

**Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Transportation Debrief**  
**June 10, 2015**

**Hosted by: LA Metro, Enterprise Community Partners, LA Regional Collaborative, California  
Community Foundation, and LA THRIVES;**  
**with participation from the Southern California Association of Governments**

Meeting Notes

*These notes are drawn from the comments and observations of participants to the AHSC Transportation Debrief workshop held on June 10, 2015. Participants included public agencies who applied or are interested in applying for AHSC funds, housing developers, and advocates. These notes do not necessarily reflect the positions of the hosting organizations or any other individual organization.*

**Theme 1: Need to Refine SGC's Transportation Infrastructure Goals under AHSC**

- Is transportation an equal priority to housing, or does housing come first?
- Program not aligned with reality of transportation project development – projects are typically either at early stage (little \$/no CEQA) or at shovel-ready (100% \$/CEQA clearance), don't really linger at a "near shovel-ready" state where just a little bit more \$\$ will push over the hump
- 1<sup>st</sup>/last mile infrastructure doesn't fit in program – ICP by definition doesn't have HQT, and TOD requires linkage to housing, which has problems under theme 3 below
- Timing of funds/leveraging scoring making AHSC last funding in doesn't create framework for integrated planning efforts needed to put good integrated projects together

**Theme 2: Regulations and Scoring don't incentivize higher impact transportation infrastructure**

- Round 1 may have lots of little TRI elements, but mostly low-hanging fruit such as bike kiosks
- Scoring formula of \$ request/GHG emission dis-incentivizes larger scale capital intensive TRI
- GHG calculator doesn't reward higher impact TRI, maxes out points at low level

**Theme 3: "Jam not Jelly" – Getting to strategic geographic apportionment**

- Geographic distribution across state and region is important, but should be strategically clustering somewhat in areas that achieve high GHG reduction impact – hence "jam, not jelly"
- Need to identify high priority communities, separate screening methodology from disadvantaged communities
- Jurisdictional cap is barrier for largest cities like Los Angeles
- Need to address needs and realities of rural and less-urbanized areas of region
- Issue is somewhat about regulatory fixes, but also will need more time to understand and develop So Cal's capacity to submit high quality projects, seems to be a more nuanced set of dynamics

**Theme 4: Southern CA is at a disadvantage in a few key ways**

- Low AMI leads to municipalities having fewer resources, less staff, less capacity
- Younger transportation system means earlier stage of maturity of integrated sustainability, transportation, and land use planning
- Cities lack capacity/consistent interest, experiencing high staff turnover, small staff, so very few cities participate in state GREEN summit, for example

- Exceptions are jurisdictions with strong individual leadership
- On positive side, Metro/SCAG joint work program out of Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan are providing framework and funding to build local capacity and plans

#### **Theme 5: Models and Best Practices for implementing program**

- 2014 Active Transportation Program was very successful in funding 1<sup>st</sup>/last mile projects
- California Tax Credit Allocation Committee has successful geographic apportionment system
- Prop 84 Integrated Water Management Plan is a model for sophisticated integrated project planning and development framework

#### **Theme 6: Disadvantaged communities (DACs) need increased attention**

- DACs by definition have the least resources and capacity
- ATP achieved high % towards DACs
- Should increase % set-aside to DACs rather than revise the definition

#### **Possible Policy recommendations:**

- Increase or Eliminate jurisdiction cap of \$15 million
- Create a strategic geographic allocation system
- Refine CalEEMod to reflect more detailed valuation of transportation infrastructure elements
- Revisit CEQA threshold requirement
- Revise scoring to eliminate bias against larger scale transportation infrastructure
- Revisit Joint and Several Liability requirement to facilitate more partnerships
- De-couple housing + transportation requirement in TOD pool

#### **Possible Implementation recommendations:**

- More local coordination to ID and match housing with TRI projects
- More local coordination to better leverage \$\$, such as Metro's pool of Low Carbon Transportation funds, or other Cap and Trade Funds, or other transportation \$
- Technical assistance (or financial support for TA) from Metro, LA n Sync, or other private sector partners
- Alignment with new Transit Oriented Affordable Housing Fund being created by Metro and capital partners