

California

Rural Counties Task Force



www.ruralcountiestaskforce.org

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Mr. James C. Ghielmetti, Chairman
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Ghielmetti:

On behalf of the 26 agencies that form the Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF), we appreciate your extensive outreach in the conduct of the Active Transportation Program (ATP) workshops. In response to your request for input, we are writing to offer our specific suggestions and recommendations on the January 17, 2014 Draft Active Transportation Program Guidelines:

Rural and Small Urban Funding – We strongly support the Guidelines provision of the 10% share for rural and small urban areas in the state.

Geographic Distribution of Statewide Funds – We do not advocate that this be defined in any more specific terms, as by a formula or maximum. We do believe, however, that evaluation should be permitted to take geographic distribution into account.

Disadvantaged Communities – The RCTF supports the option for an applicant to provide an alternative quantitative assessment of why a community should be considered disadvantaged.

Define the mandate for serving disadvantaged communities in a way that is consistent with statute, simple to measure and report in terms of easily available data, and allows for fair application throughout the state.

State Only Funding – Smaller projects should be programmed with state funds to speed project delivery. Focus use of federal funds on larger projects that will most likely already be federalized.

Project Size – We agree with the Guidelines' statement of a minimum project size of \$250,000, and the ability to aggregate small projects into a comprehensive bundle of projects.

Design Standards – The RCTF asks that the Commission provide flexibility, as some of our agencies have their own design standards that may differ from the Caltrans Design Standards.

Criteria – Make the evaluation and programming process as simple as possible, minimizing workload while allowing for consideration of project funding from multiple sources. We propose rural participation in the selection committees.

Reporting – We support semi-annual reporting. Final reporting should occur one year after the project has been completed.

Delegate Allocation – Revise the Guidelines to delegate Caltrans the authority to allocate funds to projects that have already been approved by the CTC to speed the obligation for federal funds.

Unallocated Funds Identified in Fund Estimates – Make unallocated funds and project savings available for reprogramming to new projects within the existing components.

Partnering – Honor regional priorities, consistent with program goals. Projects should be selected that are consistent with an agency's Regional Transportation Plan goals and policies.

Supplanting of Other Funds – We do not see the need to preclude the use of ATP funds for a future project that may have been scheduled for local funding. We suggest, that for the first round to utilize federal funds, agencies that have projects selected that supplant funds, use an equivalent amount of supplanted funds for projects in their region that meet Active Transportation Program criteria.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions. We would like to acknowledge Mitch Weiss of your staff, for his open and thoughtful dialogue during the development of the Active Transportation Program Guidelines. We look forward to implementation of the Active Transportation Program throughout California.

Sincerely,



Sharon Scherzinger, Chair

CC:

California Transportation Commissioners

Mr. Brian Kelly, Secretary, California Transportation Agency

Ms. Arwen Chenery, Office of Senate Pro Tempore

Mr. Christian Griffith, Assembly Budget Committee

Ms. Erica Martinez, Assembly Speaker's Office

Ms. Carrie Cornwell, Senate Transportation and Housing Committee

Mr. Ted Link-Oberstar, Senate Office of Research

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty, Director, California Department of Transportation

Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director, California Transportation Commission