

Caltrans FAST Act National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) Working Sub-Group Fact Sheet

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Group
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SUBJECT: FAST Act National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) Implementation Advisory

National Highway Performance Program. The FAST Act expands National Highway Performance Program (NHPP, FAST Act section 1106) eligibility to include funding for Federal-aid Highway system bridges that are not on the National Highway System (NHS); and also to pay subsidy and administrative costs for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) projects. Funding for locally owned on-system bridges was an important issue for California local agencies since the Highway Bridge Program was eliminated in MAP-21. In FFY 2015, California received \$1.93 billion in NHPP apportionments; California would receive \$10.03 billion in NHPP funding over five years (an annual average of \$2 billion) under the FAST Act.

The Sub-Group is making the following recommendations in light of FAST Act provisions for NHPP:

- FHWA indicates the final federal pavement and bridge performance management rules are not expected to be delivered until late summer of 2016 at the earliest; the Department's proposed distribution of NHPP apportionment funding may need to be reconsidered, and perhaps adjusted, based on the requirements of the final federal rule. However, the working Sub-Group's position is that in order to utilize NHPP apportionment on a timely basis, California cannot wait for federal pavement and bridge rules to be finalized before distributing federal NHPP funding. In the meantime, the Department should continue implementing its existing set of physical infrastructure performance measures and targets, with plans to align them with the anticipated federal performance management measures and targets in the final federal rule when it is published.
- The FAST Act adds new eligibility, permitting use of NHPP funds for bridges NOT on the NHS. This eligibility is conditioned on minimum pavement and bridge standards, requiring that no more than 10 percent of NHS bridge deck area be rated Structurally Deficient. FHWA has indicated that for the last year of reporting, California showed that less than 10 percent of its NHS bridge deck area is Structurally Deficient, meaning California qualifies for this new additional eligibility. The Sub-Group therefore recommends that NHPP funds be made available for utilization on off-NHS bridge projects as allowed under the FAST Act. The Sub-Group further recommends that priority be given projects that will allow California to continue meeting the Structurally Deficient deck area performance standard, and thus maintain this new FAST Act additional NHPP eligibility.

- Based on the language in the FAST Act requiring the State’s asset management plan include critical NHS infrastructure (failure of which facilities would have regional impacts), we recommend that the listing and prioritization of projects be assembled to incorporate and address these considerations.

Additional Resources:

FHWA National Highway Performance Program Fact Sheet,
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/nhppfs.cfm>

FHWA National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) Implementation Guidance,
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/nhpp/160309.cfm>