



Board Report

File #: 2015-0477, **File Type:** Program

Agenda Number: 16.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
JUNE 17, 2015**

SUBJECT: FUTURE CALL FOR PROJECTS PROCESS

ACTION: APPROVE RESTRUCTURING THE PROCESS

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED the four recommendations detailed in Attachment A that address the following improvements to the **Call for Projects (Call) process for future Calls beyond 2015:**

- A. Strengthen Subregional Partnership in Countywide Call Process;
- B. Simplify and Improve the Call Process for Local Agencies;
- C. Strengthen Focus on Greenhouse Gas Reductions; and
- D. Maximize Funding Availability.

ISSUE

At its October 23, 2014 meeting, the Board directed staff to revise and improve future Calls and to return to the Board with an examination and recommendations on the possibility of converting the Call process into a new subregional, multi-modal subvention formula program (Motion 21, Attachment B). The motion further directed that as part of the examination and recommendations on changes to the Call process, that a survey be conducted to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of the process from cities, Council of Governments (COGs), and other stakeholders who both apply and do not apply for funding. Attachment C contains the survey results. This report recommends greater subregional involvement in the Call process to respond to the diversity of our subregions and their communities; a simplified and streamlined process for project applicants; a performance based, competitive, countywide process that meets Federal planning requirements, while aggressively working towards State greenhouse gas reduction targets; and leveraging other funding sources with the Call to the extent possible.

DISCUSSION

Background

The Call process was initiated in the early 1990s as a mechanism for programming federal funding sources created by the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and state sources created by the California Transportation Blueprint of 1990 which increased the state gas tax. Both state and federal programs provided a new flexibility that was not available in prior block grant programs. The Call established various program categories and appropriate fund sources were matched to those categories. The Call process instituted a countywide competitive process for local jurisdictions to compete for funding by proposing projects that respond to countywide Metro policy objectives established in our periodically updated planning documents. Agencies across the nation and around the world request copies of our application package to use as a model in developing their own competitive programming processes.

The Call is intrinsically linked to Metro's programming responsibilities. As the regional transportation planning agency for Los Angeles County, Metro has a statutory responsibility under state and federal laws for programming available local, state, and federal funding. The Call meets Metro's multi-modal programming responsibilities under State and Federal statutes, and projects approved by the Board are integrated, as appropriate into the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the California Transportation Commission's (CTC) State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Policy Setting Advantages of the Call

The Call has changed significantly in its policy emphasis over the years. While in the early years of the Call, major highway projects were eligible for funding; this was discontinued as funding for specific highway projects was approved through the Long Range Transportation Plan. Over time, the Call has emphasized the development of various modal programs, including the countywide signal coordination program, the transportation demand management program, and in creating goods movement as a separate mode from the Regional Surface Transportation Improvements (RSTI) mode. Most recently, the Call has emphasized the active transportation program in response to the changing policies of the Board, SCAG, and the State and Federal Government.

For example, while bicycle and pedestrian projects were initially in one combined modal category, greater interest in these programs required separating bicycle and pedestrian projects into separate modes. Given greater project funding demands for a growing active transportation program, the Board directed that the Call increase bicycle funds by eight percent in the 2011 Call and pedestrian funding by 2.5 percent in the 2013 Call. This increase in Board support for active transportation modes has increased active transportation funding from 9.7 percent of Call funding in 1995 to 55.6 percent of Call funding in 2013. As such, the Call reflects the Board's support not only for mobility, but for projects that support the sustainability and the reduction of greenhouse gases, consistent with recent state legislation (AB 32, SB 375, and SB 743).

Call Process is a National Model

Today's Call is conducted every two years and consists of seven modes: RSTI, Goods Movement Improvements, Signal Synchronization & Bus Speed Improvements, Transportation Demand Management, Bicycle Improvements, Pedestrian Improvements and Transit Capital. The Call continues to be a competitive, countywide, needs based process based on evaluating six criteria:

regional significance and intermodal integration, first/last mile improvements, project need and benefit to the transportation system, local match, cost effectiveness, and land use and sustainability policies/principles.

Metro's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Subcommittees play an instrumental role in the Call's initial application development and TAC serves as an Appeal panel making recommendations for staff's consideration in the review process. The Board established a reserve for TAC to consider funding worthy projects in addition to staff's recommendations. Recommendations on reserve projects come from TAC through the TAC Appeal process.

The 2015 Call currently underway has evolved from past Calls to underscore the Board's emphasis on complete street projects, active transportation, and first/last mile strategies. Future Calls will continue to enhance this direction and to integrate Metro's Complete Street Policy and other sustainability related plans and policies as adopted by the Board.

The Call is scrutinized for continual improvement and update through a "lessons learned" process. Upon the completion of each Call cycle, a survey is sent to the city managers, planning directors, and public works directors of each city; transit operators; TAC and its Subcommittees; and other transportation partners to look for areas of improvement in the process. This has been instrumental in improving the process, such as the introduction of on-line applications. The feedback that we have received in recent years has been very positive, with a 95 percent satisfaction rating.

An independent third-party audit of the 2013 Call process was conducted by Bazilio Cobb Associates (Certified Public Accountants) and was completed in June 2014. The report gave the Call process high marks, in particular, noting that the Call process is well organized, identifies clear goals (improve mobility, maximize person throughput, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions), includes clear procedures, and has strong internal controls. The audit report states:

"These policies and procedures, combined with strong internal controls, a clearly defined organizational structure and roles, and common activity tracking tools provide for the efficient and effective distribution of Call funds.

As part of this audit, survey questionnaires were used to obtain feedback from grant recipients on the Call. The vast majority of grant recipients were satisfied with all aspects of the program."

Assessment of Call Process and Recommendations

The Board directed that as part of the examination and recommendations on changes to the Call process, that a survey be conducted to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of the process and that this information be considered the foundation for revising future Calls. Over 1000 surveys were sent in early November 2014 to city managers, public works directors, and city planning directors of each city and the county, as well as to transit agencies, subregional agencies/COGs, and other transportation partners. Out of the 1000 surveys distributed, only 34 responses were received.

From the few responses that were received, there was no clear recommendation to move from a countywide to a subregional Call process. Of the responses received from local jurisdictions, 12 local jurisdictions representing 55 percent of the county's population recommended keeping the current Call process, were neutral, or expressed no preference, while 13 local jurisdictions representing 11 percent of the county's population recommended a subregional Call process. Overall, 64 of 89 local jurisdictions provided no response.

While Motion 21 proposes converting the Call into a new subregional, multimodal subvention formula, federal planning regulations specifically do not allow formula subvention programs. The Federal Highway Administration previously notified Metro, in response to a similar past proposal, that a subregional subvention program is specifically prohibited by federal regulations and that "the planning process should be based on demonstrating needs and system performance, not on everyone getting a certain percentage of the funding." (see Attachment C). Staff has confirmed with FHWA that the requirements mentioned in their letter are still in force, remain unchanged in current federal planning regulations, and do not allow a subregional subvention program. This regulation applies to all Call modes. Other issues that create impediments to a subregional process include jurisdictions like the City and County of Los Angeles that would have to apply to multiple subregions for Call funding, and concerns that not all subregions have adequate staffing and expertise to execute the schedule-driven Call process in a timely and transparent manner.

While the limited survey responses did not demonstrate a significant demand for change of the overall Call process, the survey responses have led staff to recommend a significant restructuring of the countywide Call process as summarized in Attachment A. Attachment C also provides a detailed discussion of the Call assessment process and restructuring recommendations.

TAC CONSULTATION

At their June 3rd meeting, TAC met and was briefed on this future Call proposal. Considerable discussion ensued and comments by individual TAC members are summarized in Attachment D.

Much of TAC's discussion focused on Call implementation issues that would need to be addressed in parallel to any changes in the Call process adopted by the Board. The TAC adopted a motion to consider creating a sub-committee to further explore various Call technical implementation issues that will need to be addressed in a new Call process.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Modifying the future Call process will not have any adverse safety impacts on our employees and patrons.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This action has no impact on Metro's adopted FY 2016 budget as it changes how applicants can compete in future Call processes. Funds for future Calls are included in the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan and the 2014 Short Range Transportation Plan.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could choose to approve the recommended changes to the Call process, direct staff to develop an alternative Call process consistent with state and federal requirements, or discontinue the Call process and redirect funding to other regional priorities. The staff recommendations provide for a major restructuring of significant improvement to the Call process to respond to Motion 21 and the survey responses received by local agencies.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will proceed with the development of the future Call process that reflects the recommendations outlined in the report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Summary of Call Restructuring Recommendations

Attachment B - Motion 21

Attachment C - Assessment of Call Process

Attachment C1 - FHWA Response on Subregional Subvention

Attachment C2 - Summary of Survey Results

Attachment C3 - Survey Instrument

Attachment C4 - Compendium of Survey Responses

Attachment D - Summary of Comments from TAC Briefing - 6/3/15

Prepared by: Brad McAllester, Executive Officer (213) 922-2814

David Yale, Managing Executive Officer, (213) 922-2469

Reviewed By: Martha Welborne, Chief Planning Officer



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT D

Summary of Comments from TAC Briefing - June 3, 2015

- Metro staff's recommendations should be presented to COGs/Subregions prior to Metro Board action.
 - Does the federal restriction to subvene funds affect all sources or just Federal funds? How much of Call money is federal?
 - Allowing COGs/Subregional agencies to review and rank projects from their COG/Subregion as input into the countywide project recommendations will require local agencies to vet their projects before the COG/Subregional agency which leaves a lot of room for interpretation. It's too wide open on the criteria to be used by each COG/Subregions for ranking projects. Will there be guidelines for how COGs would do this? This will likely lengthen the Call process. The Call application process would need to begin months earlier in order to accommodate the COG/Subregional review process. It is unclear how much input the COG/Subregions will have on how a project is scored.
 - Formula issue is misleading and misinterpreting motion. The COG/Subregions want an allocation, however, they would then do a competitive process to recommend funding.
 - The City and County of Los Angeles are disadvantaged through a COG/Subregional approach because they are contained in multiple COG/Subregions. Each COG operates and is governed differently from one another. If projects are vetted by the COGs/Subregional agencies, each COG/Subregion will want to see the applications in a different way as each COG/Subregion does things differently.
 - Some subregions or COGs may not have the resources to undergo a strenuous evaluation process.
 - As seen in the Mobility Matrix process, having COG/Subregional review of projects tends to make the project ranking process more political rather than technical.
 - We need to look for ways to accelerate project readiness.
 - The concept of having more COG input into the Call process is the right concept. Trying to figure out the best way to implement it in the appropriate technical manner so that you can take the COG/Subregional input from 9 different Subregions and then fold it into the final call process is complex.
 - Make an effort to bring smaller projects out of Federal money and into local money.
 - Look for potential ways to keep in mind geographic equity, while not having a formal COG/Subregional pre-approval.
 - Streamlining the application is vital.
 - Look at potential for helping local jurisdictions with Caltrans approval processes, such as Metro's FTA Pass-Through Process.
 - What are the impacts on Call projects if using VMT? Remove direct reference to SB 743, but address the Board's overall commitment regarding Greenhouse Gas reduction.
 - Attachment A recommendations should add bullet to reaffirm TAC's role in the Call process.
 - The relation between TAC and Subregions should be clear.
 - Engage local jurisdictions for input when developing the new "performance measure calculator tool" for Greenhouse Gas reduction calculations.
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- TAC MOTION: TAC recommended the formation of a TAC Working Group to address specific implementation issues and overall new process.

Attachment A

Summary of Call Restructuring Recommendations

Strengthen Subregional Partnership in Countywide Call Process

- Subregional input into the application development to address subregional needs at the beginning of the Call process through a new Subregional Steering Committee.
- Allow subregional agencies to review and rank projects from their subregion as input into countywide project recommendations.
- Encourage subregional agencies to coordinate inter-jurisdictional projects and to apply as lead agency for inter-jurisdictional projects on behalf of local agencies.

Simplify and Improve Call Process for Local Agencies

- Review and streamline application package to simplify and reduce preparation time
- Create on-line "performance measure calculator tool" to assist applicants in determining project performance benefits.
- Create complete street/multimodal application for projects (eliminates multiple modal application submittals)
- Allow on-line application completion and submittal of Call applications to Metro

Strengthen Focus on Greenhouse Gas Reductions

- Creation of Complete Streets/Multimodal application to encourage complete street emphasis
- Revise performance measures in accordance with SB 743 and to be state-of-the-practice for assessing vehicle miles travelled and greenhouse gas reductions.
- Incorporate Greenhouse Gas reduction calculations into new "performance measure calculator tool" for use by local agencies.
- Revisit funding marks for Call modes with particular focus on Active Transportation and sustainable programs, through the 2017 LRTP development process.

Maximize Funding Availability

- Seek to leverage Call funding with other sources, such as the State/Regional Active Transportation Programs and Cap and Trade Program.
- Seek to coordinate funding cycle with other funding cycles, in particular the Active Transportation Program.

21

REVISED

October 23, 2014

Regular Board Meeting

Motion by Directors O'Connor, Dupont-Walker, Najarian, Dubois and Bonin

Beginning with the changes in MAP 21 that converted Transportation Enhancement funding to "Transportation Alternatives" to the State oversight of Active Transportation funding we are seeing a diminished role for Metro as the sole implementing agency with multi-modal programming responsibilities in providing critical funding for local agencies for needed transportation improvements that are beyond local agencies' capabilities that help implement the LRTP.

There is a new paradigm of state and federal funding being developed; the State of California has just adopted new environmental planning law that changes the mobility focus from reducing congestion to reducing vehicle miles traveled -to bring jobs back closer to neighborhoods and/or to improve the connections between neighborhoods and the regional transit network, with a goal of reducing pollution and improving air quality.

This emerging state regulatory framework requires that L. A. county re-balance the Call-for-Projects mobility investment portfolio by embracing innovative changes that are dramatically changing the next generation's lifestyle choices into a new world connected by technology rather than a car for every driver. A world dominated more by local neighborhood and community connectivity that emphasizes the neighborhood quality of **complete streets** rather than by increasing the speed of auto trips across mega-regions; a world of connected villages and Smart Neighborhoods where jobs and housing are clustered, emphasizing a desire for sub-regional congestion mitigation and local quality of life while being linked through transit trips that span the region -a world that begins at home rather than "on the road".

It is becoming ever clearer that the decades old **Call for Projects** process has become an anachronism. Instead, an updated LRTP and new ballot measure should propose an overarching strong subregional emphasis that provides funding for inter-jurisdictional transit and highway projects and programs that encourage and fund improved sustainability of the basic building blocks of our communities -our neighborhoods. We believe the current form of Call-for-Projects needs to be changed to incorporate the concept of expanding to each subregion the successful Highway Operational Improvement Program (HOIP) created in Measure R, and use this program as a template and paradigm for converting the current Metro Call for Projects Program into a new subregional, multi-modal subvention formula program in which local agencies, rather than the monolithic Metro Board, determine sub-regional priorities for public transportation investments applying the same modal categories currently used in the Call-for-Projects process.

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WE THEREFORE MOVE that the Metro Board instruct the CEO and Planning staff to:

- A. ~~in effect suspend~~ revise and improve future **Call for Projects** past the 2015 Call and incorporate an evaluation of this process into the LRTP-update and ballot exploration process with the stakeholding COGs and subregions; and
- B. return to this Board in February, 2015 with the examination and recommendations on the possibility of converting the **Call for Projects Process** into a new subregional, multi-modal subvention formula program as previously described above.

BONIN AMENDMENT that the Metro Board instruct the CEO and Planning staff to, as part of the examination and recommendations on changes to the Call for Projects Process beyond 2015, solicit an assessment of both the strengths and weaknesses of the process from cities, COGs, and other stakeholders who both apply and do not apply for funding. The information solicited should be presented to the Board and incorporated as part of the foundation for revising future Calls.

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SCANNED
IN RMC



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
METROPOLITAN OFFICE
201 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1460
Los Angeles, California 90012
213-202-3950

April 6, 1998

IN REPLY REFER TO

HSC-CA
Document # 125

Mr. Mark Pisano, Executive Director
Southern California Association of Governments
818 W. 7th Street, 12th Floor
Los Angeles CA 90017-3435

Mr. Julian Burke, Interim CEO
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles CA 90012-2932

Attention: Mr. Arnie Sherwood

Attention: Carol Inge

Dear Mr. Pisano and Mr. Burke :

SUBJECT: SUBALLOCATION OF FEDERAL FUNDS BY LACMTA

It has come to our attention that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) is pursuing language in state bill AB 1759 (Runner) that would suballocate STIP Regional Choice funds on a formula basis to balance regional and subregional needs. Federal Metropolitan and Statewide planning regulations specifically prohibit distributing ISTEA funds (STP, CMAQ, Section 5307, etc) to local jurisdictions based on a formula. The planning process should be based on demonstrated needs and system performance, not on everyone getting a certain percentage of the funding.

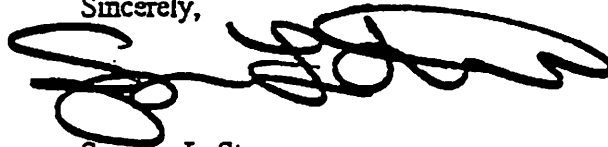
Federal Statewide and Metropolitan Planning rule specifically states:

"Procedures or agreements that distribute suballocated Surface Transportation Program or section 9 [now called section 5307] funds to individual jurisdictions or modes within the metropolitan area by predetermined percentages or formulas are inconsistent with the legislative provisions that require MPOs in cooperation with the State and transit operators to develop a prioritized and financially constrained TIP and shall not be used unless they can be clearly shown to be based on considerations required to be addressed as part of the planning process." [23 CFR §450.324(1)]

We will be happy to assist SCAG and LACMTA in ensuring that the regional project selection criteria is consistent with all necessary rules and regulations. If you have any questions

pertaining to this or any other Federal planning regulations, please do not hesitate to contact Spencer Stevens of the LA Metropolitan Office at (213) 202-3954.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Spencer L. Stevens', written in a cursive style.

Spencer L. Stevens
Transportation Planning Engineer

cc:

FHWA:

Dennis Scovill, CA Division
Bob O'Loughlin FHWA Region IX

FTA:

Erv Poka, Metro office
Bob Horn, FTA Region IX

Caltrans:

Zahi Faranesh : District 7 LA
Tremain Downey : HQ Sacramento

BILL NUMBER: AB 1759 AMENDED
BILL TEXT

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 27, 1998
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 15, 1998
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 13, 1998

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Runner

FEBRUARY 4, 1998

An act add Section 14528 to the Government Code, relating to transportation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1759, as amended, Runner. Transportation: funding.

(1) Existing law requires regional transportation planning agencies and county transportation commissions to adopt and submit to the California Transportation Commission and the Department of Transportation, not later than March 1, 1998, and December 15 of each odd-numbered year thereafter, a 4-year regional transportation improvement program, as specified. Existing law prescribes procedures for implementing that requirement.

This bill would require that prior to the preparation and adoption of the 2000 State Transportation Improvement Program, a regional transportation planning agency or a county transportation commission in a county with over 8,000,000 persons review and revise the process, as specified, by which it allocates funds for regional improvement programs identified by the California Transportation Commission. The bill would require the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority by March 31, 1999, to develop an allocation process that includes the revised process and identifies a percentage of funds available for subregional transportation policy decisions for each cycle of the state transportation improvement program. The bill would require the percentage of funds identified for subregional transportation policy decisions be less than 10% and not more than 25% of the available state funds. *The bill would require the chair of the authority to appoint authority members to assist the authority's staff in developing the process.* Because the bill would thereby impose additional duties upon those entities of local government, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: **majority**. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 14528 is added to the Government Code, to read:

14528. (a) For the State Transportation Improvement Program, a regional transportation planning agency or a county transportation commission in a county with over 8,000,000 persons shall review and revise the process by which it allocates the funds identified for regional improvement programs under subdivision (b) of Section 14525 of the Government Code and shall adopt changes to this process prior to the preparation and adoption of the 2000 State Transportation Improvement Program, consistent with the following principles:

(1) Ensuring a balance between regional and subregional needs.

(2) Ensuring an equitable distribution of funds among subregional areas over time.

(3) Maintaining the region's ability to fund major projects located in one or more subregional areas that significantly contribute to the region's mobility needs.

(4) Providing greater participation in funding decisions by the localities that comprise subregional areas.

(5) Balancing the need for transportation improvements in the most densely populated areas in the region with the transportation needs of more distant and geographically separated areas.

(6) Ensuring that all of the requirements for the use of state transportation improvement program regional choice funds are met.

(b) By March 31, 1999, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority shall develop an allocation process that includes the revised process required in subdivision (a) and the identification of a percentage of funds available for subregional transportation policy decisions for each cycle of the state transportation improvement program. The percentage of funds identified for subregional transportation policy decisions for each cycle of the state transportation improvement program shall not be less than 10 percent nor more than 25 percent of the available state funds.

For the purposes of developing the allocation process described in this subdivision, the chair of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority shall appoint three or four authority members to assist the authority's staff in developing that process.

SEC. 2. Notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the claim for reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars (\$1,000,000), reimbursement shall be made from the State Mandates Claims Fund.

Notwithstanding Section 17580 of the Government Code, unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this act shall become operative on the same date that the act takes effect pursuant to the California Constitution.

Attachment C2

Summary of Survey Results

Existing Call for Projects Process Strengths

- Technical Integrity and transparency of process
- Staff outreach and workshops
- Clear rules and application package

Existing Call for Projects Weaknesses

- Complex application is difficult, especially for small cities
- Time and cost of developing application
- Cities need more assistance in application's project performance calculations

Challenges in proposing inter-jurisdictional projects

- No specific barriers in Call process
- Local barrier most significant – a local agency must take on responsibility to lead, administer, and manage funding
- Time needed to reach local agreement is longer than Call allows

Projects that agencies would like to fund beyond Call eligibility

- Maintenance/state of good repair
- Local roadway improvements
- Storm water/beautification/landscaping and other local programs with funding shortages

Subregional Call Strengths

- Local control
- Knowledge of subregional and local needs/priorities
- Spreads funding among cities within subregion

Subregional Call Weaknesses

- Less money available per city
- Limited subregional staffing and expertise to manage Call
- Concern about how local politics may influence project selection

Call for Projects Preference (Countywide vs. Subregional Process)

- 1000 surveys sent and 34 responses received – evenly split between two options
- 12 local jurisdictions representing 55% of county population prefer existing countywide Call process, or no preference
- 13 local jurisdictions representing 11% of county population prefer subregional Call
- 64 local jurisdictions representing 34% of county population did not respond
- Seven of eight transportation partners prefer existing countywide Call process



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

November 5, 2014

Dear Interested Parties in Los Angeles County:

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors (Board) adopted a motion at its October 24, 2014 meeting directing staff to "revise and improve future Call for Projects past the 2015 Call." The Board further directed staff to "solicit an assessment of both the strengths and weaknesses of the process from cities, COGs, and other stakeholders who both apply and do not apply for funding."

Attached for your use is our Call for Projects Survey. Your assistance in completing the attached survey will help to guide the future of the Call for Projects process. We anticipate that the results of this survey will be provided to the Board at its February 2015 meeting. Please note that this does not impact the 2015 Call for Projects currently underway.

We recognize that you are busy preparing applications for the 2015 Call for Projects, but we would appreciate your response to this request. Please return the completed survey by Friday, December 19th via email to lumr@metro.net or via mail to:

Metro
One Gateway Plaza
Mail Stop 99-23-25, attn: Call for Projects
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2932

Sincerely,

Martha Welborne, FAIA
Chief Planning Officer

Attachment

Distribution:
City Managers
Planning Directors
Public Works Directors
Transportation Directors
General Managers of Muni Operators
Metro's Technical Advisory Committee
Streets and Freeways Subcommittee
Bus Operations Subcommittee
Local Transit Systems Subcommittee
TDM/Sustainability Subcommittee
COG Executive Directors
Call for Projects Email Distribution List (email only)

Call for Projects Survey

The Metro Board adopted a motion at its October 24th meeting (attached) directing staff to consider whether the Call for Projects process should be revised beyond the 2015 Call process to allocate Call funds through a sub-regional process. (NOTE: This does **NOT** impact the 2015 Call currently underway). The Board directed that staff report in February 2015 with a recommendation on revising the future Call process. We know that you are busy preparing applications for the 2015 Call for Projects, but we would appreciate your response to this survey.

1. Does your jurisdiction or agency participate in the Call for Projects process? Yes No

1a. Please describe strengths (Please list in priority order with most important first):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

1b. Please describe weaknesses (Please list in priority order with most important first):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____



1c. If applicable, please describe why you do not participate in the Call for Projects.

2. Are there types of projects that you would like to fund through the Call process, but are not eligible? Please provide examples:

3. Are there any barriers in the existing Call for Projects process that make it more difficult for local jurisdictions to work together to propose inter-jurisdictional projects? If so, how could the current Call process create a greater opportunity for inter-jurisdictional projects?

4. If the Call for Projects process was modified to allocate funding through sub-regional COGs/agencies as described in the attached motion, what would be the strengths and weaknesses of this process?

4a. Please describe strengths (Please list in priority order with most important first):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

4b. Please describe weaknesses (Please list in priority order with most important first).

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

5. Are there any issues or considerations that you would want to see addressed if a sub-regional Call process was instituted?

6. If funding was allocated to sub-regions, how would you want to see funding allocated? If allocated by formula, what formula would you recommend and why?

7. Other than a countywide or sub-regional Call process, are there other alternative Call processes that you believe should be considered?

8. On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate your preference for continuing with the existing countywide process beyond the 2015 Call? (Circle one)

Least favorable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most favorable

9. On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate your preference for revising the Call for Projects to allocate funds through sub-regional COG processes beyond the 2015 Call? (Circle one)

Least favorable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most favorable

10. Do you have any other comments on the Call for Projects process that you would like to have considered by the Metro Board?

Thank you for your participation in our survey!

Name: (optional) _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Please return survey by Friday, December 19th via e-mail to Rena Lum at lumr@metro.net or mail to:

Metro
One Gateway Plaza
Mail Stop 99-23-25, attn: Call for Projects
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952



**COMPENDIUM OF SURVEY RESPONSES
DECEMBER 2014**

Question 1. Does respondent participate in Call? yes (28) no (4) no response (2)

Question 1a. Strengths of Existing Call Process

- Metro staff assistance to applicants (4)
- Sub-regional/applicant workshops (3)
- Metro staff availability
- Provides funding for large projects
- Large agencies receive majority of funds, as have staff resources to prepare applications
- Distribution and award of grants based on merit, not regional distribution.
- Additional points for higher local match.
- Overall a very good program.
- Current countywide Call process is the most cost effective and justifiable means of selecting projects. Should remain as is.
- Communication and outreach
- Process highlights local needs.
- Offers forum to review projects throughout the County.
- Modal categories help ensure each mode receives consideration.
- Sectional weighting
- Application guidelines are very comprehensive
- The Call provides funding to local agencies to implement “Regionally significant” projects that exceed available local funding.
- The Call equitably distributes grant funds through the County.
- The Call funds innovative transportation programs and projects which then can be replicated throughout the County.
- The Call provides significant funding for TDM and non-motorized modes.
- The Call provides a consistent set of goals and objectives allowing Cities to develop projects which will compete well.
- The workshop at the beginning that gives us access to the Modal Leads is very helpful in understanding what types of projects might be successful.
- Availability of on-line application
- Provision of electronic communication with Metro staff to answer application questions
- Metro staff extremely responsive to questions.
- Significant amount of funding (2)
- Good to have multiple categories

- Helps fund vehicle replacement or other significant capital investments that local jurisdictions would not otherwise be able to cover.
- Variety of modes (2)
- Range of funding amounts.
- Good way to distribute funding to local projects.
- Application process is well defined and administered.
- Lot of informative communication available through workshops, brochures, website
- Fair selection process of projects.
- Tech support for online application
- Didn't understand the question of what "strength" to describe.
- Call gives chance to request funding for projects that are not eligible for other sources
- Scoring metrics focused on enhancing antiquated urban infrastructure
- Regional significance cannot be equitably evaluated among varied cities.
- Application process requires tens of thousands for each application
- Funding availability is often 4-5 years out.
- Funding opportunity for various types of projects. (2)
- Categorical separation of modal types
- Opportunity to extend the scope of improvements while utilizing limited agency funds.
- Fair and open competition.
- Submission and grading process is transparent
- Appeals process is fair.
- Metro staff does a good job at presenting the Call application and process
- Metro's outreach
- Metro's willingness to make "some" changes, especially related to the appeal process
- Funding opportunity – the ability to attract other funding sources.
- Awarded funds can be advanced easily by working with Metro staff is very helpful
- CFP is a well-established process for evaluating projects, awarding funds. It has been tweaked over time and refined to be a generally good process for the distribution of funds.
- Since it is an already established process, the Call can be used for any future funds that require a similar evaluation process. (If the State required regional allocation of funds through an evaluation process, the Call method can be used)
- The Call is usually tweaked and adjusted each year, based on feedback and comments from applicants, so it is a living process.
- Application is easily understandable
- Project categories insure that funding restrictions are adhered to
- Needs are addressed on a countywide basis
- Multijurisdictional applications are encouraged
- Project coordination on a regional basis

- Application on website – user friendly
- Availability of IT technical staff to assist
- Keeping transit agencies informed during the process
- Priorities and objective of Call are clearly stated both in the application and questions.
- The process is well defined
- The best projects get funded. There is a good effort to evaluate projects objectively vs. subjectively
- The Call provides a potential source of funding for transportation projects/programs at local levels that otherwise may not be funded through formula allocation programs.
- The Call provides funding for projects that may have regional significance but that may not reach high levels of priority for any individual or set of local agencies.
- Consideration is given to all modes of transportation
- Agencies must be able to timely spend Call funds once they are obligated and abide by terms/conditions in funding agreements.
- This competitive funding allocation process on the regional scale allows high-quality projects to get funded in it's entirety, as some of these projects would have difficulty getting funded if not through such competitive process. Take, for example, bus replacement/expansion projects. These kinds of projects are usually high-cost. However, without the option of getting funding through a regional competitive process, it would be very difficult for some transit agencies to be able to obtain the necessary funding to acquire the buses to maintain the existing service and/or to expand service.
- High priority:
 - Ratings are based on the technical merits of projects using established metrics
 - Call has evolved to award points to projects that focus on Complete Streets, First-Mile/Last Mile, Sustainability
- Medium priority:
 - Current process allows for appeals
 - Metro staff is very supportive and response to agency's questions
 - Relative consistency of when Calls are held (every 2 years) and reliability of process
- Regional Transportation Funding distribution based on project merit and scoring
- Flexibility in delivering the project as funding is programmed ahead of the project
- Metro's assistance in scope changes
- Metro's workshop and assistance in explaining the Call Process and intent.
- The Call is overall consistent with the Federal, State and regional intent of how these regional funds should be distributed
- Continuous assistance from Metro staff during the process.
- Amount of funding available

Question 1b. Weaknesses of Existing Call Process

- Metro staff inability to meet in person or at proposed project site
- Inability to provide previously successful applications to current applications
- Larger agencies with more staff are more successful and able to submit more projects, to the disadvantage of smaller jurisdictions
- Lack of geographical consideration in how funds are distributed
- Larger agencies more successful in receiving funds.
- Federal requirements are labor intensive and increase administrative costs, which discourage small cities from preparing applications.
- Requiring projects be within low income areas eliminates some potential projects (ed. note: this is not a Call requirement)
- Prior Call requirements for CCC participation was cumbersome and made some projects ineligible (ed. note: was a State requirement, now rescinded)
- Small agencies no longer have staff to prepare applications.
- Current Call does not allow multi-modal projects. Project can only be listed in one category.
- None. (3)
- Dilution of award amounts by funding all categories in each Call cycle.
- Recommend reviews by local personnel.
- Established previously studied projects are given too much weight while new project ideas that might have greater impact have trouble competing.
- Grant deadline should be moved to February instead of January due to holiday season
- Increase number of workshops
- Reduce grant match to 15 percent.
- Limited funds available for “regionally significant” projects.
- Project development costs (design, env. Review, PS&E) can be prohibitive
- Funds being awarded several years in the future is difficult for projects with immediate/short term funding needs.
- It can be a little tricky to place a project if it involves different modes.
- The application can be a bit daunting for City Staff without the help of a consultant.
- Seems like process is geared slightly toward larger agencies.
- Deadline did not provide adequate timing for cities to understand and incorporate new requirements.
- Priorities are given to less conventional and unproven improvements, particularly for bicycle projects.
- Some aspects difficult to understand for those not experienced in process
- On-line document was a little cumbersome
- Lack of funding for maintenance/3R work

- Very time consuming process, may put smaller jurisdictions with limited staff/resources at disadvantage
- Often requires significant input and data that is not always readily available for very limited funding pool.
- More funds needed than resources to support
- Not clear that funds are fairly allocated to sub-region relative to other major projects.
- Lack of communication between MTA and Caltrans
- Inability to cross different modal categories when submitting projects requiring need to submit various applications in different modes.
- Does not take into account priorities for sub-regions different from one another or Metro
- Still requires printed application to be sent. Needs to be electronically sent for future.
- Time allotted does not provide for inter-jurisdictional projects to be fully developed, as application development period is during the holidays.
- Didn't understand question of what "weaknesses" to describe.
- A few redundant and irrelevant questions for each category
- Unfair scoring based on the same measures. Gives smaller projects a higher score due to higher local match percentage, while bigger projects with greater regional impact get disqualified.
- Application, process and required documentation are costly, tedious and time consuming requiring significant research and analysis and may not be funded.
- New Call cycles have new sections/requirements added further committing local agency resources.
- PSR-PDS requirements and Caltrans concurrence for projects on/at State highways/freeways
- PSR-PDS or PSR are extremely costly and time consuming. Most agencies not willing to gamble on being awarded funding. Discourages smaller agencies and unfairly limits field to larger agencies with available resources.
- Application preparation time is too short and impossible for projects requiring a PSR
- Subjectiveness of the ranking/scoring system
- Cap/limitations on each modal category
- Lengthy application
- Funding is almost always scheduled for "out years" (four to five years out)
- "Some" cities not following Metro's rules
- Current methodology pertaining to funding equity is flawed
- Priority appears to be focused on the LA Basin – proactive vs. reactive
- Methods should be rewarded.
- Application values project readiness, but funding is typically not available for 4-5 years.

- Projects receiving funds 4-5 years out may change, and the change process for awarded funds is cumbersome and there is a high risk of losing the funds.
- The entire Call has become more and more cumbersome over the years, with new, unwieldy initiatives becoming part of the requirements.
- Tends to be a one size fits all application of the rules, which is not always helpful for those agencies that don't fit nicely into a category.
- Not being able to submit everything online.
- Having to provide printout and DVD/CDs
- Smaller agencies have limited staff resources to properly compete for funding
- Sub-region equity becomes an issue
- Sub-region priorities are not accounted for in project ranking/selection
- Funding allocations between categories may not reflect actual need
- Representation of local agencies by selection/appeals committee is limited
- Some questions are redundant. Could help to consolidate questions in part I, II, and III.
- Would be helpful to announce funding amounts in each mode so agency have an idea of chances of being funded before exerting serious amounts of effort that may not be productive.
- More good projects than funding available in most modes
- Application components somewhat tedious for routine bus capital requests – could be simplified for vehicle acquisition for ongoing transit systems.
- As with any grant program, the application process requires significant effort and resources, with uncertainty of success
- The grant program in particular cobbles together funding from multiple sources, and thus introduces uncertainty in the final sources of funding to be received , meaning the funding restrictions and requirements is unknown until after the proposal period and when funds are awarded
- Funding source uncertainty makes it difficult to plan and nominate projects that require long lead times to develop and good information to prioritize
- Some believe that the Call process is vulnerable to political interests that are motivated to spread resources among jurisdictions, rather than select projects based on merit, need, or effectiveness of investments.
- The grant funding availability is too far out – we need to have earlier grant funding availability so it doesn't prevent us from implementing the projects as soon as they are ready.
- The applications are broken into different modes, and this makes it difficult for agencies who want to propose projects with improvements that fall under multiple modes as the current Call process requires such projects to apply under multiple modes, and this leads to a burdensome application preparation process. We should be allowed to turn in one application for a multi-modal project and have such project be evaluated as one complete

project, and its' up to Metro to decide internally how much funding from the available funding sources to fund such multi-modal projects

- The performance measures are auto-oriented. Person throughput should be added as part of the measures.
- High priorities:
 - Modal categories should be revisited to account for current goals and programs related to Complete Streets
 - Fund distribution does not match change in modal options
 - Administratively burdensome and resource-intensive for Metro and agencies
 - No established formulas or methodologies for quantitative questions (b/c calculations, mode shift)
 - Too much lead time for programming of funds. Funding years should be within 2 years of award to keep all outreaching efforts valid.
 - There is an existing overlap between ATP and Bike and Pedestrian projects. If the Call does not support TEA projects anymore, then there should be a special consideration to safety factors in Bike and Pedestrian category projects.
- Medium priority:
 - Points for overmatch should not be included – this is not a merit based factor
 - Funding caps in different modes restrict higher-scale, corridor-wide congestion relief opportunities
 - Applications are lengthy; questions lead to repetitive answers
 - Does not provide adequate time with lapsing policies for larger-scaled projects
 - No open forum to discuss projects that have not been successful. This is to help project sponsors improve their projects for the next Call.
 - Would like to see Call Application/Guidelines released sooner to allow for more time to prepare applications.
- Low priority:
 - High modal lead staff turnover
 - Amount of funding allocated to RSTI category has been diminishing throughout the years. Board needs to make a decision if this is no longer a viable category for the Call and divert funds to other categories, especially to Pedestrian and Bike safety projects.
 - Applicants required to re-submit entire application(s) if Metro staff recommends alternate mode category (in a very short time frame)
- The sometimes uncertainty of the availability and amount of Call funding can inhibit local agencies' long term transportation planning.
- Certain years' Call are more competitive than others which results with inconsistent quality of funded projects region wide.
- Funding seems to be awarded to obtain equality among geographic areas, not necessarily based on the merit of the application

Question 1c. Why you do not participate in Call?

- City has participated in past with great results. City does not have a project to bring forward for upcoming Call.
- Restricted timeline for grant submittal
- Matching requirements are high
- Application is a large undertaking that staff does not have time to accomplish without consultant help. No funding is available for hiring a consultant.
- Type of eligible projects, along with weighting criteria, make it difficult for smaller cities to compete with larger cities and larger projects.
- Application process can be very formidable, with the preparation of the PSRE and the requirements association with the Complete Streets Act
- Process and staff time involved in administering federally funded projects can be overwhelming. Greater Caltrans assistance with administration process would be helpful.
- Funding not typically available for a minimum of 5 years, which makes it difficult for projects which need to be constructed in a more timely manner
- Prior years' workload did not allow time to prepare application.
- Do not often have projects that compete well.
- Level of effort to apply can be cumbersome for a project with a low chance of funding.
- Did not have time to obtain Caltrans' approval of PSR/PSRE
- Projects not big enough to justify the effort needed to go through process.
- No regionally significant projects to submit.
- Participation is based on calculation whether a project has a strong chance of being competitive.
- Smaller agencies/smaller projects are not worth the extended effort.
- City did not prioritize funds for engineering consultants to prepare applications and necessary studies.

Question 2. Types of projects you would like to fund in Call

- Green Street projects in response to federal storm sewer requirements.
- Upgrade traffic signal equipment (non-synchronizing) to comply with Federal mandates, especially adjacent to active railroads where battery backup systems are required.
- Upgrade traffic signals to provide emergency vehicle priority (EVP)
- Upgrade traffic signals to install accessible pedestrian signals (APS), countdown signals and access ramps to current ADA standards.
- No. Likes current project eligibility. (2)
- Small city arterials impacted by neighboring jurisdictions but receives small amount of gas tax and local return funds. Only 10 percent of maintenance covered and would like to have Call funds for maintenance.
- Water quality projects that mitigate pollutants from transportation infrastructure.
- Pedestrian and bicycle projects.
- Street lighting improvements
- Less stringent requirements for median landscaping/irrigation
- Streets preservation measures
- Development of First/Last Mile Plans to identify and design needed improvements.
- Small scale local street improvements. Call seems to focus on large arterial improvements.
- Concepts funding in addition to shovel ready project funding.
- Projects that not only provide access to transit centers, but also reduce VMT by encouraging pedestrian and bike travel to/from local businesses, point of interest, schools, places of work, such as upgrades to sidewalks and ADA ramps, new sidewalk construction, bike lane maintenance on locally used routes (as opposed to regional transit centers).
- Alt Fuel requirement for transit operators required conversion of Gas fleet to LPG. Without requirement, would have maintained gas fleet.
- Existing roadway improvements for major thoroughfares. Needs exist beyond local return allocations.
- 3R work and maintenance.
- Preventative maintenance of streets (resurfacing, slurry seal, reconstruction projects)
- Intersection improvements that would be beneficial, where other widening options are limited as ROW cannot be obtained.
- Transportation related utility construction/relocation
- Local projects with local benefits.
- State of good repair, local capacity enhancements to minor arterials and collectors and beautification projects smaller in scope.
- Interchange beautification projects (landscape)

- Facility or service feasibility studies
- Rail track construction for a Metrolink Station.
- Current call modal applications are sufficient
- Difficulty identifying the modal category for projects such as CAD/AVL projects.
- Maintenance training for Innovative capital projects.
- Permanent art installations tied to transit
- Sustainability enhancements, i.e. solar lighting at bus stop or solar panels on facilities – may be eligible but would not rank high.
- Feasibility/preliminary design for projects that require some type of feasibility study in order to compete for funding. For example, a transit center projects would require some type of feasibility study that assesses potential locations and come up with the preliminary design and cost estimate; this information is critical in helping the agency move forward with preparing the application for future Call to implement the design and construction portion of the project. Allowing at least the feasibility study to be funded through the Call really would make it possible for agencies with tight budget to be able to implement such projects.
- High priorities:
 - Safety, traffic calming projects
 - Advanced Planning/Pre-Development Efforts
 - Projects not along transit lines
- Medium priorities:
 - Multi-phased projects
 - Major investment Studies
 - Operation and maintenance/State of Good Repair Improvements (Resurfacing/sidewalk repair)
- Projects which are otherwise qualified for Federal and State funding such as roadway resurfacing, rehabilitation, and reconstruction work
- While not necessarily appropriate for Call, money is needed to fund the operations of deployed systems.
- Projects that improve transportation mobility but are not directly related to public transit.
- Funding for the implementation for new fixed route transit services

Question 3. Barriers for inter-jurisdictional projects

- Could be improved by information applicants of similar project concepts in each mode or neighboring jurisdictions.
- Budget cuts have impacted resources to maintain additional striping of bike lanes desired as a multi-jurisdictional project.
- Low funding limits, which impact completing larger, regional projects.
- None within LA County. Would like to see projects with adjacent counties get funded through Call.
- Multi-agency projects require upfront coordination and agreements. Call does not allow necessary coordination. Could be possible to do with time to properly develop, but coordination can be time consuming.
- Lower the matching requirement
- Stringent timeline for grant submittal, making collaboration with other agencies more difficult.
- Provide a more simplified grant application.
- No substantial barriers to intercity cooperation.
- As incentive, count staff time as “hard match” for lead agency of multi-jurisdictional application. There are substantial time commitments for lead agency to administer grant fund distribution to participating cities.
- Problem in 2005 Call on multi-jurisdictional bike project. Process required one agency to take lead in federal funding allocation process and several agreements needed to be finalized. All jurisdictions needed to complete their own public process through their City Councils. Funds were finally de-obligated. Process needs to be better defined to ensure each jurisdiction is aware of requirements prior to application submittal.
- Lack of staff to coordinate and bureaucratic hurdles. A central lead, like a COG, would help.
- Allow 3R regional projects
- None (3)
- Coordination and prioritizing and decision on who will lead, transfer of funds between agencies, and need for agreement and city approval processes.
- Application period is insufficient. Process for two agencies to go through their city bureaucracy takes more time than application period allows.
- Call is more geared for single agency applications. Unless one agency is willing to be lead and take on the work, it is difficult to get various agencies on same application.
- When inter-jurisdictional projects are identified, do not have difficulty partnering.
- Extensive and costly studies and analysis, such as PSRs
- Smaller cities don’t have staff to prepare applications. Use consultants and need to pay for their time.
- Metro could add greater weight on joint applications.

- Projects awarded funds so far into the future is a barrier to timely planning and execution of a “shovel-ready” multi-jurisdictional project.
- Allow JPA’s to apply directly for project funding. Allow several jurisdictions to formally select a lead agency for application and project implementation
- You already do a good job promoting the regional connectedness. Local jurisdictions are such underfunded or under staffed that they don’t have capacity to work through the planning process to bring a multi-jurisdictional project forward.
- Possibly Metro could pick a couple of countywide initiatives, do some planning groundwork, and get local jurisdictions to cover on board, i.e., old signal sych. project.
- Successful inter-jurisdictional projects require strong working relationships between agencies/jurisdictions that may have competing or conflicting interests. Grant programs can be the catalyst for incentivizing agencies to work collaboratively while competing aggressively based on the merits of their projects.
- At county level, working relationships and trust do take time to foster. One strategy is to make Call as reliable as possible with defined parameters so that jurisdictions/agencies have certainty upon which to build sometimes (real or perceived) risky partnerships. Also, another change may be to remove the requirement that applicants rank their projects, thus eliminating the problem of reaching consensus on how a joint project will be ranked among each jurisdiction’s individual priorities.
- The current Call funding agreement requires one lead agency for joint projects. This makes it cumbersome for the agencies involved as the lead agency will incur a lot more administrative burdens of having to sign sub-agreements with other agencies in the joint project and invoicing and project management tasks. Please revise this so that each agency can sign individual funding agreements (under the umbrella of the joint project) with Metro and each agency handles its own project management/invoicing directly with Metro. If awarded, each agency under the joint application gets a defined amount of funding (from the total amount requested under the joint application) and scope of work. This would make it a lot easier for agencies to want to work together on inter-jurisdictional projects and even multi-modal projects.
- Funding caps limit scopes for larger multi-jurisdictional projects
- Deadlines/funding lapse policy make it challenging to coordinate efforts with other jurisdictions.
- Difficult to collaborate with other agencies within the short duration provided to prepare applications.
- Many smaller jurisdictions are not familiar with Federal and State processing of project. Right of way issues, inter-jurisdictional maintenance responsibilities, and availability of local match funds also limit inter-jurisdictional projects.

Question 4a. Strengths of Sub-regional Call process

- Staff with specific knowledge of jurisdictions and potential projects.
- Could allow more local control of where funds are expended.
- Could fund neighborhood multimodal complete street projects.
- Equality of funding distribution which should be set by formula (square mile area, population)
- Not enough information on sub-regional process
- City's COG currently receives Measure R. Sub-regional priorities are set and funds are allocated more effectively, however Metro staff need to be a part.
- Such an organizational approach to CFP Funding (sub-regional priority setting?) would be a critical component to multi-agency projects and coordination.
- Have funds available that match needs of the sub-region
- Enable local agencies to compete fairly as competition would likely be with surrounding cities rather than a small city competing with a large city
- Would provide relatively predictable fund stream for local agencies
- Would provide access to funding for smaller agencies
- Might allow for more fund distribution to smaller agencies
- Local agencies would not have to compete with large cities/projects
- Smaller communities could focus on alternatives that work on a smaller scale. Call is more suitable for larger cities
- Projects could focus more on community needs rather than weighted criteria. Criteria do not always result in a project that meet local needs and improve multi-modal circulation and VMT reductions.
- Since priorities vary by sub-region, each sub-region would be able to set priorities according to needs of area
- Might or might not encourage cooperation between jurisdictions
- Might or might not ensure allocation of funds according to need
- Better representation and understanding of local needs.
- Ability to coordinate projects inter-jurisdictionally
- Better funding opportunities
- Competition on a local scale
- Better process for selection
- COGs would respond to local needs better
- Potentially more direct access to support for the application process
- Potentially more direct access to support for the grant administrative process
- None (2)
- Sub-regional priorities would be addressed.
- Agencies would only be competing with other agencies in that sub-region.

- Sub-region can act as lead on inter-jurisdictional projects
- Project will be scored based on impact and importance to the region
- More inter-jurisdictional projects will be proposed
- Sub-regional definitions of “regional significance could be more accurately applied
- More equitable distribution of funds.
- Sub-regions have familiarity with local regional and local jurisdiction needs and understand the local political dynamics to foster support among jurisdictions.
- Funding may be more evenly divided, allowing greater level of sub-regional improvements.
- Coordination between COGs and local agencies is simplified
- Utilize COG’s bench consultants to conduct initial studies and feasibility analysis
- Encourages smaller agencies to become involved in large or broad base projects.
- COG will get the job done.
- Well-staffed, well-funded.
- More local input and oversight of projects
- Local oversight of funding
- Level playing field (smaller agencies would not compete against large agencies
- Better funding opportunities for various projects within the sub-region by mode.
- Sub-regions can determine priority of modes and projects to be funded.
- More information needed.
- Leaders in the region would be able to prioritize projects of importance for their respective jurisdictions.
- Ideally, overall distribution of funding would be more equitable by region.
- Project selection would represent sub-region’s priorities
- Larger agencies would not dominate the process.
- Greater potential for sub-regional equity
- Greater participation would be encouraged
- Potential for funding to be allocated in a manner that provides for greater distribution of available funding.
- Transit planning decisions can be made at a more sub-regional level
- For some types of projects or transportation modes, sub-regional allocation may make sense based on the rationale that (1) local (sub-regional) agencies would know best what their constituents and local transportation systems need. On the other hand, projects of regional significance will be disadvantaged if funds are spread across sub-regions based on geographic equity (i.e. spreading the peanut butter)

A prime example is goods movement, in which facilities and projects may be localized but the environmental impacts and economic activities generated are regional in nature. In addition to goods movement, transit and signal prioritization projects may be other

candidates for maintaining the current regional approach due to the importance of connectivity between cities and network effects across a region. Pedestrian and bicycling (though one could argue bike networks rely on connectivity and networks) may be better candidates for devolved funding through sub-regions.

- None. We strongly oppose this approach to allocate funding through sub-regional COGs/agencies.
- More discretion to fund local agency priorities
- Less administrative and less resource-intensive
- Projects with sub-regional consensus will lend themselves to better coordinated delivery
- One lead agency could handle a broader project for several agencies which will cut down the administrative processing related to the grants
- Would help ensure that sub-regional priorities are being addressed rather than just the priorities of a single agency
- It will bring additional smaller agencies to the sub-regional table
- May result in a greater number of collaborative, multi-jurisdictional projects

Question 4b. Weaknesses of Sub-regional Call process

- Too many applicants may apply within sub-region
- Limited dollar amounts and number of projects within sub-region
- May dilute focus away from larger regionally significant projects.
- Would be tough job for Board to assess amount of funding to be allocated to each sub-region.
- Eliminating existing merit based system and switching to COG formula distribution may dilute grant award amounts if distributed to all cities.
- Not enough information on sub-regional process.
- None (4).
- Potential for unequal distribution of funds among sub-regions.
- Little to no autonomy for sub-regions to make decisions on elements such as scoring criteria used for applicants
- Fund allocations would not be aligned with Metro's regional transportation priorities.
- Projects without regionally significant mobility benefits could receive funding, preventing regionally significant projects from receiving funds.
- Small agencies may not receive sufficient funding to complete a project.
- Cities who have not adopted land use policies to support transit or non-motorized modes would receive regional transportation funds.
- Challenges to ensure distribution of funds in a fair and equitable manner.
- Difficult in establishing new criteria by which project grants are awarded.
- Not sure that Metro's experience and expertise of funding and regional issues could be replicated on a decentralized level.
- Since transportation is a regional issue, decentralizing could lead to more fragmented system.
- If project evaluation happens locally, is it duplicative to have many different review processes. How is consistency and compliance guaranteed for outside funding sources?
- How do you guarantee that funding decisions are made fairly? Would Metro still have oversight?
- COGs may be subject to limited interests.
- Metro expertise may be diluted.
- Create another layer of oversight
- More paperwork to sub-regions, local agencies, and MTA.
- Overall pot of money in sub-region may preclude bigger projects from being funded.
- Allocation method between cities may create disagreements between cities.
- Who would determine which projects would be funded? COGs are made up of member cities. No impartial evaluators. Bias may be present.
- Sub-regional approach may divert needed funds from bigger and larger scale projects.

- One more layer of review.
- Distribution of funds might take longer.
- Allocation of funds and priority projects – who decides?
- Equity issues.
- Possible delays to funding and hence project timelines
- Possible political motivation for funding or not funding projects (rather than merit)
- Less funding for smaller sub-regions (large regions would take most of funding)
- Inconsistent rating of projects between regions (if each sub-region rated their own proposals).
- Some sub-regions may be too small to fund or fairly rate all Call modes.
- More information needed.
- Not certain that all sub-regions see the value in transit equally. Some regions would be at a disadvantage with a lack of transit support.
- There may not be transit experts in sub-regions who would be able to fairly evaluate transit projects if a sub-regional call for projects were implemented.
- There may be differing priorities which might cause the appearance of favoritism
- Some sub-regions are more influential than others which could lead to variances in allocations to the sub-regions
- Funding in a particular category may not be sufficient to fund an entire project at the regional level. Whereas at the Metro level, sufficient funds would be available for the entire project. (For example, a \$3 million project applied for in a countywide \$15 pot might have a better chance of being funded than in a sub-regional pot where only \$3 million was available.)
- COG staffing required to administer a sub-regional process
- Project coordination among sub-regions
- Multi-jurisdictional (across COG boundaries) project submittals would be difficult to evaluate
- While COGs may have a better understanding of local transit needs, they may not understand regional transit planning and this could cause a disjointed regional transit network.
- Local political interest may distract during the development and project selection process.
- Fund apportioned to the sub-region may not match the project needs –so poor or less desirable projects may get funded by COG and leave other great projects in other areas unfunded.
- Will be more political vs. professional.
- COG evaluators may not have capability of performing adequate evaluation process.
- Lack of regional connectivity

- Regional projects may not receive the funding levels needed if the funding is allocated to sub-regions based on a population factor or formula. In the case of goods movement in particular, a sub-region that includes a port would therefore be expected to fund its port projects in addition to other modes.
- Devolving the funding allocation to sub-regions would require councils of governments – many of which are small and have limited resources – to administer a competitive process; Metro has had years of experience administering this program and has developed the resources to do so over many years.
- Devolution would remove the regionally competitive nature of the Call, which may produce suboptimal results in the set of funded projects.
- This would prevent high-quality projects from getting funded through a fair and competitive process. Some of the bigger projects will not be able to obtain enough funding if not through this Metro administered competitive process on a regional scale.
- The allocation of funding through sub-regional COGs would make the process a lot more political and cause conflicts between agencies/cities under each COG.
- This process would be detrimental to some agencies without the political and/or additional financial resources that would be required to get the full funding to implement high-quality projects.
- City is within multiple sub-regions.
- Smaller cities would get very little funding
- Sub-regional agencies' goals may not line up with Metro's policies and objectives; local projects may not integrate well with Countywide initiatives, such as Measure R
- Would add another administrative layer if applications are processed through sub-regions
- Does not address allocation issues experienced recently under MAP-21
- Countywide and MPO mobility priorities may be diluted in favor of priorities with a strictly sub-regional emphasis
- Sub-regional control must result in the funding of fewer projects that demonstrate innovative new solutions of the type currently being advocated by Metro.

Question 5. Issues to be addressed if a Sub-regional Call process was instituted.

- Pre-application process to streamline review process, as applicants put a lot of effort into application development.
- More local control without Federal or State burdensome requirements.
- Allow each sub-region to determine maximum award amounts per category.
- Allow project to be funded over several years.
- No restrictions on COGs to determine award types, amounts, or duration of funding.
- Not enough information regarding sub-regional process, favor leaving process as is. Need forum to discuss proposed changes to process
- Distribute grant funds to sub-regions or local agencies per an acceptable formula without the need for a call process.
- Distribute funds equally to sub-regions
- That agencies receiving funds are implementing transportation improvement projects that support regional mobility.
- Funding for small local projects.
- Assistance for project concept funding as opposed to shovel ready projects.
- Sufficient training and workshops to ensure agencies are familiar with new process/guidelines
- Assurance that local agencies could apply for local projects, not limited to multi-jurisdictional projects.
- Concerns with fund availability being delayed, as most projects are needed immediately.
- Would Metro still provide Technical Assistance?
- Would each local sub-region be responsible for project evaluation?
- Bringing the COG to the process as a centralized clearing house
- 3R work needs additional funding for sub-regional Calls to be effective.
- Method of evaluating applications.
- Need a set of guidelines to ensure funds are distributed fairly and benefit entire sub-region as well as individual local agencies.
- A shorter and more direct application might be helpful to save staff time and other resources.
- Ability to develop criteria and guidelines by sub-regional agencies
- Ability to develop criteria and guidelines unique to the sub-region's needs.
- Would support the effort as long as every city gets their fair share.
- Possible delays to funding and hence project timelines
- Possible political motivation for funding or not funding projects (rather than merit)
- Less funding for smaller sub-regions (large regions would take most of funding)
- Inconsistent rating of projects between regions (if each sub-region rated their own proposals).

- Some sub-regions may be too small to fund or fairly rate all Call modes.
- Solid methods and formulas that guarantee fairness in terms of funding allocation and distribution. Regional equity.
- Requiring a guaranteed amount of funds be spent on transit.
- Allow sub-regions to establish project categories that will encourage agencies within the sub-region to submit projects that will further the sub-region's priorities.
- The current Call application process would need to be replicated somehow at the sub-regional level
- Selection Committee members would need to possess transit and regional transit qualifications
- Unsure if could support or recommend a sub-regional Call projects until a process is developed and fully vetted.
- Concern how money would be apportioned to COGs.
- Who would have oversight on quality of project selection?
- How would an appeals process work?
- Could COGs with excellent but unfunded projects pull money from COGs with poor project selections?
- Though we favor keeping the program at the regional (Metro) level, if the Call must move to a sub-regional model, it does not have to be an all-or-nothing proposition. We encourage you to consider allowing some modes/types of projects to be funded at the sub-regional level, while retaining at Metro other regionally significant modes or types of projects/programs; these regional projects rely heavily on network effects and connectivity across multiple sub-regions, and are therefore better suited for competition at the regional level.
- We oppose the institution of such sub-regional Call process for reasons stated above. If such process is to be further explored per Metro Board direction, stakeholder meetings must be held to compile and address all issues before further actions can be taken.
- This would not work for City of Los Angeles which is within multiple sub-regions, unless funds allocated directly to the City as a whole on a formula basis.
- Sub-regions should be required to comply with Metro-approved project evaluation criteria to ensure that County and MPO mobility policies are adhered to in a consistent manner across sub-regions and to ensure an equitable, transparent, and fair project evaluation process
- Fewer administrative requirements for project processing and reporting
- Sub-regions would need to build technical expertise for their sub-regional project evaluation process
- Sub-regions should be required to meet Metro-approved modal funding targets (with some flexibility provided) similar to those established in the traditional Metro Call

process for RSTI, GMI, TSSP, TDM, Bike, Pedestrian, and Transit in order to meet Countywide and MPO transportation policy goals.

- While sub-regions should be given flexibility to adopt protocols for disposition of lapsing funds, these protocols have to be consistent with a Countywide Metro-approved lapsing policy

Question 6. If sub-regional process instituted, how should funds be allocated?

- Funds allocated to sub-regions based on needs assessment.
- Based on percentage of countywide population.
- Minimum allocation should be set for smaller agencies.
- Funds should be allowed to be banked to fund larger projects.
- Lump sum amounts based upon workday/nighttime resident population (75%) and freeway congestion (25%).
- No requirement for funding mark by category.
- How the money is allocated to this sub-region.
- Funding allocated to the COG.
- Funding would not work on a population basis for small COG, but land area
- Funds should be allocated equally or per capita.
- That agencies receiving funds are implementing transportation improvement projects that support regional mobility.
- The formula should include both population and jobs for each city
- Based on population and land area formula, or land miles. Unused project funds could be reassigned as needed.
- So many different ways to allocate funds, it would be difficult to find a fair method. Could include population, income, transit dependency, access to regional services, commitment to alternative transit modes, percentage of transit dependent riders, past funding history. All factors but don't tell the whole story.
- Break into categories by project type.
- Allocate some funds to inter-jurisdictional projects.
- Let each sub-region define its funding criteria and allocation categories/percentages.
- Allocate by residential population.
- Heavily weigh traffic volumes and congestion as well as unmet potential transit ridership.
- Funding by population and attraction destination location/point of interest. If city attracts visitors nationally, this should have weight.
- Mixture of funding mechanisms, 50 percent as formulate based on population to each city. 50 percent as an open sub-regional Call process.
- 70 percent distributed by population, 30 percent distributed by merit of projects to sub-region. (or 60-40 or 80-20 depending on needs of each sub-region)
- Projects to be funded based on priority within the region, as determined by COG
- Allocate by sub-regional geographic area, or lane miles rather than population. Transportation needs are not directly proportional to population.
- Various project types, such as state of good repair, bicycle/pedestrian enhancement beautification, capacity enhancement signal coordination/upgrades, ITS/ATMS
- Encourage small and large projects

- Formula based on sale tax generation, per capita, daytime or night time population, whichever is greater, lane miles of roadway.
- Population and poverty level.
- FAP
- Formula: more information needed
 - Equitable
 - Fair
 - Legally binding
 - More funding in local return
- Difficult to imagine a formula that would take all key factors into account: population, access to transit, congestion, previous investments, regional significance, existing transit services, age of infrastructure
- Formula should be by sub-region population for non-vehicle improvements such as transit and active transportation, and by sub-region VMT (in lieu of highway mileage) for highway related improvements.
- Not ready to recommend alternative funding strategy for a sub-regional allocation process at this time. Willing to discuss if another method such as the Highway Operational Improvement Program could produce an assessment formula that could result in greater funding parity while not at the expense of the regional transit network.
- Formula may not be effective
- What if COGs did first cut of projects then have a final review and recommendation by Metro process.
- Should funding be allocated to sub-regions, it should be done with some consideration that some but not all sub-regions will have greater needs in particular modal categories such as goods movement. We strongly recommend additional outreach to local agencies by Metro before a decision is made.
- If funding was allocated to sub-regions, how would you want to see funding allocated? If allocated by formula, what formula would you recommend and why?
- Funding directly to sub-regions would not work for the City of Los Angeles. If funding were to flow directly to agencies, the following a local returns, population-based formula is recommended.
- Support a population-based formula distribution to sub-regions. Population based distribution of funds will give sub-regions an element of local control and a reasonably predictable funding stream which affords them the opportunity for longer term planning for essential sub-regional priorities

Formula distribution will also allow sub-regions and local jurisdictions to pool resources for grant preparation, project development and delivery, and grant tracking and reporting.

Question 7. Alternative Call processes

- Funds not used by approved projects should be evenly distributed to non-successful candidates based on ranking.
- Eliminate the Call for Projects and allocate funding directly to local agencies for local mobility improvements
- Allocate a portion of the Call for maintenance of project improvements.
- Allocate portion of the Call to local agencies for implementing unfunded Federal and State mandates.
- Keep countywide call process but increase award limits by focusing on one mode per Call cycle.
- Give all Call funds to sub-region unconditionally.
- Stop diluting funding by spreading money over all Call categories.
- Go with the sub-regional process from now on, as COG process works well.
- Distribute the funds to local agencies.
- None (8)
- Recommend category for smaller projects or smaller jurisdictions.
- Streamlined process for projects of \$1.5 million or less.
- Metro and Caltrans need to coordinate Calls, especially with advent of ATP cycles and with Metro's emphasis on Complete Streets.
- Instead of spending all money on smaller, short term and near sighted projects that will not solve problems in long run, a comprehensive, all inclusive and long term forward thinking commuter freight rail network system should be planned as a regional super – project to address next 50 – 100 years.
- Metro research and evaluate other “similar” agencies and provide information to “Call” participants/agencies - more information is needed.
- Perhaps a hybrid program that would provide some distribution of funds to the sub-regions for certain categories and retain the remainder for categories of a more regional nature.
- Not at this time. Believes the current Call process, while not perfect, does produce a reasonable outcome and list of regional projects. As long as Metro works to maintain a fair and transparent process and adheres to the published Call criteria. Willing to discuss if another method such as the Highway Operational Improvement Program could produce an assessment formula that could result in greater funding parity while not at the expense of the regional transit network.
- What if COGs did first cut of projects then have a final review and recommendation by Metro process.
- The State's Prop. 1B TCIF model and the USDOT TIGER Grants process should be compared before the Metro Board finalizes its decisions.
- Formula- based distribution directly to agencies.

Question 8 – Preference ranking for Countywide Call

Question 9 – Preference ranking for Sub-regional Call

Question	NR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Question 8 (Countywide Call)	5	5	3	3	1	4	0	3	2	2	6
Question 9 (Sub-regional Call)	5	5	2	2	2	4	1	3	1	3	6

• **Question 8 (Countywide Call):**

- Strongly favor (8-10): 10
- Somewhat favor (6-7): 3
- Neutral (5): 4
- Somewhat dislike (3-4): 4
- Strongly dislike (1-2): 8
- No Response: 5

• **Question 9 (Sub-regional Call):**

- Strongly favor (8-10): 10
- Somewhat favor (6-7): 4
- Neutral (5): 4
- Somewhat dislike (3-4): 4
- Strongly dislike (1-2): 7
- No Response: 5

Question 10. Other comments?

- This survey and the sub-regional proposal is a great idea and shows that MTA is looking forward on how to improve funding process.
- Instead of going through the Call process, distribute funds to local agencies
- Reduce matching requirements to enable more participation and simplify grant application.
- Call has focused more on large, urban, regionally based projects. Focus should shift to individual city projects that reduce longer regional trips and VMT.
- Create hybrid of local input/local control and centralized administration and evaluation. While local communities have a better sense of what is needed, some regional oversight is necessary for efficient coordination.
- Metro calls should consider a process similar to Calrecycle; if you recently received awards the amount you are eligible to receive in the next Cal is reduced.
- If sub-regional process negatively impacts chances of getting projects then does not favor. If positively impact chances, then support.
- Sub-regional process would better service sub-regional priorities. Issues that need working out include method of evaluating and formula.
- Appreciates Metro Board exploring Call options. Current process good for large projects. Most cities don't have mega projects year after year. Sub-region role could be beneficial in distributing smaller amount of funds for smaller projects to smaller cities.
- Appreciate opportunities for additional revenue.
- Thanks for asking.
- It may be worth examining the sub-regional approach to future Call for Projects applications. However, an accepted formula for funding distribution amongst the sub-regions and a consistent methodology for rating the applications would need to be established first.
- Signed MOU's between Metro and COGs that include guarantees for an equitable funding distribution plan. Criteria for funding must consider the COG and its unique demographic, housing and transportation characteristics
- There is value in a well-established process, such as it is with the Metro Call. The process could use some additional refinement, if Metro staff were open to it.
- Submit online.
- Consider giving some priority to projects that promote zero emission, reduce GHG, innovativeness, and IT projects that enhance the customer experience.
- The current Call process has really tried to level the playing field across the county. For the most part, the best projects are funded and typically are spread throughout the county. The Regional funds should really be considered for those projects that would otherwise remain unfunded and/or have significance to sustaining the current systems in place. It should not supplant funding that otherwise would be the responsibility of the local jurisdiction.
- The Call process has been in place for many years. While it may not be perfect, the overall process has evolved and become very robust. Before Metro Board decides to overhaul the

Call or to make incremental procedural refinements, I would like to see additional outreach, workshops, case-studies be conducted. Each sub-region may have diverse views and unique circumstance on the needs of transportation programs/projects. Thus, any proposed changes to the funding distribution mechanism should be properly vetted and debated.

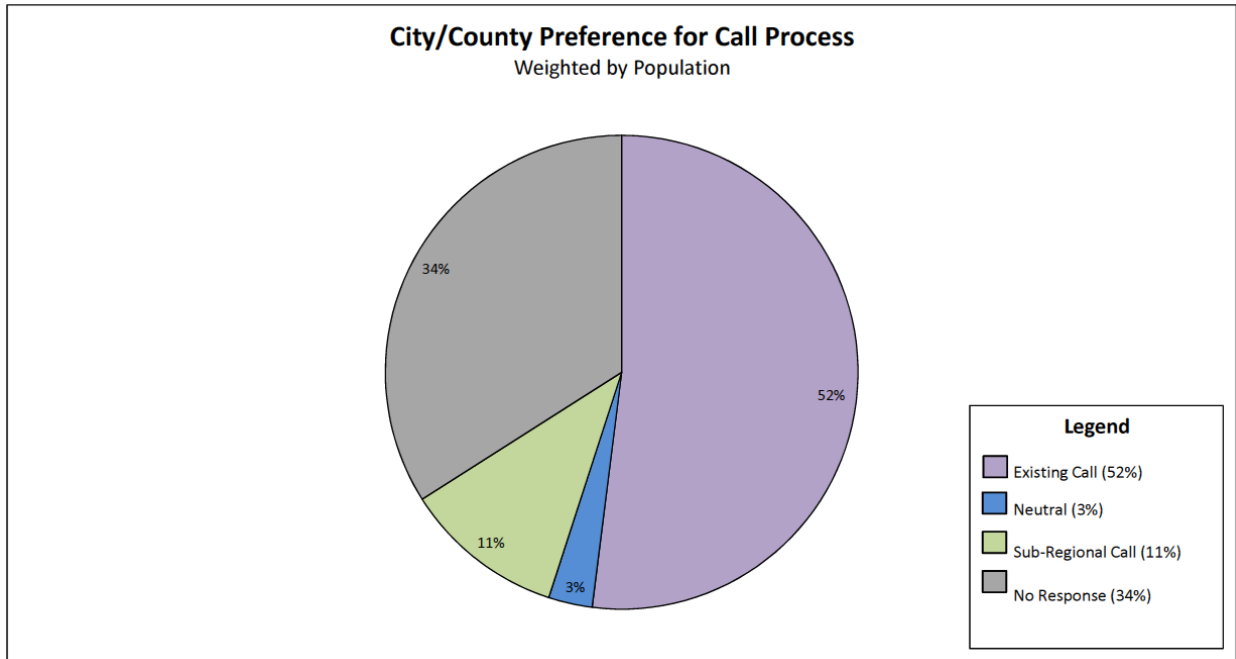
- The Call process definitely has its strengths and weaknesses
- Consideration should be given to developing a new “Complete Street” modal category for large capital roadway projects that encompasses the goals of the Complete Streets Act and addresses multi-modal solutions but does not eliminate the Bicycle or Pedestrian categories and funding associated with those modes
- Fund lapsing policies should be flexible to allow sufficient time to implement larger-scaled projects that may have environmental and ROW issues
- Sub-regional allocation of funds would pose significant challengers to large agencies that include multiple sub-regions.
- Very receptive to fund distribution directly to local agencies.
- Metro should have more control of funding streams that prevents them from requiring agencies to re-submit funding applications for projects already committed to other funding opportunities (ATP)
- Metro should consider eliminating the RSTI, PI, TE, and Bikeway categories and create a Complete Streets or Multi-Modal transportation Category.
- Future applications should look at metrics related to VMT and GHG reductions pursuant

Attachment C Assessment of Call Process

The Board directed that as part of the examination and recommendations on changes to the Call process, that a survey be conducted to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of the process and that this information be considered the foundation for revising future Calls. While responses were received from only a small portion of Call participants, the responses we did receive had a generally common thread that was helpful in developing and recommending substantial change for the future Call process.

Over 1000 surveys were sent out in early November 2014 to city managers, public works directors, and city planning directors of each city and the county, as well as to transit agencies, subregional agencies/Councils of Governments (COGs), and other transportation partners. Out of the 1000 surveys distributed, only 34 responses were received such that a clear indication of countywide opinion is not possible. However, the following observations can be made.

In viewing the respondent's preference for a countywide or subregional Call, there was no clear countywide recommendation to move from a countywide to a subregional Call. To summarize Call preferences received, 13 respondents supported the current countywide Call process, 14 respondents supported a subregional Call process, and seven respondents were neutral or did not provide a preference. Of the responses received from local jurisdictions, 12 local jurisdictions representing 55 percent of the county's population recommended keeping the current Call process, were neutral, or expressed no preference, while 13 local jurisdictions representing 11 percent of the county's population recommended a subregional Call process. Of the eight other transportation partners that responded, six municipal operators and one port supported the existing Call process, and one COG supported the subregional Call process.



Subregional Call Assessment

In assessing the feasibility of the subregional proposal beyond the survey results, there appear to be federal barriers to a subregional Call process. Motion 21 proposes converting the Call for Process into a new subregional, multimodal subvention formula. In 1998, AB 1759 proposed a similar concept to suballocate STIP funding to subregions in Los Angeles County. This Bill elicited a strong response to Metro from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), stating that federal Metropolitan and Statewide Planning regulations specifically prohibit distributing federal funds to local jurisdictions based on a formula. The letter specifically states that “the planning process should be based on demonstrating needs and system performance, not on everyone getting a certain percentage of the funding.” (Attachment C1). Staff has confirmed with FHWA that the requirements mentioned in this letter are still in force, remain unchanged in current federal planning regulations, and do not allow a subregional subvention program.

In addition to the statutory subregional barriers, there are several other issues regarding the implementation of a subregional Call process. Several jurisdictions, namely, the City and County of Los Angeles, have multiple subregions within their boundaries. Los Angeles County incorporates nine subregions and the City of Los Angeles incorporates five subregions. As a result, the City and County of Los Angeles would have to submit their Call projects to multiple subregional agencies, which would impose an unwieldy Call process. Additionally, it is not clear that all subregions have the staffing and expertise to manage and administer a Call program, given the wide range in subregions which vary from a few cities to some that represent 20 to 30 cities. Adequate staffing and expertise is important to executing the Call process in a timely

and transparent manner. We note that the Call is a schedule driven process and projects must be approved in time to meet regional and state deadlines necessary to include projects in the RTIP, STIP, or Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP).

Restructuring Recommendations

While the limited survey responses did not demonstrate a significant demand for change of the overall Call process, the information provided by survey respondents provided some insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the existing Call process. Their observations and suggestions together with Metro staff analysis of the Call provide an opportunity to recommend a significant revamping of the countywide Call process. (See Attachment C2 for a summary of survey results, Attachment C3 for the survey instrument, and Attachment C4 for a detailed compendium of survey responses). The discussion below identifies substantial changes recommended to the future Call processes and is summarized in Attachment A.

Strengthen Subregional Partnership. One of the key strengths of the subregional Call process identified in the survey was the importance of understanding subregional and local priorities in the review and selection of Call projects. It is recommended that the Call process can be improved through greater involvement of the subregions in the Call process, to bring their knowledge of subregional and local needs and priorities and reconciling these with Metro Board priorities into the Call's application development and project recommendation process.

Subregional Steering Committee. Staff recommends creating a Subregional Steering Committee consisting of a representative selected by each subregion to meet before the start of the Call process to discuss subregional and local project needs, priorities, and other issues which can inform the preparation of the application package. Staff also recommends that subregional agencies be part of the project review process, ranking projects within their subregion as input into the Call recommendation process.

Inter-jurisdictional Projects. The survey also asked respondents to discuss whether there were impediments in the Call process to proposing inter-jurisdictional projects. While most responses did not find an impediment in the process per-se, respondents noted that the key challenge is finding a local agency that is willing to take the time, effort, and expense to be the lead in managing and administering the project. Some respondents also mentioned that the time necessary to reach agreement and approval among agencies is longer than the Call process allows. Subregional agencies may be best positioned to assist their member agencies in the development of inter-jurisdictional projects. Staff recommends that subregional agencies work with cities in advance of the Call process to define projects and reach agreement, and that future Calls allow subregional agencies to apply and manage inter-jurisdictional projects on behalf of their member agencies provided that they demonstrate the capacity to do so.

New Project and Program Strategies. Through the survey, staff explored whether there were other projects that respondents would like to fund, but were not eligible for funding in the Call. Many respondents noted existing local programs that were in need of additional funding included, road maintenance, state of good repair, storm water, beautification, and landscaping, and new programs such as first-last mile and active transportation. Staff recommends that discussions occur with the proposed Subregional Steering Committee and with TAC and its subcommittees at the start of the Call process, to determine if there are local project needs or new innovative project strategies that should be considered through the Call process and whether eligible funding is available through Metro. Staff notes that such project recommendations would be conditioned on finding an eligible source of funding and being in concert with Metro Board directives.

Continue TAC Role. Finally, staff recommends retaining involvement of the TAC and its subcommittees to advise us on Call application technical issues as is done now at the start of the process and through the Appeals Process. As subregions already appoint representatives to the TAC, this is an important avenue for the subregions to have input on technical Call matters.

Simplify and Improve Call Process for Local Agencies. The survey responses noted various ideas for streamlining the Call application package. Various streamlining recommendations are discussed below.

Simplify Application Package. A common concern noted by survey respondents is the complexity of the Call application, especially noted as a problem for small agencies. In response, staff recommends a major rewrite of the application package with the intent to simplify it and to eliminate duplication and overlap to reduce preparation time.

Assist Jurisdictions with Performance Calculations. Respondents also noted that it can be challenging to calculate the performance benefit of projects and that they need more guidance from Metro on performance calculations. As a result, we propose to develop a “performance measure calculation tool” to assist agencies in calculating project performance benefits, including vehicle miles travelled (VMT) changes and greenhouse gas reductions.

New Complete Street/Multimodal Application. Finally, respondents noted that they must sometimes apply for various components of a local project in different Call categories. We recommend creating a complete street/multimodal category to serve as a one-stop application for multimodal projects.

Strengthen Focus on Greenhouse Gas Reductions. Staff recommends that the next Call finalize the transition started in the 2013 and 2015 Calls, to address Complete Streets, multimodal projects, and greenhouse gas reduction strategies using performance measures consistent with recent State legislation (i.e., SB 375 and SB 743).

Complete the Transition to Complete Streets and Greenhouse Gas Performance Measures. As mentioned above, staff recommends 1) a new Complete Streets/Multimodal application to encourage the integration of all appropriate modes in Call projects, 2) reviewing the Call application to transition to new performance measures based on VMT and greenhouse gas reductions, and 3) a new performance measure tool to assist agencies in calculating project benefits.

Reassess Modal Funding Marks. Finally, through the 2017 Long Range Transportation Plan process, staff recommends revisiting the Call funding marks with a particular focus on Active Transportation and Sustainable programs.

Maximize Funding Leveraging Opportunities. In light of new State and Federal funding programs such as the Active Transportation Program managed through SCAG and the CTC and the State Cap and Trade Program, staff recommends that the Call process seek to maximize opportunities to leverage Call funding with other programs. As was commented on in the survey, staff will also look for opportunities to coordinate the schedule of the Call process with other funding process to the extent possible.

Future Call for Projects Process

Planning and Programming Committee
June 17, 2015



Metro

Overview

- Responding to Board motion
 - Revise and improve future Call process
 - Consider subregional subvention program
 - Conduct survey assessing Call process
- Results
 - Federal regulations prohibit subregional subvention
 - Low survey response – 34 responses out of 1000
 - No consensus for change
 - Recommendations to evolve future Call process

Recommendations

- Strengthen Subregional Partnership
 - Create Subregional Steering Committee to input subregional needs into application development
 - Allow subregions to review and rank projects
 - Encourage subregions to coordinate/lead interjurisdictional projects

Recommendations

- Simplify/Improve Call for Local Agencies
 - Streamline application package
 - Create on-line performance measure calculator
 - Create complete street/multimodal application
 - On-line application and submittal

Recommendations

- Strengthen Focus on Greenhouse Gas Reduction
 - Complete Streets/Multimodal Application
 - Revise performance measures to assess greenhouse gas (GhG) reduction benefits
 - Incorporate GhG reduction calculations into performance measure calculator tool
 - Revisit Call funding marks in 2017 LRTP update

Recommendations

- Maximize Funding Availability
 - Leverage Call funding with other sources
 - State/Regional Active Transportation Program
 - State Cap and Trade Program
 - Others
 - Coordinate funding cycles with other programs

Next Steps

- Initiate Subregional Steering Committee at start of next Call cycle
- Continue TAC involvement in application development and Appeal process
- Integrate recommendations into future Call process