**Questions and Answers**

**FAST – Fast and Available Charging for All Californians**

**GFO-22-611**

**May 25, 2023**

The following answers are based on California Energy Commission (CEC) staff’s interpretation of the questions received. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to review the purpose of the solicitation and to determine whether or not their proposed project is eligible for funding by reviewing the Eligibility Requirements within the solicitation. The CEC cannot give advice as to whether or not a particular project is eligible for funding, because not all proposal details are known.

# Project Requirements – General

**Q1:**  **Is this program stackable with other CEC charging incentives like the CALeVIP Golden State Priority Project?**

A1: No. Other sources of CEC funding may not be claimed as match share per Solicitation Manual Section II.C.4.

**Q2:**  **Would an authorized representative for an eligible applicant be allowed to submit the grant application?**

A2: Any person submitting an application on behalf of an organization must have the authority to represent that organization, including making the authorizations and certifications stated in the Solicitation Manual, Grant Solicitation System, and other materials.

**Q3:**  **Does FAST require project to pay prevailing wage?**

A3: Please see Section 26, “Public Works – Payment of Prevailing Wages” in the Clean Transportation Program Terms and Conditions (Attachment 10) for prevailing wage requirements.

**Q4:**  **Our city has a small transit service for dial and ride EV buses. Would charging stations for the buses qualify?**

A4: Charging stations must be publicly available. Reservation systems may be used, but must be made equally available to members of the public as to gig or commercial drivers.

**Q5:**  **Is there a formal definition for charging plazas?**

A5: No. Charging plazas are listed as examples of projects that may qualify.

**Q6:**  **Are there any stipulations on charging rate design? That is, charging rates themselves.**

A6: If the question is regarding power of chargers, minimum power requirements for chargers can be found in Section II.B.5 of the Solicitation Manual. If the question is referring to cost, there are no requirements. Per Section III.D.2.b.6 of the Solicitation Manual, Applicants will provide estimated costs for charging, and the “Market Viability” evaluation criterion in Section IV.E.1 of the Solicitation Manual includes an evaluation on the degree to which projects provide economic benefits to drivers.

# Project Requirements – Chargers

**Q7:** **I’m not familiar with the 97% uptime. What does that mean?**

A7: Chargers installed under FAST are required to be operational 97% of the time for six years after the beginning of operation. (Attachment 2 - Scope of Work, Task 3, “Operations and Reliability.”) A charging port is considered “up” when its hardware and software are both online and available for use, or in use, and the charging port successfully dispenses electricity in accordance with requirements for minimum power level. Uptime is the percentage of time a charging port is “up.” (Attachment 2 – Scope of Work, Definitions.)

**Q8:**  **I have a car sharing business through Turo. Can you expand on the eligibility for car sharing? For example, do the chargers have to be installed where the car sharing vehicles are parked?**

A8: Eligible projects will provide EV charging infrastructure to support charging for on-demand transportation services, car sharing enterprises, or car rental agencies, and the public. Eligible projects must demonstrate participation of or written support from on-demand transportation service companies, car sharing enterprises, or car rental agencies. There is no requirement that the chargers would need to be installed where car sharing vehicles or any other vehicles are parked. Charging stations must be publicly available.

**Q9:**  **The application states the chargers must "Be capable of at least a simultaneous 150 KW guaranteed power output at each active connector." Some of our sites have a mix of power outputs. Can we apply for a portion of a site that meets this requirement with at least 4 active connectors? ie. a 12 stall site that meets these requirements at 4 stalls?**

A9: Chargers installed under FAST must be capable of at least a simultaneous 150 kW guaranteed power output at each active connector. Other chargers on site that do not meet this requirement would not be eligible for CEC reimbursement or match share contribution. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.5, “Charging Equipment.”)

# Project Requirements – Certifications

**Q10:**  **Please explain a bit more about EVITP.**

A10: Section II.B.6 of the Solicitation Manual, and Attachment 2 - Scope of Work, Task 2, contain the requirements for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Project (EVITP) certification. Additional information regarding EVITP can be found at [www.evitp.org](https://caenergy.sharepoint.com/sites/FTD/Shared%20Documents/FTD%20Shared%20Files/Solicitations/2022/GFO-22-611%20(FAST)/Q&A/www.evitp.org).

**Q11:** **ENERGY STAR requirements for DC fast chargers are not yet fully developed. Earlier this year, the FHWA determined that ENERGY STAR certification for DCFC was premature and elected not to adopt this requirement in its set of NEVI standards. In addition, ENERGY STAR requirements that exist today for DCFC may conflict with a safe and reliable charging experience for customers. Features such as indicator lights and security lights and cameras are key safety features that enhance customer experience and reduce vandalism. As such, we recommend CEC remove the ENERGY STAR requirement (*Solicitation Manual p. 10*) from CEC FAST to align with Federal standards.**

A11: Any chargers installed after July 1, 2023 must be ENERGY STAR certified. (Solicitation Manual Section II.B.5, “Charging Equipment.”) Solicitation Manual Section II.B.3, "EV Charging Station Accessibility and Availability” requirements include that charging locations and parking areas must be well-lit. The charger user must be able to easily read any instructions on the charger and the area around the vehicle must have adequate lighting to allow the driver to safely walk from the charger to the charging port on the vehicle.

# Project Requirements – Site Location

**Q12:**  **Would a project that involves two counties, both in the same region, qualify as one application?**

A12: Yes. An application may propose a project with sites in multiple counties within a single region. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.2, “Project Location Requirements.”)

**Q13:**  **Does the land have to be classified as commercial property?**

A13: FAST does not require land to be classified as commercial property. FAST, however, does require that proposed projects meet all local requirements, including zoning and permitting of commercial activity. Section II.B.3 of the Solicitation Manual states, “All successful Applicants must comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards; all federal, state, and local electrical and building codes for construction; and all Americans with Disability Act (ADA) codes.” This includes applicable zoning and permitting of commercial activity.

**Q14:**  **There is a requirement for 50% of the project’s EV chargers to be installed within disadvantaged communities. What is defined as disadvantaged?**

A14: As stated in Section II.B.4 of the Solicitation Manual, “Disadvantaged communities are designated by the California Environmental Protection Agency, under Senate Bill 535. Low-income communities are defined per Assembly Bill 1550 (Gomez, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016) as census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted under California Health and Safety Code Section 50093.

“Applicants should use the California Air Resources Board California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2022 CES 4.0 map (https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations/) to identify disadvantaged communities and/or low-income communities.”

**Q15:**  **Can we apply for multiple sites in one application?**

A15: Applicants may propose a project for multiple sites under one application, as long as those sites are located within the same geographic region. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.2, “Project Location Requirements.”)

**Q16:**  **Since we are building a site that is currently in construction and set to have doors open in the fourth quarter of 2023, is it possible for near term projects like that to be considered for FAST even though they are “new build”?**

A16: All deployments must be at existing structures or facilities and involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.1. "Eligible Projects.”) A site identified in an application must be an “existing structure or facilit[y].”

**Q17:**  **There is a requirement for the project to be on existing structures in order to be eligible. Would my project be eligible if I don’t own the structure or land? How about if I'm negotiating for land usage after the application is submitted?**

A17: There is no requirement in the solicitation that the Applicant own the structure or land. There is no requirement in the solicitation that the site be secured at the time the application is submitted. Please note that the Evaluation Criteria includes Project Location and Project Readiness (Solicitation Manual Sections IV.E.2 and IV.E.5).

**Q18:**  **Would new build charging stations on existing parking lots be excluded under the no expansion requirement?**

A18: An Applicant should consider current traffic and traffic forecasted with a proposed project to determine whether the project would "involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.” (Solicitation Manual Section II.B.1, "Eligible Projects.")

# Eligible Costs

**Q19:** **When can cost incur?**

A19: Match share expenditures are allowable under an agreement only if they are incurred after CEC notifies the Applicant that its project has been proposed for an award through the release of a Notice of Proposed Awards (NOPA). Match expenditures incurred after the release of the NOPA but prior to the execution of an agreement are made at the Applicant’s own risk. CEC is not liable for Applicant’s match share costs if the agreement is not executed, if execution is delayed, or if the match share expenditure is not allowable under the terms and conditions of the grant agreement or this solicitation. Please note that all non-match expenditures incurred prior to agreement execution are not reimbursable from CEC funds. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.C.1.h, “Total Match Share Requirement.”)

**Q20:**  **Would an existing solar system already installed at the facility be consider as a renewable distributed energy resource (DER)? And would the grant consider the EV infrastructure to be integrated with it?**

A20: Projects may include deployment of renewable DERs or energy storage systems for supplying power to chargers or charging systems provided the Applicant demonstrates that the DER is a component of the system necessary to address their charging requirements. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.5, “Charging Equipment.”) Existing DERs or other systems could potentially be considered as an in-kind contribution under match requirements, but would not be eligible for CEC reimbursement. (For more info on match funding requirements, see Solicitation Manual, Section II.C, “Match Funding Requirements,” and Attachment 10 – Clean Transportation Program Standard Terms and Conditions, Section 18.d, “Match Share Requirements.”)

**Q21:**  **Are any vehicle purchases eligible under FAST?**

A21: No. Vehicle purchases are **not** eligible for either CEC reimbursement or match share contribution. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.12, “Eligible Costs.”)

**Q22:**  **Would a financed project be considered as match? Or does the applicant need to bring in cash towards their 50% share?**

A22: Applications must include a minimum cash contribution equal to at least 50 percent of the minimum match requirement. Cash match means the net of any funds actually expended by the Applicant for the project. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.C.2, “Cash Match Share Requirement.”)

**Q23:**  **Is purchasing land or property an eligible cost?**

A23: The purchase of land or property is not eligible for CEC reimbursement but may count as match share. (For more information on match share requirements, see Solicitation Manual, Section II.C, “Match Funding Requirements,” and Attachment 10 – Clean Transportation Program Standard Terms and Conditions, Section 18.d, “Match Share Requirements.”) Expenditures other than for site design, installation, labor, site preparation, upgrade for utility connections, signage, maintenance and equipment necessary to implement and operate the proposed charging station ARE NOT eligible for reimbursement under this solicitation and any resultant Agreement(s). (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.12, “Eligible Costs.”)

**Q24:**  **What construction costs are covered by FAST, such as building facilities that would support charging infrastructure?**

A24: Projects are required to be at existing structures or facilities and involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Expenditures other than for site design, installation, labor, site preparation, upgrade for utility connections, signage, maintenance and equipment necessary to implement and operate the proposed charging station ARE NOT eligible for reimbursement under this solicitation and any resultant Agreement(s). (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.12, “Eligible Costs.”)

**Q25:**  **In the case of charging plazas, will the CEC allow projects where a portion of the plaza is utilized for dedicated fleet charging with some charging stations open for public use? (e.g. A plaza with ten stalls dedicated for rideshare/TNC use and ten stalls open for public use?)**

A25: All chargers installed under FAST must be publicly available and accessible for at least 18 hours per day. Other chargers on site that do not meet this requirement would not be eligible for CEC reimbursement or match share contribution. (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.3, “EV Charging Station Accessibility and Availability.”)