

California

Rural Counties Task Force



[www.ruralcountiestaskforce.org](http://www.ruralcountiestaskforce.org)

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Mitch Weiss, Deputy Director  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N. Street, Mail Station 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2014 State Transportation Improvement Program Guidelines

Dear Mr. Weiss,

*Mitch*

We appreciate the inclusive outreach effort the CTC has undertaken to ensure clear guidance is developed for the 2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Programs, and offer the following comments:

**Section 19 - Criteria for Measuring Performance and Cost-Effectiveness:**

The \$50 million level for project specific evaluation should be retained because it allows for analysis of the largest projects and will guide the State's future investments. Inflation has reduced the significance of the \$50 million funding level over time, and the STIP funding levels continue to fall.

Performance measures should be guided by the CTC RTP Guidelines and the goals outline by the RTP's of the individual regions. The RTIPs, in their entirety, should be evaluated as to their achievement of the goals established in the RTPs. It would be efficient, and cost effective, if the performance measurement could be qualitative or quantitative, and use existing data.

The cost/benefit formula used by Caltrans includes factors (such as hourly wage) that weight the result toward urban projects that reduce congestion. We recommend factors like days of operation be considered, as well.

**Section 20 - Regional Improvement Program:**

Government Code section 14529.12(a) requires that Caltrans and regional planning agencies seek agreement on State Highway projects to be included in the STIP. The proposed guidelines add a requirement to provide a comparison of the projects in the RTIP and state highway needs identified by Caltrans. Hopefully, such coordination is already occurring on a regular basis. This process allows regions to evaluate their local transportation needs, in comparison to state needs, on an on-going basis, rather than only immediately prior to an RTIP submittal. There could be conflicts in regard to priorities, if this has not happened, and a discussion of significant differences should be left at the discretion of the region in the RTIP.

**Section 35 - Transportation Enhancement Projects in the ITIP:**

Support that existing TE projects may remain in the STIP, if they are eligible for SHA or Federal funds, and that new bike/ped projects may be programmed.

**Section 47 - Cost Estimates for Project Component:**

Please add when Caltrans should provide regions with cost information.

**Section 68 - Project Delivery:**

We appreciate the importance of documenting the benefits of the projects, but have concerns about cost and ability of agencies with limited staff to accomplish further reporting.

Can the reporting requirements be aligned with the level identified in Section 19 for simplicity purposes?

**Appendix B - Performance Indicators:**

We recommend performance measures that include – days of operation, detour distance, condition and availability of alternate facilities. We are also concerned when an indicator identifies “bridge deck area” as a measure. A rural community may be in need of a small bridge, but it might provide the only connection to employment, medical and educational services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at (530) 642-5260, if you would like to discuss anything further.

Sincerely,



Sharon Scherzinger, Chair  
Rural Counties Task Force