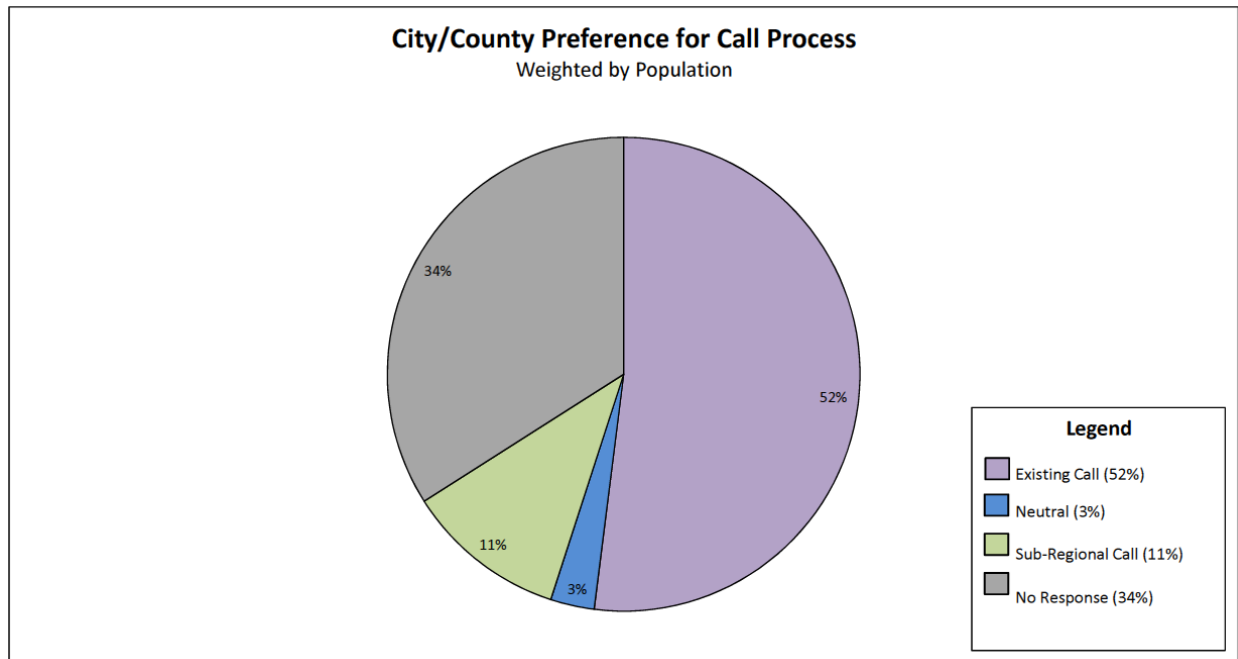


Attachment C Assessment of Call Process

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.