



FACT SHEET

Audits and Investigations

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Oversight of Local Assistance Projects

BACKGROUND

Caltrans' Local Assistance Program oversees more than one billion dollars annually available to more than 600 cities, counties, and regional agencies to improve transportation infrastructure or provide transportation services. The Local Assistance Program is comprised of the Division of Local Assistance (DLA) in Headquarters and 12 District Local Assistance offices.

KEY FINDINGS

During our audit, we noted the following:

- Oversight of local federal-aid projects is not always performed and is not clearly defined for state funded projects.
- Conflicting roles and responsibilities in assisting local agencies.
- Meeting the training needs of local agencies could be improved.
- District local assistance offices' processes and procedures are not always followed.
- Process reviews are not always conducted for federal-aid projects.
- Unclear responsibility for following up on program reviews and audit exceptions.
- Some policies and procedures are outdated or unclear.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit resulted in several recommendations, a few of which are listed below:

- The DLA determine if maintenance reviews should be conducted as required in the Stewardship Agreement, communicate any requirements to the District Local Assistance offices, determine the level of oversight necessary to ensure state funded projects are developed within scope, and establish proper procedures of the level of oversight.
- The District Local Assistance offices review plans, specifications, and estimate package for at least one project per agency annually; remind staff to conduct final inspections on completed projects; and ensure timely receipt of critical certifications.
- The DLA work with the District Local Assistance Engineers (DLAE) to define their roles and responsibilities in promoting partnering with local agencies and clarifying the oversight responsibilities, provide DLAEs with guidance on their roles and responsibilities when preparing documents for local agencies, and participate in consultant selection panels.
- The DLA assess training needs of the local agencies, work with the DLAEs to develop necessary training, provide regular and consistent training to local agencies for project administration, and close out procedures.
- The DLA conduct process reviews, as necessary, to ensure federal requirements are met, and update policies and procedures to be consistent with current practice of its oversight framework.