



Regional Planning Partnership

August 19, 2009

Fall Programming Process

Issue: SACOG staff is preparing for the biennial programming round scheduled to take place this fall. Several activities are underway to help ensure a successful programming process. This item was discussed at last month's Transportation Committee meeting, and has now been revised based on the committee input.

Recommendation: That the Regional Planning Partnership provide feedback to SACOG staff on this proposal. Staff's revised recommendations will go to all four SACOG committees next month and then to the Board.

Discussion: SACOG staff began a project to improve transparency and equity in the programming process last fall. Work on this has proceeded somewhat more slowly than anticipated, due to the addition of programming activities this year resulting from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Staff has held peer review sessions with the Fresno Council of Governments (COG), San Joaquin COG, the San Diego Association of Governments, and will be holding one with the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission. These sessions have focused on sharing information on programming processes, criteria, and equity considerations.

Work is also underway with individual program managers to update the processes and guidelines for the air quality, bike/pedestrian, community design, and transportation demand management (TDM) funding programs. Staff is also proposing a new process and guidelines for the largest funding program—the "regional/local" funding program. Using the policies of the MTP and criteria used in other funding programs and by our peer programming agencies, staff has been developing draft performance considerations for the regional/local funding program. A programming process "brainstorming" session was held at the July 23rd Regional Planning Partnership meeting, and a performance considerations workshop will be held prior to the RPP meeting on August 26.

Discussion of the policy issues focused on whether or not SACOG should give priority to funding road rehabilitation work as part of this programming round. The Transportation Committee members supported funding for road rehabilitation, but did not want it to be allocated by formula. They also supported incorporating some "common sense" complete streets provisions. Exactly what this means has yet to be precisely defined, but it would likely mean ensuring that roads are restriped to include bike lanes and that sidewalks, crosswalks and ADA ramps would be included within the existing right-of-way. E Street in Marysville was cited as an example of a state highway that is also a city street in need of both road rehabilitation and complete streets improvements. Typically, Caltrans is supportive of complete streets improvements, but lacks the funding to do them. Rehabilitation of E Street could be done with Caltrans SHOPP funds and the complete streets improvements could be funded through SACOG. There was also considerable discussion of the importance of helping to promote infill development in all areas of the region whether with complete streets investments, road rehabilitation funding or in any number of other ways. There was interest in tying any criteria used to accomplishing goals identified in the Rural Urban

Connections Study. The committee did also recognize the need to support funding project development to a limited extent, as it helps to ensure the region has “shelf-ready” projects that can take advantage of new or expanded funding opportunities (e.g. ARRA, Proposition 1B or a new and larger federal transportation bill). There was some agreement that in general the program should focus on big (or relatively big for the size of the jurisdiction) projects for funding.

It is anticipated that the fall programming process will proceed in a similar manner to those used for the other SACOG funding programs, as well as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding round. The primary difference between this programming round and the previous round two years ago is that staff is working to provide further opportunities for input throughout the process. Stakeholder input is being sought at all stages of the process. There are still a number of uncertainties related to how much funding can be expected to come out of the 2010 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding process managed by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). A draft fund estimate was released on August 12th, but will not be adopted until October. CTC typically releases a new fund estimate every two years in July (of odd-numbered years); however, the fund estimate was delayed due to the late state budget. This will also delay the due date for the submittal of SACOG’s projects to the CTC from December 15 to February 15, meaning that Board adoption of our fall program will now be scheduled for the January 2010 meeting. Until the final fund estimate is adopted, staff cannot accurately gauge the exact amount of funding that will be available for this fall programming round. The following is staff’s revised estimate of a range of funding that could be available based on the latest information:

Air Quality Program	\$7.2m - \$8.4m
TDM	\$2.4m - \$2.4m
Community Design	\$12m - \$20.2m
Bike/Ped	\$8.6m - \$14m
Regional/Local	\$59.8m - \$70m
Total Range	\$90m-\$115m

These numbers will be adjusted again when the CTC’s Fund Estimate is adopted. Staff will continue to update our stakeholders, the Transportation Committee and Board as the process advances and will be seeking input at all stages of the process.

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