**Questions and Answers**

**Reliable, Equitable, and Accessible Charging for Multi-family Housing 3.0**

**GFO-24-604**

**December 19, 2024**

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.

Applicant Eligibility

**Q1.** **Would we be able to apply on behalf of the applicant as an electrical contractor/service provider, property or ownership group, etc.? If so, would we apply individually for each project or would we group all applications under application?**

A1. As stated in the Solicitation Manual, “the entity applying to the Solicitation (the Applicant) will become the Recipient, if awarded” (Section II.A.1., “Eligibility” page 7). Any person applying on behalf of an organization must have the authority to represent that organization, including providing the required authorizations and certifications stated in the Solicitation Manual, Energy Commission Agreement Management System (ECAMS), and other required application materials as stated in Section III “Application Format, Required Documents, and Delivery” of the Solicitation Manual (pages 20-32). The addended solicitation manual also clarifies, “Applicants are only eligible to submit one application under this solicitation. **An application may only include one project.**” (Section I.H., “Maximum Number of Applications” page 3).

**Q2. Do we have to win the project as an "administrator", or can we apply for any interval of 120 ports and work with a CEC designated "administrator"?**

A2. As stated in the Solicitation Manual, “the entity applying to the Solicitation (the Applicant) will become the Recipient, if awarded” (Section II.A.1., “Eligibility” page 7). If an entity would prefer to act as a Subrecipient or Vendor, the entity will need to partner with another entity that can act as the grant Recipient (see [[ECAMS Budget Category Guidance](https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources/ecams-resources/budget-category-guidance?auHash=cEItgat6JNbO9BFGeVqe4E5T6koCOgTaqliFX6bmwtg)](https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources/ecams-resources) for definitions, https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources/ecams-resources).

**Q3.**  **Can a vendor serve as a subrecipient or installer on multiple applications?**

A3. Yes

**Q4.**  **Are awardees of previous REACH programs eligible to apply for REACH 3.0?**

A4. Yes. Please note that funds from REACH 3.0 cannot be stacked with other CEC funds for the same project.

**Q5.**  **Can an organization/vendor serve as Prime Recipient on one application and as a Subrecipient or installer on other applications?**

A5. Yes.

**Q6.**  **What is considered an "investor-owned building" under this solicitation?**

A6. This solicitation does not include a definition or any restrictions for “investor-owned buildings”. The solicitation manual does however state Investor-owned *utilities* are ineligible applicants under this solicitation (Section II.A. “Applicant Requirements” page 3).

Project Eligibility and Requirements

**Q7.** **Can we install 120 ports over multiple sites (i.e., 40 ports at 3 locations)?**

A7. Yes, the Solicitation Manual states, “A project can be comprised of installations at multiple MFH properties” (Section II.B.2, “Eligible Projects” page 10)

**Q8.** **Can we apply to install 480 ports?**

A8. Yes, projects must install a minimum of 120 charging ports, but there is no maximum number of charging ports that can be installed. However, the maximum funding amount for any single project is $6,000,000 (Solicitation Manual, Section I.G. “Minimum and Maximum Award Amounts”, page 3).

**Q9.** **What is defined as multi-family housing? Will condos be included?**

A9. As defined in the Solicitation Manual, multi-family housing is defined as “residential properties with multiple dwelling units excluding single-family dwellings (detached), condominiums, duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and mobile homes” (Section V.A., “Definition of Key Words” page 42).

**Q10. Will additional points be awarded for using solar energy storage? Can automated load management (ALM) be used?**

A10. According to theSolicitation Manual, renewable distributed energy resources (DER) or energy storage equipment/systems capable of providing independent or supplemental power to the EV charging ports (separately metered for electric charging) may be used. (Section II.B.1 “Eligible Projects” page 10). Usage of DER may factor into an Applicant’s Sustainability and Innovation Evaluation Criteria Score which indicates, “Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which the proposed project promotes and measures sustainability and innovation, e.g., minimizes grid upgrades, enhances grid reliability, enables load management, etc.” (Section IV.E.9 “Sustainability and Innovation” page 39).

ALM and similar systems may be used. Please see the details in Section II.B.5. page 12 of the Solicitation Manual for how usage of these systems affect the minimum kW output requirements.

**Q11. Would recipients be able to receive bonus points for providing electricity through solar energy storage at a much lower cost than grid electricity?**

A11. There are no bonus points available under this solicitation, however use of renewable energy storage systems may factor into an applicant’s score through evaluation criteria such as Sustainability and Innovation or Project Location and Benefits (Solicitation Manual, Section IV.E. “Evaluation Criteria” page 38).

**Q12.**  **Do all project sites need to be identified in the application? Or can applicants identify sites after the award?**

A12. Project sites can be identified after a project is awarded, however site details such as location type, whether the site is located in a priority area, and the number of multi-family housing units being served are required details as part of the Project Narrative (Attachment 1). For unknown sites, an applicant may list TBD (or leave the priority area blank) for these categories with the understanding that the Evaluation Committee will assume no priority area and no multi-family housing units served for those sites. An applicant may select a priority area for an unknown site, however if awarded, must select a site within the selected priority area for that site.

**Q13. Is there a prevailing wage requirement for installation or does it depend on source of matching funds?**

A13. The CEC assumes that all projects it funds are public works projects and therefore subject to Prevailing Wage laws. See the standard Terms and Conditions (located on the CEC’s website, <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources>) for more information on Prevailing Wages.

**Q14.** **Are Affordable housing units eligible?**

A14. Yes, applicants are encouraged to pursue installations that serve residents in affordable housing.

**Q15.** **Can we install chargers at single-family homes if they are designated as affordable housing?**

A15. No, the Solicitation Manual states, “Projects **may not** include charger installations in any single-family dwellings (detached), duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, or mobile homes” (Section II.B.1 “Eligible Projects” page 10).

**Q16.** **Do installations serving residents in affordable housing count toward the 50% disadvantaged and low-income community (DAC/LIC) requirement?**

A16. No, a minimum of 50 percent of a project’s EV charging ports must be installed within DAC/LICs (please see Section II.B.3 “Serving Underserved Communities”, page 10 of the Solicitation Manual). Project sites that serve residents in affordable housing however are encouraged and may benefit an Applicant’s score in scoring criteria such as the Priority Population kW Weighted Average category (Solicitation Manual, page 23, Section III.D.2 “Project Narrative”).

**Q17. How does the $12,500 rebate break down?**

A17. The addended Solicitation Manual clarifies, “Projects shall adhere to a CEC cost cap of $12,500 per charging port installed. This cost cap includes all CEC reimbursable project costs. Applicants should not request more CEC funding than their project’s CEC cost cap and should be mindful of this cost cap while preparing and submitting application materials.” (Section II.B.1 “Eligible Projects” page 9).

**Q18.** **Do Buffer Low Income Communities count toward the 50% DAC/LIC requirement? What layers need to be selected on the California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2024 GIS tool?**

A18. No, Buffer Low Income Communities do not count toward the DAC/LIC 50% minimum requirement. Applicants may use the “Disadvantaged Communities CES4.0”, “Low Income Communities”, and “Disadvantaged Communities Tribal Lands” layers on the [California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2023 map](https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations) (https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations/) to identify disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and Tribes, respectively. See Section II.B.3 “Serving Underserved Communities”, page 10 of the Solicitation Manual for more information.

**Q19.**  **Are 50% of sites required to be in a DAC?**

A19. No, a minimum of 50 percent of a project’s EV *charging ports* must be installed within DACs and/or LICs.

**Q20. Are automated load management (ALM) system, battery energy storage systems, and solar generator systems considered part of the EVSE, and thus require certifications such as the California Type Evaluation Program (CTEP)?**

A20. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure all legal requirements are met for any EVSE installed, including CTEP certification. The California Department of Food and Agriculture Division of Measurement Standards has more information on CTEP compliance.

**Q21.** **What expenses are eligible for match share?**

A21. Applicants should reference the Solicitation Manual, Section II.B. “Project Requirements” pages 14-15 for a list of eligible match expenses and Section II.C., “Match Funding Requirements,” pages 16-18, for match share requirements.

**Q22.** **Are operating fees (i.e. costs for maintenance, networking, connectivity) covered by CEC funds? If yes, for how long? Which Operation fees are eligible for reimbursement and what is not eligible?**

A22. As clarified in the addended Solicitation Manual, “Maintenance during the term of the agreement, or a maintenance agreement for a term of up to six years from installation” are eligible for CEC reimbursement or as match share. The addended Solicitation Manual also states, “equipment warranties for a term of up to six years following installation” and “Costs to network chargers during the term of the agreement or a networking agreement for a term of up to six years from installation” are not eligible for CEC reimbursement but may included as an Applicant’s match share (Section II.B.10., “Eligible Project Costs” page 15).

**Q23. Could you provide resources or references for us to understand how the CEC issues reimbursements for invoiced work and expenses once the project starts?**

A23. The Recipient is responsible for following CEC procedures for submitting invoices and will be reimbursed for eligible expenses in arrears. The CEC utilizes the Energy Commission Agreement Management System (ECAMS) to support administrative tasks, including invoicing. Steps for invoicing are available at the ECAMS Resources webpage found here: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources/ecams-resources>

The Solicitation Manual states, “Non-match expenditures incurred prior to the agreement execution are not reimbursable from CEC funds” (Section II.C. “Match Funding Requirements” pages 15-16).

The Recipient will submit invoices to the CEC and receive reimbursement for eligible costs. More information on the payment of funds is located in Section 17 of the Clean Transportation Program Terms and Conditions.

**Q24**. **If the local electric utility provider charges the property owner for meter installation, transformer installation, electric panel upgrade, are these eligible costs for reimbursement covered by CEC funds?**

A24. Costs incurred for the applicant’s cost-share of utility installation directly related to or caused by the project, such as meters, transformer installation, and electric panel upgrades are eligible for CEC reimbursement or as the Applicant’s match share. Please see Section II.B.10 “Eligible Project Costs,” Solicitation Manual (page 15) for more information.

**Q25. Is there a Certified Access Specialist (CASp) assigned to this project or will a CASp be needed to ensure accessibility and the EV charging stations?** **Will accessibility compliance need to be verified?**

A25. By signing this Agreement, Recipients assure the State that they will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as applicable regulations and guidelines issued pursuant to the ADA. (Section 22.e., “Certifications and Compliance” page 22, Standard Clean Transportation Program Terms and Conditions).

**Q26.**  **If these chargers are located in private multi-family residences and are ONLY there to serve those residents, do they need to be CTEP compliant as they are not public chargers?**

A26. The Solicitation Manual states, “All public chargers must meet applicable requirements, including those of Senate Bill 454 (Corbett, Chapter 418, Statutes of 2013), the California Air Resources Board Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Standards, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture Division of Measurement Standards, for public chargers.

All electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) installed for commercial use shall have a type approval certificate issued through the California Type Evaluation Program (CTEP) administered by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Division of Measurement Standards (DMS) or Certificate of Conformance issued by the National Type Evaluation Program (NTEP) administered through the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM). California accepts NTEP certificates so long as the device also meets CCR Title 4, Section 4002.1” (Section II.B.5 “Charging Equipment” pages 11-12). Please see the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s CTEP website (<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/dms/programs/ctep/ctep.html>) for more information.

Eligible Costs & Reimbursement

**Q27.**  **Will the $12,500 cost cap cover installation for non-grid tied infrastructure?**

A27. The addended Solicitation Manual states “**Projects shall adhere to a CEC cost cap of $12,500 per charging port installed. This cost cap includes all CEC reimbursable project costs”** (Section II.B.1 “Eligible Projects”, page 10). The Solicitation Manual also indicates electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) can be grid connected or non-grid connected (Section II.B.5 “Charging Equipment” page 11).

**Q28.** **Does this grant cover both retrofits and new construction? Can funding be used to replace broken or non-functioning chargers?**

A28. No, funding is only for new installations of chargers.

The Solicitation Manual states, “All deployments must be at existing structures or facilities and involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use” (Section II.B.1., “Eligible Projects,” page 10). New construction sites are not eligible. Project sites must be located at existing facilities as that is interpreted under CEQA. For purposes of eligibility under this solicitation, partially-built structures or facilities (at the time of application) are not considered “existing.” See Attachment 10 (California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Worksheet) and Section III.D.10. “CEQA Worksheet (Attachment 10)” on pages 29–31 of the Solicitation Manual for more information.

**Q29.**  **Will expenses associated with CTEP compliance be eligible? If so, which expenses are eligible, if not how does CEC see this working in low income communities?**

A29. No, the Unallowable Costs section of the Solicitation Manual (Section II.D, page 18) states “Costs associated with Compliance with Local, Regional, State, or Federal Law, Rule or Regulation are not eligible. For example, expenses associated with ensuring compliance with state or federal building codes, including provisions of the California Green Building Standards Code requiring the installation of a minimum amount of electric vehicle supply equipment, Electric Vehicle Capable, or Electric Vehicle Ready parking spaces, are not an allowable item of cost.”

**Q30.**  **Will DCFC installations be considered for this award?**

A30. DCFC charging equipment is NOT eligible for funding under this solicitation. Please see Section II.B.10 “Eligible Project Costs” of the Solicitation Manual (page 15) for more details.

**Q31. Are electrical upgrades eligible costs?**

A31. Applicant’s cost-share of utility installation are eligible costs. These may include transformers, electric panels, conduit, wiring, and meters. Please see the Eligible Costs section of the Solicitation Manual (Section II.B.10) for more information.

Project Requirements – Chargers

**Q32.** **Are untethered EVSE okay with this application?**

A32. The solicitation allows for chargers not permanently connected to the grid (such as chargers with solar and battery storage). The chargers shall be configured to deliver at minimum 3.3 kW to an EV and at minimum 30 kWh per day. For such chargers with multiple ports, each port shall be configured to deliver at minimum 1.9 kW to each EV when multiple ports are in use and at minimum 30 kWh per day across all ports as stated in Section II.B. “Project Requirements” of the Solicitation Manual (page 12).

**Q33.** **Are all project chargers required to be networked?**

A33. As the addended Solicitation Manual states, “All publicly available chargers must be networked” (Section II.B.5 “Charging Equipment” page 12). Chargers that are not publicly available are not required to be networked. Please see Section V.A. for a definition of public charger (page 42).

**Q34. Would the CEC consider alternative eligibility for technology solutions that can meet all reporting requirements outlined by the program but do not utilize OCPP?**

A34. The solicitation manual states, “EVSE shall be certified for OCPP 1.6 or newer by the Open Charge Alliance (Core and Safety certificates), or have OCPP 2.0.1 certification proof of payment, or have an OCPP 2.0.1 test tool report showing compliance for Core and Security” (Section II.B.5 “Charging Equipment” page 13).

**Q35.** **The solicitation manual notes that 50% of the match requirements must be cash. If the project meets the 90% DAC/LIC impact threshold for the 10% match that would mean 5% project cost must be covered with cash?**

A35. Correct, proposed projects with over 90% of sites in DAC/LICs must provide half of the 10% match share as cash.

**Q36.**  **Does EVSE need to be eligible for utility incentives?**

A36. No, EVSE is not required to be eligible for other incentives.

**Q37.**  **Can the charging ports be low-power level 2 chargers?**

A37. As stated in the Solicitation Manual, “Each grid-connected Level 2 port not utilizing Automated Load Management (ALM) must be capable of outputting at least 6.2 kilowatts (kW) of power. Grid-connected dual-port Level 2 chargers must be capable of outputting at least 6.2 kW of power from each port simultaneously.

ALM and similar systems may optionally be used. ALM systems manage load across multiple EVSE or charging ports to share electrical capacity and/or automatically manage power at each EVSE or charging port. In some cases, ALM may enable installation of EVSE at sites that would otherwise require significant electrical upgrades.

For multi-family residential sites with shared EV charging spaces where multiple EVSE are installed and ALM is used, each Level 2 port shall be configured to continuously deliver no less than 3.1 kW to an EV when multiple ports are in use and no less than 6.2 kW when only one port is in use.”

Please see Section II.B. “Project Requirements” of the Solicitation Manual (page 12) for more details.

**Q.38** **For chargers not permanently connected to the grid, the manual reads 'For such chargers with multiple ports, each port shall be configured to deliver at minimum 1.9 kW to each EV when multiple ports are in use and at minimum 30 kWh per day across all ports'.  In the case where multiple charging pedestals are connected to one battery energy storage system as power source, does the '30kWh per day across all ports' rule apply?**

A38. Yes, each charger must be configured to deliver 30 kWh per day regardless of the power source.

 **Q39. How long must an installed EVSE be supported for?**

A39. The Solicitation Manual states that “the Recipient will be required to operate, keep records of, maintain, and report on chargers as specified in the Scope of Work (Attachment 2). Chargers installed through this solicitation must be operational for a minimum of six years after initial installation.” (Section II.B.7., “Operation, Maintenance, and Uptime” page 14).

**Q40.**  **Is there a clear definition of a 'public' charger?**

A40. As clarified in the addended Solicitation Manual, “Public chargers are located at parking space(s) designated by a property owner or lessee to be available to and accessible by the public for any period of time” (Section V.A. “Definition of Key Words” page 42).

**Q41.**  **Can the CEC clarify if an electrician with RSA approval from the CDFA is required to install EVSE in non-commercial, multi-family housing properties? For all commercial and non-commercial property types, can grantees contract with a non-RSA electrician for the EVSE installation and maintain a separate contract with an RSA to place chargers into service and maintain the chargers?**

A41. According to the Solicitation Manual, Section II.B., “Project Requirements,” (page 12), any installation, repair, or maintenance on commercial EVSE must be performed by a Registered Service Agency (RSA) and after the device is placed in service, the RSA must report this information to the county within 24 hours. To place a device into service, the RSA must perform accuracy testing. Device owners are responsible for registering their device with the county.”

**Q42. The J3400 EV charging receptacle standard allows the user to bring their own cord, and can support either J1772 or J3400 connector to the vehicle; does the CEC support the use of the charging receptacle standard to accommodate either connector?**

A42. Yes, SAE J3400 is allowable, but the projects will still need to meet the minimum amount of SAE J1772. The Solicitation Manual states, “For each site, at least 50 percent of the connectors must be SAE J1772; other connectors may optionally include SAE J3400” (Section II.B.5. “Charging Equipment” page 13)

Miscellaneous

**Q43. Are there any comparable programs for direct current fast charger (DCFC) charging?**

A43. The CEC has many charging infrastructure funding opportunities, including various block grants that include funds for DCFCs. Please see our list of funding opportunities here: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations?field_solicitation_status_target_id%5B32%5D=32&field_solicitation_type_target_id=All&field_division_1_target_id=20>

We recommend signing up for our Clean Transportation Program and Solicitations subscriptions to be notified when new funding opportunities arise. <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CNRA/signup/31719>

**Q44. Last round, the CEC was able to provide double the amount funding for the REACH 2.0 program through the GGRF funds, to fund additional projects. Does the CEC anticipate being able to use funds from the GGRF fund for REACH 3.0?**

A44. A total of $19,000,000 is available for awards under this solicitation. CEC, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to increase or decrease the amount of funds available under this solicitation.

 The Solicitation Manual states, “This program uses GGRF funding and is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities” (Section I.B. “Background” page 1).

**Q45. Is there any required certification for battery energy storage systems and solar generator systems other than the state and local permit requirements (e.g. UL certificates)?**

A45. All federal, state, and local laws must be followed within the grant project. Therefore, any legally required certifications should be completed for the project. (Section 22.a. “Certification and Compliance”, Page 20, Standard Clean Transportation Program Terms and Conditions).

**Q46. In addition to prohibition of funding from another CEC grant funding opportunity or block grant, are there other funding prohibitions? Which incentive stacking is anticipated to be allowed, or what are the restrictions for incentive funding stacking?**

A46. Section II.D. of the Solicitation Manual (page 15) lists unallowable costs that cannot be used for either CEC reimbursement or match share contributions. Most forms of incentive stacking are allowed as match share such as federal funding or funding from other state agencies. However, incentive stacking is not allowed for funding from other CEC sources including block grant. More details on eligible and ineligible match share contributions are available in Section II.C. (page 16) of the Solicitation Manual.

**Q47.** **Could the upcoming changes in federal administration affect this grant funding opportunity?**

A47. The State of California provides all funding for this solicitation. This solicitation does not use any federal funding.

**Q48. We notice that project readiness is evaluated according to whether "milestones and completion dates are reasonable and expedited." Will earlier award approval or completion of work result in a higher score for an Applicant?**

A48. Yes, applications will be evaluated on the degree to which milestones and completion dates are reasonable and expedited. Please see Section IV.E. “Evaluation Criteria” Solicitation Manual (page 38) for more information.

**Q49.** **According to the solicitation, "applicants are encouraged to submit letter(s) of support that substantiate the estimated demand and/or the potential benefits of the proposed project." Are you looking for demand for the proposed project only or also demand in the market?**

A49. The goal of the letters of support should be to substantiate demand for the proposed project. These letters often show support from local governments, businesses, or communities, demonstrating the need for the proposed project. (Section III.D.9., “Letter of Support” page 29, Solicitation Manual).

**Q50.** **Is the CEC’s clawback clause still in effect for this round of funding?**

A50. The Energy Commission has multiple remedies for grant agreement issues without requiring the return of grant funding. However, as stated in the CTP Terms and Conditions, the Commission may, for Recipient’s noncompliance of any Agreement requirement, withhold future payments, demand and be entitled to repayment of past reimbursements, or suspend or terminate this Agreement. (See Section 29, “Commission Remedies for Recipient’s Non-Compliance” , Standard Clean Transportation Program Terms and Conditions).

**Q51. What is the deadline for the project scope to be completed? What will be the term length of the resulting REACH 3.0 agreement?**

A51. Agreement terms will begin when agreement documents are signed and executed. All work must be scheduled for completion by no later than **January 31, 2028**, to allow timely processing of final invoices before the liquidation date of the funds (Section III.D.4., “Schedule of Products and Due Dates” page 27, Solicitation Manual).

**Q52. Is there any flexibility or consideration by the CEC to revise the 120 charger criteria set forth in this solicitation?**

A52. No, all projects must install a minimum of 120 charging ports (Solicitation Manual, Section II.B.2. “Project Size” page 10).

**Q53. What was the intent of setting a minimum power requirement in the REACH 3.0 that was not required in the previous iterations of this grant? Is there any flexibility on this requirement?**

A53. Minimum power requirements are instated in this solicitation to ensure state-funded charging installations are reliable for various charging needs. These minimum power requirements vary depending on the whether the chargers are grid-connected, whether Automated Load Management systems are used, and whether the parking spaces are designated for individual residents. Please see Section II.B.5 “Charging Equipment” (page 11) of the Solicitation Manual for more details.

**Q54.**  **The J3400 EV charging receptacle standard allows the user to bring their own cord, and can support either J1772 or J3400 connector to the vehicle; does the CEC support the use of the charging receptacle standard to accommodate either connector?**

A54. Yes, SAE J3400 is allowable, however projects must still meet the minimum amount of SAE J1772. The Solicitation Manual states, “For each site, at least 50 percent of the connectors must be SAE J1772; other connectors may optionally include SAE J3400” (Section II.B.5 “Charging Requirements” page 14).