

## **Memorandum**

To: Capital Area MPO Executive Board

From: CAMPO Staff

Date: May 25, 2021

Re: FFY 2023 LAPP Program

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The next round of LAPP applications will be open in August 2021 and will be for the FFY 2023 project cycle. Staff has reviewed the issues brought up during the FFY 2022 cycle and provided recommendations to address those issues.

### **Issues addressed in this memo:**

- **Buffer for Bicycle and Pedestrian Connection Criteria**
- **Parallel Route Selection Requirement**
- **Project Cost Application Fields (Administrative Change)**
- **Location Requirement for Bundled Transit Projects**
- **Target Modal Investment Mix**
- **Including Equity in LAPP Scoring Criteria**
- **LAPP Selection Panel Policy Recommendations**

### **Issue: Buffer for Bicycle and Pedestrian Connection Criteria**

A scoring criterion for Bicycle and Pedestrian projects submitted through LAPP is network connections. Network Connections are currently defined in the LAPP Handbook as:

***Network Connections*** – *The project must be within approximately ¼-mile of activity centers, high density residential development, or government facilities. To qualify for these points, the activity centers, etc. must be existing, under construction at the time of application, or obligated for federal or state construction funding at the time of application. The project will receive one point for each connection made, up to a maximum of 15 points. To receive these points, network connections must be identified on the project map and/or listed in the application.*

In noticing that greenway projects tend to score less points in this criterion due to the inherent nature of greenways being more isolated, a suggestion was made to consider extending the buffer for greenway projects to a greater distance.

**Staff Recommendation:** CAMPO Staff does not recommend having different buffer distances between greenway and non-greenway bicycle and pedestrian projects. The rationale to keep the buffer distances consistent is because LAPP's prioritizing methodology reviews projects from the purpose of serving a transportation purpose. By creating different buffer distances for different project types, the program

would allow lower standards or expectations for connecting users to destinations to greenway projects. Connectivity, as it refers to transportation projects, is an important measure for bicycle and pedestrian projects, and the ¼ mile buffer was established as a reasonable distance an individual could walk to access potential connections. While it does appear that greenway projects can be at a disadvantage in this criterion, the bicycle and pedestrian mode has multiple criteria to create a balanced scoring system. In reviewing prior funding data for bicycle and pedestrian projects, greenway projects had a slightly lower likelihood of being awarded funding through LAPP but received the highest overall amount of funding by project type in the mode.

#### **Issue: Parallel Route Selection**

When a Roadway project is submitted on a new location, CAMPO analyzes a parallel route to measure volume to capacity ratio, travel time savings, and safety score. Currently, this process is managed through discussions and agreement between applicants and CAMPO on a proper parallel route at any phase of the application process. Since there is not a formal location or benchmark when the applicant must provide the parallel route before the application window closes, CAMPO has seen instances where a parallel route is not established until late in the application process, where there is less time to review and approve the parallel route and provide the necessary supplementary documentation.

**Staff Recommendation:** To avoid a need for last-minute reviews of the parallel route for new location roadway projects, CAMPO recommends creating a required field in the LAPP application that would be filled out and discussed at pre-submittal meetings. This would allow ample time to review, approve, and run the TEAAS reports on parallel route selections before the application window closes.

#### **Issue: Project Cost Application Fields (Administrative Change)**

When an applicant is submitting cost information in the LAPP application portal, applicants fill out the cost by phase, the total cost, cost to CAMPO, and the local match. In the current application portal, these fields exist individually, leaving opportunities for discrepancies between phase and total costs and local match submitted.

**Staff Recommendation:** To ensure that project and phase costs are consistent with each other and the local match submitted, CAMPO will update the LAPP application to have some cost fields auto-populate based on information submitted.

#### **Issue: Location Requirement for Bundled Transit Projects**

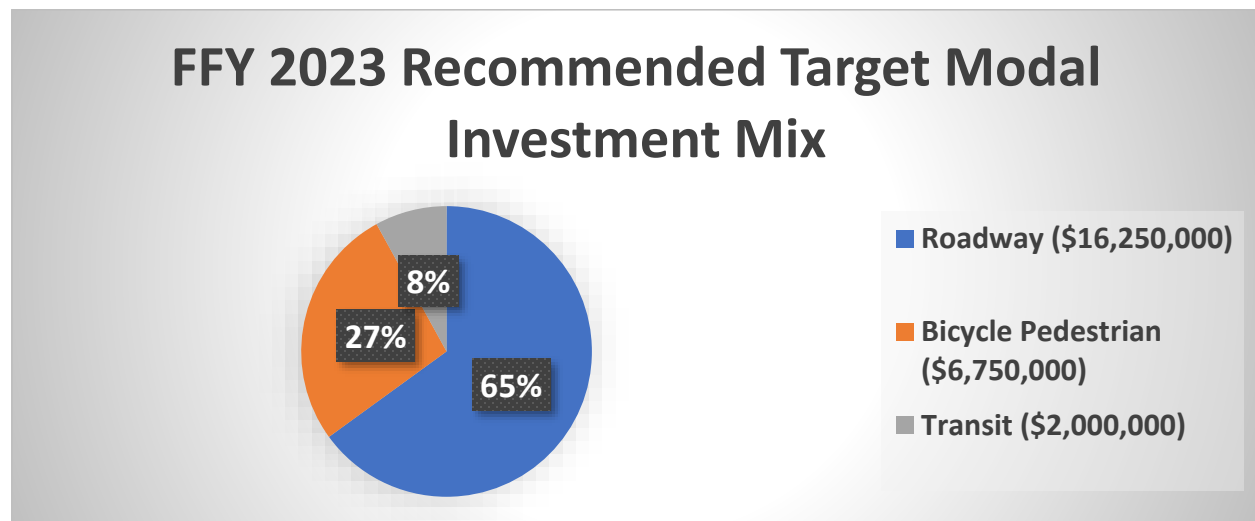
Historically, transit agencies have submitted bundled projects that include bus stop improvements at multiple locations. The locations of the bus stops have not been required as part of the application process. While bundling projects has been shown as an effective method to complete improvements in a cost-effective manner that impacts many people/locations, it is challenging to measure the value and track these projects when locations are not submitted.

**Staff Recommendation:** Require locations to be identified in future LAPP applications, so projects can be further evaluated and tracked if funded.

**Issue: Target Modal Investment Mix**

The Target Modal Investment Mix for the FFY2022 round of LAPP was 65% roadway, 27% bike/ped, and 8% transit and the total programming allowance was \$25million. Uncertainties in future federal funding, overprogramming, and existing project cost overruns have caused general funding uncertainties for LAPP over the next few years.

**Staff Recommendation:** Keep the same Target Modal Investment Mix and tentative programming allowance as the prior rounds of LAPP. If new funding information is made available, CAMPO Staff or the LAPP Selection Panel may recommend programming less or more than the total programming allowance for the FFY2023 cycle.



**Issue: Including Equity in LAPP Scoring Criteria**

The topic of including equity as a measure in the LAPP scoring criteria has been discussed through numerous iterations of program development. Nuances on how equity is measured and concerns over how to properly include equity measures in the program have stalled these efforts up to this point. CAMPO is committed to including considerations and support for underserved communities throughout our planning processes, and would like to begin implementing equity scoring in our LAPP process over the next two years.

**Staff Recommendation:** CAMPO Staff recommends using the next two LAPP cycles to further develop equity in the LAPP scoring criteria. This year, CAMPO is undertaking an update to our Strategic Plan and our Public Participation Plan. During the process of updating these plans, CAMPO will solicit feedback from important stakeholders, including the CAMPO Executive Board, TCC, and public. The feedback from both plan updates will help provide meaningful guidance on the specific equity priorities of our stakeholders and decision-makers, that can then be used to implement in LAPP. CAMPO recommends discussing equity during the FFY2023 round with the LAPP Steering Committee and then proposing

equity changes to the program in the FFY2024 round after the feedback from the Strategic Plan and Public Participation Plan are available to help guide recommendations.

#### **Issue: LAPP Selection Panel Policy Recommendations**

The FFY2022 LAPP Selection Panel provided multiple policy recommendations during their review and recommendation of the FFY2022 projects. The Panel did not reach a consensus on how to address some of the policy issues introduced during their meeting, but all members agreed that these items were worth acknowledging and considering through future iterations of the LAPP Program:

1. **Logical Termini:** There have been occasions when a project submitted to LAPP is associated with or a part of a larger project to address the transportation needs of an impacted area. In reviewing these types of projects, concerns remain on whether the intended transportation benefit could be achieved without completing *all* phases of a project. The Selection Panel suggests this issue could be mitigated by greater scrutiny in determining if a stand-alone project submitted to LAPP produces an independent utility and is a justified logical terminus to produce a transportation benefit.
2. **Conscious Development:** The CAMPO region is experiencing new growth and development that, along with many benefits, results in negative impacts to our transportation network. Local jurisdictions faced with these traffic impacts can negotiate with developers beforehand (by way of conditional approvals, etc.) to have developers build or fund solutions for the transportation needs brought on by their developments. In scenarios where this does not occur, or the local jurisdiction may offer to provide transportation incentives for the development to come without addressing other clear impacts, the use of regional public funding to alleviate issues caused by a specific development is viewed as problematic by some of the Selection Panel. While the Selection Panel has mixed opinions on how involved the Locally Administered Projects Program should be in this issue, especially since it is challenging to determine if a single development is causing the transportation issues in a specific location, the Panel would like to stress the importance of including necessary transportation projects in negotiations with potential development.
3. **Accessibility and Environmental Justice in Transit Scoring:** The current criteria used to score transit projects does not have a specific measure that accounts for accessibility or providing transit access to underserved areas. The Selection Panel recommends considering adding components of these items to future scoring criteria, to incentivize or give advantage to projects that can serve those areas.
4. **Inclusion of Dedicated Access to Transit Funds in Wake County Transit Plan:** currently, there is not a line-item in the Wake County Transit Plan that designates specific funds to transit access improvement projects, specifically sidewalks; however, there have been discussions of adding them in the past. The LAPP Selection Panel has indicated support of this inclusion, since access improvements are a major component of transit ridership, safety, and equity.

**Staff Recommendation:** CAMPO Staff does not recommend including these policy items as requirements in LAPP, but rather to review the policies with Steering Committee and at future LAPP trainings.