



Board Report

File #: 2025-0814, **File Type:** Policy

Agenda Number: 6.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 15, 2025**

SUBJECT: STATE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the State Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 8 Grant Assistance Priorities in Attachment A;
- B. APPROVING the Regional ATP Point Assignment Methodology as described in Attachment B; and
- C. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer or their designee to assign up to 10 points to projects to be considered for funding in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Large Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Competition of the ATP.

ISSUE

The State ATP Cycle 8 is a competitive grant program that will award \$574 million over Fiscal Years (FY) 2028-2031. Metro promulgates two ATP policies for each ATP cycle. The first is a set of priorities for selecting projects to receive Metro grant writing assistance. The purpose of the grant writing priorities is to encourage local jurisdictions to assist in implementing Metro plans and goals, and to maximize funding for active transportation projects in Los Angeles County by selecting projects that will score well within the existing ATP criteria. The second policy consists of adopting and communicating to prospective applicants the point assignment methodology Metro will use in assisting SCAG in selecting regional ATP projects. This is Metro’s role pursuant to ATP statute. It is important to communicate this policy early to assist local jurisdictions in planning ahead for successful applications. The purpose of the scoring policies is to provide effective incentives for local agencies to pursue projects that implement Metro plans and policies.

BACKGROUND

The ATP is a competitive funding program established by Senate Bill 99 and Assembly Bill 101 in

2013 to promote increased use of active transportation modes like bicycling and walking. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) manages the ATP through successive rounds: Statewide, Small Urban and Rural, and Large MPO Competitions. Projects in Los Angeles County that do not receive funding in the Statewide Competition, which accounts for 50% of available funds, are then evaluated in the Large MPO Competition, which allocates 40% of the funding. For this Large MPO round, Senate Bill 99 mandates the SCAG to select projects in collaboration with its member counties, a process which SCAG accomplishes by inviting Metro to assign up to 10 points to each project's Statewide Competition score. To date, the CTC has conducted seven ATP cycles, awarding approximately \$1 billion to 230 Los Angeles County projects across both Statewide and Large MPO Competitions. To date, 173 projects have been completed.

As the ATP is a rigorous and competitive program, Metro has provided grant-writing services to Metro project managers and local agencies for the past seven cycles to support the development of strong applications that increase the likelihood of Los Angeles County's collective success. Of the \$1 billion awarded to Los Angeles County over the ten years since the ATP began, \$495 million - or approximately 50% - was awarded to projects that received Metro grant assistance.

DISCUSSION

ATP Cycle 8 funds infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects as well as plans. Funding for ATP Cycle 8 will be available to local jurisdictions over FY 2028-2031. Staff offers grant writing assistance by releasing a solicitation for Letters of Interest for grant assistance to local jurisdictions. Staff will evaluate and select grant assistance recipients by February 2026, and the grant-writing process will kick off in March 2026, around the time the Call for Projects is anticipated to be released. Staff anticipates that ATP applications will be due to the State in Summer 2026, with Statewide Competition awards adopted by the CTC in late 2026. At that time, Metro will assign 10 points to add to the State score to arrive at the final score for the SCAG Regional competition. SCAG will submit the final scores and funding recommendation to the CTC for adoption as part of the Large MPO Competition, tentatively in June 2027.

Cycle 8 offers an opportunity to continue and refine priorities and policies to encourage the delivery of projects that align with ATP criteria and priorities, and Metro's plans and priorities.

Grant Assistance Priorities

The existing priorities approved by the Metro Board as part of the [Metro Active Transportation Strategic Plan Update in October 2023](https://metro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6415559&GUID=90AF62EA-7144-4EB3-848A-58C9F8774D26&Options=Advanced&Search=&FullText=1) <<https://metro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6415559&GUID=90AF62EA-7144-4EB3-848A-58C9F8774D26&Options=Advanced&Search=&FullText=1>> require all projects to be compliant with Metro's 2014 Complete Streets Policy and give preference to projects that demonstrate alignment with Metro first/last mile and active transportation plans, improve locations targeted for safety improvements, benefit high need communities, and demonstrate project readiness. The proposed Cycle 8 policy retains these priorities.

Additionally, staff proposes to expand the Cycle 8 priorities to consider the delivery record for jurisdictions and projects with special needs: unfunded projects from ATP Cycle 7 and underfunded projects from the Metro Active Transport Program.

This prioritization is in response to the FY 2025 State Budget, which resulted in a \$400 million reduction to the ATP, leaving Cycle 7 with only \$168.7 million in available funding. As a result, there was an unprecedented shortfall for an already oversubscribed grant program, and the CTC could only fund a very small fraction of applications submitted. In Cycle 7, which was set up to fund projects between FY 2026 through FY 2029, the CTC received 277 project applications statewide totaling \$2.5 billion in funding requests, with total project costs amounting to approximately \$4 billion. Of these, only six projects in Los Angeles County were awarded funding, leaving 42 well-prepared, unfunded projects. Given the strength of these applications and their potential for success, we aim to make unfunded ATP Cycle 7 applications one of the priorities for Cycle 8 grant assistance.

Projects funded through the Metro Active Transport Program that need additional funding would also be considered to support those projects in filling the gap through ATP. This will ensure projects with existing Metro investment can be implemented.

The proposed changes will support projects that implement a broad range of Metro active transportation plans and policies to match the broad eligibility and goals of the state ATP. The overall intent is to support ATP-competitive projects that advance Metro goals. The proposed ATP Cycle 8 grant assistance priorities are in Attachment A. Completion by mid-2028 for the Olympic and Paralympic Games was not included in the grant assistance priorities, as Cycle 8 of the ATP will fund projects between FY 2028 and FY 2031. With allocation and advertising processes and a proposed moratorium on construction starting January 2028, project sponsors would have little or no time to construct projects funded by Cycle 8 until after the Games.

Large MPO Competition Scoring Method

Senate Bill 99 requires SCAG to work with each county transportation commission to adopt a county-specific scoring method for the Large MPO Competition. Each member county receives a population-based share of SCAG's MPO Competition funds and determines how projects are funded through the adoption of a point assignment methodology.

The scoring method must outline how a county will augment each project's Statewide Competition score by up to 20 additional points based on consistency with regional/local plans. For Los Angeles County, Metro elects to use a methodology that is based on 10 points in order to maintain a balance between state and Metro priorities.

The existing scoring method outlines that Metro will evaluate each project for an additional 10 points based on overlap with Metro EFCs, consistency with regional plans, community support, and first/last mile implementation.

The proposed Cycle 8 scoring method retains the same scoring criteria as the Cycle 7 scoring method, with the addition that points will be considered for projects that leverage Metro Active Transport Program dollars and work to make a Quick Build project permanent. The proposed scoring method is in Attachment B.

Following CTC's adoption of the Statewide ATP awards in late 2026, staff will identify up to ten points for each project based on the Metro Board-adopted point assignment methodology. We will report

the points to SCAG to collaboratively score and select projects for the SCAG MPO component of the ATP. SCAG will submit the program of projects to the CTC for final adoption in Summer 2027. Metro will report on the final results to the Metro Board.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

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

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the staff recommendations would have no impact to the agency.

Impact to Budget

Approving the staff recommendations will have no impact on the FY 2026 budget. Funds for grant assistance have already been budgeted in the FY 2026 Budget for Cost Center 4420 under Project 405510 (Other P&P Planning), Task 05.05.01. Funding for this activity is Proposition A, C & TDA administration fund, and Measure R Administration fund.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Overall, the changes to the ATP Grant Assistance Priorities and 10 Point Policy seek to build upon and refine the ways the existing policies prioritize equity in the selection of projects for grant assistance and ATP funds from the MPO Competition.

By prioritizing and giving preferential points for projects located within EFCs, the policies aim to direct resources to projects that will improve 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.

Metro staff recognizes that active transportation projects are not always welcome nor properly planned and implemented in EFCs. The implication is that although the policies prioritize projects located in EFCs, the projects themselves may not have been developed or ultimately implemented in ways that center equity. To mitigate the potential for harm, Metro staff will require that grant assistance applicants provide documentation of past or planned community engagement and potential project impacts to the community. Metro staff also 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 grant assistance and additional points from the MPO Competition. To mitigate the potential for harm, Metro staff will identify non-compliant jurisdictions that include EFCs and provide targeted support and resources to help them come into compliance. Metro staff regularly provides updates on the ATP to the Metro Technical Advisory Committee and Streets and Freeways Subcommittee and have

consulted directly with the bicycle and pedestrian coordinators for both committees while developing these ATP policy changes. There was also internal consultation with staff in the Office of Equity and Race to ensure that equity concepts were included and emphasized in the proposed policies. Additionally, Metro staff developed these policies with an eye toward creating consistency with other Metro programs and state ATP requirements that were developed through series of public community meetings.

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 will prioritize and give preferential points for projects that will encourage mode shift through the use of active transportation and contribute to further reductions in VMT. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through investment activities that will benefit disadvantaged communities and further encourage public transit ridership and active transportation.

Because the Metro Board has adopted an agency-wide VMT Reduction Target, and this item supports the overall function of the agency, this item is consistent with the goals of reducing VMT.

*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

This report seeks approval of policies 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 policies incorporate equity platform practices into decision-making that will help direct active transportation investments to communities with the highest needs.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to adopt an updated grant assistance policy for Cycle 8. Staff does not recommend this alternative, as policies would default to Cycle 7 policies, which do not align with the priorities developed through significant input from both internal and external active transportation stakeholders. Cycle 8 policies were shaped with feedback from the Metro Technical Advisory Committee and the Metro Streets and Freeways Subcommittee.

The Board could elect not to adopt the updated Regional ATP Point Assignment Method at this time. Metro staff does not recommend this alternative as the policy should be adopted timely to allow Los Angeles County project sponsors time to identify and develop projects for the ATP with Metro's

project selection policies in mind.

NEXT STEPS


Upon approval, staff will release a solicitation for Letters of Interest from local jurisdictions for grant assistance. Metro staff will work with SCAG to select projects for the Large MPO Competition by assigning up to 10 points to the remaining unfunded projects according to the proposed point assignment policy. Metro staff will report back to the Board on the results of the Statewide and Large MPO Competitions.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Grant Assistance Priorities
Attachment B - Point Assignment Methodology

Prepared by: Cindy Cho, Principal Transportation Planner, (213) 547-4230
Shelly Quan, Senior Manager, Transportation Planning, (213) 547-4303
Patricia Chen, Senior Director, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-3041
Mark Yamarone, Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3452
Laurie Lombardi, Senior Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3251
Nicole Ferrara, Deputy Chief Planning Officer, (213) 547-4322

Reviewed by: Ray Sosa, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 547-4274



Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer