



**Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Program**  
**Application Packet**  
**2018**

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Applications deadline:

**DECEMBER 31, 2018**

Merced County Association of Governments  
369 West 18th Street  
Merced, CA 95340  
209-723-3153  
<http://www.mcagov.org>

## Introduction and Timeline

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) is issuing a Call for Projects primarily for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ). At this time, only the seven member agencies (Merced Region's cities and county) and the region's two regionally-recognized transit agencies (Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County and Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System) may apply.

CMAQ projects must document their emissions reductions and they must be able to meet all federal requirements including NEPA. They must be programmed in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) and must obtain federal funding obligation (E-76) in order to be reimbursed for incurred, eligible costs.

**Project applications are due at MCAG by 5 pm on December 31, 2018.**

Agencies may submit multiple projects. The CMAQ committee will evaluate and score the projects and make a recommendation of projects for programming. The Governing Board may program projects and amend the FTIP at their February 2019 meeting.

## About CMAQ

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) is a federal funding program. The purpose of the program is to fund **transportation** projects or programs that will contribute to attainment or maintenance of national air quality standards. Funding can be expended on projects to reduce ozone and particulate matter and precursor emissions – nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOC), and particulate matter (PM).

## Eligible Projects

Some examples of **eligible** projects:

- Traffic flow improvements (e.g. roundabout; auxiliary (turn) lane; signals synchronization; etc.);
- Bicycle and pedestrian projects;
- Ridesharing, carpooling and vanpooling programs; and
- Transit service expansion and transit management systems.

For construction-type projects, PE work (consultant or force account work) is also eligible.

Examples of **ineligible** projects:

- Projects that add new capacity for single-occupant vehicles;
- Maintenance and rehabilitation / reconstruction projects.

Due to tighter federal restrictions, **equipment and vehicle replacements will not be considered** in this cycle.

## Cost-Effectiveness Policy

Since 2011, all San Joaquin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), including MCAG, adopted policies for distributing at least 20% of CMAQ funds to projects that meet a cost-effectiveness threshold for emission reductions. MCAG will continue to make the effort to meet this target funding goal.

**The cost-effectiveness threshold is \$45 per pound (\$90,000 per ton).** Projects meeting this threshold ( $\leq$  \$45/lb.) will receive up to 20 points during application scoring.\*

The proposed methodology for calculating cost-effectiveness is the 2005 ARB “Methods to Find the Cost-Effectiveness of Funding Air Quality Projects”. This report is available on the source website: [www.arb.ca.gov/planning/tsaq/eval/eval.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/planning/tsaq/eval/eval.htm).

Utilizing this ARB cost-effectiveness methodology and the most current emission factor tables (May 2013), staff has prepared a standardized spreadsheet for applicants to use. The result should be submitted along with the application.

Other methodology may be used for projects not included in the guidance or upon agreement. Cost-effectiveness for CMAQ projects should be expressed as dollars spent per pound of pollutant reduced (ROG + NOx + PM2.5 + PM10). Cost-effectiveness is based on CMAQ dollars only (not total project costs).

### Example Formula

Cost-Effectiveness = (Capital Recovery Factor \* CMAQ Funding) / (ROG + NOx + PM2.5 + PM10)

**Note\*:** A possible way to meet the cost-effectiveness threshold ( $\leq$  \$45/lb.) is to request less CMAQ funding for the project.

## Policies and Procedures for Programming CMAQ Funds

The updated Policies and Procedures were adopted by the MCAG Governing Board at the September 2018 meeting. This will be posted on MCAG's CMAQ webpage.

### Application Requirements

All project applications must document all of the following information:

- Project total cost and CMAQ cost, by phase and by year;
- Engineer's Estimate;
- Total emission reductions;
- Cost-effectiveness of CMAQ dollars;
- Project schedule;
- Proof of public vetting; and
- Assurance of timely delivery of programmed projects (via. board/city council action).

### Categorical Funding Goals

The following category funding goals are as follows:

- Cost-effective projects (**≤ \$45 per pound**): at least 20%;
- Transit: as needed; and
- Pedestrian/bicycle: at least 40%.

### Application Scoring

Staff will review and assess project applications for their completeness and CMAQ eligibility. The CMAQ Scoring Committee will evaluate and score project applications, and make a recommendation for programming. The following scoring factors will be used to rank the project applications.

- **Cost-effectiveness: 20 points**
  - Priority is given to Highly Cost-Effective projects (≤ \$45/lb.)
- **Vehicle Miles Traveled Reduction: 10 points**
  - Reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) results in reduction of GHG emissions
- **Benefits Disadvantaged Community (DAC): 5 points**
  - See <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EnvJustice/GHGInvest/>
  - Partial points could be awarded if:
    - project location is partially in a DAC,
    - if not in a DAC, but benefits to one which could be explained.
- **Subjective Evaluation: 15 points**
  - Such considerations may include, but are not limited to: safety, functionality, connectivity, accessibility, improving quality of life, supportive of economic activity such as goods movement.
- **Project Requesting CMAQ for Right-of-Way: -10 points**
  - Projects without right-of-way acquisition(s) are preferred due to lower implementation cost and less risk of delay.
  - If right-of-way acquisition is required for a project, non-CMAQ funding (100%) could avoid this deduction.

### **Scoring Committee**

The scoring committee consists of 9 members, one from each of the following agencies:

- City of Atwater;
- City of Dos Palos;
- City of Gustine;
- City of Livingston;
- City of Los Banos;
- City of Merced;
- County of Merced;
- Transit Joint Powers Authority; and
- Caltrans District 10.

### **Schedule**

The following is the schedule:

December 2018	Deadline for applications
January 2019	Initial Screening of Eligibility by MCAG Staff
January 2019	CMAQ Scoring Committee to evaluate applications
February 2019	Board takes action on recommended projects and FTIP amendment

## CMAQ Project Application

**Applications must be received at MCAG by 5 pm December 31, 2018.**

Submit at least one hard copy and an electronic copy (if possible), to:

Merced County Association of Governments  
Attn: Ty Phimmasonne  
 369 West 18<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Merced, CA 95340

**Agency (project applicant):**

**Application prepared by (name, title, phone #):**

**Project Scope of Work (brief):**

**Project Description (details including project limits):**

**Project Cost (\$):**

	CMAQ (88.53%)	Local (11.47%)	CMAQ (88.53%)	Local (11.47%)	Total
Prelim. Engineering (PE)					
Right-of-Way (R/W)					
Construction					
TOTAL					

**Project Cost-Effectiveness (in dollars/pound) (attach calculations):**

**Source of Local Match (minimum 11.47%):**

**Air Pollution Reduction (in kg/day of reduced emissions) (attach calculations):**

**Project Schedule:**

**Additional Information (attach more sheets if needed). Projects will be evaluated subjectively based (up to 15 points) on this supporting information:**

**Proof of Public Vetting:**

**Assurance of Project Delivery by Formal Board/City Council Action? YES or NO? If no, when will this be provided? (MUST BE provided within 1 month of MCAG Board awarding CMAQ for project)**