

December 9 & 13, 2021 LAPP Selection Panel Meeting Overview

Attendees:

John Hodges-Copple, Regional Planning Director, TJ COG
Brandon Jones, Chief Engineer, NC DOT Division 5
Kai Monast, Director, Public Transportation Group, ITRE
Leta Huntsinger, Director of Research, Systems Planning and Analysis, ITRE
Joe Milazzo, Executive Director, RTA
Chris Lukasina, Executive Director, CAMPO
Shelby Powell, Deputy Director, CAMPO
Gretchen Vetter, LAPP Program Manager, CAMPO
Mike Bruff, Transportation Modeling Engineer, CAMPO

Discussion:

The Selection Panel began by reviewing the LAPP Program: underlying goals, funding restraints, and the target modal investment mix. The Panel then went over how LAPP projects are scored and the criteria used for each mode of transportation. The Panel was reminded of the options they have when providing a recommendation for a LAPP Investment Program. Those options are:

- Recommend projects based on raw scoring
- Recommend projects based on other documented considerations
- Use raw scores until modal target budgets are met
- Recommend modifying modal mix targets and allow for additional budget in a specific mode
- Institute 50 percent of modal top score rule- not recommending funding for a project that scores less than 50 percent of the highest-scoring project in the mode

Prior to reviewing this year's projects, the Selection Panel discussed two policy items that ultimately impacted their recommendation for funding. The first policy item involved the recent passage of the Federal Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA), which would increase the levels of LAPP funding allocated to the Region from previous years for FFY2022-2026. At the time of the Selection Panel meetings, the actual dollar amounts expected for each FFY was not clear yet, but the Panel comfortably used the assumption that more funding would be available than what was assumed when the \$25m target total investment was adopted in August 2021. The Selection Panel recommended programming above the \$25m target total investment, partly due to this assumption. The second policy item discussed prior to project review involved Complete Streets. The Selection Panel indicated that adhering to CAMPO's Complete Streets policy would lead to funding robust projects that supported all users of our transportation networks and would be a priority in this year's recommendations. A policy recommendation for future LAPP round regarding Complete Streets was provided by the panel and will be discussed later in this document.

Roadway Projects:

With these options and policy items in mind, the Selection Panel began their review of the 9 total roadway projects submitted. The target modal investment for roadway was \$16,250,000. The Selection Panel reviewed the top 3 roadway projects, the total number of projects that could be fully funded within the confines of the modal investment target for roadway. The top-scoring roadway project, The Town of Apex's Apex Peakway Southwest Connector is a project that has previously been awarded \$2,500,000 for construction in the FFY2017 round of LAPP. Due to increased scope and construction costs, this project has had significant cost increases since the FFY2017 award. This year, the Town

resubmitted this project for \$12,500,000 for construction. By accepting FFY2023 LAPP funding, the Town of Apex would return the \$2,500,000 that had been previously awarded. Due to this distinction, the Selection Panel considered that this project would only be utilizing \$10,000,000 of FFY2023 *new* funding, since the \$2,500,000 of FFY2017 funding would be returned to the LAPP program. The Selection panel noted the merit of the project and recommended funding, but only considered the project cost to be \$10,000,000, rather than \$12,500,000 to account for the returned funding. The Selection Panel then reviewed the next three highest-scoring projects in the roadway category and, after receiving some clarification from applicants, recommended fully funding those projects as well. The Panel noted that Raleigh's Blue Ridge Road Improvements project involved a complementary bicycle and pedestrian project that would include a grade-separated greenway project to the roadway improvements. As part of their discussion, the Selection Panel also confirmed with applicants that Complete Streets components were included as part of their projects.

The final roadway recommendation is to fully fund the top four scoring projects, totaling \$18,095,500. Accounting for the \$2,500,000 in funding to be returned from the FFY2017 Apex Peakway SW Connector project, the Selection Panel recommendation would utilize \$15,595,800 of new FFY2023 funding.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects:

The Selection Panel then reviewed bicycle and pedestrian projects. The target modal investment for the bicycle and pedestrian mode was \$6,750,000. This year, 16 bicycle and pedestrian projects were submitted, a record number amount of submittals for a LAPP call for projects. The top scoring bicycle and pedestrian project, Town of Apex's Downtown Apex Safe Routes to School and Transit Connections Project, was submitted as both a bicycle and pedestrian and transit project. The nature of the project allowed eligibility in both categories and the project earned the highest score in both. The Selection Panel distinctly praised this project for its commitment to multimodalism by completing connections in the Town's sidewalk network to serve a Safe Routes to School designated area as well as their local and regional bus service stations. The Selection Panel happily recommended funding this project, but recommended the funding come from the transit category. This would allow more funding for the highly competitive bicycle and pedestrian category and emphasize the importance of access to transit projects in the transit mode. The LAPP Selection Panel then reviewed the next 8 bicycle and pedestrian projects. Noting that the City of Raleigh's House Creek Greenway Grade Separation project appeared close to the funding cut off for the bicycle and pedestrian mode and GoRaleigh's GoRaleigh Access ADA Facility project was on the funding cut off for transit, the Selection Panel requested CAMPO Staff reach out to the City of Raleigh to understand the priority of the two projects in case there was an opportunity to provide partial funding for either both or one of the projects. Learning that the City of Raleigh's higher priority was the House Creek Greenway Grade Separation (the complementary project to the City's Blue Ridge Road roadway project), the Selection Panel recommended fully funding Raleigh's House Creek Trail project and not awarding partial funding to GoRaleigh Access' ADA facility. Overall, the Selection Panel recommended fully funding the bicycle and pedestrian projects ranked 2-9, with the number 1 ranked project funded through the transit mode. This recommendation would lead to the overall funding amount to exceed the \$25,000,000 target adopted by the CAMPO Executive Board by \$813,025. The LAPP Selection Panel felt comfortable exceeding the \$25,000,000 target due to the increased funding allotted to the Region through the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act and overprogramming allowed permitted by NCDOT.

The funding recommended for the bicycle and pedestrian mode includes projects ranked 2-9 and totals \$8,682,168.

Transit Projects:

The Selection Panel reviewed the transit projects last. The target modal investment for transit is \$2,000,000. The Selection Panel reviewed all three submitted transit projects. The transit recommendation was based largely on discussions that occurred during the bicycle and pedestrian deliberations. As noted in the bicycle and pedestrian section, the top scoring transit project, the Town of Apex Downtown Apex Safe Routes to Schools and Transit Connections project was also the top scoring bicycle and pedestrian project. The Selection Panel recommended funding this project through the transit category to stress the importance of access to transit and to allow more funding for the competitive bicycle and pedestrian mode. The second scoring transit project, GoRaleigh's Blue Ridge Road/District Drive Transit Connectivity and Access also focused on access to transit and was recommended for funding by the Selection Panel. The final project submitted in the transit mode was GoRaleigh's GoRaleigh Access ADA Facility. This project was not recommended to receive funding due to the City of Raleigh's indication that their priority would be to allocate any partial funding to their House Creek Greenway Grade Separation bicycle and pedestrian project.

The LAPP Selection Panel recommended fully funding the top two transit projects totaling \$1,535,357.

All Projects:

The total amount of funding the Selection Panel recommends programming for FFY23 is \$28,313,025. After considering the \$2,500,000 that will be returned to the Program from the Town of Apex's FFY2017 Peakway SW Connector project, the total amount of *new* funding recommended is \$25,813,025. This is \$813,025 over the target investment program established by the CAMPO Executive Board. The Selection Panel ultimately recommended fully funding four roadway projects, totaling \$18,095,500 (\$15,595,800 of new FFY2023 funding). The bicycle and pedestrian mode is recommended to fully-fund eight projects, totaling \$8,682,168. The transit mode is recommended to fully-fund two projects, totaling \$1,535,357. This year, there were 5 unfunded roadway projects totaling \$11,323,673, 7 unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects totaling \$4,384,987, and 1 unfunded transit project totaling \$2,000,000. The recommended LAPP Investment mix is 64% roadway, 31% bicycle and pedestrian, and 5% transit. The Target Modal Investment Mix was 65% roadway, 27% bicycle and pedestrian, and 8% transit.

Policy Items for Consideration

In addition to the FFY2023 funding recommendation, the Selection Panel also discussed and is recommending further consideration of two policy items that came up during discussions of this year's program. The Selection Panel requests these subjects be discussed during the next LAPP development process to improve the existing Locally Administered Projects Program.

- **Complete Streets:** As noted earlier, Complete Streets are a required component of all LAPP submittals to adhere with CAMPO's adopted Complete Streets Policy. This year, the Selection Panel focused on the merits of Complete Streets and stressed that the best projects include components that serve all users of our transportation network. While reviewing projects this

year, the Selection Panel identified opportunities to improve the inclusion of and transparency regarding Complete Streets elements in future LAPP rounds. Their recommendations include:

- Discuss Complete Streets components and requirements in the LAPP Applicant Training: This will ensure all applicants are aware of the Complete Streets requirements and learn of types of components expected in projects.
 - Include a “Complete Streets Elements” field in the LAPP application: This will require applicants to complete a thorough analysis of Complete Streets opportunities in their project limits and ensure they are being included as part of the submittal. This will also allow individuals reviewing the projects to have a better understanding of the components, rather than having to circle back for clarification at times.
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- **Land Use and Development Policies and LAPP:** Over the past few years, the Selection Panel has reviewed multiple projects that include infrastructure intended to solve a transportation problem caused by recent development in the project vicinity. Last year, the Selection Panel provided a policy recommendation noted as “conscious development” that stressed each jurisdiction look at their land use development policies to ensure that new development is required to include the necessary transportation infrastructure as part of their development projects. The Panel has noted the importance of these policies because more public funding is available to serve the needs of our Region when private sector dollars are used to fund the infrastructure needed to support their development projects. Last year’s policy recommendation from the Selection Panel did not include any actionable items; however, this year, the Selection Panel requests that the LAPP Steering Committee consider aligning land use development policies in LAPP. This could be in the form of eligibility requirements or scoring criteria. The LAPP Selection Panel hopes that by including land use development policies in LAPP, jurisdictions may be encouraged to tighten their own land use development policies and public funding can go further in the Region.