

Regional Roundtable: Sustainable Streets

Meeting Summary

Initial Roundtable Meeting

1515 Clay Street, Oakland, Room 1

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

1. Opening Remarks

- Welcome from the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA) -- Geoff Brosseau, BASMAA Executive Director
 - The purpose of the Roundtable is to bring together a broad spectrum of stakeholders and funding agencies to identify funding options for achieving widespread, long-term green infrastructure (GI) implementation in the San Francisco Bay Area.
 - A Roadmap report will be prepared to codify next steps to remove obstacles to funding sustainable street projects. This will require additional coordination and meetings.
- Welcome from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board -- Newsha Ajami, Board Member, Regional Water Board
 - Water is an under-funded commodity. Proposition 218 restrictions on enacting fees create challenges for local agencies to fund requirements in stormwater permits.
 - In addition to fees, there may be ways to tap into funding available in other sectors, through evaluating how GI provides cross-sectoral benefits.
 - The water community needs to be organized to have unified voice/be influential, much in the way the energy sector was in exempting themselves from the provisions of Prop 218.

2. Keynote Remarks: The Need to Fund Sustainable Streets

- GI Planning in Bay Area Cities--Thomas Mumley, Assistant Executive Officer, Regional Water Bd.
 - Municipalities in urbanized parts of the Bay Area must prepare and implement plans to build GI facilities that reduce PCB and mercury pollutant loads.
 - PCB and mercury load reductions must be achieved by 2020 and 2040, as specified in the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (Provisions C.11 and C.12).
 - Synergies with roadway projects include:
 - The federal Clean Water Act identifies roads as part of storm drain systems.
 - Automobiles generate and distribute pollutants.
 - Funding of infrastructure in the region includes:
 - \$1 billion per year for sanitary sewer systems
 - Less than \$100 million per year for stormwater systems
 - \$7 billion over four years for transportation
- Complete Streets Implementation in the Bay Area -- Jeff Tumlin, Interim Director of Transportation, City of Oakland
 - Underlying problems with funding of transportation improvements need to be fixed. The funding of transportation improvements does not follow the principle of supply and demand.
 - By making decisions regarding transportation improvements based on level of service (LOS) analysis, excessively wide roads are built, and car-oriented communities are created that do not attract pedestrian activity, and induce more driving. A paradigm shift is needed to move away from using LOS to evaluate environmental impacts.
 - Transportation requirements may disincentivize alternative commute options that the private sector would like to promote, such as carpooling, bicycling, and other low "carbon footprint" modes of transport:

- For example, Genentech needed parking structures to meet requirements.
 - Instead, Genentech requested permission to pay employees not to drive.
- Parking requirements result in excessive paved areas.
- Transportation has high impact on public health, land value and stormwater quality.
- Challenge – align budgets with public values.

3. How Do Funding Programs Promote Benefits of Sustainable Streets?

- Introduction - Matt Fabry, incoming Chair of the BASMAA Board
 - GI, for the purposes of the Roundtable, focuses on landscape-based stormwater treatment facilities.
 - Sustainable Streets is a term used by the Roundtable to describe projects that combine complete streets with GI.
- Presentations were made on funding program, as summarized in the following table.

| Program | Presenter | Summary of Presentation |
|---|---|--|
| State Water Resources Control Board’s Prop 1 Stormwater Grant program | Harish Bagha, Water Quality Engineer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The creation of water supply is prioritized. ○ \$86 million available in 2018; solicitations will open in mid-2018. ○ The program funded 27 stormwater management projects in 2016. ○ Green streets projects are welcome, but must be multi-benefit projects. |
| State Water Board’s State Revolving Fund | Harish Bagha, Water Quality Engineer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The State Revolving Fund requires a revenue source; there must be returns in the future. |
| Dept. of Water Resources’ Integrated Regional Water Management Prop 1 program | Paul Wells, Regional Coordinator, North Central Regional Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The emphasis is on collaboration, resiliency, climate change, and multiple benefits. ○ Future funding expected in 2018 and 2020 ○ Green streets may be funded, in accordance with the program guidelines. ○ There is \$65 million for the Bay Area. |
| State Coastal Conservancy’s (SCC) Prop 1 Grant Program | Matt Gerhart, Deputy Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program funds multi-benefit projects in four focus areas: Fisheries, Wetlands restoration, Agricultural water use/ecosystem, and Urban Greening. ○ Urban greening looks as multi-benefits, including public access to ecological resources, carbon sequestration, enhancement of urban parks. ○ The focus is on ecological function, different than other grant programs ○ There is a total of \$25 million. This is year two of 5 to 7 years, three rounds per year. |
| San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority – staffed by SCC and ABAG | Matt Gerhart, Deputy Executive Officer, SCC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program generally looks at larger scale GI, but could fund water quality treatment measures along urbanized shorelines of the Bay. ○ Projects in association with restoration and/or along shore or Bay edge may be eligible. |
| California Natural Resources Agency’s (CNRA) Urban | Julie Alvis, Deputy Assistant Secretary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program focuses on multi-benefit projects. The funding comes from cap and trade; there is interest in greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction benefits. ○ There are requirements for strategic tree planting, active transportation, or public transit -- or a combination of all three |

| Program | Presenter | Summary of Presentation |
|---|--|---|
| Greening grant program | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The current solicitation offers \$77 million; applications are due May 1. ○ The program will see another cycle, but it is still going through legislative process. |
| Strategic Growth Council's (SGC) Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program | Allison Joe, Deputy Director | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program focuses on developing affordable housing near transit; the main goal is to reduce GHGs through reductions in vehicle miles traveled. ○ It is an affordable housing program with transportation requirements to assist with "first mile/last mile" connectivity, to help people get to transit. ○ GI is required as a threshold for project eligibility. GI is of interest for carbon capture. ○ Almost \$500 million in housing and infrastructure has been funded statewide. ○ Draft guidelines are available, scheduled for adoption in June; a funding round is anticipated in the summer. |
| Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) | Robert McCord, Hazard Mitigation Assistance Branch Chief, Region IX | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two mitigation programs were described. The focus is flood risk reduction. ○ GI projects are eligible; the key is to show that projects will reduce flood risk. ○ The first program is a pre-disaster mitigation program, with nationwide annual funding of \$100 million to \$500 million. ○ The second program is a hazard mitigation grant program, with over \$100 million available for projects in California. ○ There is a 25% local match requirement. ○ Contact the California Office of Emergency Services, Caloes.ca.gov, for how to apply. |
| Bay Area Air Quality Management District | Chengfeng Wang, Acting Manager of the Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The focus of the grant program is to improve air quality ○ The TFCA is funded by a \$4 surcharge for vehicle registration. Congestion management agencies receive 40% of the funds. ○ The Air District approves a funding policy and plan for each fiscal year. ○ Bicycle way funding will be released in the next week – up to \$5 million this year, \$2 million projected next year. ○ The program also funds electric vehicle charging stations. |
| Caltrans Active Transportation Program | Ted Davini, Northern California Manager for the Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The ATP seeks to increase walking and bicycling, with \$120 million per year statewide. ○ The next solicitation will be in Spring 2018, with a total of \$240 million. ○ Landscaping can be funded; there is a distinction between functional and non-functional landscaping. Functional landscaping provides separation between modes of travel. ○ Landscaped bulbouts may be an example of functional landscaping and would therefore be 100% eligible for ATP funding. |
| Caltrans Stormwater Program – Cooperative | Hardeep Takhar, Water Quality Manager for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The programs funds projects that reduce water pollution, as a way for Caltrans to meet the requirements of 84 Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) statewide. |

| Program | Presenter | Summary of Presentation |
|---|--|--|
| Implementation Agreement program | Caltrans District 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The projects that are funded are generally projects that retrofit existing storm drain systems to provide water quality treatment. ○ In the Bay Area, Caltrans is subject to requirements for mercury, PCBs, and full trash capture. Eligible projects would address these pollutants. |
| Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) program | Anne Richman, Director of Programing and Allocations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The OBAG program guides federal highway funding investments in the region. ○ The OBAG regional program accounts for 60% of the funding, for projects with wide-scale regional impact, such as climate programs, BART cars, and 511. ○ The county program accounts for 40% of the funding, which is distributed by each county’s congestion management agency. ○ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements apply, including a funding match. ○ The OBAG program focuses on state-mandated GHG and VMT reduction goals and promotes alternative modes of transportation. ○ OBAG includes a priority conservation program, which promotes conservation areas around the Bay Area and access to those areas. |
| San Mateo County Transportation Authority’s (SMCTA) Half-cent sales tax measure | Joe Hurley, Director | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The half-cent sales tax helps to fund mobility needs and funds an array of transportation components, including bike/pedestrian facilities, shuttle service, and ferry service. ○ SMCTA partners with the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG), which is the congestion management agency for San Mateo County. ○ The implementation of particular projects may include water quality treatment requirements, in accordance with stormwater permit requirements. |

4. Obstacles to Funding Sustainable Streets – Roundtable Discussion

- Common Obstacles to Funding Sustainable Streets -- Kelly Havens, Project Engineer, Geosyntec Consultants, presented the “obstacles” listed on page 4 of the agenda packet.
- Laura Prickett, Senior Associate, Horizon Water and Environment, led a Roundtable discussion that covered the following obstacles to funding sustainable streets.
 - Matches for Multiple Grants
 - Matt Fabry (BASMAA) commented that a 50% match requirement had to be specific to stormwater, and a transportation grant could not count as the match.
 - Allison Joe (SGC) noted that SGC requires significant matching funds.
 - Ineligible Costs - Project Type
 - Sharon Newton, Environmental Services Program Manager, City of San Jose, explained that San Jose received both Prop 84 and transportation funds for a green street project. However, it was identified as two separate projects due to eligibility requirements. Thus, work must be duplicated. Separate bids are needed for stormwater and transportation features. The proposal cost estimate was completed in 2013, but estimates have gone up substantially. The coordination of bids led to additional delays and increases in cost. Combining this into a single project would have saved considerable time/effort

- Ted Davini (Caltrans) acknowledged that eligibility requirements can be difficult, but more integration is likely over time. It can be challenging to get different groups of people talking with one another. Under the existing rules, agencies should strategically use resources to combine efforts and factor in the administrative costs.
- Thomas Ruark, City Engineer, Union City, described the city's three green street projects, funded by Prop 84 grants. Grants target Old Urban areas, but GI should be built in Old Industrial areas, which provide more bang for the buck for PCBs.
- A question from the audience asked if water or stormwater is showing up in transportation funding.
- Anne Richman (MTC) responded that it is often not included, as state and federal transportation policy may disallow this type of funding. There could be local sources of funds that have more flexibility.
- Ted Davini (Caltrans) explained that stormwater treatment measures could be funded by transportation dollars when they are required as mitigation.
- Grant Administration - Tracking
 - Amanda Booth, Environmental Analyst, City of San Pablo, identified the audit process as particularly difficult for projects with multiple grants.
 - Matt Gerhart (SCC) noted that audits are difficult for all agencies, including funding agencies. He suggested that, if audits could focus on the project goal contractually, the audit process could be made less painful.
- Ineligible Costs – Project Activities
 - A question from the audience asked whether any grants could help scope and plan around local sources of revenue, such as fee or sales tax.
 - Allison Joe (SGC) noted that, in the past, Prop 84 funded program planning. SGC has a small amount of funding for best practices, to be awarded soon. Funding would likely come from the SGC/Office of Planning and Research.
 - Julie Alvis (CNRA) commented that program planning may not have direct reduction of GHG by projects. General fund may be the best funding source for planning, although this can be a challenge.

5. Brainstorm Funding Solutions to Case Studies – Roundtable Discussion

- Rumrill Boulevard Complete Green Street Project Case Study -- Amanda Booth, Environmental Program Analyst, City of San Pablo. The case study illustrated obstacles that the City has encountered in funding a sustainable street project.
- Adrienne Miller, Senior Engineer, Geosyntec Consultants, led a Roundtable discussion that addressed the following obstacles to funding sustainable streets:
 - Grant Administration - Applications:
 - Allison Brooks, Executive Director, Bay Area Regional Collaborative, noted that some cities may not have the capacity to apply for complex sources of funds. How can there be more equality for cities that need access to funds?
 - Amanda Booth (City of San Pablo) described, as an example of administrative barriers to grant funding, one grant application that had 15 pages of questions.
 - Miriam Chion, Director of Planning, ABAG, commented that, because many cities have difficulty navigating the grant process, ABAG has obtained large grants that benefit a number of cities. The cities sign a MOU to be involved.
 - General Comments:
 - Sandy Wong, Executive Director, San Mateo C/CAG noted that different sectors use different terminology. This conversation illustrates the value of improving communications and learning from each other.

- Cecilia Crenshaw-Godfrey, Community Planner, FHWA, commented that, since eligibility requirements are likely to remain, there is a need for strategic partnerships. Staffing is an issue at every level. Internal communications can be improved, to figure out how projects can work together.
 - Environmental Review:
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) noted that Caltrans NEPA Delegation procedures act as a check for transportation projects. It is important to have government grant rules that ensure that compliance with all applicable regulations.
 - Amanda Booth (City of San Pablo) suggested having the Water Board talk with Caltrans more to help streamline the environmental review process for transportation projects that include GI in order to address PCBs.
 - Grant Administration - Applications:
 - Anne Richman (MTC) commented that it is helpful to hear how difficult the grant application process is. MTC has taken some steps to simplify grant applications and will continue to look for ways to streamline the application.
 - Ineligible Costs - Project Type
 - A question from the audience asked whether the Caltrans ATP program considers permeable pavement to be landscaping.
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) responded that eligible areas of pavement that are permeable are eligible. Paving a parking lane is ineligible; paving a bike or pedestrian lane is eligible.
 - A question from the audience asked if speeds need to be 35 mph or more for landscape to be considered functional under the ATP program.
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) responded that the 35 mph speed is currently in the guidelines; however, special situations can be justified for funding, even if mph is reduced. Ideally the grantee would obtain pre-approval for special situations.
- San Pablo Avenue Spine Project case study -- Josh Bradt, Watershed Specialist and Project Manager, San Francisco Estuary Partnership. The case study illustrated challenges of coordinating multiple grants to fund a multi-jurisdictional project. This was followed by a Roundtable discussion that addressed the following obstacle to funding sustainable streets:
 - Ineligible Costs – Project Type:
 - Miriam Chion (ABAG) commented that multi-jurisdictional efforts are the type of effort to bring into the future. ABAG has identified GI as a priority for Priority Conservation Areas. GI could potentially be added as a priority for Priority Development Areas (areas intended to support infill development).

6. Roundtable Participant Input on Potential Solutions – Roundtable Discussion

- Kelly Havens (Geosyntec) presented on Potential Solutions to Obstacles for Funding Sustainable Streets.
- Adrienne Miller (Geosyntec) led a Roundtable discussion that addressed the following obstacles:
 - Modify Eligibility Requirements – Project Type:
 - Matt Fabry (BASMAA) commented that it would be ideal for a single grant to fund both transportation and GI components.
 - Julie Alvis (CNRA) noted that many programs are statutes, and changing the eligibility requirements would require a shift in language. There are different appropriations for each agencies, so integration would require considerable planning. It is difficult to integrate across agencies

- Joe Hurley (SMCTA) observed that unfunded needs are not unique to stormwater. If an agency wanted to use transportation funding for stormwater improvements, it would create a bigger shortfall in transportation dollars than already exists.
- Keith Lichten (RWQCB) commented that transportation is not just getting people from A to B but dealing with impacts associated with that. Transportation projects create an opportunity to tackle stormwater needs. This needs to be done in ways that are eligible for transportation grant funding.
- Ted Davini (Caltrans) explained that Caltrans employees are charged with meeting legislative rules, but legislative rules can change. Many of the solutions presented do not appreciate the legislative requirement on that program
- Anne Richman (MTC) commented that MTC tries to combine funds; it is complex to try to match eligibility requirements. She noted an evolutionary process, in which complete streets were formerly a topic of discussion, but are now just part of part of street design. Stormwater could potentially be the next phase.
- Legislative Changes
 - A question from the audience noted that grant criteria are often dictated by propositions/legislative language – how much control to funding agencies have? Would more legislation be needed to make some of these changes?
 - Julie Alvis (CNRA) commented that state agencies can provide information about legislation but cannot advocate for specific legislation, and cannot advocate for funding to come their way.
 - Cecilia Crenshaw-Godfrey (FHWA) stated that federal employees have no influence on legislation; however, some metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) go to DC and advocate for their concerns.
 - Miriam Chion (ABAG) described ABAG’s legislative committee, and other legislative efforts. She commented that, before getting involved in legislation, priorities should be clearly articulated. Some ways to make the process more efficient include streamlining; and accomplishing environmental goals, such as climate change, sustainability, etc.
- Key Overall Solution - Integration
 - A question from the audience asked whether transportation and urban greening are the only paired funding. What about Housing, etc.?
 - Anne Richman (MTC) commented that SGC focuses on pairing housing with transportation and GI. MTC tries to do that with OBAG funding – can’t directly fund housing but are trying to pair this funding up with project which focus on housing.
 - Miriam Chion (ABAG) noted that ABA is trying to identify all the projects along a corridor, so they are ready when the funding comes in. If grants are for connecting housing and transportation, there is a pipeline of projects ready for those funds
 - A question from the audience asked why GI should be separate from transportation funding. Isn’t this similar to American Disability Act (ADA) requirements, which are funded as part of transportation projects?
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) noted that, federal law establishes priorities, such as ADA requirements. Currently, GI does not have this type of priority.
 - Matt Gerhart (SCC) commented on the need to consider environmental priorities, such as habitat and ecological benefits, in addition to pollutant removal. Sometimes, the balancing of priorities makes it more challenging to fund expensive GI improvements.

- A question from the audience asked, with stormwater and transportation benefits led by different agencies, how can coordination continue in the future?
- Julie Alvis (CNRA) observed that the Prop 84 implementing legislation created SGC, which is comprised of most of the state agency secretaries to administer Prop 84 projects, to make sure work proceeds in a coordinated fashion. The SGC was novel idea that now works on cap and trade.

7. Review Obstacles and Potential Solutions to Develop Further – Roundtable Discussion

- Laura Prickett, Senior Associate, Horizon Water and Environment, facilitated a Roundtable Discussion that included the following obstacles to funding sustainable streets.
 - Ineligible Costs – Project Type
 - Keith Lichten (Regional Water Board) noted that a majority of municipalities present will prepare GI and/or stormwater resource plans, and asked if there is a focus to help define actions that would be eligible under grant programs represented at the meeting.
 - Amanda Booth observed that a single distribution for multiple grants would help cities, instead of trying to piece together separate funds. What is needed to advocate for this?
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) responded that cities have various associations that represent them, such as associations of governments. The issue would have to gain sufficient visibility to take this issue to the state legislature.
 - Julie Alvis (CNRA) observed that there are difficulties in combining sources of funding administration of funding. This would have to be spelled out in the budget, and issues would be hashed out through the budget process.
 - Miriam Chion (ABAG) commented that methods of integration should be pursued, but it takes times. A system has been created in which each funding piece is fragmented. A regional process is needed to bring sources together and sort out fragmented funding and regulation. This is the place to start.
 - Matches for Multiple Grants
 - Ted Davini (Caltrans) explained that there is an 11.47 percent match requirement for federal transportation funds. Caltrans is using toll credits to match federal funds. Funding agencies use match requirements to bring additional funding to leverage program’s goals. A planning process may be beneficial. Agencies’ plans could discuss how they will leverage available funds to achieve identified goals. One solution to the obstacle of matching funds may involve a plan requirement.
 - A show of hands was conducted to generally assess how attendees would prioritize obstacles to funding sustainable streets. The results are presented in the following table.

| Obstacle to Funding Sustainable Streets | Proportion of Attendees that Identified the Obstacle as a Priority |
|--|--|
| Ineligible Costs – Project Type | A large majority of attendees |
| Ineligible Costs – Project Activities | Less the 10% of attendees |
| Matches for Multiple Grants | Approximately 30% of attendees |
| Funding Cycles Not Coordinated | Approximately 10% of attendees |
| Grant Periods May Not Align | Approximately 10% of attendees |
| Grant Administration-Applications | Approximately 40% of attendees |
| Grant Administration - Tracking | Approximately 30% of attendees |
| Scoring of Cost Effectiveness | Approximately 20% of attendees, including approximately 50% of Roundtable Participants |

8. Closing Remarks and Next Steps

- Matt Fabry (BASMAA) gave closing remarks and described next steps in the Roundtable process.
 - BASMAA will send online survey to meeting attendees to solicit input on priorities for the Roundtable process.
 - The next Roundtable meeting will be on May 23. It will be a smaller meeting that will include the Roundtable Participants, with potentially a few additional stakeholders. BASMAA will work on a method for interested parties to observe by phone and/or Internet.

9. Questions from Audience Deferred to Subsequent Meetings or Process

- Due to time limits, the following written questions received from members of the audience were not answered during the meeting and will be addressed at subsequent Roundtable meetings, or as part of the Roundtable process:
 - Can we change the definition in grant guidelines of “drainage system” from just gray to green? What would be needed?
 - Do any of the cities/municipalities or the agencies that provide grants have experience with grants going to private recipients? Example: Wetland restoration project on private land supported by municipality. Private 40%, city 20%, grant 40%.
 - Can you describe the need for jurisdictions to have stormwater resource management plans in order to receive grant money for GI implementation? Why the need for these plans? This can be a barrier for smaller regions especially.
 - The funding issues identify siloes and related obstacles on the funding side. But there are obstacles on the local government side too in terms of siloes and obstacles for funding. What are some of those obstacles, how are you addressing them, and how can funders and recipients better work together?
 - Re: onerous grant applications, Is there a way to have shorter initial grant applications, and then ask the 17-pages of questions only to qualified applicants?
 - Is life cycle analysis (LCA) a part of these grants? Can we change lengths of terms for LCA's to look longer term which can help some GI measures like permeable paving, that lasts longer than traditional surfaces like asphalt, be cost-effective?
 - Will you please create a funding matrix that summarizes the grant sources summarized this morning, with some simple info like focus, weblinks, key requirements, etc.
 - Which jurisdiction gets the reduction credits for PCBs/mercury in projects that use Caltrans mitigation funding?