

**Board Report**

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**File #:** 2022-0646, **File Type:** Policy**Agenda Number:** 9.

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**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 19, 2022****SUBJECT: STATE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM****ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS****RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE the ATP Point Assignment Method Planning Supplement, as described in Attachment A.

**ISSUE**

The Active Transportation Program (ATP) Point Assignment Method adopted by the Board in October 2021 (File# 2021-0587) guides Metro staff in the evaluation and selection of projects for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) regional ATP Cycle 6 competition. The adopted Point Assignment Method preceded the development and adoption of SCAG's Regional ATP Cycle 6 Guidelines, which now delegate the selection of non-infrastructure, quick-build projects, and planning projects to the SCAG region's county transportation commissions, including Metro. Because the adopted Point Assignment Method is intended to evaluate projects with direct infrastructure (capital) or non-infrastructure (program) outcomes, it is not well-suited for application to planning projects. Therefore, SCAG recommends a separate Point Assignment Method for planning projects. To adequately evaluate planning projects under the regional ATP Cycle 6 competition, Metro should adopt a Planning Supplement to its existing Point Assignment Method.

**BACKGROUND**

The ATP is a competitive state funding program administered by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) that offers two sequential opportunities to fund LA County projects - first, through a statewide competition and second, through a regional competition within the SCAG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region, which encompasses LA County. All LA County candidate projects that are not awarded funding through the statewide competition, which allocates 50% of available funding, are considered in the regional MPO competition, which allocates 40% of available funding overall and is distributed based on the population of each of the state's large MPOs.

For the regional competition, Senate Bill 99 requires SCAG to select projects in consultation with its member county transportation commissions. SCAG accomplishes this requirement by combining up to 20 points assigned by member counties with up to 100 points from the statewide competition score for each ATP project application to generate an updated project score. Each county receives a

population-based share of SCAG's regional competition funds and determines how projects are funded through the adoption of a Point Assignment Methodology. For LA County, Metro elects to use a methodology that is based on only 10 points in order to maintain much of the statewide competition's scoring process, which is thorough, detailed, and largely consistent with Metro's active transportation priorities and policies.

ATP Cycle 6 will award a total of \$1.7 billion across all competitions over Fiscal Years (FY) 2024-2027. From the regional MPO competition, SCAG will provide LA County a total share of \$192.1 million for use as follows:

- \$182.5 million for infrastructure projects (selected using the current adopted Point Assignment Method)
- \$9.6 million for non-infrastructure (programs), quick-build, and planning projects (with non-infrastructure and quick-build projects selected using the current adopted Point Assignment Method and planning projects selected using the proposed Planning Supplement)

The purpose of the staff recommendation is to provide a better suited framework for assigning points at the regional MPO competition level for projects in the latter category of funding.

## **DISCUSSION**

The current Board-adopted Point Assignment Method was intended to be applied to infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects, which were the only projects that county transportation commissions were responsible for evaluating and selecting in prior cycles. SCAG has historically managed the evaluation and selection of planning and quick-build projects. For ATP Cycle 6, SCAG has delegated the responsibility over these project types to the counties.

Because quick-build projects result in capital improvements similar to infrastructure projects, they can be evaluated under the adopted Metro Point Assignment Method. Planning projects do not directly implement capital improvements and therefore are not well-evaluated under the adopted Point Assignment Method.

Metro staff developed the proposed Planning Supplement to mirror as closely as possible the current adopted Point Assignment Method and to leverage application content already submitted by applicants. The proposed Planning Supplement continues to require compliance with Metro's Complete Streets Policy and assigns points based on status as a Metro Equity Focus Community (EFC) and level of community engagement. Where the current adopted Point Assignment Method assigns points to projects that support first/last mile improvements, the proposed Planning Supplement would assign points to plans that will analyze and be informed by safety data. This contrast is consistent with the objectives of Metro's first/last mile planning efforts, the Metro Street Safety, Data Sharing, and Collaboration Policy adopted by the Board in June 2022 (File #: 2022-0340), and trends in state ATP scoring emphasis. The proposed Planning Supplement is found in Attachment A.

## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

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The recommendations in this report will provide policies to facilitate the award of funds to improve safety, comfort, and convenience to the 75-88 percent of Metro customers accessing major transit facilities via active transportation.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

### **Impact to Budget**

Approving the staff recommendations will have no impact on the FY 2023 Budget.

## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

Overall, the proposed Planning Supplement is consistent with the currently adopted Point Assignment Method, which sought to build upon and refine how Metro staff prioritizes equity in the selection of projects for funds from the ATP's regional MPO competition.

By prioritizing and giving preferential points for plans located within EFCs, the proposed Planning Supplement aims to direct resources to plans that will identify ways to improve accessibility and safety for people walking, rolling, and riding transit; improve/create alternatives to driving; and support improved health outcomes in high need communities. By requiring Complete Streets compliance, the policies aim to encourage local agencies to adopt policies that will set the stage for future actions that consider the mobility of all users of the road, including those who walk or roll.

By prioritizing and giving preferential points for plans with robust community engagement, the proposed Planning Supplement aims to direct resources to plans that incorporate equity into the plan development process.

Metro staff recognizes that not all jurisdictions are currently in compliance with the Complete Streets Policy, and some non-compliant jurisdictions may include EFCs. The implication is that projects from those jurisdictions will be barred from receiving additional points from the regional competition. To mitigate the potential for harm, Metro staff identified all three non-compliant jurisdictions in EFCs and reached out to these three jurisdictions to provide targeted support and resources to help them come into compliance. This included information on the policy, templates, and a review of proposed policies or resolutions.

Metro staff regularly provides updates on the ATP to the Metro Technical Advisory Committee and Streets and Freeways Subcommittee, and through this process, introduced the proposed Planning Supplement. Additionally, Metro staff developed these policies with an eye toward creating consistency with other Metro programs and state ATP requirements that were developed through a series of public community meetings.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

This report seeks approval of policy that will support Vision 2028 Goal 1, Initiative 1.1: To expand the transportation network and increase mobility for all users, Metro will target infrastructure and service investments toward those with the greatest mobility needs. The proposed policy incorporates equity

platform practices into decision-making that will help direct active transportation investments to communities with the highest needs.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board could elect not to adopt the proposed Planning Supplement to the Point Assignment Method and instead direct Metro staff to apply the current adopted Point Assignment Method to planning projects. Metro staff does not recommend this alternative because the adopted Point Assignment Method was intended for infrastructure projects.

The Board could elect not to adopt the proposed Planning Supplement and direct Metro staff to not assign additional points to planning projects. Metro staff does not recommend this alternative as it removes Metro's opportunity to prioritize plans that align with Metro's policies and priorities.

The Board could elect to defer the adoption of the proposed Planning Supplement to a later date. Metro staff does not recommend this alternative because SCAG requires each county transportation commission to submit a final project list by January 30, 2023. Metro staff must begin the evaluation process using the adopted Point Assignment Method and proposed Planning Supplement no later than November 2022 to ensure analysis is completed, and any funding issues are resolved timely.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Metro Board approval of the proposed Planning Supplement, Metro staff will carry out the regional MPO competition evaluation according to the schedule below. Metro staff will report back to the Board on the results of the statewide and regional competitions after the completion of ATP Cycle 6 in summer 2023.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- October 21, 2022 - CTC announces statewide competition funding recommendations
- December 7, 2022 - CTC adopts statewide competition awards
- November 2022 to January 30, 2023 - Metro staff evaluates remaining unfunded projects and submits regional project list to SCAG
- June 28, 2023 - CTC adopts regional MPO competition awards

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Point Assignment Method Planning Supplement

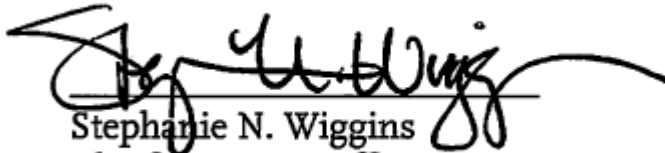
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