

November 2, 2007

To: FOCUS working group members
Fr: FOCUS staff
Re: Draft Guidelines for upcoming Station Area Planning Program

At its October meeting, MTC approved a new cycle of funding for the Station Area Planning Program that is intended to support MTC's TOD policy and planning efforts in five future transit corridors being planned under the Commission's Resolution 3434 Regional Transit Expansion Program. The Commission also approved:

- Opening up the Station Area Planning Program to allow Priority Development Areas (PDAs) under the FOCUS program to be eligible for planning funds under the Station Area Planning Program. Priority must still be given to Station Area Plans on the five Resolution 3434 future transit corridors (e-BART, Dumbarton Rail, BART to San Jose, SMART and ferry service expansion).
- A new Station Area Planning Manual that sets the overall framework for the Station Area Planning Program and provides guidance for grantees preparing Station Area Plans (see attached).

Funding Available for the Station Area Planning Program

The Commission approved \$7.5 million in funding that will be available for this upcoming cycle of the Station Area Planning Program. MTC has also set aside \$4.6 million in funding for the subsequent FY08-09 cycle of the Station Area Planning Program. In addition, an announcement was made at the ABAG-MTC "Bay Area On the Move" forum in October that the Commission will consider an additional \$5 million-\$10 million commitment in November in order to ensure that a significant number of planning efforts can occur in the Priority Development Areas under FOCUS. While this additional funding likely won't be available until FY08-09 and later, in total it represents a regional commitment of at least \$17.1 million for local planning efforts over the next several years.

Key Questions for the FOCUS Working Group

Please review the following three documents in preparation for a discussion at our November 8th meeting: (a) the Station Area Planning Manual approved by the Commission in October; (b) the draft Station Area Planning Program Guidelines, and (c) the draft Station Area Planning Program Application. Given that the Commission approved the Station Area Planning Manual at its October meeting, both MTC and ABAG staff have now attempted to develop more detailed program guidelines, evaluation criteria and an application form that build off the manual and will provide applicants a better sense of the types of planning efforts that will be most competitive under the program.

Staff is now seeking the FOCUS working group's specific input on the following five questions:

(1) Are the draft Station Area Planning Program Guidelines – and in particular the Evaluation Criteria proposed under Part Two of the Guidelines – clear and reasonable? Do they provide the right evaluation framework to ensure that planning processes will be successful and meet the goals of the program? Should there be explicit weight or scores defined for each of the evaluation criteria in Part Two?

(2) Are there any obvious missing elements in the Station Area Planning Program Guidelines? Are there any elements that you feel should not be included?

(3) Are the issues of social equity and public participation dealt with appropriately in the program guidelines and application?

(4) Is the proposed application clear and straightforward? Is it reasonably consistent with the Station Area Planning Manual and the Station Area Planning Program Guidelines?

(5) Does a February 15th deadline give potential applicants enough time to prepare a strong application if the Call for Applications is released the last week of November?

Next Steps

Staff will receive input on the draft Station Area Planning Program Guidelines from the FOCUS working group members at your November 8th meeting followed by input from MTC's Advisory Council at their November 14th meeting. A final version of the Program Guidelines and the Application will be released in a Call for Applications at the end of November.