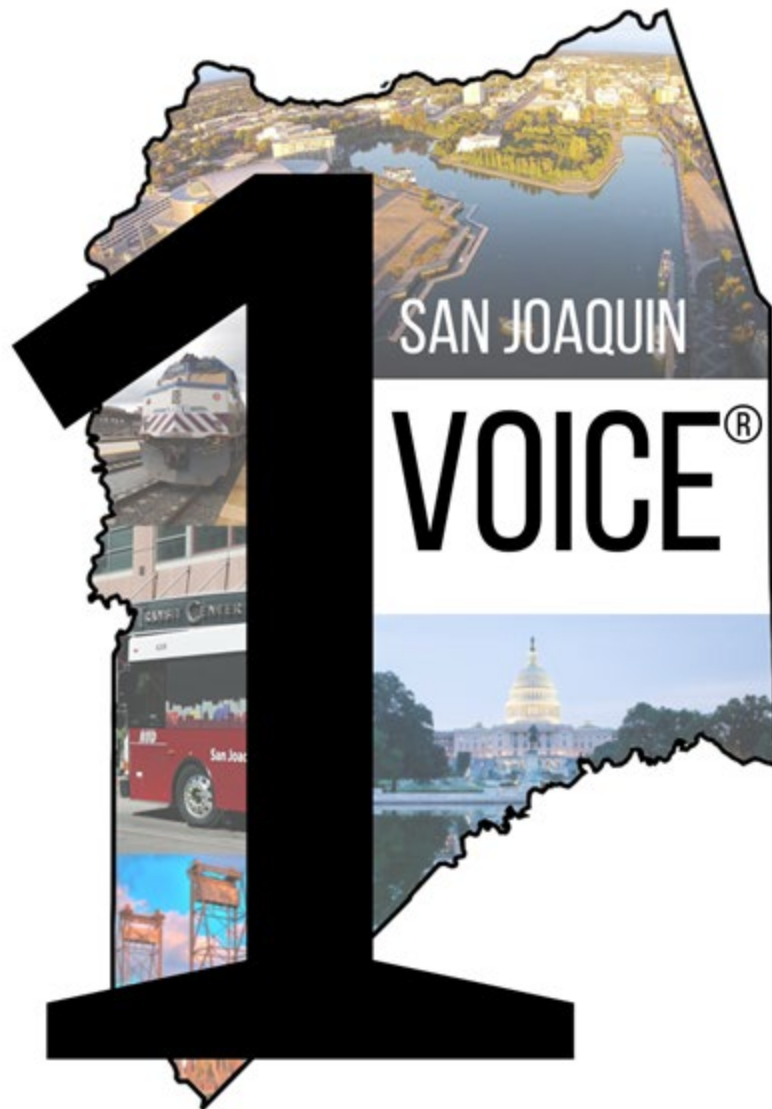


FY 2024 One Voice® Guidelines



SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

San Joaquin Council of Governments
FY 2024 One Voice® Program Guidelines
Table of Contents

A.	Introduction	3
	Background.....	3
B.	Project Evaluation Procedures	3
	Project Criteria	3
	One Voice® Project Ad-Hoc Committee	4
	Funding Opportunities.....	4
C.	Program Schedule	5

A. Introduction

Background

San Joaquin One Voice® is SJCOG's federal advocacy program for San Joaquin County that promotes projects, programs, and issues of regional significance to federal legislators and agencies typically through an annual trip to Washington, D.C.

With the return of federal earmarks, continued availability of funding opportunities from transportation and infrastructure legislation, the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) is focusing the One Voice® initiative on elevating regional projects and maximizing funding success. As a result, projects being submitted to SJCOG for One Voice® support will need to ensure they're clearly aligned with SJCOG's legislative priorities and eligibility requirements for the discretionary and federal earmark programs.

B. Project Evaluation Procedures

To increase competitiveness of the region's projects, SJCOG has developed a process to review and evaluate project applications. The process includes determining project eligibility based on established criteria and an ad-hoc committee to review the applications. The committee will offer suggestions to improve applications to successfully receive federal funding assistance. Outlined below are the project eligibility criteria, the roles, and responsibilities of the ad-hoc committee, and a description of the funding opportunities.

Project Criteria

To align with infrastructure legislation, SJCOG will publish a list of federal funding opportunities to be released in the current and near future fiscal years. Any public agency, the Port of Stockton, and all airports are eligible to submit one regional project application. Each application will specify which federal funding program(s) to which the sponsor is applying.

Below are the criteria by which the projects will be evaluated. Sponsors will be notified if a project application does not meet the criteria so that it can be modified.

- Be regional in nature and have a federal nexus.
- Must be at or near completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance, or qualified waiver, for projects seeking ROW or construction funding. If not already cleared, the project sponsor will be asked to provide the anticipated clearance date and explain how the project status can be competitive for the federal programs (see application form for list).
- Be sufficiently developed to leverage federal assistance (shovel ready).

- Explain whether the sponsor is utilizing any formula funding for the project elements and detail how formula funds are being applied. If not utilizing formula funds, explain why formula funds are not being applied to the project.
- Projects should be targeted for appropriations in the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 budget or an upcoming notice of agency funding opportunity
- Demonstrated community support
- Identify if project can be submitted as an “earmark” if a congressional call for projects is announced
- All narrative shall be in Word for ease in cut and pasting to project sheets.

Each jurisdiction will be limited to one regionally significant project. SJCOG, as it has done in the past, will also be limiting its submittal to one project.

One Voice® Project Ad-Hoc Committee

The committee’s purpose is not to eliminate projects, but to review the submittals and identify framing strengths and weaknesses. Feedback will be forwarded to the sponsor. The sponsors will be asked to elaborate on the details of that part of the project. The process is designed to ensure the projects are presented to decision makers and legislative representatives in the most effective format that gives them the best chance for success in receiving federal funds.

Ad-Hoc Committee Membership:

- 1 member of the business community
- 1 SJCOG staff
- 1 CJ Lake
- 1 from San Joaquin County
- 1 each from San Joaquin Regional Transit District and San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
- All cities can participate on the committee

This committee will review applications. Suggestions to improve applications will be offered to project sponsors. This may be an iterative process to achieve the final application. The final project list is planned for either the February or March 2024 SJCOG Board meeting.

Funding Opportunities

Funding opportunities from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law continue to be noticed. It is important that the projects SJCOG puts forward are regional in scope, have been vetted, and have a pathway through the funding opportunities available. The federal program sheets (Attachment B.) provide descriptions of each federal funding opportunity listed in the One Voice® Project Application Form.

C. Program Schedule

The tentative program schedule has been changed to align with the One Voice® Trip in May 2024. The schedule allows for the ad-hoc committee to meet prior to taking the final project list to the SJCOG Board. The schedule also allows for time to refine the project descriptions prior to the trip. Table 1 lists the program schedule through the February 2024 SJCOG Board meeting.

Action	Deadline
Call For Projects	10/27/2023
Projects Due	11/27/2023
Ad hoc Committee Review Due	1/10/2024
Ad hoc Committee Meeting	1/17/2024
Jan. Board w/ Draft Project List	1/25/2024
Feb. Board Mailout	2/15/2024
Feb. Board Meeting	2/22/2024

Table 1. Tentative Program Schedule