

# MAP-21 FACT SHEET

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**DATE:** November 1, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program-Distribution of TA funding

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## **PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

MAP 21 TA is a new funding program. MAP 21 eliminated the TE program altogether beginning FY 13. In establishing the TA program, the funding was reduced 20% than the level funded with the TE program ending in FY 12.

Under MAP-21 Section 1103 (Definitions) and Section 1122 (Transportation Alternatives) address implementation of this new program. Section (c) addresses allocation of funds where fifty percent of a State's TAP apportionment (after deducting the set-aside for the Recreational Trails Program) is sub-allocated to areas based on their relative share of the total State population with the remaining fifty percent available for use in any area of the State.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required under MAP-21 to develop a competitive process to allow eligible entities to submit projects in order to obligate the TA Program funds distributed by population. This leaves the question of how to address the fifty percent to be obligated in any area of the state.

FHWA TA Program Guidance dictates that funds sub-allocated to small urban areas and rural areas (areas with less than a population of 200,000) will be administered by the State. Using a competitive process, the State will select the projects from proposed projects submitted by eligible entities. This defines the State's roles in soliciting and selecting the projects to be funded under the TA Program for certain agencies.

Caltrans created a TA Program working group to address the fifty percent of TA Program funding that are to be obligated in any area of the State. The working group consists of representatives from Caltrans, the California Transportation Commission (CTC), MPOs, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), and other transportation partners.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

MAP 21 provides that CMAQ, HSIP, NHPP and STP funds may be transferred to the TA program. That is not recommended for California administration of the TA Program. However, should a region choose to voluntarily use their allocation of such funds for funding of a TA project (i.e. bike/ped), than that project would be included in the STIP and follow STIP guidelines.

In addition to the fifty percent of a State's TAP apportionment (after deducting the set-aside for the Recreational Trails Program), the State would distribute the 50% of TA Program funding for any area of to State to the regions by a yet-to-be-determined formula. This would place the funding in larger urban areas under the control of the region to be obligated through a competitive process. Consistent with MAP 21 Section 1122(5), the MPO proposed competitive process for selection of TAP projects shall be consulted with the state in order to confirm that the

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process and projects achieve the objectives of this section. However, The State would still be required to solicit and select eligible projects for smaller urban and rural areas. That process would be determined at a later date

Pros: Agencies would receive additional TA funding that would allow them to fund more projects in their regions. In addition, this option would allow maximum flexibility to the regions to determine which projects will be funded.  
Cons: The funding of large TA projects would not be possible for small urban and rural areas. If the regions do not have the ability to trade TA shares due to the TA Program projects not being included in the STIP, the flexibility to allow some regions to over-program their TA target is some years, while other under-program will be lost. Rurals may also lose the option of programming larger projects as an advance against their future TA share.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Previously, TE funds were split 75% to RTPAs and 25% to the State. Projects chosen to receive the 25% in State TE funds were selected by a formal solicitation. The solicitation was open to local and State agencies and a team of Caltrans staff reviewed the applications and selected the projects for funding. These projects were programmed in STIP and referred to as Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) TE projects. The Division of Local Assistance (DLA) reviewed all TE applications for eligibility; however, only played a minor role in ITIP project selection.

Map-21 has eliminated the TE program but provides funding for many of the same project types under the TA Program. However, MAP-21 does not include State DOTs nor MPOs as an eligible entity to receive TA funding. Therefore, local agencies will ultimately receive 100% of the TA funding for project implementation. MAP-21 only mandates that 50% of the TA funding be distributed by population, leaving to the State discretion as to how distribute the remaining 50%.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

#### Alternative #1

50% to the State through the STIP after set aside the Recreational Trail Program (RTP)

Pros: Current practice of including the TE Program projects in the STIP has improved TE Program delivery. Would likely result in TA projects in more areas of the state. Provides flexibility to regions who do not wish to prioritize TA projects.

Cons: Most representatives in the working group prefer not to have the TA Program projects included in the STIP as a requirement. Their reasoning cites timeliness, ease and cost of administrative burden for small TA projects using STIP process.

#### Alternative #2

50% managed as a competitive Statewide program after set aside for the RTP.

Pros: Small urban and rural areas would have the chance to propose larger projects that they would be able to fund with a proportional share. The State would have a better opportunity to prioritize funding projects that advance major state policy priorities. Project selection would be based on merit of the project not location.

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Cons: This portion of the funds would not be under the local control of the regions. The State would make the final determination of which projects would be funded and would use a collaborative process to develop the criteria for ranking projects. Funding may be centralized in fewer regions.

**PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE:**

October 1, 2012-March 31, 2013

Attachment(s)

<Map-21 Citation, US Code Citation, and CA Statute Affected >