



September 12, 2022

To: Members of the Board of Directors
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: 2023 Active Transportation Program Regional Project Prioritization Point Assignments for Orange County

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Overview

On March 16, 2022, the California Transportation Commission adopted the 2023 Active Transportation Program guidelines and issued the associated statewide call for projects. This program purpose is to provide funding to eligible applicants for projects that encourage increased use of active modes of transportation such as biking and walking. The Orange County Transportation Authority has the opportunity to assign additional points to project applications to augment the application scores received through the statewide call for projects. These additional points will be considered during a second opportunity for funding as part of the regional program. The assignment of points to applications that have been submitted by Orange County entities for the 2023 Active Transportation Program funding cycle are presented for Board of Directors' approval.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the Orange County 2023 Active Transportation Program project prioritization point assignments for submittal to the Southern California Association of Governments.
- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer or his designee to provide concurrence on future project scope changes and substitutions as needed for the 2023 Active Transportation Program projects.
- C. Authorize staff to process all necessary amendments to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program to facilitate the above actions.

Background

On March 16, 2022, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted the statewide 2023 Active Transportation Program (ATP) guidelines and issued

the associated ATP call for projects (call). The 2023 ATP will provide a total of \$1.707 billion in funding for projects in fiscal years (FY) 2023-24 through FY 2026-27. Overall, the substantial increase in available funding in the 2023 ATP as compared to prior program cycles, is a result of requests by the CTC to the Governor's office for additional resources for active transportation to be funded through the state budget. The CTC adopted the ATP fund estimate in March 2022, and more recently adopted the amended ATP fund estimate in August 2022, reflecting the additional funding directed to the ATP from the state general fund through the Budget Act of 2021 (AB 180 {Chapter 44, Statutes of 2022}), for a total ATP funding availability of \$1.707 billion. A fact sheet outlining the CTC ATP guidelines is provided in Attachment A.

The ATP includes two opportunities for projects in Orange County to be funded. Projects may be funded through the statewide round of funding or through the regional round of funding. All project applications are first ranked according to a project score and considered for the statewide round of funding. CTC is responsible for overseeing the scoring process and is expected to publish funding recommendations in October 2022. Funding recommendations for the statewide round of funding are based on the highest scoring project applications statewide.

Consistent with state law and approved program guidelines, the 2023 ATP funding is distributed three ways. Fifty percent of the available funding is distributed through the statewide round (approximately \$853 million). Ten percent of the available funding is distributed to small urban and rural regions (approximately \$171 million of which Orange County applicants are not eligible to receive). The remaining forty percent of the available funding (approximately \$683 million) is distributed through the regional round of funding which is subdivided across metropolitan areas and is further split by county based on population. Orange County expects to receive approximately \$61.143 million in ATP funds through this round of funding.

Orange County projects, which are not recommended for funding through the statewide round of funding, will be considered for the regional round of funding through the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) process.

The SCAG Regional ATP guidelines were approved by the CTC in June 2022, and outline the SCAG regional project selection process. This process allows for a prioritization methodology to be developed by each of the county transportation commissions to augment the scores received by project applications through the statewide round. Up to 20 points can be added to the statewide project score. The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) established a prioritization methodology for OCTA in September 2020.

This methodology is provided for reference below and in Attachment B.

Plan Type	Point Assignment per Plan Type (Maximum of 20 Points ¹)
A planned bikeway in the Orange County Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan or OC Active	10
Project is included in the Orange County district bikeway strategies	10
Project is included in the OCTA non-motorized Metrolink Accessibility Strategy	10
Project is a sidewalk along a roadway on the Master Plan of Arterial Highways	5
Project is included in a state or local agency bicycle or pedestrian master plan, active transportation plan, or complete streets plan	5
Project is included in a local safety plan, including but not limited to, Safe Routes to Schools, Local Roadway Safety Plan, Vision Zero Plan, or implements countermeasures to identified crash typologies in the project area consistent with the Orange County Systemic Safety Plan	5
Project is included in a specific plan or corridor plan	2
Project is included in local agency general plan or circulation element	2

Discussion

Applications for the 2023 ATP were due on June 15, 2022. Orange County agencies submitted 34 applications, requesting a total of \$311.095 million in ATP funding.

OCTA staff reviewed project applications and surveyed Orange County agency contacts to assign points consistent with the approved methodology. Staff also reviewed survey responses to verify consistency with referenced planning documents, contacted applicant agencies for clarification as needed, and finalized the recommended point assignments for submittal to SCAG (Attachment C). As noted above, the primary project scoring will be performed by CTC and has not occurred yet. The SCAG/OCTA ranking and augmented scoring will only affect projects not selected for funding in the statewide round of funding. Once SCAG applies the OCTA-assigned points to the CTC scores, the CTC will review and authorize the ATP funding for the selected projects through the regional share of ATP funding.

¹ The adopted 2023 ATP SCAG regional guidelines establish that the maximum points that can be assigned by the county transportation commission is 20 points.

If a project that is recommended for funding through the SCAG regional project selection process is not able to be delivered or is recommended for partial funding, OCTA will work with applicant agencies and SCAG to substitute the next ranked projects or adjust project scopes for partial funding consistent with the SCAG regional guidelines. Although OCTA does not determine final scores or award funds to local agencies for ATP projects, future scope changes for Orange County projects may require OCTA concurrence as part of the request to the CTC. To carry out these activities, staff is requesting Board authorization to make these minor adjustments.

Lastly, and consistent with SCAG's Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) guidelines, all federally funded, or regionally significant projects, must be included in the FTIP; therefore, Board direction to enter awarded ATP projects into the FTIP is requested because the ATP includes federal funding sources.

Next Steps

With Board approval, staff will submit the project point assignment recommendations noted in Attachment C to SCAG. The SCAG Regional Council will consider adoption of the regional program in spring 2023, and CTC will consider adoption of the regional program in summer 2023. Following approval, projects will be entered into the FTIP so that local agencies may initiate the process to begin their projects, consistent with the award amount, match required, and timing that the funds are available.

Summary

As part of the SCAG regional project selection process for the 2023 ATP, staff is recommending point assignment for projects submitted by Orange County agencies consistent with OCTA-approved methodology for approval and submittal to SCAG.

Attachments

- A. 2023 Active Transportation Program Fact Sheet
- B. Orange County Transportation Authority, Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Methodology
- C. Orange County Transportation Authority, 2023 Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Point Assignments

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