



Board Report

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

APRIL 16, 2025

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: METRO ACTIVE TRANSPORT, TRANSIT AND FIRST/LAST MILE PROGRAM
CYCLE 1 PROGRAMMING UPDATE

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the programming of additional funding capacity in the amount of \$6,400,000 from the Measure M Metro Active Transport, Transit and First/Last Mile program (MAT Program) to add funds to seven projects previously funded in MAT Cycle 1; and
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designee to negotiate and execute all necessary agreements and/or amendments for approved projects.

ISSUE

Due to higher than projected sales tax revenues in 2020 and 2021, \$11.9 million authorized for the Cycle 1 solicitation is available to program. Staff recommends programming \$6.4 million of these additional funds to existing Cycle 1 projects that are adding new beneficial scope elements. These projects include elements that improve safety, were identified through community engagement, and/or were originally not funded due to lack of funding availability at the time. These also include three projects that are relevant to the 2028 Olympic Games.

..Background

BACKGROUND

The MAT Program is included in the Measure M Expenditure Plan and allocates \$857 million (in 2015 dollars) for investment in active transportation infrastructure over 40 years. The initial MAT solicitation as authorized by the Board in January 2020 anticipated awarding a total of \$75 million in Cycle 1. However, due to concerns about a potential reduction in sales tax revenue because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the Board approved awarding a lesser amount of \$63.1 million to 16 projects, consistent with cash flow adjustments for comparable Measure M programs at that time.

Sales tax revenues were higher than projected in 2020 and 2021 when the projects were programmed so the original \$75 million is therefore available to MAT Cycle 1. At this time, \$63.1 million is currently obligated to awarded projects or expended, leaving \$11.9 million in unobligated funds. Most MAT projects include early work to plan and design projects with considerable community input, so after Cycle 1 projects had advanced further in planning/scoping and design, staff developed and implemented a process to maximize the use of these available funds and achieve program objectives. The result of this process is a recommendation to add \$6.4 million of these funds to several existing Cycle 1 projects and adding the remaining \$5.5 million of unobligated funds to Cycle 2.

DISCUSSION

The Cycle 1 solicitation split funding evenly between active transportation corridor projects (five in total) and first/last mile projects (11 in total). Many of the projects that were awarded funding received less than was requested and adjusted project scopes accordingly.

In September 2024, staff queried all MAT Cycle 1 grantees regarding interest and ability to amend project scopes and cost estimates to add new project elements. Staff evaluated all requests based on the following questions:

- Will additional funding be used to better prioritize people walking, biking, or accessing transit?
- Will additional funding allow for bicycle and pedestrian improvements not funded by the original grant to address a need identified during community engagement and/or project scoping/conceptual design?
- Will additional funding allow for an upgrade in materials and/or design adjustments/reconfiguration of the project to improve safety above and beyond what can be achieved with existing funding?
- Will the improvements afforded by the larger funded project reduce points of conflict between vehicles, transit vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians?

Justification for additional funding was evaluated by the degree to which the requested scope enhances the project based on responses to the questions and the level of engagement and scoping that informed the identified needs. Additional consideration was given to the ability, through this action, to expedite delivery of projects that support the Mobility Concept Plan for the 2028 Games, as noted in Attachment A. New cost estimates and the degree of progress made on the project to date were also considered, along with whether the project received less funding than originally requested in 2021. All new elements also needed to be closely tied to the original project scope (e.g. improvements within the footprint of the project or project elements that were in the original application from 2020 but cut due to the reduction in funding that took place). No single project could result in a total funding award greater than the maximum allowed for each category (\$8 million for active transportation corridors and \$5 million for first/last mile projects).

Metro staff received six requests to add scope to first/last mile projects and four requests to add

scope to active transportation corridor projects. Based on the considerations described above, staff recommends programming additional funds in the amount of \$6.4 million to four of these first/last mile projects and three active transportation corridor projects (Attachment A). Staff recommend programming these additional funds and scope now to expedite amendments to existing funding agreements for projects that are already in the planning, design or construction phase. The additional funding will not change the timeline of projects and will proceed on the previously agreed-upon timeline. The remaining \$5.5 million will be made available to augment Cycle 2 funding, for which the call for projects is currently underway.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The programming of \$6.4 million in additional funds to these seven MAT Cycle 1 projects will result in improved safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people accessing transit. All seven requests are adding features that better prioritize space for exclusive use by pedestrians or bicyclists, upgrade materials to improve durability and safety on pedestrian and bicycle routes above and beyond what can be achieved with the original grant award, and reduce conflict points between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Most MAT Cycle 1 projects were originally programmed for funding in FY 2022 to FY 2025 to include all phases of project development. Some of the projects received Board approval to extend their programming years. Most spending thus far has been for planning and design, and as projects enter the construction phase, the expenditures of Measure M funds should increase considerably in the coming years.

This action will increase available MAT Cycle 1 funds to these seven projects in FY 2025. The full life cycle of programming for all MAT Cycle 1 projects is shown in Attachment B with the additional funds added to each project's FY25 programmed funding. Project sponsors have three years from the programming year to spend funds before they lapse. These projects will be budgeted in the Metro Active Transport project (#473001) for reimbursement payments to MAT projects being implemented by local jurisdictions. Since these are multi-year projects, the Cost Center managers and Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting in future years.

Impact to Budget

The source of funds for these projects is Measure M Active Transportation 2%. This fund source is not eligible for Metro bus and rail operating and capital expenditures. Taking this action will not impact Metro's finances as the funding is already dedicated to active transportation and first/last mile projects implemented by local jurisdictions.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The MAT Program is purposed with creating safe and dignified routes for Metro riders who are walking to or from Metro stations. The MAT program initially chose projects based on a screening and

ranking process intended to target high-need locations based on indexes of socio-economic and environmental disadvantage. Projects within Equity Focus Communities (EFC) were assigned additional points as part of the evaluation process. Supporting these projects with additional funds will uphold the initial dedication to addressing infrastructure inequities in EFCs.

Of the seven projects receiving additional funding in this action, five are in or immediately adjacent to EFCs including South LA, Van Nuys, Commerce, Bell, and Huntington Park . This additional funding will improve quality of safety infrastructure for vulnerable road users like pedestrians and bicyclists, many of whom are regular transit users. Many households in EFCs do not have access to a car and would benefit from safer options for travel within neighborhoods and accessing transit to meet daily needs. The additional project elements, moreover, were largely developed with the input of local community participation during project scoping. For those projects that Metro led early planning and scoping using cooperative agreements, community engagement included partnerships with CBOs and involved community meetings, pop-up events, and walk audits with community members and translation services where applicable.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through investment and planning activities that will improve and further encourage transit ridership and active transportation. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The program advances several Strategic Plan Goals including:

- *Goal #1:* High-quality mobility options - advances new active transportation corridors and a full suite of first/last mile interventions at selected stations.
- *Goal #2:* Outstanding trip experiences for all - will develop and advance key station access improvements including traveler/transfer information, improved signage and wayfinding among others.
- *Goal #3:* Enhancing communities and lives - includes a clear focus on targeting investment to places that need it most due to safety, socio-economic and other factors.
- *Goal #4:* Transform LA County through collaboration and leadership - prompts new partnership

models with agencies to deliver projects.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could elect to program all additional Cycle 1 funds to the Cycle 2 solicitation and not provide these additional funds to existing Cycle 1 grantees. This action is not recommended as Cycle 1 projects are more likely to be delivered within the next two years (i.e. before the 2028 Games) and contain project elements that have already been developed during project scoping. Adding these funds to Cycle 2 only would reduce the ability for existing grantees to deliver higher quality projects.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval by the Board, the project Funding Agreements will be executed or amended with the new funding amounts and details of the project scope. The additional funding will not change the timeline of projects and will proceed on the previously agreed-upon timeline. The remaining funding will be made available for the Board to program as part of the MAT Cycle 2 program. Cycle 2 applications were due to Metro on April 7, 2025, and staff expect to bring the Cycle 2 programming action to the Metro Board in July 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - MAT Cycle 1 Funding Adjustments

Attachment B - MAT Cycle 1 Programming Table

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