



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Memorandum

TO: Advisory Council

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FR: Doug Johnson

RE: Transportation for Livable Communities Program Update and Evaluation

Transportation for Livable Communities Background

For the past ten years, the Transportation for Livable Communities program has served as one of MTC’s primary tools for fostering smart growth. MTC and its partner regional agencies define smart growth as development that revitalizes central cities and older suburbs, supports and enhances public transit, promotes walking and bicycling, and preserves open spaces and agricultural lands. By promoting compact, mixed-use development in existing communities, smart growth aims to accommodate a growing population while providing affordable options, reducing automobile dependency, and protecting open space and farmland.

MTC SMART GROWTH TIMELINE

| | Policy | TLC Funding Programs |
|------|--|--|
| 1996 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation/Land Use Connection Policy adopted | |
| 1997 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TLC Planning Program created |
| 1998 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TLC Capital Program created |
| 2000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTC and partner agencies begin a two-year effort to develop the Bay Area Smart Growth Vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Incentives Program (HIP) pilot cycle launched |
| 2001 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001 Regional Transportation Plan triples TLC funding to \$27 million annually for HIP, regional TLC, and county-level TLC |
| 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit-Oriented Development Policy adopted, requiring that jurisdictions receiving MTC funding for transit extensions plan a minimum number of housing units along the new corridor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Station Area Planning Grant program created |
| 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTC and partner agencies launch Focusing Our Vision (FOCUS), an effort to prioritize infill, mixed-use development near existing transit and jobs | |

Program Overview

MTC awards TLC grants to cities, counties and transit agencies based on adherence to TLC goals and program criteria, including project impact, project readiness and basic eligibility requirements. TLC currently consists of three types of grants:

- **Capital Program:** funds transportation infrastructure improvements that encourage pedestrian, bicycle and transit trips and support high-density, mixed-use development.
- **Housing Incentive Program (HIP):** rewards communities with funding for TLC-type transportation improvements when they successfully build high-density housing and mixed-use developments at transit stops.
- **Community Design Planning Program:** funds community planning efforts to revitalize existing neighborhoods, downtowns, commercial cores and transit stops and create more pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly environments.

TLC Program Goals

The purpose of MTC's Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Program is to support community-based transportation projects that meet the following goals, adopted in 2004:

- Develop projects through a collaborative and inclusive planning process that includes broad partnerships among a variety of stakeholders such as public agencies, community-based organizations and community stakeholders, and outreach to a diversity of participants.
- Improve a range of transportation choices by adding or improving pedestrian, transit, and/or bicycle facilities, and by improving the links between these facilities and activity nodes.
- Support well-designed, high-density housing and mixed use developments that are well served by transit, or will help build the capacity for future transit investment and use.
- Support a community's infill or transit-oriented development and neighborhood revitalization activities
- Enhance a community's sense of place and quality of life.

Funding

MTC created the TLC Planning Program in 1997 and added the Capital Program in 1998, committing \$9 million annually over six years to fund planning and capital grants. To address regional housing needs and maximize transit use, MTC launched a pilot cycle of HIP in 2001 using \$9 from the existing funding commitment to TLC. The 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) tripled the size of the TLC program from \$9 million to \$27 million per year, allocating a third of the funding to HIP, a third to MTC's TLC program, and a third to the nine county congestion management agencies (CMAs) for local TLC capital and/or HIP programs. TLC programs are now funded with a combination of federal Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds. Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds were used early on in the program.

Since 1998, MTC has programmed \$85 million to fund 65 planning projects, 81 capital projects, and 28 HIP transportation projects across the Bay Area. In addition, the nine CMA's have programmed \$35 million for local TLC programs during fiscal years 2006-2009. Most TLC projects are located in disadvantaged communities. Typical TLC grants support pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks and streetscape amenities, as well as bicycle routes and transit access improvements.

Current Evaluation and *Transportation 20305*

In light of the current update to MTC regional transportation plan, staff conducted an evaluation of all three TLC programs (TLC planning, TLC capital grants, and the Housing Incentive Program). A presentation at the meeting will outline some of the key findings from those evaluations. Further, staff will discuss some possible policy considerations for the future of TLC and how it might be modified to better support the region's smart growth vision as articulated in FOCUS and the Priority Development Areas.