206
 - 1-669-900-9128

B. Additional Information

For more information on VTA’s Transit-Oriented Communities work to date and VTA’s Transit-Oriented Communities Policy, visit VTA’s Transit-Oriented Community website at <https://www.vta.org/transitorientedcommunities>.

For questions regarding VTA’s Transit-Oriented Community Program, please email TOCGrant@vta.org.

For translation services and other accommodations, please contact VTA Community Outreach at (408) 321-7575/TTY (408) 321-2330 or email community.outreach@vta.org.