

Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program Call for Projects

Overview

Flexible Fleets comprise various modes of on-demand shared mobility services, typically requested or reserved through a smartphone application or call center. In 2023, the Board of Directors authorized \$5 million in federal funding to develop and implement a grant program to pilot Flexible Fleets projects in the region.

Key Considerations

The Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program is intended to fund pilot projects that expand shared mobility services and advance the goals of the Regional Plan. The Program will fund projects that can serve as models for the region and demonstrate the ability to sustain operations after the grant expires.

Eligible applicants include federal, state, and local governmental agencies, tribal governments, transit operators, and military institutions. Eligible costs will include service operations provided by the applicant or through a contracted service. Applicants must provide 11.47% of the total project cost in matching funds, which may include in-kind staff time.

Over the last year, SANDAG worked with the Mobility Working Group and the Transportation Committee to develop the Call for Projects, evaluation criteria, and performance metrics. A summary of all feedback received on the Call for Projects and the revisions made to it is provided in Attachment 4. The scoring rubric is Attachment 2, and the performance metrics are Attachment 3.

The Flexible Fleet Grant Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration's Surface Transportation Block Grant. These funds can only be used to fund new Flexible Fleet pilot projects or enhanced existing pilot projects. The enhanced pilot must not have received prior U.S. Department of Transportation funding. Modifications to established/existing pilot operations must include new geographic limits or introduce new service models, technologies, or partners to be eligible. The funding also requires that all operations be completed and expenses incurred by December 31, 2029.

On [February 20, 2026 \(Item 6\)](#), the Transportation Committee recommended that the Board approve the release of the grant program.

Action: Approve

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board of Directors approve the release of the Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program Call for Projects.

Fiscal Impact:

Up to \$4.5 million will be made available through the Call for Projects through Overall Work Program No. 3501000: Flexible Fleet Pilots.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

Pending Board approval, staff anticipates releasing the Call for Projects in spring 2026.

Next Steps

If approved by the Board, staff will release the Call for Projects in early March 2026. The application period will be open for 90 days. Applications will be reviewed by an evaluation panel with experience in deploying and operating transportation services. The funding recommendations are expected to be brought to the Transportation Committee and Board of Directors in fall 2026. Projects would begin in late 2026. SANDAG will continue to seek sustainable funding for ongoing Flexible Fleet service operations.

Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning

- Attachments:
1. Final Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program Call for Projects
 2. Final Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program Scoring Rubric
 3. Final Flexible Fleets Pilot Grant Program Performance Metrics
 4. Summary of FFGP Feedback and Revisions