

ATP Kick-Off Workshops - Notes

Sacramento & Los Angeles, November 12 and 18, 2019

Welcome / Introduction

- Commission staff: intros and basic overview on funding years, amounts, and components.
 - Banjo, Laurie's dog, will be our peacekeeper.

Workshop Strategy using more technology – GoTo Meeting and Sli.do.

- Central Workshops vs. Branch Workshops.
- Tentative Schedule with locations and times to be decided.
 - Potential locations – add Merced, Pomona.
 - Seems like a lot of workshops.
- Suggest having a designated note-taker and post the notes from each workshop.
 - Track the decisions agreed on for each topic.
 - Note how decisions to guidelines will affect the application.

Program Schedule

- Option of either 4- or 5-month reviews.
 - 5-month review would give volunteers more time and may encourage more comments.
 - Speed up the MPO approvals.
 - Make sure schedule doesn't have the MPO's doing their reviews over the holidays.
 - Leave schedule open and see how discussion on review process affects it.
- Other Comments / Questions on Schedule?
 - Would like to have until end of June for application deadline.
 - Community outreach takes time, and some don't start process until guidelines are out, so more time is always better.

Commission Staff Proposed Revisions

Review of Executive Order N-19-19 – making everyone aware. Commission staff not proposing anything from this now but may need to.

- Seems like this is saying the program needs additional resources.
- If this leads to changes, try to realign things rather than add things. Use what is already there and show how it is highlighting these things rather than adding to the burden of the applicant.

Leveraging Funds – clarify language.

- Agree this needs to be clarified.
- Clarify reporting requirements.
- Clarify if the money spent on pre-construction can be counted as leveraging funds.
- Highlight the commitment of the leverage and what the jurisdiction must do to follow through on those matches.

Eligible Projects – Tactical Urbanism.

Commission staff: Considering adding "Quick Build" projects as eligible projects, since it has never been addressed in the guidelines. Will also need to make sure we have the language on what is eligible with these. May also lead to change in minimum project cost for those projects.

- Will these be SOF projects since they will be 5-10 years of life?
- Are they CON or NI projects?
- Suggest creating a separate application for this (maybe with less questions since they are a smaller dollar amount).
 - This type of project would score very low given the current application.
 - Add a transformative question for this type of project.
- Clarify what it is. For example, is just painting allowed?
 - When you define it, clarify between what Tactical Urbanism we are allowing.
 - Provide examples.

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- Include art and culture as eligible elements.
- Want to make it quick, but projects are not always quick if we do it through Caltrans.
- How does public participation tie in?
 - These projects are the public participation for a lot of projects.
 - Must be tied to engagement.
- Will future permanent infrastructure be eligible in future cycles given that it will essentially be the same project?
- It should be allowed for an agency to apply for several interventions in a given area and just receive the money for that.
 - Let jurisdictions apply for an area where there may be need and then decide later on specific projects.
- The money for removal should be an eligible cost.
- Applicants could use these projects as a way to get leveraging money for future applications.
- It is very important that language about this be very clear in the guidelines.
- What about observational influence?
- Break down of the costs that are eligible for this type of project.
- Establish timelines for how long the project can be. How long can it stay up?

DAC / Regional definition -

Commission staff: Regional Definition in Cycle 4 was not as successful as hoped. If the regional definition is no longer allowed, it was suggested we allow for "Cost of Living Adjustment" (COLA).

- COLA:
 - Look at HCD income levels and other state programs. HCD sets annual limits.
- There were comments of support for getting rid of regional definition and against adding a cost living component.
- There were comments of support for keeping the regional definition.
- Add Healthy Places Index as a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) qualifier?
- CalEnviroScreen (CES): disadvantaged communities within a ½ mile of the project that could benefit should be allowed.
- The "Other" DAC category is completely subjective.
- Any changes made to this question it should be the stringency of the points.
- CES 3.0 tightened the DAC areas and the SCAG definition brought those areas that deserve that designation back into contention.
- Hard pressed to see prioritizing the areas of the state with the least amount of resources.
- CES areas that are DAC and then be allowed to use half a mile from there to qualify; other programs allow that.
- DAC requirement tied to the amount of funds?
- If not a regional definition, then a metric that will capture high cost of living since the MHI doesn't take into account the high cost of living in areas.
- Free and Reduced Price Meals: why is it a 2-mile buffer instead of the enrolment boundaries?

Sequential Project Selection –

Commission staff: Plan to go back to removing the requirement that all Project Applications must be submitted to the statewide competition. MPOs informed us they didn't like this requirement so are removing it.

Scoring Criteria –

Commission staff: There are new things we *may* have to consider scoring on. Don't think we will have separate questions but may fold it into current questions. Considerations are GHG Reduction, Housing or Anti-Displacement Strategy.

- Caution making GHG Reduction a scoring criterion, having done the CMAQ scoring, the bike and ped projections just don't have the same numbers as other projects out there. Will be scoring projects by a fraction of a reduction.

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- Someone else agree having done TCC applications. Those are more for transit and electric vehicles.
- In regard to the executive order N-19-19: scoring criteria should focus more on public health benefits.
- Look at TCC program for anti-displacement and language on engagement.
- Add variability to public engagement question.

Public Participation Outreach vs. Engagement –

Commission staff: difference between outreach and engagement, is outreach you have a project in mind and show to the community and get input and don't really change the project. With engagement, it starts earlier in the process, and can actually change the entire design and project to meet the needs of the community or neighborhood and comes with a willingness to completely scrap or change the project if that is what the community wants. Engagement is usually more expensive, especially in DAC neighborhoods.

- When do you plan to introduce the new spread of points?
- What will this mean in terms of language in the application?
 - Commission staff: Give examples of what engagement looks like and definitions, possibly as an appendix in the guidelines.
- Look at Rec Parks Program – require 5 workshops, give a process, etc.

Re-Distributing points -

- Take points from Need and Safety question.
- Upping points for Safety and taking points from Need because Safety has better evidence than Need.
 - Rurals should encourage more reporting to SWTRS so that they get better data.
 - If you increase points you should change the way you calculate it because TIMS is not always accurate and there is inconsistency in how safety is seen and perceived.
- Would like to add points to transformative, innovative and engagement. Also agree to taking some points from the Need.
- Have a concern in removing points from Safety and would rather add more points to Safety.
- Take points from Leveraging?
- If we are encouraging people to be innovative we may push them to not use tried and true fixes.

Updating Project Reporting and Scope Change Clarification – Stay consistent with SB 1 guidelines.

- How about allowing that a project will be built within 5% of leeway?
 - Don't want a specific quantity otherwise you are boxed into that.

Changes to Application

Safety Question –

Commission staff: this tends to be the area that really impacts places, especially smaller rural areas that don't have as much data. In addition, it can be hard in places without any facility or an area that is so unsafe that no one walks or bikes there. Hard to answer and score.

- Should be less reactive – more systemic.
- Safety issues not related to traffic (lights, brush, etc.) are left out of the current question.
- Traffic hot spots should not be forgotten.
- Allow agencies to use their own data.
- Biggest issues I've seen is that they are reactive. It should be less about the specific numbers and more about the big picture of "this is an environment of great risk due to other areas that are similar".
- Lot of request for safety, such as personal safety like removing brush and increasing lighting. But there is not an easy way to show that with numbers and that would be nice to have a section for that in app.

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- Street story would help with that as well.
- Someone shouldn't have to die at a location to make an improvement.

Cost Benefit Question –

Commission staff: By statute must have it in the application. Will eventually have a B/C tool, but still don't have anything this cycle. Any ideas to have more value?

- Add something that says project will be built within 5-10% of original parameters.
- Current Cal/BC tool is very hard to use. Any tool for ATP should be easy to use.
- Since it is a useless question, reduce points.
 - Have it be 0 points or 1 point.

All Electronic Application Submittal –

Commission staff: Issue we have is how to get them to us. Emailing does not work with the firewall.

- Try using "Box" rather than "DropBox". Very strict organization and works.
- FTP system?
- Can spend up to \$3,000 per app to print it out nicely.
 - Asking for only one copy would make a big difference.
- Don't want to lose evaluators or make them print it out personally.
- An electronic form of the full application, so can print it out in one piece, rather than all the fragments like it is currently.

Evaluation Process

- Pay evaluators.
- Does ATP/SB 1 have administrative caps? Paying evaluators may exceed any caps.
- Less paper!
- SGC (TCC) grants use box.com.
- Require Comments from evaluators?
 - What about say, "We need your scores by *this* time, but we will accept comments until this date".
 - What about paying people full time to evaluate?
 - A stipend to pay these evaluators? Not hiring them, just giving a stipend?
 - If we are going to pay people to review in this Program, we may have to do it in others and hit the Administrative cap.
 - Strong opposition to only Caltrans scoring all of the applications.

Performance Metrics – Counts

- Projections from applications were very inconsistent.
- Counts help you make a case for project need but concerned they overestimate numbers.
- Like the idea of only requiring counts of funded projects.
- Questions from the legislators should be passed on to the applicant so that we can get the information from them directly.
- For projected counts - need a projection model that works statewide.

Working Group Input – Future topics for Discussion

- Change amount of space allowed within the application. For example: DAC benefits question.
 - Look at the types of answers we want and allow the space for a good answer.
- Remove points for leveraging.
- Change what is eligible for leveraging (in-kind).
- Scoring rubric:
 - Make DAC severity more rigorous.

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- Add examples to rubric and make the comparisons more extreme. It should be easier for evaluators to see the difference between great and not good answers.
- Changes in amount of words for questions.
 - Increase in DAC.
- Some people against having Leveraging as points, whereas some are still for it.
- Leveraging hurts DACs.
- Look at maximums and thresholds for the program.
 - North/South split?
- Mini-grant set aside:
 - For tactical urbanism.
 - For engagement.
- Talk about focusing components on different types of projects.
- Talk about delivery – provide resources for successful delivery.
- Add section about eligible costs.
 - Especially for NI projects. Example: scholarships and paying for attending a conference or paying for childcare.
- Scope and plan consistency – is it valuable?
- With the evaluation of the applications – take into account rural issues and incorporate into the scoring rubrics.