

Recommendations and Suggestions by RTPA Group on Improved Delivery of Active Transportation Program Projects

#	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CTC AND CALTRANS	NEXT STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PART(IES)
1	CTC: consider programming changes to ease tight timeframes (provide funds over more realistic delivery timeframes and avoid 3 or 4 phases within 2 years):	Draft language for Guidelines	CTC staff
1A	Find a way to award more than a two year program of projects in each cycle - The ATP is a four-year program, but each cycle typically only programs funds to the last two years of each cycle. Agencies seeking to ensure funding for all phases of their projects request to program up to four phases within two years. A four-year program would greatly lessen the potential for delay of projects with multiple phases. Alternatives to accomplish a four-year program would be reserving a small amount of preconstruction funding from one cycle for programming through the following cycle. Alternatively, the CTC could allow overprogramming in early years to accommodate pre-construction of projects programmed with construction in later years. (The APDE in the STIP provides precedent for overprogramming for pre-construction.)	Draft language for Guidelines	CTC staff
1B	Allow project sponsors to reprogram design, right of way, and/or construction to a later year if a time extension for environmental is approved. Sponsors currently may request a one-time extension if there is environmental or design delay impacting the construction start date, but the existing 12-20-month maximum time extension may not be sufficient for some projects. Reprogramming would allow sponsors to proceed with future phases upon completion of preconstruction phases pursuant to normal timely use of funds deadlines. The process for reprogramming should be streamlined and not follow the two-meeting STIP allocation process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult STIP Guidelines 2. Draft language for Guidelines. 	CTC staff

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2	Minor adjustments to facilitate project delivery		
2A	Early Allocation or Advances - Allow for projects to receive an advance allocation if they are programmed in a later year. Especially for projects with multiple phases programed one after the other, advance allocation of the preconstruction phases will allow more time to complete the work and reduce the potential for delay to the later phase.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify projects where this could be advantageous/easy to implement. 2. Draft language for Guidelines. 	CTC Staff
2B	Calculate match based on non-ATP contribution to total project cost, not by phase. Allow project development phases to proceed 100% with local funds and for those funds to count as match (currently match is calculated based on the ATP-funded project phases; it can't be frontloaded). For projects with multiple phases, beginning the earlier phase with local funds rather than waiting for ATP funds to be available will allow more time to complete early work and reduce potential for delay to later phases.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze previously awarded projects to identify where this could be advantageous/easy to implement 2. Draft language for Guidelines. 	RTPA Group, CTC staff
2C	Awarding points for future phases of work - Provide points for future phases of work such that projects that received ATP funding in prior cycles receive points for future phases. Local agencies need an assurance or incentive to apply for project development first and construction later. Many local agencies prefer not to commence preconstruction activities until construction funding is assured. Providing future points, though it is not a full assurance, could help local agencies to develop over a workable timeframe. This approach is also consistent with the emphasis on putting shovels in the ground.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider various point scales; draft language for Guidelines. 	RTPA Group, CTC staff

#	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CTC AND CALTRANS	NEXT STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PART(IES)
2D	<p>Ensure state resources support implementation of projects - Provide resources through the Active Transportation Resource Center (ATRC). Resources could include training, monitoring, meetings around the districts that provide in-person guidance on delivery topics and requirements for state-only funded projects, and meetings with future applicants on a project-specific basis on project development. Some of these may not require development of entirely new resources. For example, existing training can be made more accessible to local agencies (e.g. webinars, multi-day trainings broken down into one-day trainings) and the training topics can expand on specific guidance for active transportation project development and delivery. Also, monitoring tools and methods may already exist in other programs which can be adapted for the ATP (e.g. listserv to send out information and reminders to project sponsors).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop list of desired resources and examples of resources if existing in other programs 	Caltrans Special Programs staff
2E	<p>Strategic Use of State and Federal Funds. State only funds should be focused on smaller projects, typically sponsored by smaller agencies, that do not have the experience or capacity to administer federal funds, or on project development phases so that early work has adequate time to be completed and there is less risk for delay to construction. Federal funds should be focused on larger, already-federalized projects, typically sponsored by larger agencies with the experience with and capacity to administer federal funds.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Propose principles for prioritizing State only fund assignments in the Statewide competition, and for MPO competitions in regions that have not already established principles. Adapt the State only funds request form, if necessary to obtain information necessary to distribute SOF funds efficiently. 	Caltrans Local Assistance staff

3	CTC: manage within existing tight timeframes:		
3A	To expedite initiation of project development phases by reducing duplicative forms and processes, allow:		
3Ai.	Delegation of allocation authority to Caltrans for project development components of ATP projects similar to Resolution G-01-03. CTC would approve and program ATP projects and delegate authority to Caltrans to allocate and obligate funds. The process will follow the existing ATP approvals process and allow CTC to select projects, consistent with the scoring from the review panel. The allocation and obligation of funds will follow the already-established delegated authority processes and policies for the federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP), building upon the proven success of those programs over the past decade and a half in fully obligating all federal dollars. Caltrans would provide to CTC a quarterly allocations report. One variation would be that Caltrans would provide a report on project development phases NOT yet allocated.	Draft language for Guidelines.	CTC staff
3Aii.	Lump sum allocation of programmed ATP project development funds to Caltrans for sub-allocation to ATP projects similar to the delegated authority for sub-allocation and adjustment of local assistance grant projects established by Resolution G-01-08. Caltrans would provide to CTC a quarterly allocations report. One variation would be that Caltrans would provide a report on project development phases NOT yet allocated.	Draft language for Guidelines.	CTC staff

4	CTC: manage programming to reflect historical delivery rate. Two alternatives include:		
4A	Over-program Projects - Do not program just up to the amount available, but over-program the amount of project to reflect historical delivery rate. . Over-programming is an efficient way to maximize the programming of ATP funds and avoid ATP funds sitting unused. Over-programming has the same effect as allowing fund exchanges/reprogramming, but without the need for one or more follow-up project selection processes and programming actions.	1. Draft language for Guidelines.	CTC staff
4B	Extend Contingency List Use to Statewide Program - Current guidelines allow large MPOs and CTC to adopt contingency lists from which to select projects for the MPO and Small Urban/Rural programs should there be project failures or savings in the adopted program. This tool should be implemented in the Statewide Program as well, in order to promote additional flexibility and ensure no ATP funds are lost due to unanticipated project failures or savings. Consider SCAG's contingency list policy as a potential model.	1. Draft language for guidelines.	RTPA Group, CTC staff

	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MPO/RTPAS		
1	RTPA Assistance to Local Agencies		
1A	<p>Increased Role for RTPAs serving urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or less with review of applications - Consider RTPAs reviewing applications from their regions. RTPAs may have the option to screen for overambitious programming and consistency with Regional Transportation Plans prior to project selection. This will reduce the need for later technical programming corrections and time extension requests. RTPAs could adopt specific guidelines for technical review as a condition of receiving letter of support.</p>	<p>1. RTPAs individually develop and distribute guidelines for issuing "Letters of Support"</p>	<p>MPOs and RTPAs serving urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or less, that do not hold MPO competitions. Optional for large area RTPAs/MPOs.</p>
1B	<p>Meet with applicants Review application with potential applicants. Conduct workshops and ensure applicants know penalties. A workshop, independent of or combined with the application training workshop, will ensure that applicants understand ATP timely use of funds and state and federal project implementation requirements and typical timelines. With this information, applicants can assess their own project readiness, how long it takes to obtain allocations and e-76s, and agency capacity and request appropriate programming for it.</p>	<p>1. RTPAs look at how and when such meetings could be conducted in their regions in the next ATP cycle</p>	<p>MPOs and RTPAs</p>
1C	<p>Encourage agencies to apply for project development first and construction when ready - (See item 2.C above). Agencies frequently apply for both project development and construction phases because there is no guarantee that a second application for construction will get funded. Agencies need an assurance or incentive to apply for project development first and construction later.</p>	<p>1. Draft language for Guidelines.</p>	<p>MPOs and RTPAs</p>

	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MPO/RTPAS		
2A	<p>Pursue legislation to allow expedited project delivery by authorizing an implementing agency to seek commission approval of a letter of no prejudice (LONP) along with application of local advanced construction for federal funds. The LONP would allow the agency to expend its own funds for a project in a future fiscal year of the adopted program of projects, in advance of allocation of funds to the project by the commission, and to be reimbursed at a later time for eligible expenditures. For projects programmed in the current fiscal year of the adopted program of projects, an implementing agency may notify the commission of its intent to expend its own funds in advance of an allocation, upon transmittal of an allocation request and receipt of the request by the commission. Eligible expenditures occurring after the commission's receipt of the request are eligible for reimbursement upon approval of an allocation by the commission.</p> <p>This could be helpful in getting environmental started as early as possible.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rework AB 2796 language using STIP language as guidance. 	MPOs, RTPAs