



**San Francisco Bay Trail Project**  
Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street, Suite 700  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**TO:** Bay Trail Steering Committee

**DATE:** January 2, 2020

**FR:** Laura Thompson

**RE:** Regional Measure 3 Bay Trail Program Preliminary Feedback

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To help solve the Bay Area's growing congestion problems, MTC worked with state legislators to authorize a ballot measure and finance a comprehensive list of transportation and transit improvements through phased toll increases on the region's seven state-owned toll bridges. Regional Measure 3 (RM3) was passed by Bay Area voters in June 2018. The measure has been challenged in court, and remains unresolved. MTC staff are beginning to develop the funding structure and program guidelines so funds can be disbursed promptly if the legal decision allows for the measure to stand. We are seeking preliminary input from the Steering Committee on the Bay Trail portion of the funding measure and will bring this topic back to the Committee if the funding becomes available.

Consistent with the intent of the RM3 legislation to improve the quality of life and sustain the economy of the San Francisco Bay Area by improving mobility and enhancing travel options on Bay Area bridges and bridge corridors, the goals of the Bay Trail Program are to increase the carrying capacity and travel options on Bay Area bridges and along bridge corridors by funding projects that will lead to the completion of Bay Trail segments that fulfill these goals.

\$150 million is included in RM3 for the Bay Trail and Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T):

*San Francisco Bay Trail/Safe Routes to Transit. Provide funding for a competitive grant program to fund bicycle and pedestrian access improvements on and in the vicinity of the state-owned toll bridges connecting to rail transit stations and ferry terminals. Eligible applicants include cities, counties, transit operators, school districts, community colleges, and universities. The project sponsor is the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. One hundred fifty million dollars (\$150,000,000).*

The following components of a competitive funding program are under discussion internally and we now invite Steering Committee input on these topics. We will also seek input from other stakeholders and organizations.

**Bay Trail / SR2T Split.** \$150M is available for both programs. We anticipate the two programs will have separate calls for projects, advisory committees, criteria, etc. We also expect funding requests to exceed the amount available. For example, the 5-year funding needs estimate for the Bay Trail is over \$260 million.

Questions: Should the \$150M be split evenly into two \$75M pots? Are there additional split scenarios we should consider?

**Project Types.** Eligible projects include planning, design, engineering and construction. Also consider using funds for other planning purposes that encourage active transportation and further completion of the Bay Trail.

Questions. Should the program also include funding for demonstration projects to jump-start critical segments? What other planning purposes should be eligible for funding, i.e., outreach (maps, social media, etc.) focused studies such as the current state of trails, new mobility, maintenance needs, design guideline updates, etc.

**Funding Cycle Timelines.** If we assume an even split, an initial Bay Trail funding program could, for example, begin in FY20 with \$15M, followed by four \$15M cycles, every other year, staggered opposite the SR2T and the Regional Active Transportation Program (ATP) calls for projects.

**Draft Cycle Timeframe (\$ in millions)**

Program	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total
Bay Trail Program	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$75
SR2T	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	-	\$15	\$75
Regional ATP	-	\$36	-	\$36	-	\$36	-	\$36	-	\$36	\$180
All	\$15	\$51	\$15	\$51	\$15	\$51	\$15	\$51	\$15	\$51	\$330

Question: Does it make sense to manage a Bay Trail call for projects separate from the SR2T and ATP programs?

**Program Structure/Restrictions.** We envision a series of workshops around the region to allow potential applicants to gather information about the grant program. Soliciting letters of interest in advance of a full application is an option that has been used successfully to streamline the application process for other funding sources, such as Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Grants.

Questions: Solicit interest from applicants through a letter before a full application? Limit the number of applications submitted by each jurisdiction, or limit by jurisdiction size? Require a funding match or tiered match (based on a percentage of the grant)? Exclude match requirements from Communities of Concern and for feasibility studies? Establish minimum and/or maximum grant requests?

**Evaluation Criteria.** Evaluation criteria will need to be consistent with the RM3 legislation, but we can also consider criteria drawn from the Bay Trail-Coastal Conservancy grant program.

Question: What evaluation criteria are important to include in the Bay Trail program?

**Decision-making process.** The MTC Commission will authorize the final funding decisions. The Active Transportation Working Group (ATWG), or a subset thereof, will likely serve as the advisory committee for the SR2T funds. Given its history as a recommending body for Conservancy grants, the Bay Trail Steering Committee could serve the same role for the Bay Trail RM3 funding, helping to define criteria and program guidelines. An evaluation panel will also need to be formed.

Questions: Should the Bay Trail Steering Committee serve as the advisory committee for the Bay Trail funds? Should we also reach out to external agencies/organizations to gather input on criteria development, scoring and participation on an evaluation panel? Any thoughts on size and/or makeup of an evaluation panel?

**Other considerations.**

Advancing major trail/bike/pedestrian infrastructure projects will require a significant amount of funding. RM3 is frequently referenced as a potential funding source for high profile and high-dollar projects, such as the Bay Bridge West Span (\$180M for next phase).

Question: How do we insure a competitive process, adequate geographic spread and Bay Trail gap closures while also supporting large infrastructure projects?

With the recent Coastal Conservancy authorization of \$1.4 million for a new Bay Trail grant program and potential limitations of RM3 funding, it will be important for potential applicants to understand how the two grant programs relate to each other.

Question: How will the Conservancy funds and RM3 funds complement each other and should funds for each program be targeted to different types or locations of projects?

We welcome Steering Committee input on these questions and others that may come up as part of the discussion at the January 9 meeting.