

**FY 2008/09 Regional Blueprint Planning Program**  
**Grant APPLICATION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Application Contents and Completion**

**Q: Do you need new “letters of support” from supporters of previously awarded Blueprint grant funds?**

A: No. We only need letters from any new supporters.

**Q: Should the applicant submit letters of support from last year?**

A: Yes. We encourage that letters from previous years be submitted along with this year’s application. Agencies should compile new letters of support along with their application as well.

**Q: Will you accept letters of support after the application deadline of Oct. 10, 2008?**

A: Yes. Letters of support can be sent in and will be given consideration after the application deadline.

**Q: Could a charter in support of our Blueprint process substitute for individual support letters?**

A: Yes. That would be fine.

**Q: Do we need a new resolution for each year that we apply for Blueprint grant funds?**

A: Yes. This ensures the RTPA Board is aware and supportive of the Regional Blueprint effort.

**Q: The application page limit is 20-pages and appendices can be added. The new forms are at least 10 pages; is this included in the 20-page limit?**

A: No. The narrative portion of your application alone should not be more than 20-pages. The forms shall be included as appendices and will be additional pages to the 20-page limit.

**Q: Should housing elements be included in the application, e.g. Regional Housing Needs Assessment?**

A: The application must demonstrate how housing benefits transportation goals, e.g. transportation corridors. Although federal dollars cannot fund specific housing plans, accommodating housing needs should be addressed in your application.

**Q: Is a travel model upgrade an eligible activity for the blueprint grants?**

A: Yes. Data and modeling are eligible activities.

**Q: Is the development of an integrated GIS model that would address Land Use, Transportation, and Greenhouse gas pursuant to AB 32, an appropriate work activity for Blueprint funding?**

A: Yes. Such a model would address Regional Blueprint goal #10 to reduce the region's greenhouse gas emissions and plan for climate change impacts as well as Regional Blueprint goals to integrate land use and transportation modeling. However, the focus on greenhouse gas modeling should not overshadow the other regional blueprint grant goals. Also, as with all activities funded with federal transportation planning funds, the use of this model to meet transportation planning needs should be highlighted.

### **Application Forms**

**Q: In regards to Form 2, should agencies create an outline in the same format?**

A: Yes. You could create an outline so that the Interagency Review Committee (IRC) can easily see how an agency is addressing the program goals.

**Q: Form 2 does not allow for much detail on the objectives. Should more discussion of the objectives be covered in the narrative?**

A: Yes. Please discuss your objectives in the narrative and summarize them in Form 2 along with the proposed performance measure.

**Q: Forms 2 and 3 seem to be a reverse of the definitions used in past applications. Our past applications are organized according to tasks. What is meant by objectives and tasks?**

A: Objectives are the major strategies of your blueprint effort that help you achieve your regional goals. The tasks are the specific projects that implement the objectives. You can still organize around tasks, but show how they flow from the goals to objectives to tangible tasks.

**Q: From Form 3: At the top it says FY 2008-09 Status of Milestones and Products. Does that mean to list milestones and products completed from past grant years or only what is planned for FY 2008/09 and in that case, there will not be any completed tasks yet?**

A: The IRC wants to see a list of milestones and products completed from the beginning of your blueprint grants to the present and you should list the planned milestones for the coming year. You can state that they are in progress or new for FY 2008/09 in the Status

column. Also, please indicate for past and current milestones and products any major barriers and challenges to success you encountered and how you addressed them.

**Q: Form 5 asks for public and stakeholder engagement. Does this mean for the past grant years and the coming year or only the coming year?**

A: Please describe your stakeholder engagement strategies in the past and what is planned this year.

**Q: On form 6, Stakeholder Support, can we list those organizations that have given us verbal support of our Blueprint process, but have not provided a letter of support?**

A: Yes.

### **Addressing Blueprint Goals in the Application**

**Q: How should an applicant address the Blueprint goals in the application? Does the Committee want to see overall goals or what the agency hopes to accomplish in current year?**

A: The application should address the overall goals that have been established in the region.

**Q: Since there are overlapping goals and objectives, can the same objective i.e. strategy be shown for more than one goal on Form #2?**

A: Yes. An objective may support more than one goal.

**Q: Please provide resources on how health and obesity prevention goals can be addressed through transportation-land use connections.**

A: See attached resources and contacts for addressing this connection in your regional blueprint planning efforts. This information is also posted on our website.  
(Attach document.)

**Q: Are the Blueprint goals prioritized based on the way they are numerically identified in the application?**

A: No they are not, with the exception of goal number one. Goal number one has the most significant priority.

### **Submittal, Award, and Encumbrance Processes**

**Q: Can the Board resolution be submitted after the application due date?**

A: Yes. We will accept the resolution after the Oct. 10, 2008 deadline, if you are working on scheduling this item with your board.

**Q: Is an electronic (e-mail) submission permitted?**

A: No. We require an unbound hard copy and a CD of the application because of the number of copies we have to make. *The hard copy must be post marked no later than Oct. 10, 2008.*

**Q: Given the previous year's timing of the grant awards, should we expect to incorporate the awarded Blueprint grant into the Overall Work Program (OWP) by March of 2009 for expenditure in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009/2010?**

A: Yes. The Blueprint grant program runs on a calendar year, not the fiscal year, so expenditures are typically in the fiscal year following the award. However, the grant funding should also be amended into the FY 2008/2009 OWP and OWP Agreement because funds expire June 30, 2009 as they are tied to the 2008/2009 fiscal year.

**Q: What arrangements will be made for the Districts to tie into the relevant MPO presentations?**

A: We're exploring various options, including teleconference, webinar, and other media. Once we determine the logistics, we will inform District staff.

**Q: Is a minimum 20% local match required for each quarter's expenditures?**

A: Yes. The local match must be commensurate with spending.

**Q: Does the percentage of local match have anything to do with the quarterly progress reports or the Requests for Reimbursements or is it only an initial grant application requirement?**

A: The rule of thumb for the other federal grant programs is that there should be 'proportional spending' using some of the grant funds and some of the local match – but not necessarily exactly 20%. The rationale behind the 'proportional spending' rule is to avoid using up all of the federal funds first and then not having enough local match funds left over to finish the project, thus leaving Caltrans without a final product after reimbursing all of the grant money.

**Q: How much of the 20% local match can be in-kind services?**

A: Your local match can be all cash, all in-kind, or a combination of the two. If you use in-kind services for part or your entire local match, you need to be able to document staff time and salaries. You may also need an Indirect Cost Allocation Plan.

**Q: Can in-kind contributions count towards the 20% match requirement?**

A: Yes; for example, staff time for an outreach meeting would count. Agencies are encouraged to go beyond the 20% minimum requirement. The only restriction is that the local match cannot be federally funded.

**Q: Is there a limit on an applicant's request for funding?**

A: It is up to the agency to decide how much funding they will be requesting. The grants have ranged from \$140,00 to over \$1 million.

**Q: Which State agencies participate in the Interagency Review Committee (IRC)?**

A: Participating agencies are:

- California Environmental Protection Agency
- State and Consumer Services Agency
- Department of Food and Agriculture
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- California Transportation Commission
- Health and Human Services Agency
- Governor's Office of Planning and Research
- Resources Agency
- Labor and Workforce Development Agency
- Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
- Office of the Secretary of Education

### **Quarterly Reports**

**Q: Can the request for reimbursement paperwork be used for the quarterly reporting requirement?**

A: No. Quarterly progress reporting must be done using the *Partnership: Regional Blueprint Planning Grants Quarterly Progress Report* form. It is posted on the Blueprint web site at [www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov](http://www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov). Requests for reimbursement and quarterly reporting are procedurally two different processes.

**Q: Who prepares Regional Blueprint Quarterly Reports – the regional agency, or the Caltrans District?**

A: The grant applicant (either an MPO or RTPA) is responsible for preparing the quarterly progress reports because they are responsible for either doing the work themselves or managing a consultant's work. Once the MPO/RTPA completes the quarterly progress report form, the MPO/RTPA should send it to their Caltrans District contact who will, in turn, forward the quarterly progress report to the appropriate Headquarters staff. The due dates for the Blueprint Quarterly Reports have been adjusted to synchronize with the due dates for the OWP Quarterly Reports. On the new schedule, the first/next Regional

Blueprint Quarterly Report is due in November 2008. The Quarterly Report form is posted at [www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov](http://www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov).

**Blueprint Goals and SB 375**

**Q: Have elements of SB 375 been considered in the development of this years application?**

A: No. Caltrans is very much aware of SB 375 and SB 732. As you know, SB 732 would establish the Strategic Growth Council and could potentially change our role in the administration of the Blueprint grants. Since neither one of these bills has been signed by the Governor yet, it would be premature to incorporate its language or proposed requirements into this year's application.