



DATE: March 8, 2021

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Funding, Programs & Legislation Executive Committee

FROM: Anne Richman, Executive Director *Anne Richman*
David Chan, Programming and Legislation Manager
Scott McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: MTC Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program (Action), Agenda Item No. 7

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend the Funding, Programs & Legislation (FP&L) Executive Committee to review staff funding recommendations to forward to MTC for the MTC Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike (“Quick-Strike”) Program, as shown in Attachment B, and refer it to the TAM Board for adoption.

BACKGROUND

On February 1, 2021, MTC released a call for letters of interest to County Transportation Agencies (CTAs) with \$54.4 million in federal Surface Transportation Program (STP)/Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds, through the one-time, competitive Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program to fund projects that can be implemented quickly to support communities responding to COVID-19. The Quick-Strike Program emphasizes bicycle/pedestrian safety and mobility, connections to transit, and projects that advance equitable mobility.

By March 30, 2021, CTAs are expected to submit project nominations for their respective county areas based on funding targets established by OBAG 2 county program distribution, whereby Marin can expect to receive approximately 2.8% of the available funds, approximately \$1.5 million. However, the final amount for the projects selected by MTC for Marin may not necessarily adhere to these targets.

MTC staff will evaluate submitted project nominations and develop funding recommendations for MTC’s approval. MTC’s approval of the recommended projects is anticipated at its June 23, 2021 meeting.

DISCUSSION

As noted above, MTC has established a target of approximately \$1.5 million for projects in Marin. CTAs have been advised by MTC to submit a list of projects totaling approximately two to three times their target amounts, which equates to approximately \$3 million to \$4.5 million for Marin County. CTAs may also indicate local priorities within their project lists submitted. However, MTC is not obligated to fund projects in accordance with local priorities.

If selected for funding by MTC, project sponsors must obligate all funds awarded with Caltrans Local Assistance by September 2022 and comply with the federal aid process and requirements, unless the funds can be exchanged with local funds or transferred to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for processing. Only transit operators are eligible to transfer Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grants to FTA. Both local funding exchange and FTA transfer provide a greater chance for timely project delivery, which is important given the compressed time schedule offered by the Quick-Strike Program.

Call for Projects

On February 6, 2021, TAM issued a Call for Projects to public agencies in Marin with a deadline to submit applications by February 22, 2021. In addition to submitting applications, sponsors will be required to submit the following supplemental documents if their applications are selected by MTC:

- Complete Streets Resolution or equivalent,
- Complete Streets checklist,
- Resolution of Local Support,
- Surplus Lands Act Resolution, and
- 2020 Housing Element Annual Progress Report (required by State statute).

Applications Received

By the deadline of February 22, 2021, TAM received nine applications from nine agencies totaling \$7.8 million in requests. The applicants include cities and towns, transit agencies, and TAM.

Attachment A shows a list of the applications received with brief project descriptions, current phase of the projects, total costs of the projects, and the requested amounts.

Application Evaluation

MTC will evaluate nominated applications against the following program criteria:

- Align with Connected Mobility Framework Values and Goals (see Attachment B);
- Be the direct result or outcome of a community engagement process;
- Be within or directly connected to a Priority Development Area (PDA) or Transportation Priority Area (TPA) and/or serve a Community of Concern (CoC), Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program area, or similar local designation. PDAs and TPAs may be existing or recently designated as part of the Plan Bay Area 2050 growth framework;
- Addresses transit connectivity gaps, especially in areas significantly impacted from the pandemic;
- Demonstrate partnership among jurisdictions, transit agencies, and counties; and
- Demonstrate ability to quickly deliver, and meet federal funding requirements, as funds must be obligated by September 30, 2022.

Given the short timeframe to obligate federal funds, only “shovel-ready” projects should be considered to move forward to MTC for consideration. Projects requiring funds from the Quick-Strike Program for pre-construction phases, such as design or environmental clearance, will not likely be able to meet the strict fund obligation requirements and risk losing funds for noncompliance.

Provided in Attachment B are the results of an evaluation by staff, with applications arranged by Tier 1 and Tier 2, along with applications not being recommended to be submitted to MTC. Applications in Tier 1 are considered higher priority than applications in Tier 2.

Applications Not Recommended to be Submitted to MTC

Using the evaluation criteria directed by MTC, applications were evaluated for program consistency, readiness, and appropriateness for Quick-Strike funding. The below three applications are not recommended to be submitted to MTC for consideration.

- Fairfax's Sidewalk & Disabled & E-Bike Charging and Lockers Project
- Novato's San Marin High School Area Access Project
- Sausalito's Bridgeway Bike Lane Project

Fairfax, Novato, and Sausalito's applications were not recommended to be submitted to MTC because they still have substantial work to be completed before they are considered shovel ready. These applications are therefore unlikely to meet federal requirements and obligate all funds by September 2022. Furthermore, Fairfax's project is ineligible because the request is below the minimum federal amount of \$250,000 established by MTC.

While these projects are not recommended for Quick-Strike funding, staff believes these projects merit funding and will attempt to identify other sources of funding for these projects.

Applications in Tier 1 and Tier 2

Applications in Tier 1 and Tier 2 are considered projects that align with the Quick-Strike Program criteria. Staff believes all applications in Tier 1 and Tier 2 merit funding but applications in Tier 1 met more of the MTC evaluation criteria and have a greater chance for complying with the federal obligation requirements than the applications in Tier 2.

Marin Transit will be able to transfer the Quick-Strike funds for the Bus Stop Improvement Project to FTA for processing, bypassing Caltrans' more rigid federal aid process. Mill Valley will be able to exchange Quick-Strike funds with local funds to complete the construction phase of the East Blithedale Project. TAM's Street Smart Program is a non-infrastructure project and non-infrastructure projects are the least complicated projects to obligate funds in the federal aid process because pre-construction phases such as right-of-way certification, field review, design, and other phases, are not required for non-infrastructure projects.

Staff will communicate to MTC that Marin Transit Bus Stop Improvement Program is scalable with flexibility regarding the available funding provided. This Bus Stop Improvement Program has designated approximately 20 bus stops. Marin Transit will be able to implement improvements to bus stops based on the funds provided by the Quick-Strike Program.

Options

The TAM Board has the discretion to submit any applications to MTC for consideration, even those not recommended by staff. Staff proposes the below options for TAM Board consideration:

1. Submit all applications from Tier 1 to MTC for consideration
2. Submit all applications from Tier 1 and Tier 2 to MTC for consideration
3. Submit some other combination of applications to MTC for consideration

Staff is recommending the TAM Board approve Option 2 to submit all applications in Tier 1 and Tier 2. The total amount for Tiers 1 and 2 applications is approximately \$5.71 million.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Funds from the Quick-Strike Program will be programmed directly to projects and sponsors are expected to obligate funds through the federal aid process with Caltrans Local Assistance.

If TAM's project is selected by MTC, the federal funds will be included in the FY 2021/22 and subsequent TAM Budgets depending on the anticipated rates of drawdown. Award of Quick Strike funds for the Street Smarts program would be a welcome addition to the overall Safe Routes to Schools program and would be used to update the Street Smarts messaging and materials such as street banners; the additional funding would also allow TAM to focus local funds on the other Safe Routes program elements.

NEXT STEPS

Upon TAM Board approval, the list of applications will be submitted to MTC for consideration. MTC plans to release its staff recommendation by May 3, 2021. The result of MTC's funding recommendation will be communicated to the TAM Board. Staff will work with sponsors of selected projects to submit remaining requisite application materials to MTC before the Commission adoption in June 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Applications Received
Attachment B – Applications Evaluation
Attachment C – PowerPoint Presentation

Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program
Applications Received

Applicant	Project Name	Project Description	Current Project Phase	Total Project Costs	Quick Strike Funds Requested
Corte Madera	Casa Buena Drive Complete Streets Regional Improvements	Connects the Horse Hill Path in Mill Valley to Class II bike lanes immediately to the north in Corte Madera, the Class I Larkspur Path, and ultimately the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) and Larkspur Ferry Terminal. Improvements include nearly 1-mile segment of Casa Buena Drive to add a new sidewalk and a new Class II Bicycle Lane on the southbound-uphill side. Shared Lane Markings (a new Class III path with sharrows) will be striped in the northbound direction. Includes retaining walls, shoulder stabilization, and street lightings needed for the improvements.	Construction	\$2,890,000	\$600,000
Fairfax	Sidewalk for Seniors and Disabled & E-Bike Charging stations/lockers	Replace narrow, non-ADA compliant asphalt pathway with ADA compliance sidewalks (approx. 1,300 linear feet) and curb ramps to connect the Victory Village affordable senior apartments to downtown and install e-bike charging stations and lockers at the transit hub to encourage people to take public transit.	Design (has not started, Quick Strike funds needed for design)	\$145,000	\$145,000
Larkspur	Doherty Drive Multi-Use Pathway at Redwood High School – Phase 2	The project completes the gap in pedestrian and bicycle improvements from 500' west of the Riviera Circle and Redwood High School intersection to Lucky Drive/Doherty Drive/Redwood High School Entrance intersection with full width bike lanes, a separated bike path and removal of visual barriers.	Design (near completion with local funds)	\$565,000	\$500,000

Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program
Applications Received

Applicant	Project Name	Project Description	Current Project Phase	Total Project Costs	Quick Strike Funds Requested
Marin Transit	Marin County Bus Stop Improvements	The project will continue Marin Transit’s program to improve bus stops throughout Marin County. This funding will enable construction of accessibility and amenity improvements at 15 and 20 additional stops. Bus stops are a highly visible aspect of transit service for both current and potential riders in Marin County. Stops should be easily identifiable, safe, accessible, and comfortable. When bus stops meet these guidelines, they are more inviting and likely to be used by the public. The stops included in this project were identified for improvement following a systemwide bus stop survey and conditions assessment conducted in 2017	Design (30% completed with local funds, Quick Strike funds needed to complete remaining design work). If awarded, plans to transfer grant to FTA.	\$1,500,000	\$1,200,000
Mill Valley	East Blithedale Pathway to Transit	Install new Class IV bike lane eastbound direction, from Camino Alto to Tower Drive and westbound from Tower Drive to Meadow Drive. Upgrade pedestrian crosswalks, new curb ramps, improve access to Mill Valley Sausalito Multiuse Pathway, install new slip lane bike access, install new crosswalks at the entryway to the pedestrian pathway on Ashford Ave., and improve pedestrian and bike access to transit bus stops along East Blithedale Avenue.	Design (near completion with local funds)	\$1,400,000	\$1,000,000
Novato	San Marin High School Area Multimodal Access Project	Multi-modal safety improvements to a large all-way stop controlled intersection and its approach roadways: new crosswalks and curb ramps, bulb-outs, intersection lighting, lane re-configuration, widening and upgrading existing pathway to a Class I multi-use path, Class II bicycle lane widening to 5 feet, and a crosswalk with school-area signage. The project is expected to result in safer and more comfortable conditions for people on foot, on bikes and on transit to increase the active transportation mode share among students and faculty at four schools, as well as residents accessing other nearby community destinations.	PA&ED (has not started but local funds have been secured for all pre-construction phases)	\$1,743,000	\$1,432,000

Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program
Applications Received

Applicant	Project Name	Project Description	Current Project Phase	Total Project Costs	Quick Strike Funds Requested
Sausalito	Bridgeway Bike Lane Project (Princess to 2nd Street)	The project includes the installation Class II bike lanes on Bridgeway Blvd. The project also includes roadway surface treatment and new striping with appropriate stencils. The project also includes accessibility improvements at the intersection of 2nd St and Bridgeway.	PA&ED (has not started, need Quick Strike funds for all pre-construction phases)	\$586,000	\$518,785
SMART	SMART Pathway – San Rafael (McInnis Parkway to Smith Ranch Road)	This project will construct a level, paved bicycle/pedestrian facility along .85 miles of the SMART railroad right-of-way, with two crossings over Las Gallinas Creek. The project will connect major destinations, including a regional rail station to the south and to the north, Marin County’s McInnis Park, a 450-acre park with multi-use sports and outdoor activity facilities, including a skate park, batting cages, softball/soccer fields, tennis courts, a group picnic area and nature trails. The project will allow bicyclists and pedestrians of all skill levels greater access, while minimizing environmental impacts to Las Gallinas Creek.	Design (near completion with local funds)	\$2,393,166	\$2,158,026
TAM	Marin County Street Smarts Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program (Non-Infrastructure)	Street Smarts Marin is a public education campaign designed to raise awareness of driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist behavior in order to make streets safer and friendlier. The program works on many levels by providing transportation-related safety messages via outdoor media (e.g., banners, signs, and posters) and community outreach (e.g., brochures, presentations, and press coverage). The community outreach includes brochures for distribution at schools and organized events; presentations and slide shows prepared for communicating with schools, neighborhoods, civic and business groups; and neighborhood kits which include an assortment of lawn signs, brochures, and copies of presentation and slide shows	PA&ED (has not started but local funds have been secured)	\$275,000	\$250,000
			TOTAL	\$11,497,166	\$7,803,811

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Applications Evaluation

Applicant	Project Name	Program Values/ Goals	Community Engagement	PDA, TPA, COC, CARE	Connectivity	Partnerships	Readiness	Bypass Local Assist. (FTA or Swap)	Forward to MTC	Tier	Funds Recommended
Marin Transit	Marin County Bus Stop Improvements	X	X	X		X	X	X	Yes	1	\$1,200,000
Mill Valley	East Blithedale Pathway to Transit	X	X		X	X	X	X	Yes	1	\$1,000,000
TAM	Street Smarts Program (Non-Infrastructure)	X	X	X	X	X	X		Yes	1	\$250,000
Tier 1 Total											\$2,450,000
Corte Madera	Casa Buena Drive Project	X	X		X		X		Yes	2	\$600,000
Larkspur	Doherty Drive Multi-Use Pathway – Phase 2	X	X		X		X		Yes	2	\$500,000
SMART	SMART Pathway in San Rafael	X	X	X	X		X		Yes	2	\$2,158,026
Tier 2 Total											\$3,258,026
Tier 1 and Tier 2 Total											\$5,708,026
Projects Not Recommended for Funding											
Fairfax	Sidewalk & Disabled & E-Bike Charging, Lockers	X			X				No	N/A	\$0
Novato	San Marin High School Area Access Project	X	X		X				No	N/A	\$0
Sausalito	Bridgeway Bike Lane Project	X	X	X	X				No	N/A	\$0

MTC Evaluation Criteria:

MTC staff will evaluate nominated projects against the following program criteria. Nominated projects should:

- Align with Connected Mobility Framework Values and Goals (see inset below)
- Be the direct result or outcome of a community engagement process Be within or directly connected to a Priority Development Area (PDA) or Transportation Priority Area (TPA) and/or serve a Community of Concern (CoC), Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program area, or similar local designation. PDAs and TPAs may be existing or recently designated as part of the Plan Bay Area 2050 growth framework
- Addresses transit connectivity gaps, especially in areas significantly impacted from the pandemic Demonstrate partnership among jurisdictions, transit agencies, and counties
- Demonstrate ability to quickly deliver, and meet federal funding requirements, as funds must be obligated by September 30, 2022

CONNECTED MOBILITY VALUES AND GOALS	
Values	Goals
Think Regionally Act Locally	Be coordinated, interconnected, and contiguous
Provide Great Travel Choices	Provide choices that are better than driving alone, are viable and intuitive for all trips
Put the Traveler First	Ensure a dignified traveler experience, focusing on customer care and needs
Be Equitable & Inclusive	Address disparities and be transparent for all people and all trips
Be Sustainable	Strive for a healthy planet, people, and full-cost accounting



MTC Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program

Funding, Programs & Legislation
Executive Committee Meeting
March 8, 2021

Background

- On February 1, 2021, MTC released a Call for Nominations to County Transportation Agencies (CTAs) with \$54.4 million in federal STP/CMAQ funds for the Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program, also known as the Quick-Strike Program
- The Quick-Strike Program is a one-time, competitive program to fund projects that can be implemented quickly to support communities responding to COVID-19
- The Quick-Strike Program emphasizes bicycle/pedestrian safety and mobility, connections to transit, and projects that advance equitable mobility

Background, cont.

- TAM is expected to submit project nominations to MTC by March 30, 2021
- MTC has set a funding target for TAM to receive approximately 2.8% of the available funds or approximately \$1.5 million
- The final amount for the projects selected by MTC for Marin may not adhere to these targets

Background, cont.

- MTC staff will evaluate submitted project nominations and develop funding recommendations for MTC's approval
- MTC plans to release its staff recommendation by May 3, 2021, and approve at their June Commission meeting
- CTAs may include local priorities within their project lists but MTC is not obligated to fund projects in accordance with local priorities

Call for Projects

- On February 6, 2021, TAM issued a Call for Projects with a deadline to submit applications by February 22, 2021
- TAM received nine applications from nine agencies totaling \$7.8 million in requests. The applicants include cities and towns, transit agencies, and TAM

Applications Received – Attachment A

Applicant	Project Name	Requested
Corte Madera	Casa Buena Drive Complete Streets Regional Improvements	\$600,000
Fairfax	Sidewalk for Seniors and Disabled & E-Bike Charging stations/lockers	\$145,000
Larkspur	Doherty Drive Multi-Use Pathway at Redwood High School – Phase 2	\$500,000
Marin Transit	Marin County Bus Stop Improvements	\$1,200,000
Mill Valley	East Blithedale Pathway to Transit	\$1,000,000
Novato	San Marin High School Area Multimodal Access Project	\$1,432,000
Sausalito	Bridgeway Bike Lane Project (Princess to 2nd Street)	\$518,785
SMART	SMART Pathway – San Rafael (McInnis Parkway to Smith Ranch Road)	\$2,158,026
TAM	Marin County Street Smarts Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program (Non-Infrastructure)	\$250,000
		\$7,803,811

TAM Street Smarts Project Application

- TAM applying for \$250k for “Street Smarts”, part of Safe Routes to Schools program
- Street Smarts put on hold this year due to reduced revenues and pandemic’s effect on school operations and travel patterns
- Quick Strike funds would allow for robust refresh of Street Smarts message and materials, and for focusing local funds on other program elements

Application Evaluation – Attachment B

- Align with Program Values and Goals
- Community engagement process
- In Priority Development Area (PDA) or Transportation Priority Area (TPA) and/or serve a Community of Concern (CoC), Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program area
- Addresses transit connectivity gaps
- Demonstrate partnership
- Demonstrate ability to quickly deliver, and meet federal funding requirements, as funds must be obligated by September 2022

Shovel-Ready

- Very short timeframe to obligate federal funds
- Projects requiring funds for pre-construction phases will not likely be able to meet the strict fund obligation requirements and risk losing funds for noncompliance
- Only considered “shovel-ready” projects to submit to MTC for consideration

Applications Not Recommended

Applications that still have substantial work to be completed before they are considered shovel ready were not recommended:

- Fairfax's Sidewalk & Disabled & E-Bike Charging and Lockers Project
- Novato's San Marin High School Area Access Project
- Sausalito's Bridgeway Bike Lane Project

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Applications

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Applications, cont.

Applicant	Project Name	Tier	Funds Recommended
Marin Transit	Marin County Bus Stop Improvements (FTA Transfer)	1	\$1,200,000
Mill Valley	East Blithedale Pathway to Transit (Funding Exchange)	1	\$1,000,000
TAM	Street Smarts Program (Non-Infrastructure)	1	\$250,000
Tier 1 Total			\$2,450,000
Corte Madera	Casa Buena Drive Project	2	\$600,000
Larkspur	Doherty Drive Multi-Use Pathway – Phase 2	2	\$500,000
SMART	SMART Pathway in San Rafael	2	\$2,158,026
Tier 2 Total			\$3,258,026
Tier 1 and Tier 2 Total			\$5,708,026

Options

Next Steps

- Forward recommendations to TAM Board for approval at March 25 meeting
- Forward approved, recommended projects to MTC by March 31 for consideration
- Work with any selected projects/sponsors to meet requirements and timelines
- Include funds in FY22 budget if TAM project is selected, obligate funds and implement project



Feedback and Questions