



December 2, 2024

To: Regional Transportation Planning Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: 2025 Active Transportation Program Regional Project Prioritization Point Assignments for Orange County

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Overview

On March 21, 2024, the California Transportation Commission adopted the 2025 Active Transportation Program guidelines and issued a two-tiered call for projects, the State of California Statewide call for projects, and the Southern California Association of Governments' regional program. The Orange County Transportation Authority can assign additional points to project applications from Orange County agencies to augment scores, which will be considered during the regional program review. The assignment of points for Orange County applications is presented for the Board of Directors' approval.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the Orange County 2025 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 2025 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 21, 2024, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted the statewide 2025 Active Transportation Program (ATP) guidelines and issued the associated ATP call for projects (call). The 2025 ATP will provide a total of \$168.7 million in funding for projects in fiscal years (FY) 2025-26 through FY 2028-29.

The ATP includes a two-tiered call. 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. The CTC is responsible for overseeing the scoring process and is expected to publish funding recommendations in November 2024. 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 2025 ATP funding is distributed three ways. Fifty percent of the available funding is distributed through the statewide round (approximately \$84.35 million). Ten percent of the available funding is distributed to small urban and rural regions (approximately \$16.87 million of which Orange County applicants are not eligible to receive). The remaining 40 percent of the available funding (approximately \$67.48 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 \$5.6 million in ATP funds through this round of funding.

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

The SCAG Regional ATP guidelines were approved by the CTC in June 2024 and outline the SCAG regional program 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 2024.

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

Plan	Point Value (Maximum of 20 Points)
A planned bikeway in OC Active	10
Project is included in the Orange County Bike Connectors Gap Closure Feasibility Study or the Nonmotorized Metrolink Accessibility Strategy	10
Pedestrian or bikeway improvements that connect to a Transit Opportunity Corridor identified in OC Transit Vision	10

Pedestrian improvements within a half mile or bikeway improvements within three miles of one of the Prioritized High-Potential Hub Locations identified in the Orange County Mobility Hubs Strategy	5
Project is included in a regional 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 closes a gap on a sidewalk along a roadway on the Master Plan of Arterial Highways	2
Project is included in a specific plan, corridor plan, or multimodal study	2
Project is included in local agency general plan or circulation element	2

A previous version of this report was included in the November 12, 2024, OCTA Board agenda but was withdrawn from that agenda due to the discovery of an error in the assignment of points. The points assignment in this item reflects the correction.

Discussion

Applications for the 2025 ATP, including both statewide and SCAG regional program, were due to the CTC on June 17, 2024. Orange County agencies submitted 14 applications, requesting a total of \$228.844 million in ATP funding. None of the projects submitted by Orange County agencies were funded through the statewide call. Therefore, all of the Orange County projects would be considered through the SCAG regional program.

OCTA staff reviewed project applications and surveyed Orange County applicant agencies to evaluate the consistency of their projects with the planning documents outlined in the Board-approved project prioritization methodology. Each applicant agency was contacted a second time for clarification, following the discovery of an error in the original survey. The revised scores were fully analyzed by staff to confirm compliance with the criteria and only then, the scores were finalized for Board consideration and submittal to SCAG, as included in Attachment B. Ultimately, projects are ranked for funding by SCAG, based on the combination of OCTA assigned points and the points assigned to each project by the CTC. Once SCAG applies the OCTA-assigned points to the CTC scores and recommends funding to projects that fall above the funding threshold, the CTC will review and approve ATP funding.

If a project that is recommended for funding through the SCAG regional program 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 program 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 local agency's request to the CTC. To carry out these activities, staff is requesting Board authorization to make these minor adjustments.

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 to SCAG. The SCAG Regional Council will consider the adoption of the SCAG regional program funding recommendations in spring 2025, and the CTC will consider the adoption of the SCAG regional program project funding in summer 2025. Following approval, awarded projects will be entered into the FTIP so that local agencies may initiate their projects, consistent with the award amount, match required, and timing for when the funds are available.


Summary

As part of the SCAG regional program project selection process for the 2025 ATP, staff has reviewed applications and is recommending point assignments for projects submitted by Orange County agencies consistent with OCTA-approved methodology for approval and submittal to SCAG.

Attachments

- A. Orange County Transportation Authority, Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Methodology
- B. Orange County Transportation Authority, 2025 Active Transportation Program Project Prioritization Point Assignments

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