

Developing Effective Active Transportation Projects and Programs Support for Disadvantaged Communities



Module 3: Working within your Policy & Planning Context



Overview

- Why the Planning Context Matters
- What Plans Do You Have In Place?
- Inventory Your Existing Programs
- Consider Applying for Planning Funds

- Before diving right into the specific project you have in mind, it is extremely important to take a step back and look at the broader planning context in which you are working
- In this module, we will be going over the types of plans and programs you should review before pulling together an application. This background inventorying of policies and programs will let you know what is already being taken care of, so that you can focus your project application on unaddressed community needs.
- Lastly, we will go over whether applying for planning funds makes sense for your community.

Why the Planning Context Matters

- ATP Guidelines (Screening Criteria, pg. 13):
“All projects submitted **must be consistent with the relevant adopted regional transportation plan...**”

Applicants must provide the supporting language cited from the adopted regional transportation plan that shows that the submitted project is consistent with the plan.”

- The ATP Guidelines require that all projects are consistent with a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as a basic screening criteria.
- You will have to also provide the supporting language from your RTP in your application; be sure to highlight the relevant language of the RTP if you are planning on submitting a large portion of it to support your application.
- Your RTP is developed by your Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and a list of MPOs can be found in your resources binder.

Why the Planning Context Matters

- ATP Guidelines (Public Participation & Planning, pg. 14), for **projects over \$1 million**:

“...emphasis will be placed on projects that are **prioritized in an adopted city or county bicycle transportation plan, pursuant to Section 891.2, pedestrian plan, safe routes to school plan, active transportation plan, trail plan, or circulation element of a general plan** that incorporated elements of an active transportation plan.”

- Additionally, for large ATP project applications (those over \$1 million), you will need to provide evidence that your proposed project is prioritized in an adopted bicycle, pedestrian, safe routes to school, trail, or active transportation plan OR in the circulation element of your general plan that has incorporated active transportation elements.
- While there will only be an emphasis on projects consistent with a plan this funding cycle, future funding cycles will likely make plan consistency a requirement for very large projects.

What Plans Do You Have In Place?

- Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
- City/County General Plan
 - Look at Circulation OR Health Element
 - Look for explicit complete streets or multi-modal language
- Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan
- City/County Complete Streets Resolution/Policy
- Area Specific Plans

- So as you are reviewing your RTP, you should also be looking to other plans that your community may have in place that will likely inform the development of your ATP project
- Research to see if you have the plans listed here

Complete Streets policies



Ensure that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



National Complete
Streets Coalition

Complete Streets policies are a key part of these efforts. It's about making sure our transportation network works for all users every time there's a new project. State law requires that local jurisdictions address Complete Streets when you update the Circulation Element of the General Plan.

Model Complete Streets Resolution

**A RESOLUTION OF THE [City Council/Board of Supervisors] OF THE [Jurisdiction]
ADOPTING A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

WHEREAS, the term "Complete Streets" describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families *[insert other significant local users if desired, e.g. drivers of agricultural vehicles, emergency vehicles, or freight]*;

WHEREAS, the lack of Complete Streets is dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders, particularly children, older adults, and persons with disabilities; more than 4,000 pedestrians and bicyclists died on roads in America in 2009, and more than 110,000 were injured, and more than 20% of traffic-related fatalities in California involved bicyclists or pedestrians; many of these injuries and fatalities are preventable, and the severity of these injuries could readily be decreased by implementing Complete Streets approaches; and *[Jurisdiction]* wishes to ensure greater safety for those traveling its streets and roads;

WHEREAS, *[Jurisdiction]* acknowledges the benefits and value for the public health and welfare of reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing transportation by walking, bicycling, and public transportation, which can help address a wide variety of challenges, including pollution, climate change, traffic congestion, social isolation, obesity, physical inactivity, limited recreational opportunities, sprawl, safety, and excessive expenses;

WHEREAS, sedentary lifestyles and limited opportunities to integrate exercise into daily activities are factors contributing to increased obesity among adults and children and the consequences of obesity, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, certain cancers, asthma, low self-esteem, reduced academic performance, depression, and other debilitating diseases;

[http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/
bicyclespedestrians/
sample_OBAG_CS_resolution.doc](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/bicyclespedestrians/sample_OBAG_CS_resolution.doc)

Model Bay Area Complete Streets Resolution

2

- BUT you don't have to wait until a General Plan Update to adopt Complete Streets in your community.
- A Complete Streets policy or resolution is a much nimbler way to codify your community's commitment to complete streets (v. a General Plan Update)
- MTC has developed a model/sample Complete Streets Resolution that may be useful for your community.

What Plans Do You Have In Place?

- Existing Modal Plans
 - Bicycle Master Plan
 - Pedestrian Master Plan
 - Trails Master Plan
 - Safe Routes to School Plan
 - Active Transportation Plan
- Public Health Plans
 - Physical Activity Plan
 - Injury Prevention Plan
 - Community Health Needs Assessments

- Check if your community already has a master plan in place for walking, biking, trails, or Safe Routes to School
 - These master plans generally will have already identified relevant policies, programs, and even prioritized projects from which you can begin to develop your project application.
 - These master plans also generally identify a network of existing and proposed facilities; this is helpful to identify gaps in the existing network that could be addressed through an ATP project application.
- It is also very important to look outside the transportation realm to see if there are any plans that may be helpful for your project.
- For example, your county may have public health plans related to physical activity or injury prevention that may touch upon walking- or biking-related issues.
- Public health departments may also have already completed Community Health Needs Assessments that pull together demographic, health, and active transportation data all in one place; this can be very useful to review for your project application

Community Health Needs Assessment

Status of Latino/Hispanic Health
Santa Clara County 2012



- Included comprehensive neighborhood profiles touching upon community needs and concerns related to active transportation

- Here is an example of a Community Health Needs Assessment from Santa Clara County
- The 2012 Santa Clara County Latino Health Assessment compiled demographic and health data, as well as some active transportation-related infrastructure data and qualitative survey findings
- For example: in the Washington/Guadalupe neighborhood, the assessment found that almost 20% of high traffic streets lack any type of traffic control device, and more than a third of high traffic streets lack any infrastructure other than a crosswalk to help residents get across the roadway safely.
 - The survey also found that violence was an issue in the community that discouraged active transportation: many parents refused to let their children outside due to gang members, sex workers, homelessness, drug users, and other illegal activities. As one resident commented: "That's another problem with obesity, because if you want to keep your children safe, you have to keep them at home. You are not going to let them go out to the street or take them to the park because of what they are going to find there."

Inventory Your Existing Programs

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
 - Does your CIP contain specific allocations to pedestrian and/or bicycle improvements?
- Traffic Monitoring Program
 - Do you have an ongoing traffic monitoring program?
 - Does your program collect count data on pedestrians and bicyclists?
- Transportation Development Act, Article 3 Funds (TDA-3)
 - Does your community already leverage TDA-3 funds for walking and biking improvements?

- After reviewing existing plans and policies in your community, it is also useful to inventory your existing walking and biking programs—both infrastructure and non-infrastructure.
- This will allow you to eliminate any potential projects that will already be funded through other non-ATP means, as well as to identify potential data and matching fund sources to support your project application
- This slide lists some of the programs and types of programs that you should look at.

Inventory Your Existing Programs

- Safe Routes to School Program
 - School-based traffic safety education
 - Encouragement programs
 - Data collection efforts: student travel tallies, parent surveys
- Traffic Enforcement Program
- Other Traffic Safety Education Programs
 - Possibly coordinated by local police department or public health department

- In addition to your infrastructure programs, you should do the same for any existing non-infrastructure programs
- These non-infrastructure programs may include data collection that can be useful for your own project application
- Other traffic safety education programs could include:
 - Senior pedestrian safety workshops or senior walking clubs
 - Bicycle or pedestrian ticket diversion programs
 - Pedestrian or Bicycle Safety Months/Weeks/Days

Consider Applying for Planning Funds

- Planning funds available for “**community wide** bike, pedestrian, safe routes to schools, or active transportation plans **in disadvantaged communities**” (ATP Guidelines, pg. 4)
- Plans can help:
 - Organize all relevant community policies related to active transportation into a single document;
 - Identify and prioritize specific projects and/or broad program categories for the community to pursue;
 - Document community engagement, input, and support; and
 - Strengthen grant applications.

- If none of what we have reviewed so far seems applicable to your community, it might be a good idea to consider applying for planning funds
- Applications for planning funds must be for community wide plans in disadvantaged communities.
- As noted here, plans help you develop a vision as well as identify priorities and steps to implementation.

Consider Applying for Planning Funds

- ATP Guidelines (Public Participation & Planning, pg. 14), for projects over \$1 million:
“In future funding cycles, the Commission expects to make consistency with an approved active transportation plan a requirement for large projects.”
- Alternative Sources for Planning Funds
 - Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants
 - Regional MPO Programs
 - Public Health Grants
 - Foundation Grants

- And remember, for large projects, the CTC will expect consistency with a plan in future funding cycles
- In addition to ATP, there are other sources that can assist you with planning:
 - Regional MPO Program examples: SCAG Compass Blueprint Grant program
 - Public health example: San Gabriel Valley Regional Bicycle Master Plan funded by LA County Dept. of Public Health; others have been funded through CDC grants (CPPW, CTG, etc.)

Questions/Comments?