CHAPTER 40
FEDERAL-AID

Topic 41 - Enabling Legislation

Index 41.1 - General

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 is the first transportation legislation since the Interstate System was enacted. ISTEA has changed the established Federal-Aid system. During the 20 years prior to ISTEA there were four Federal-Aid systems: Interstate, Primary, Secondary, and Urban. Now, instead of four Federal-aid systems there are two, the National Highway System (NHS) and the Interstate System, which is a component of the National Highway System.

ISTEA has created new federal-aid programs. The Surface Transportation Program can be used on Interstate, National Highway System, and all roads functionally classified by FHWA as other than local or rural minor collectors. The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program is directed towards transportation projects which will contribute to Clean Air Act requirements in non-attainment areas for ozone and carbon monoxide. The Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program is continued.

A variety of other programs also exist to provide flexibility in determining transportation solutions and promote a multi-modal system approach. Some of these programs include those that target funding for transit projects such as commuter and high-speed rail systems while others provide funds for environmental enhancement such as habitat mitigation and wetland banking. Numerous other funding categories are also available for use during the six year term of the act.

Topic 42 - Federal-Aid System

42.1 National Highway System

After consultation with the States, the Secretary of Transportation will propose a National Highway System. The National Highway System must be designated by law by September 30, 1995. In the interim, the National Highway System will consist of highways classified as principal arterials. The final system will consist of 155,000 miles (± 5 percent) of major roads in the United States. Included will be all Interstate routes, a large percentage of urban and rural principal arterials, the defense strategic highway network, and strategic highway connectors.

42.2 Interstate

As a result of ISTEA the Interstate System is a part of the NHS, but will retain its separate identity and receive separate funding. Under ISTEA the Interstate Program will include: Completion funding for Interstate Construction, Interstate Substitute highway projects, and an Interstate Maintenance program to rehabilitate, restore, and resurface the Interstate system. Reconstruction is also eligible for funding if it does not add capacity, except for high occupancy vehicle (HOV) or auxiliary lanes.

Topic 43 - Federal-Aid Programs

43.1 Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The Surface Transportation Program is a new funding program which may be used for roads (including NHS) that are not functionally classified as local or rural minor collectors. These roads are now collectively referred to as Federal-aid roads.

The STP includes safety and enhancement programs. Ten percent of the STP funds must be used for safety construction activities, hazard elimination and rail-highway crossings. Another ten percent of the program is designated for transportation enhancement, which encompasses a broad range of environmental related activities. The remainder of the STP funds are divided as follows; 50 percent is to be divided between areas of the State based on population; the remaining 30 percent can be used in any area.

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43.2 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program directs funds toward transportation projects in Clean Air Act non-attainment areas for ozone and carbon monoxide. Projects using CMAQ funds will contribute to meeting the attainment of national ambient area air quality standards. CMAQ funds may not be used for projects which will increase capacity for single occupant vehicles. Exceptions might include HOV lanes which allow single occupant vehicles at other than peak travel times or auxiliary lanes.

43.3 Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program

The Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program is continued in order to provide assistance for any bridge on public roads. Caltrans, Division of Structures, develops a bridge sufficiency rating for bridges on the State system and sets a sufficiency threshold for the use of Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Funds.

43.4 Federal Lands Program

The Federal Lands Program authorizations are available through three categories: Indian Reservation roads, Parkways and Park roads, and Public Lands Highways (which incorporates the previous Forest Highway category).

43.5 Special Programs

Special Program funds are allocated for projects which generally fall into the following groups: Special Projects-High Cost Bridge, Congestion Relief, High Priority Corridors on the NHS, Rural and Urban Access, Priority Intermodal and Innovative Projects; National High Speed Ground Transportation Programs; Scenic Byways Program; Use of Safety Belts and Motorcycle Helmets; National Recreational Trails Program; Emergency Relief.

Topic 44 - Funding Determination

44.1 Funding Eligibility

Each Federal program has certain criteria and requirements. During design the project engineer is to consult with the FHWA reviewer to determine the appropriate Federal program each individual project is eligible for and the level of future Federal involvement. The final determination to request Federal participation will be made by Caltrans, Budgets Program, Federal Resource Branch.

44.2 Federal Participation Ratio

ISTEA has increased the percentage of Federal participation in several programs and fund types. The Interstate System reimbursement allotment remains unchanged at 90 percent. The remainder of projects on the NHS, STP and CMAQ reimbursement allotments are 80 percent. FHWA determines the final detailed ratio based on formula applied to each State. Contact Caltrans, Budgets Program, Federal Resources Branch for the most current reimbursement rates.

44.3 Emergency Relief

Emergency opening projects are funded 100 precent for the first 180 days following a disaster. For restoration projects and emergency opening projects after 180 days Federal participation is pro-rated.

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