

March 11, 2026

SANDAG Grant Program Overview and Biannual Status Update

Overview

The SANDAG Grants team is responsible for developing and administering the agency's competitive grant programs. There are [nine grant programs](#)¹ that award federal, state, and TransNet funds to the region's local government agencies, transit operators, and non-profits, typically through a call for projects (CFP). Grants staff coordinate the CFP, including the awarding and programming of funds; assisting with project initiation; monitoring project and program performance; and providing reports to appropriate advisory bodies.

In late 2025, SANDAG made organizational changes that resulted in the SANDAG Grant Program moving under the Regional Planning Department to better align grants with the Regional Plan, the Coordinated Plan, and the Environmental Mitigation Program.

Key Considerations

Realignment of Grant Programs

Since moving the Grant Program under the Regional Planning Department, staff have conducted a comprehensive assessment of grants to identify areas of opportunity and address recommendations from performance audits and Peer Review Panels. This includes:

- Developing a risk management framework to proactively monitor grantees and overall contract compliance
- Process improvements for grant applications and evaluation criteria to maintain accuracy and integrity of the grant programs. This includes automating functions to reduce manual errors and streamlining evaluation criteria.
- Evaluating and updating Standard Operating Procedures for Grant Programs.
- Evaluating strategic partnerships with foundations that could bring additional funding to grant programs.
- Evaluating different models for administering grants.
- Evaluating the Specialized Transportation Grant Program funding sources to increase efficiency, reduce risk, and better align with the 2025 Coordinated Plan.

These recommendations are being incorporated into a detailed work plan, and staff will bring progress updates on work plan implementation to the appropriate Policy Advisory Committees for discussion throughout the year.

Action: Discussion

Staff will present a comprehensive overview of the SANDAG grant programs and recent program assessments.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

None.

¹ The Flexible Fleets Grants program was presented to the Transportation Committee on February 20, 2026, and the Board of Directors on February 27, 2026, for recommendation and approval to release the call for projects.

Biannual Progress Report

This report also includes a biannual progress report on the grant programs under the TransNet Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee's purview, including the Active Transportation Grant Program, Smart Growth Incentive Program, Senior Mini-Grants, and Environmental Mitigation Program Land Management Grant. The Grant Programs Biannual Performance Report is included as Attachment 1 and includes the performance period for July 1 – December 31, 2025.

Next Steps

The next Grant's biannual report to the ITOC will be provided in September 2026.

Antoinette Meier, Senior Director, Regional Planning

Attachment: 1. Grant Programs Biannual Performance Report