



ICARP Grant Programs Guideline Revision Memo: Adaptation Planning Grant Program Round 2 & Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program Round 1

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ICARP Grant Programs Application Period Extended

In light of our ongoing commitment to fostering equitable access to funding opportunities and ensuring the participation of all eligible applicants, we are pleased to announce an extension of the application window for Round 2 of the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP) and Round 1 of the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP).

The extension of the application window comes as a response to feedback received from interested parties and our ongoing efforts to refine the application process and tools (see below). We are committed to ensuring that all applicants have the necessary resources and support to submit high-quality proposals that align with the goals of the ICARP grants.

The application window for Round 2 of APGP and Round 1 of EHCRP will be extended by 14 days.

- **APGP application period will close at 11:59 p.m. on June 3, 2024.**
 - APGP Pre-Application Interest Form due 11:59 p.m. on May 20, 2024
 - APGP Full Application Form due at 11:59 p.m. on June 3, 2024.
- **EHCRP application period will close at 11:59 p.m. on May 7, 2024.**
 - EHCRP Pre-Application Interest Form due 11:59 p.m. on April 23, 2024.
 - EHCRP Full Application Form due 11:59 p.m. on May 7, 2024.

We hope that all prospective applicants will benefit from the application period extension and can take advantage of this additional time to work on their applications.

ICARP Grants Mapping Tool Updates

We are also pleased to announce that significant enhancements have been made to the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool, which aims to simplify the process of determining a disadvantaged community (DAC) eligibility for applicants with a geographic scope larger than one census tract. These enhancements include a refined methodology, enhanced data integration, and an improved user interface to facilitate a more seamless experience for all users.

ICARP recognizes that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable and under resourced communities. To address this, the program is committed to ensuring an equitable distribution of funds through specific funding targets. Round 2 of the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP) and Round 1 of the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) provide priority access to application technical assistance and a scoring advantage to projects that qualify as a DAC along with other funding targets.

ICARP staff based the criteria to qualify as a DAC on the California Air Resources Control Board (CARB) California Climate Investments Program. In addition to these criteria, staff

also developed the “ICARP Grants Mapping Tool” which aims to make it easier for applicants to understand if they qualify for the DAC funding target. Specifically, the tool allows applicants with a geographic scope larger than one census tract to see if their entire geographic scope qualifies.

During the week of 3/11/2024, ICARP staff identified several issues with the existing version of the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool methodology and DAC criteria. This led to three changes to the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool.

Key Changes

Change 1 – Adjustment of DAC Threshold

The threshold to qualify as a disadvantaged community is that “disadvantaged communities make up **at least 51%** of the project’s impact area/combined jurisdiction by Census tracts or population”. The threshold to qualify for the DAC funding target on the County layer of the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool was set to “**at or above 50%**” in error. As a result, some communities with percent of DAC census tracts or DAC population count between 50-50.99% may have falsely appeared to be a DAC on the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool.

This has been corrected on the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool. The threshold to qualify as a DAC community remains to be that “disadvantaged communities make up **at least 51%** of the project’s impact area/combined jurisdiction by Census tracts or population”.

Change 2 – Enhanced DAC Measurement Functionality

On scales larger than census tract, the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool did not display the percent of census tracts or population within the area (zip code, CDP, county, etc.) that qualify as a DAC under AB1550 criteria. Instead, the tool used income data for the area itself (zip code income, CDP income, county income, etc.). ICARP staff have determined both methods as valid for determining DAC status and have amended the ICARP Grants Mapping tool to reflect this.

Please note that census tracts do not always fit neatly within the boundaries of larger geographic areas. For the purposes of the ICARP Grants Mapping Tool, census tracts designated as “within a geographic area” were determined by including all census tracts with a **center** within the boundaries of the geographic area. This allows multi-jurisdictional projects that share a border to quickly determine their DAC status and avoid “double counting” overlapping census tracts. This means that census tracts that touch a geographic area but do not have a center within the geographic area are not included in the DAC calculation.

To accurately display the percentage of DAC census tracts or population within DAC tracts in larger geographic areas two additional layers were added to the ICARP Map Tool- DAC Cities and Unincorporated Places (Method 2) and DAC Zip Codes (Method 2). These layers display data from census tracts with a center within a Zip Code/Census Designated Place (CDP). The boundaries for this layer will often differ from the actual boundaries of the Zip Code/CDP. This is because many census tracts do not neatly align with Zip Code/CDP boundaries. The following layers were edited to prevent duplicative information- DAC Cities and Unincorporated Places (Method 1) and DAC Zip Codes (Method 1). Refer to the Summary of Each ICARP Grants Mapping Tool Layer section to see the changes made to each layer.

Applicants with projects on the CDP or Zip Code scale may use either layer (Method 1 or Method 2) to determine their DAC status.

Change 3 – Ensuring Accuracy on County Scale DAC Qualification

On the County scale only, the use of the full AB 1550 criteria led to misleading results. Particularly, the qualifying criteria of census tracts “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 pursuant to Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code”.

These “income limits” provide low-income thresholds for each county. It is misleading to determine DAC status by calculating if **at least 51%** of the county census tracts or population are at or below the county thresholds. This method is not an accurate representation of county scale community need because HCD’s county low-income thresholds are derived, in part, from county median income. This means the median income for each tract is compared to the median income for the county the tract is in. Since the threshold for low-income is around 80% of county median income, it is possible and frequently the case, that more than 51% of a county’s tracts will fall below this threshold. This does not mean that the entire county is low-income.

As a result of this, the APGP Round 2 Guidelines and EHCRP Round 1 Guidelines have been amended to create more accurate county scale DAC criteria. The new guideline language includes the following language:

For applications with a geographic scope on the county scale, the following DAC criteria should be used. Projects should use one or both of the following qualifications to identify disadvantaged communities:

- Disadvantaged Communities as defined by the California Environmental Protection Agency per SB 535 make up at least 51% of the Lead-Applicants' county(s) by Census tracts or population.
- County(s) with median *household* incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income.

Summary of Each ICARP Grants Mapping Tool Layer

DAC Census Tracts

Included DAC Criteria:

- SB 535
 - The Census Tract is marked as a DAC if it is designated a Disadvantaged Community by the California Environmental Protection Agency per SB 535.
- AB 1550
 - Statewide Median Income
 - The census tract is marked a DAC if the census tract median income is at or below 80% of the state median income.
 - HCD state income limits
 - The census tract is marked as a DAC is the median income is less than or equal to the limit designated as low income for the County.

Summary of Changes:

No changes were made to the DAC Census Tracts layer.

DAC Zip Codes (Method 1)

This layer uses the median income for the Zip Code. It does not include any census tract scale data.

Included DAC Criteria:

- The Zip Code is marked as a DAC if the Zip Code median income is at or below 80% of statewide median income.
- The Zip Code is marked as a DAC if the Zip Code median income is less than or equal to the limit designated as low income for the County.

Summary of Changes:

- Name change: The name of this layer changed from "DAC Zip Codes" to "DAC Zip Codes (Method 1)".

- SB535 census tracts were removed from this layer because this layer only displays Zip Code scale data. SB 535 census tracts have been added as a criterion for the “DAC Zip Codes (Method 2)” layer.

DAC Zip Codes (Method 2)

This layer displays data from census tracts with a center within a Zip Code. The boundaries for this layer will often differ from the actual boundaries of the Zip Code. This is because many census tracts do not neatly align with Zip Code boundaries.

Included DAC Criteria:

- The Zip Code is marked as a DAC if 51% or more of the census tracts with a center in the Zip Code are designated as a DAC.
- The Zip Code is marked as a DAC if 51% or more of the *population* of people in census tracts with a center in the Zip Code are designated as a DAC.

Summary of Changes:

- This is a new layer.

DAC Cities & Unincorporated Places (Method 1)

This layer uses the median income for the Census Designated Place (CDP). It does not include any census tract scale data.

Included DAC Criteria:

- The CDP is marked as a DAC if the CDP median income is at or below 80% of statewide median income.
- The CDP is marked as a DAC if the CDP median income is less than or equal to the limit designated as low income for the County.

Summary of Changes:

- Name change: The name of this layer changed from “DAC Cities & Unincorporated Places” to “DAC Cities & Unincorporated Places (Method 1)”.
- SB535 census tracts were removed from this layer because this layer only displays CDP scale data. SB 535 census tracts have been added as a criterion for the “DAC Cities & Unincorporated Places (Method 2)” layer.

DAC Cities & Unincorporated Places (Method 2)

This layer displays data from census tracts with a center within a CDP. The boundaries for this layer will often differ from the actual boundaries of the CDP. This is because many census tracts do not neatly align with CDP boundaries.

Included DAC Criteria:

- The CDP is marked as a DAC if 51% or more of the census tracts with a center in the CDP are designated as a DAC.
- The CDP is marked as a DAC if 51% or more of the *population* of people in census tracts with a center in the CDP are designated as a DAC.

Summary of Changes:

- This is a new layer.

DAC Counties

Included DAC Criteria:

- The county is marked as a DAC if the 51% or more of the census tracts with a center in the county are designated a Disadvantaged Community by the California Environmental Protection Agency per SB 535.
- The county is marked as a DAC if the 51% or more of the *population* of people in census tracts with a center in the county are designated a Disadvantaged Community by the California Environmental Protection Agency per SB 535.
- The county is marked as a DAC if the county median income is at or below 80% of statewide median income.

Summary of Changes:

No changes were made to the DAC Counties layer.

Small and Rural Communities (APGP Only)

Included Criteria:

This layer identifies communities situated 100% outside of contiguous urban areas, with populations fewer than 75,000, and designated as low-income per Assembly Bill (AB) 1550

Summary of Changes:

No changes were made to the Small and Rural Communities (APGP Only) layer.

Conclusion

The ICARP grant programs are committed to continuous improvement and transparency. Thank you for engaging with our programs and working with us to ensure our processes are clear, fair, and transparent. If you have any comments or questions, please email Icarp.Grants@OPR.CA.GOV.