



2023 OCTA Environmental Cleanup Program Tier 1 Call for Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

Project X under Measure M2 (M2) is intended to specifically address water pollution originating from and/or being transported by transportation facilities. It is also meant to provide a new or additional funding source, and not a substitute for existing funding or to supplant water quality responsibilities for new freeway, street and transit capital projects. This objective was specified in the M2 Plan and Ordinance.

1. What does OCTA consider a mandated BMP?

The Environmental Cleanup Program (ECP) is intended to augment, not replace existing jurisdiction's required water quality expenditures. Per the Tier 1 Call for Projects (call), a mandated best management practices (BMP) is a requirement that has been specified by a regulatory body. Only projects that go beyond what is required by regulatory requirements will be considered for funding.

2. Do cities have to commit to a certain frequency of maintenance to be eligible?

Eligible agencies do not have to commit to a certain frequency of maintenance to receive funding, however; an Operations and Maintenance Plan is required to ensure that the highest efficiency of the proposed BMP(s) is maintained. There is an expectation that the funding applicant also commit to maintaining the BMP(s).

3. Are projects limited to only major arterial streets or can they include side streets/residential areas?

The Tier 1 Grant Program includes arterial streets, public roads, and private streets as long as the storm water drains into a municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4). All proposed projects must meet the transportation pollution nexus definition on page 11-1 of the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs (CTFP) Funding Guidelines, where it states "transportation-related activities are associated with the operation, construction, and maintenance of public roads, highways, and other ground transportation systems."

4. When do improvements need to start undergoing construction to qualify?

Funded projects must award a construction contract by December 31, 2024.

5. Could M2 funding be awarded in conjunction with a utility project or road improvement/CIP projects?

M2 funding related to this call can be awarded to a component of a larger project with the exception of the following: a) if it is eligible under another M2 CTFP grant or b) if the storm water pollution mitigation measure is part of a regulatory requirement.

6. What types of projects are eligible for funding under the Tier 1 Grant Program?

Funding is available for equipment purchases and installation to existing catch basins and related best management practices (BMPs) such as screens, filters, inserts, and other “street scale” low flow diversion devices. Street scale low flow diversion devices is a general category that can include, but is not limited to; bioretention units, hydrodynamic separators, trash booms, end of the pipe netting systems, etc. It is recommended that any proposed project that is within the “street scale” low flow diversion category be further discussed with OCTA staff before completing the application. Reducing volume of surface flows is a factor of improving water quality.

Projects that have water-saving features (i.e., drip systems) are eligible for funding consideration. Also eligible are small scale bio retention/detention basins which capture and subsequently remove pollutants and sedimentation from storm water runoff.

Project X was not intended to deal with drought or water use, except as a byproduct of addressing water quality. For example, a project to divert or treat polluted transportation runoff may result in reclaimed water that can be used for irrigation. The project may have a resulting benefit in meeting water supply needs. Project costs for the diversion or treatment of pollutants could be eligible under Project X and would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

7. What types of projects are ineligible for funding under the Tier 1 Grant Program?

Projects which do not address water quality improvement are not eligible for funding under this program. Projects which include only landscaping installation and/or replacement are not eligible for funding consideration. Projects related to regular, ongoing street maintenance efforts, including, but not limited to trash receptacles, vacuum trucks and/or equipment, street sweeping, and signage are not eligible for funding.

8. Can Caltrans be a partner with a lead agency?

Caltrans cannot act as the lead agency for a proposed project, however; Caltrans can jointly apply with an Orange County city and/or the County of Orange with the submission of draft resolution of support and a preliminary agreement. If awarded M2 funding as part of a joint

application, the lead agency will need to submit the final resolution of support and joint agreement before funding is disbursed.

9. Is there a minimum funding request for the Tier 1 Grant Program?

There is no minimum funding request required.

10. How much funding will be allocated through the 2023 call?

Approximately \$3 million is available for the FY 2023-24 call.

11. Is this call similar to other OCTA grant programs when applying for funds?

The Tier 1 Grant Program is part of OCTA's CTFP. A procedures manual, referred to as the CTFP Guidelines, has been drafted to apply for funding of transportation projects through a simplified and consistent process. Each program has a specific objective, funding source, and a set of selection criteria detailed in separate chapters contained within the manual, however if not specifically stated, share the same reimbursement, reporting, and auditing requirements. The CTFP Guidelines are included within OCTA's dedicated Tier 1 call webpage (www.octa.net/ECPcall).

12. How will the funding be allocated if partnering with other cities?

If a joint application among agencies and/or third-party entities is submitted, a preliminary agreement must be provided as part of the application. If awarded M2 funding, joint agreements are to be signed by all parties prior to issuance of the notice to proceed and release of any funds. OCTA will release M2 funds directly to the lead agency, where the distribution of the funds among the agencies will occur as defined by their joint agreement.

13. What type of funding can be used for the local match?

Any discretionary funds including General funds, Local Fair Share (LFS) funds can be used as matching funds. Minimum match of 20% must be provided as cash contributions. In-kind services for ongoing operations and maintenance are not accepted as match.

14. Does the Tier 1 Grant Program resolution need to be finalized before the proposal is submitted?

A draft resolution requesting M2 funding for a proposed project is required as part of the application. A finalized resolution needs to be submitted before the OCTA Board of Directors approves funding. The eligible agency may choose to have a resolution approved which requests and accepts funding to expedite the process and avoid going back to the approving body multiple times. The resolution must be for the current call and multiple year resolutions will not be accepted.

15. Does an eligible agency need to utilize the exact wording of the resolution?

No. The sample resolution is provided as a sample and as such, an eligible agency can utilize this sample, parts of the sample resolution, or create their own resolution for requesting M2 funding.

16. What level of PS&E is needed to be submitted for the catch basin screens? Will standard manufacturer details suffice, or are site-by-site plans required?

The Plans, Specifications & Estimates information should be sufficient in details to address the proposal description, design, engineering, siting, operation, and maintenance. If the proposed devices do not differ, site-by-site plans are not needed, however; the specific locations where the devices will be installed need to be shown.

17. With regard to bonus points related to the matching funds (i.e., overmatch), can operations and maintenance be included?

A minimum local match of twenty (20) percent is required as cash only. Proposals that exceed the twenty (20) percent minimum funding match will be given an additional 0.5 points for every five (5) percent over the minimum match (up to 5 bonus points). Matching funds for in-kind services, such as operation and maintenance, are not eligible for these bonus points. To receive up to 5 bonus points, only cash contribution and/or funding from outside sources, such as water quality improvement and/or other grants administered by state and federal agencies, may be utilized.