	CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL	**CY 2015-16 Full Application FAQS** **Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program** **Release Date: 6/2/2016**

Q#	Category:	Sub-Category	Question:	Response:
1	AHD/HRI	Affordability	Are Unit Mix changes from concept to full app allowed?	Yes changing the unit mix would be allowable, however, the Enforceable Funding Commitments (EFC) calculation CANNOT decrease between the concept and full application and the applicant must demonstrate that the project is financially feasible and no supplantation of funds has occurred. The applicant must clearly identify any changes in funding commitments and label new funding commitment letters uploaded into FAAST. Please address any changes between the concept and full application in the narrative in the space provided in the Certification tab, and reference any related uploaded documents.
2	AHD/HRI	Affordability	Which limits are applicants required to use. The full application provides a link to the recently updated 2016 limits. Can applicants continue to use the 2015 loan limits?	Use the Income, Rent and Loan limits that were in effect at the time of the concept application (2015). The revised Workbook 2.0 will reflect this guidance.
3	AHD/HRI	Affordability	I am attempting to make sure I use the correct rents in my AHSC model. My current model actually shows TCAC rents. However, the HCD/AHSC gross rents (non-HERA, in the appropriate County) have lower gross rents. Presumably, we will use your rents (the most restrictive), and then remove utility allowance from them to come up with the appropriate net income. Please confirm this is correct.	When completing the Unit Mix tab, use the HCD/AHSC gross rents (non-HERA, in the appropriate County) for **2015**, and subtract the Utility Allowance to calculate net income. Do not use TCAC rents.
4	AHD/HRI	Affordability	On the Affordable Housing Underwriting Checklist section of the Housing tab, are HOME and MHP loans considered "balloon loans"?	Yes, both would be considered "balloon loans" that are paid out of residual receipts, and any unpaid balance at the end of the 55 year term would be due at that time.
5	AHD/HRI	Cost Reasonableness	For the cost reasonableness on the Housing tab, can you please provide some definition of "above-average" and "below-average"? The instructions say "Projects with above-average or below-average costs must provide justification for the costs. Projects with unjustified development costs may not be approved/awarded funding." We want to make sure we are providing the correct information, and in order to do that we need to understand above-average or below-average costs.	There is no established AHSC Program benchmark for reasonableness. The "description of unusual circumstances" response box in the full application workbook should be used to detail and explain any cost(s) that might seem higher than normal/average for the area. The more context an applicant can provide regarding cost drivers in the local market the better HCD can understand local development cost factors.
6	AHD/HRI	Market Study	What kind of market study is required?	A market study that meets the requirements specified in TCAC Regulations Section 10322(h)(10) will be accepted.
7	AHD/HRI	Market Study	How recent must the required market study be for applicants requesting funds for AHD or HRI?	Applicants must provide a completed market study prepared within one year of the full application due date.
8	AHD/HRI	SMI v AMI	There are AHSC Level income qualifications that differ from County income qualifications. Should these maximum incomes be used for the market study?	The maximum income amount relative to the income level being resricted may be used in market study.
9	AHD/HRI		Per the NOFA, the Housing-Related Infrastructure (HRI) grant amount is calculated based on the number of units and their level of affordability. Section 104(f)(5)(A), the total HRI grant is $35,000 per residential unit in the proposed affordable development AND $50,000 per restricted unit. We've been assuming that the max grant equals $50,000 per restricted unit and $35,000 for other residential (manager or non-restricted) units. Is the maximum available for a restricted unit $50,000 or is it $50,000 PLUS $35,000 for a total of $85,000 per restricted unit?	When determining the maximum AHSC amount for a Housing-Related Infrastructure (HRI) grant, residential (i.e., unrestricted) units are eligible for $35,000 per unit, and restricted are eligible for $50,000 per unit. It is not additive.
10	AHD/HRI		Is an appraisal required for the application?	Appraisals are only required where there is a land donation. Appraisal documentation must be submitted at full application.
11	Application	Threshold	Can an applicant assume they are already determined to have met and passed threshold requirements if invited to submit a full application? Or must applicants provide documentation to demonstrate threshold now with full application?	While the Concept Application evaluated a majority of the threshold requirements, documentation to demonstrate readiness as expressed in the concept application (i.e. CEQA/NEPA, land use approvals and site control) must be provided at full application. In addition, there are some threshold requirements that must still be met within the full application, including Project Feasibility (which depends on an evaluation of a market study), demonstration of prior experience of similar scope and size to what funds are being requested, consistency with State Relocation Law, providing Replacement Housing (if applicable), addressing Climate Adaptation measures, and demonstrating agricultural land preservation measures are in place.
12	Application		The NOFA indicates a hard copy of the final excel full application document must be submitted to HCD. How should we organize and package the hard copy application workbook being submitted?	In addition to the electronic submission of application materials and attachments via FAAST, a hardcopy of the excel workbook must be postmarked by the full application deadline and submitted to HCD. Organize each workbook in a 3-ring binder with section dividers to reflect each tab. Do not include hard copies of the uploaded attachments to FAAST, just the excel workbooks.
13	Application		For the Full Application Package are there application instructions available similar to what was provided for the Concept Application?	There is no separate application instruction document for the full application. Instructions are provided in the TOC tab and throughout the workbook itself. Applicants are cautioned to carefully review the workbook to ensure all information applicable to their Project has been provided as several tabs have many subsections. Important instructions or notes to the applicants are called out in red text were included. In addition, required documentation is identified throughout the excel workbook in blue boxes at the beginning of each applicable section of the workbook tabs.
14	Application		Is there a cut-off date to submit Questions to HCD?	Questions may be submitted until the application deadline, however, please allow adequate response time in order to receive a response prior to application deadline.
15	Application		Will there be a list posted of the AHSC concept applications submitted and which ones were invited to submit? If so, when? I see that the summary of applications was posted but it would be very helpful to get more detail.	There is a posting of full application invites available on the SGC website at http://www.sgc.ca.gov/pdf/AHSC_Concept%20App%20Summary_5316.pdf Further information regarding the application pool will be made available after the awards are announced.
16	Application		Do the last few tabs in the worksheet (operating budget and 15 Year Proforma) need to be filled in for a non-housing project	No, those tabs are only relevant to Affordable Housing Development projects.

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17	Application		Is there a list of expected attachments to be submitted with this application?	Required attachments are listed at the beginning of each section of the Application. The Table of Contents also includes a list of attachments. Be advised that attachment requirements vary depending on the Project proposed. Please refer to individual workbook Tabs for additional details on FAAST upload documentation requirements.
18	Application		When will awards be announced and when will Standard Agreements, Disbursement Agreements and funding will be available?	We anticipate awards in October 2016. Standard Agreements and Disbursement Agreements will be issued based on each project's scheduled loan closing and/or need for disbursement of funds. Funds will be disbursed after the recipient satisfies the disbursement conditions.
19	Budgets		From concept to full application, can an applicant change the amount of AHSC funds requested to add an additional component or eligible use?	The eligible uses and scope of work proposed at concept stage cannot change for full application. The amount of AHSC funds requested can decrease (e.g. if an alternative source of funds has been secured) but the total verified EFCs at full application cannot be lower than the EFCs submitted at the time of concept application submittal.
20	Budgets		Can an applicant move the allocation of their AHSC request to different line items from concept to full application, as long as they don't increase the amount requested per eligible use category?	Yes, that is acceptable, so long as the cost caps are not exceeded for items like structured parking costs, soft costs, impact fees, environmental remediation, and Activity Delivery fees.
21	Budgets		Are we permitted to include Activity Delivery Costs in each of these two Funding Budgets, or will such costs not be allowed because they were not identified in our Concept Application? If so, where can we find guidelines for the nature and scope of such costs?	Activity Delivery Costs only relate to STI and TRA activities and are defined in the Definitions. Activity Delivery Costs cannot exceed 10 percent of the costs associated with the applicable Capital Project.
22	Budgets		Can an applicant include Activity Delivery Costs for STI and TRA which were not identified in the concept application?	Applicants may reallocate AHSC funds within the same budget (i.e. STI or TRA) for other eligible AHSC costs if necessary. The amount of AHSC funds requested, however, cannot exceed the amount requested in the concept application.
23	Contract Administration		How does the reimbursement process work for the STI and TRA components? Is it on a rolling basis, or upon completion of the entire component? For example, if an applicant is adding 5 miles of bike lane, can the project costs be pieced and divide it out into segments and get reimbursed as each segment is completed?	Any Grant component (STI, TRA) would be paid out on a reimbursement basis. An awardee could request reimbursements for segments of a capital project or program on a rolling basis. Additional details would be confirmed during finalization of the Standard Agreement and Disbursement Agreement.
24	Programs		We are planning to offer both bike and bus passes as part of our Transit Ridership and Active Transportation Program. How will those funds be disbursed?	Once the award is made the applicant will fill out a loan closing survey outlining estimated time frames, the applicant will then work with their assigned NOFA/Award rep to complete the SA (Standard Agreement) and DA (Disbursement Agreement). Once the SA has been executed the applicant would then be able to submit an HCD draw request with invoices for re-imbursement of any expenses incurred after the Award date and satisfying the required disbursement conditions.
25	Resolution		Is there template language for the required resolution that will be acceptable to AHSC?	The full application workbook (Applicant Tab) includes a link to a resolution template. The resolution template is intended to be a sample. Applicants may use there own format as long as it contains ALL of the authorization contained in the provided template. A copy of the resolution template can be downloaded at the following link: http://www.hcd.ca.gov/docs/AHSCResoTemplate.docx
26	Resolution		The provided resolution template includes all portions of the application: AHD, HRI, STI, TRA and PGM costs. Does this mean that the nonprofit housing developer can submit one resolution accounting for all components of the application so that the other parties do not need to submit resolutions? Or, does each party need to submit a resolution, listing all portions of the funding request (e.g. loan and grant funds)?	Each Joint Applicant is required to submit a resolution which includes the funding amount request for each eligible use category. For example, a non-profit developer's resolution must also include the funding requested for transportation improvements which will be constructed by the City.
27	Resolution		Would a public agency resolution be acceptable if the total amount of AHSC loan and grant funds is not listed, but the amount that will go to the public agency partner for the STI and TRA is listed?	No, the resolutions for each Joint Applicant must reflect the entirety of the AHSC requested funds, including all eligible use categories (AHD, HRI, STI, TRA and PGM).
28	Resolution		Is there a 30-day grace period for the applicant to submit the signed resolution, or must the signed resolution be included with the application?	Public Entities may submit a draft resolution with the full application but must transmit signed resolutions to HCD by no later than July 31st. Signed Resolutions should be submitted via email to ahsc@hcd.ca.gov. Developers and other non-public Joint Applicants must submit a signed resolution by the full application due date on June 20th.
29	Scoring	Active Transportation Improvements	Where can we find data to show user volume for active transportation?	Availability of user volume for active transportation varies greatly along different corridors, and amongst different jurisdictions. Contact your local jurisdiction for the availability of this information. If no user volumes exist, please describe the observed user activity on the route, if any exists.
30	Scoring	Active Transportation Improvements	Can you provide examples/guidance on what the cities should prepare as the documentation of an active transportation safety issue of access barrier along Project corridor? Does the documentation need to be a formal, engineered certified study?	Any data or information available that could help document the issue at hand is available. We are leaving this open in order to allow applicants to make their case with whatever information they have. Accident data is a great example of information that could be used to document a safety issue. The information does not have to be a formal study certified by an engineer.
31	Scoring	Active Transportation Improvements	How recent must the documentation of active transportation safety issues and user volumes be?	Documentation to demonstrate an active transportation safety issue and user volumes should be the most recently available study/report provided that the data is still relevant. If formal analysis is not available, applicants should provide narrative and diagrams/pictures to reflect need for and potential impact of proposed capital improvments.
32	Scoring	Affordability	Please provide clarification on AMI vs SMI in regards to the Affordability Criteria scoring.	This discrepancy has been corrected in version 2 of the full application.

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33	Scoring	Anti-Displacement	What if we do not have anti-displacement strategies? Will the points for Anti-Displacement and Workforce Training Strategies count against us in the calculation of points compared to our maximum applicable points?	Applicants with a physical site which can demonstrate the proposed AHSC-funded project will NOT result in the physical displacement of lower-income businesses will receive a full point for the Physical Displacement portion of the criterion. However, all applications with a physical site must include Economic Displacement and Workforce Training/Employment Strategies to be eligible to receive the remaining 3 points available in the criterion. ☐
34	Scoring	Anti-Displacement	What type of documentation is needed to address Economic Anti-Displacement under the Scoring Rubric?	Applicants must identify in the space provided in the Full Application workbook all of the following: 1) identification of the strategy, 2) who is responsible for implementing the strategy and 3) how it will achieve anti-displacement objectives or address workforce training/employment strategies. No further documentation is required, however applicants should reference the document(s) which contain these policies (e.g. development agreement; local ordinance, etc.). ☐
35	Scoring	Housing and Transportation Collaboration	The guidelines state one point will be given to Projects leveraging other Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Program funds. How can applicants prove that they are leveraging other GGRF funds?	To receive the one point available, applicants must have received an award from another GGRF Program source and demonstrate how those funds will directly benefit or contribute to the development of the proposed AHSC-funded project. Applicants should upload an
36	Scoring	Housing and Transportation Collaboration	What are other Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund programs?	A listing of listing of GGRF funded programs is available on the Air Resources Board website at: http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/ggrfprogrampage.html
37	Scoring	Housing and Transportation Collaboration	Where can applicants find out if their project is in a high speed rail planning area?	Per the AHSC Guidelines Section 107(e)(4), Projects will receive one point if it is located within an environmentally cleared High Speed Rail Station Area. As of May 2016, environmentally cleared Station Areas include the following: Merced Station (located between Martin Luther King Jr. Way to the northwest and G Street to the southeast), the Fresno Station (located on H Street between Fresno and Tulare), and the San Francisco Station (located in the Transbay Terminal on Natomas street between 2nd and Beale). Please see links below for additional information on these Station Areas. Please note that these localities have defined their station areas differently. For example, Fresno has defined their station area as a half mile radius around the station. San Francisco's Transbay Terminal defines their station area in a map of their district plan. For additional information about other Station Communities, please see the High Speed Rail website (link provided below) for a list of all High Speed Rail Station Communities. On the right hand side, you will see the complete list of station communities. If you click on each individual community, you will see a map of the proposed station for each community. Each community also has a "more information" tab that may provide links to additional documents or web pages with more detail regarding the community's Station Area Planning efforts. Please note that the High Speed Rail Authority does not have Station Area Planning contracts with all of the station communities. Several other High Speed Rail stations are currently undergoing the environmental review process. Please check this website periodically for updates on the progress of the environmental review for the various station communities and project sections. Merced Station Fresno Station San Francisco Station Listing of all High Speed Rail Station Communities
38	Scoring	Location Efficiency and Access to Destinations	What if some areas do not have a Walkscore or Bikescore? What do we do? How do we score them?	Because of the limited application of BikeScore statewide, AHSC Program staff are considering alternative evaluation options for this criteria for the 2015-16 AHSC Full Application. If a project does not have a BikeScore available, please list "None" in the BikeScore submittal box. AHSC Program staff will contact applicants if additional information is required.
39	Scoring	Program Need and Readiness	What if we do not include a request for program (PGM) funds as one of our eligible uses? Will the points for Program Need and Readiness count against us in the calculation of points compared to our maximum applicable points? ☐	The Program Need and Readiness criteria applies to all applicants (see Figure 10 on page 33 of the Program Guidelines). If the application does not include a request for program (PGM) funds, the application will receive no points under this category.
40	Scoring	WEG	What documentation is necessary to demonstrate at least two years of initial maintenance for urban greening features?	The full application must provide information on who is responsible for the maintenance of the urban greening components for the required two year period. If there is not an executed maintenance agreement but there is another document (e.g. development agreement, letter of intent) that indicates the party responsible for maintenance will be, that would be sufficient. In absence of an official document detailing the responsible party, a Joint Applicant can identify themselves as the responsible party in the application. Please note, however, that the identified party will be identified in the executed Standard Agreement and will be required to provide the necessary maintenance for any and all urban greening features funded through AHSC program funds.
41	Scoring	WEG	For on-site renewable energy generation do we need to supply Title 24 compliance documents at the time of full application? This work is often done closer to construction document plan set, so this might not be readily available.	Given that the compliance documents will likely not be available at the time of the full application, the application must identify the specific components which will be included in the project design over and above Title 24. The identified components will be identified in the Standard Agreement and Joint Applicants will be required to demonstrate these features have been incorporated prior loan closing or disbursement of grant funds.
42	Scoring	WEG	How should applicants document that the Project exceeds Title 24? What kind of description is necessary in the application? Is there a minimum standard for which applicants must be able to demonstrate the extent to which a project will exceed Title 24 to receive full points?	There is no specific requirement for the percentage by which the Project must exceed either the Green Building Code or Building Energy Efficiency Standards. However, applicants should clearly identify the specific components which will be incorporated and provide a description of how they exceed Title 24. Please note, the identified components will be identified in the Standard Agreement and Joint Applicants will be required to demonstrate these features have been incorporated prior loan closing or disbursement of grant funds. ☐

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43	Scoring	WEG	Where do I find the "reach standards" referenced in the WEG section?	More information on Reach Standards (or voluntary measures) are available at: http://codes.iccsafe.org/app/book/toc/2015/CALIFORNIA/2013%20CALIFORNIA%20GREEN%20BUILDING%20STANDARDS,%20SUPPLEMENT%20JULY%202015/index.html Please see Appendix A4 for residential and Appendix A5 for non-residential.
44	Scoring		The AHSC Criteria Applicability table Figure 10 on page 33 of the guidelines does not have a column for a RIPA with Physical Site /AHD which describes our project?	All applications - TOD, ICP and RIPA - which include a request for funds for an AHD or HRI eligible use fall into the "Physical Site with AHD/HRI" column and have 100 maximum applicable points.
45	STI/TRA	CEQA/NEPA	We already have environmental clearance on this project except for a block that is Caltrans-controlled. How do we provide documentation for this?	You may obtain either a MOU or LOI from Caltrans stating that it's ministerial, or that outlines timeline and assurance for clearance.
46	STI/TRA	Readiness	For STIs and TRAs that will be built only in the public right of way, what site control documentation is necessary? Is it enough to simply say they are in the public right of way thus documentation is N/A? The current types of site control listed on the table in the readiness tab do not feel applicable/familiar terms to our City partners.	Yes, stating that the project is in public ROW under the discretion of one of the applicants would meet the requirements.