



COMMITTEE TRANSMITTAL

September 14, 2020

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Laurena Weinert,  Clerk of the Board

Subject: Active Transportation Program Regional Project Selection Process
- Orange County Project Prioritization Methodology

Regional Planning and Highways Committee Meeting of September 3, 2020

Present: Directors Chaffee, Delgleize, Muller, M. Murphy, R. Murphy, and Pulido

Absent: Director Bartlett

Committee Vote

Following the roll call vote, this item was declared passed 6-0 by the Members present.

Committee Recommendation

Approve the Orange County project prioritization methodology for the 2021 Active Transportation Program regional project selection process and future Active Transportation Program cycles.



September 3, 2020

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over the "From:" line.

Subject: Active Transportation Program Regional Project Selection Process
– Orange County Project Prioritization Methodology

Overview

On March 25, 2020, the California Transportation Commission adopted the statewide 2021 Active Transportation Program Guidelines and issued a two-tiered call for bicycle and pedestrian projects. The State of California and the Southern California Association of Governments will administer the call for projects and project selection process. A proposal for the methodology that the Orange County Transportation Authority will use to prioritize projects in Orange County for the Southern California Association of Governments Active Transportation Program regional project selection process is presented for Board of Directors' approval.

Recommendation

Approve the Orange County project prioritization methodology for the 2021 Active Transportation Program regional project selection process and future Active Transportation Program cycles.

Background

The Active Transportation Program (ATP) was approved as part of SB 99 (Chapter 359, Statutes of 2013) on September 26, 2013, and includes federal and state funds for bicycle and pedestrian calls for projects (call) statewide. The 2021 ATP call will provide funding for projects over a four-year period, covering fiscal years 2021-22 through 2024-25.

On March 25, 2020, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted the statewide 2021 ATP Guidelines (CTC ATP Guidelines) and issued a call. A fact sheet outlining the CTC ATP Guidelines is provided in Attachment A.

The purpose of the ATP is to encourage increased use of active (non-motorized) modes of transportation by achieving the following goals:

- Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by bicycling and walking,
- Increase safety and mobility for non-motorized users,
- Advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals,
- Enhance public health,
- Ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program, and
- Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

In addition to the goals listed in statute, the ATP will also consider the goals and provisions set forward in Executive Order N-19-19, which directs state agencies to increase efforts statewide to reduce GHG emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change while building a sustainable, inclusive economy.

Project applications will be submitted in two tiers, state and regional. Project applications for quick-build projects, which are semi-permanent improvements meant for testing and collecting community input prior to permanent construction, were due on July 15, 2020, and all other applications are due on September 15, 2020. Orange County agencies may submit applications to the state for the first tier of the call, which will provide approximately \$220.800 million for projects throughout the state.

Projects not selected in the statewide tier can be considered for the regional tier of the call through the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) project selection process, which will make available approximately \$14.930 million for Orange County projects.

On June 24, 2020, the CTC approved SCAG's ATP Regional Guidelines (SCAG Regional Guidelines), which outline the project selection process through the regional tier of the call. The adopted SCAG Regional Guidelines differ from the statewide CTC ATP Guidelines in the following areas:

- Awards funding to projects in two program categories:
 - Implementation projects – allocated to the highest-scoring projects in each county using population-based funding targets
 - Planning and capacity building projects – utilizing five percent of the regional share, allocated through a supplemental call.
- Utilizes a regional definition of disadvantaged communities with additional criteria including environmental justice areas and communities of concern.

- Establishes additional scoring criteria and weighting through county transportation commissions. This allows each county transportation commission to prioritize implementation projects by adding up to 20 points to projects that are consistent with plans adopted by local and regional governments within their jurisdiction.

Discussion

The CTC ATP Guidelines require the statewide call and the SCAG 2021 ATP regional project selection process to occur sequentially. Initially, all eligible project applications submitted through the statewide call will be screened by CTC staff and ranked. The CTC is expected to approve and program funding for quick-build projects in December 2020, and for all other statewide-awarded projects in June 2021.

Projects in the SCAG region, which are not selected in the statewide tier, are then considered for the regional tier of funding through the SCAG regional project selection process. This process allows for a local prioritization methodology to be developed by each of the county transportation commissions and augment the scores assigned to the projects through the statewide tier scoring. By statute, the methodology must be based on adopted local and regional plans.

On October 8, 2018, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) approved the prioritization methodology for the previous ATP call. Consistent with the SCAG Regional Guidelines, OCTA's approved local project prioritization methodology is based on the project's inclusion in local and regional plans that focus on bicycle and pedestrian gap closures and corridors, local community needs related to activities, such as Safe Routes to Schools, active transportation, and complete streets. Staff has updated the methodology. The existing methodology was developed to recognize prior planning and coordination for active transportation proposals at regional, sub-regional, or local levels. The proposed methodology will broaden the range of types of safety plans that can be used for this purpose, consistent with ATP goals. In addition to Safe Routes to School Plans, applications will be able to receive points for inclusion in Local Roadway Safety Plans, Vision Zero Plans, or for consistency with the Orange County Systemic Safety Plan. The details for the prioritization methodology are provided in Attachment B and OCTA will assist local agencies to identify eligible plans and assign points consistent with the approved methodology.

Next Steps

Once the submitted 2021 ATP applications are available in the fall, points will be assigned consistent with the methodology. Staff will then return to the Board to request approval of the recommended point assignments in order to submit to SCAG for the final award of regional ATP funds to the highest-ranking projects.

Summary

As part of the 2021 ATP call, any Orange County project applications that do not receive statewide funding will be considered for funding in the SCAG regional project selection metropolitan planning organizations call (\$14.930 million for Orange County). OCTA may assign an additional 20 points to each project based on regional planning priorities. Updates to the methodology to assign points to projects are presented for approval.

Attachments

- A. 2021 Active Transportation Program Fact Sheet
- B. 2021 Orange County Transportation Authority, Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Methodology

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2021 Active Transportation Program Fact Sheet

Background

The Active Transportation Program (ATP) was created by SB 99 (Chapter 359, Statutes of 2013) and AB 101 (Chapter 354, Statutes of 2013) to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as bicycling and walking. Fifty percent of funds will be awarded on a statewide basis. Forty percent of funds will be awarded to large metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) with populations greater than 200,000. Ten percent of funds will be awarded to small and rural regions with populations less than 200,000.

The purpose of the ATP is to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation by achieving the following goals:

- Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by bicycling and walking,
- Increase safety and mobility for non-motorized users,
- Advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals,
- Enhance public health,
- Ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program, and
- Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

In addition to the goals listed in statute, the ATP will also consider the goals and provisions set forward in Executive Order N-19-19, including state housing goals.

Summary of Requirements

Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange County cities • County of Orange • Orange County Transportation Authority • California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) • Transit agencies • Schools and school districts • Public land and natural resource agencies • Tribal governments • Nonprofits
Projected Funding Estimate ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and federal fund source • \$445.5 million available over four years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$4.0 million – conservation corps set-aside ○ \$220.800 million – State of California call for projects (call) ○ \$44.1 million – Small urban and rural agencies ○ \$176.6 million – Large MPOs • \$93.419 million – Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) call (estimated \$14.930 million to Orange County projects) • Funds must be programmed in fiscal years 2021-22 through 2024-25 • \$250,000 minimum request (infrastructure projects) • 25 percent of funds to disadvantaged communities² • No match required through statewide call

¹ Projected fund estimate is based on adopted 2021 ATP fund estimate and SCAG population-based funding targets.

² Disadvantaged community eligibility is determined based on one of the following criteria: Census Tract median household income, CalEnviroScreen score, National School Lunch Program, Healthy Places Index score, and regional definitions as identified through the current Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

2021 Active Transportation Program Fact Sheet

Eligible Project Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure projects – capital improvements consistent with ATP goals, including environmental, design, right-of-way (ROW), and construction • Plans – development of plans consistent with ATP goals (i.e., communitywide bicycle, pedestrian, Safe Routes to Schools, active transportation plans, etc.) • Non-infrastructure – education, encouragement, enforcement activities consistent with ATP goals • Quick-build (pilot) – interim capital improvements consistent with ATP goals 	
Additional Requirements/ Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 25 percent of funds will be provided to disadvantaged communities. • Conservation Corps partnership (if applicable) • Semi-annual reporting • Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Caltrans ROW certification, and Federal Highways Administration authorization to proceed (if applicable) 	
Timeline	Date (Subject to Change)	Action
	March 25, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Transportation Commission (CTC) approves guidelines • Call open
	July 15, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project applications due – quick-build applications
	September 14, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local project prioritization methodology presented to the Board of Directors (Board)
	September 15, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project applications due – non-quick-build applications • Staff recommendations for quick-build released
	December 2, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTC adoption of the quick-build program of projects
	December 14, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local project prioritization point assignment to regional program presented to Board for approval
	January 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local project prioritization point assignment recommendations due to SCAG
	February 15, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recommendations for statewide and small urban/rural component released
	March 2021 (CTC meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTC adoption of the statewide and small urban/rural component
	May 14, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final recommendations for MPO-selected projects due to CTC
	June 2021 (CTC meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTC adoption of the MPO selected projects

Additional Information

CTC ATP - <https://catc.ca.gov/programs/active-transportation-program>

SCAG ATP - <http://www.scag.ca.gov/programs/Pages/ActiveTransportation.aspx?opentab=1>

**2021 Orange County Transportation Authority
Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Methodology**

On October 8, 2018, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) approved a local prioritization methodology for projects submitted for Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding, consistent with plans adopted by local and regional governments within the County. Prioritization of ATP projects is also consistent with Board direction through the state and federal programming guidelines for bicycle projects that list a project’s readiness as a priority for funding.

For the 2021 ATP cycle, staff is proposing to use the updated methodology below. There are no proposed changes to point values at this time.

Plan	Point Value (Maximum of 20 Points ¹)
A planned bikeway in the Orange County Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan or OC Active	10
Project is included in the Orange County district bikeway strategies	10
Project is included in the OCTA non-motorized Metrolink Accessibility Strategy	10
Project is a sidewalk along a roadway on the Master Plan of Arterial Highways	5
Project is included in a state or local agency bicycle or pedestrian master plan, active transportation plan, or complete streets plan	5
Project is included in a local Safe Routes to Schools Plan Project is included in a local safety plan, including but not limited to, Safe Routes to Schools, Local Roadway Safety Plan, Vision Zero Plan, or implements countermeasures to identified crash typologies in the project area consistent with the Orange County Systemic Safety Plan	5
Project is included in a specific plan or corridor plan	2
Project is included in local agency general plan or circulation element	2

The plans that are referenced above were developed consistent with OCTA’s mission to develop and implement transportation solutions to enhance the quality of life and keep Orange County moving. The projects included in the plans focus on gap closure and regional bike corridors. Further, they are the most directly relevant plans that have been developed in Orange County, which meet the goals of the state ATP.

¹ The adopted 2021 ATP Southern California Association of Governments Regional Guidelines establish that the maximum points that can be assigned by the county transportation commission is 20 points. These local prioritization points will be added to the score provided by the state.

2021 Orange County Transportation Authority Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Methodology

OCTA-led projects will be eligible for the additional points in the same manner as the local agency projects. The regional plans listed in the methodology were developed in coordination with all of the local Orange County agencies. Basing the assignment of points solely upon a project being included in various regional and local plans that focus on gap closures, community issues, Safe Routes to Schools, and regional bicycle and pedestrian corridors ensures that projects submitted by OCTA can receive equitable consideration.

Disadvantaged Communities Methodology

To maximize funding for Orange County projects, staff will evaluate the points assigned to each project to confirm that 25 percent of the regional funding goes to projects that will benefit disadvantaged communities as required by SB 99 (Chapter 359, Statutes of 2013). Staff will consider reprioritization of points to projects if the highest scoring projects in Orange County do not meet the requirement.