



Case Study

One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG2) – Potential Solutions for Sustainable Streets

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Regional Roundtable Focus Meeting
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Outline

- Overview of OBAG2.
- Key take-aways from research for case study.
- Solution 1: Better integration of green infrastructure (GI) and complete streets.
- Solution 2: Coordinate grant application process.
- Solution 3: Improvements for using multiple grants for one project.
- Roundtable Discussion

One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG2)

- **One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG):**

- Guides how federal transportation funds are to spent in our region (divided into Regional Program and County Program).

- **Green Infrastructure in OBAG:**

- OBAG Program itself does not preclude GI components from being funded as part of an eligible OBAG project (limitations come from federal law).



Transit-oriented development near El Cerrito del Norte BART Station.

Credit: Peter Beeler

Key Take-Aways

Federal Limitations

- OBAG requirements are determined by federal law, so MTC is limited.
- Caltrans ATP has developed its own requirements beyond the federal requirements, so clarification is needed to determine eligibility.



Housing at the Bay Meadows development, a Priority Development Area (PDA) site in San Mateo. (Source: MTC)

Key Take-Aways

Some green street components may be eligible

- Under current OBAG eligibility requirements:
 - GI is eligible if required for mitigation.
 - Permeable pavement is eligible.
 - Landscaping as part of streetscape improvement or safety improvement is eligible.



PerVIOUS pavement

Solution 1: Better Integration Programmatic

■ **Obstacles to Sustainable Streets:**

- Some GI elements of OBAG projects may be ineligible for federal transportation funds; eligibility criteria governed by federal law.
- Eligibility is unclear, may vary between programs using same federal sources (ex. ATP, OBAG).

■ **Solutions:**

- Coordinate with Caltrans to develop guidance clarifying eligibility of GI elements in federally funded (OBAG) transportation projects. Similar guidance exists specific to Caltrans ATP program.



Solution 1: Better Integration Programmatic

■ Additional Solutions:

- The Roadmap to include / recommend guidance for grant applicants to demonstrate multiple benefits of GI components in transportation projects.
- MTC notes that exchanges can be made for OBAG projects; CMAs can recommend exchanges to transfer OBAG funding from a project with federal eligibility issues onto a project with clear federal eligibility (pavement rehab.) and transfer “clean” money back to the original OBAG project.



Solution 1: Better Integration Legislative

■ **Obstacles to Sustainable Streets:**

- Some GI elements of OBAG projects may be ineligible for federal transportation funds; eligibility criteria governed by federal law.
- Eligibility is unclear, may vary between programs using same federal sources (ex. ATP, OBAG).

■ **Solutions:**

- Work with partners, such as Water Environment Foundation, to influence eligibility of GI in federal surface transportation programs.
- Support communication with MTC on legislative advocacy.



Solution 2: Single Distribution

Not applicable to case study

■ Solution: Single Distribution

- Create a single distribution of funding for projects that include both green infrastructure and transportation improvements that reduce greenhouse gases.

■ Infeasible Because:

- Would require changes to federal legislation.
- Very difficult/cumbersome to mix funds from different sources.



Solution 3a: Coordinate Application Process Programmatic

■ Obstacles:

- Cost of resources to apply for multiple, often complex grants.
- OBAG2, Proposition, and other funding program requirements are too unique to fit into a “single application” solution.

■ Solution: Develop Internal Application

- MTC is looking at ways to coordinate regional programs.
- Funding agencies may consider other related grant programs (timing, criteria, etc.) in the development of future programs; coordinate where feasible.



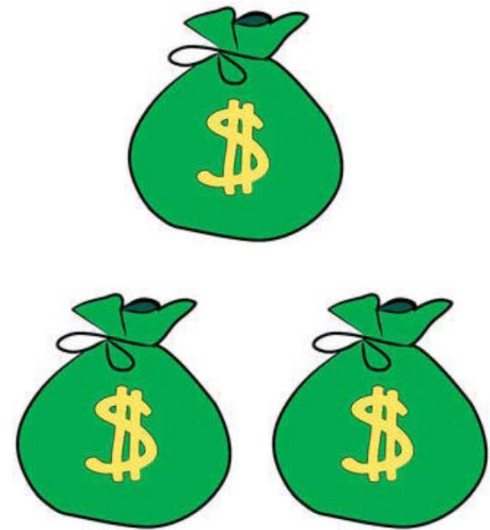
Solution 3b: Coordinate Match Requirements Programmatic

■ Obstacles:

- 11.47% non-federal local match required for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program / Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Programs (STP / CMAQ) projects. This match is determined by federal law.
- Same federal requirements apply to the project components funded with matching funds.

■ Solution: Clarify Match Requirements

- *Additional* non-federal funds must be used on ineligible scope elements.



Solution 3c: Coordinate Joint Reporting Programmatic

Not applicable to case study

■ **Solution: Coordinate Joint Reporting**

- Compare reporting requirements for applicable grant programs.
- Identify opportunities to coordinate reporting schedule, format, and other requirements.

■ **Not Applicable Because:**

- MTC does not have reporting requirements for OBAG, but Caltrans does have federally-mandated reporting requirements for federally-funded projects.



Solution 3d: Broaden Scoring Criteria

Not applicable to case study

- **Solution - Broaden Scoring Criteria:**
 - Provide level playing field for project designs that provide multiple benefits.
- **Not Applicable:**
 - OBAG program already includes an emphasis on multi-modal, multi-benefit projects.
 - OBAG criteria doesn't include a requirement to look at cost/benefit.



Solution 3e: Coordinate Timing of Funding Cycles

Programmatic

■ **Obstacle:**

- Funding cycles are not coordinated.
- Deadlines subject to federal authorization/obligation.
- Federal legislation dictates when funds are spent.

■ **Solution: Coordinate Timing of Cycles**

- MTC looking to ways to coordinate regional programs.



Solution 3f: Coordinate Information on Funding Cycles Programmatic

■ **Obstacle:**

- Release of solicitations and funding are not coordinated.

■ **Solution: Coordinate Regarding Cycles**

- MTC looking to ways to coordinate regional programs.
- Develop a database of grants/upcoming solicitations.
- Inform other funding agencies of RFPs.



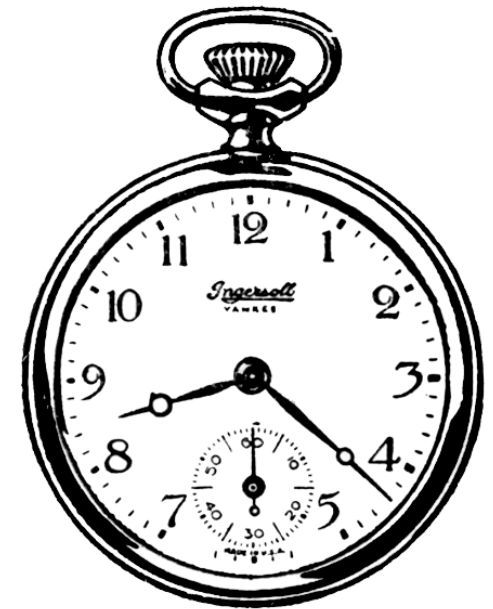
Solution 3g: Advertise Maximum Grant Periods Programmatic

■ Obstacles:

- Coordination of different programs with different delivery deadlines and extension possibilities.
- Grant extensions not available for OBAG.

■ Solution: Advertise in the Solicitation

- MTC notes that obligation and delivery deadlines are already described in the OBAG policy resolution; extensions not available.



Solution 3h: Modify Eligible Activities

Legislative

Not applicable to case study

■ **Solution:**

- Consider seeking to influence the development of future grant language to allow funding of routine maintenance.

■ **Infeasible Because:**

- Eligibility for maintenance is determined by federal law. Federal grants can be used for short-term establishment only.



Roundtable Discussion



How do solutions relate to other programs?

Solutions	Programmatic	Legislative	Guidance?	NA
1 - Better integration				
2 - Single distribution				
3a - Coordinate application process				
3b - Coordinate match policies				
3c - Coordinate joint reporting				
3d - Broaden scoring criteria				
3e - Coordinate timing of cycles				

How do solutions relate to other programs?

Solutions	Programmatic	Legislative	Guidance?	NA
3f - Coordinate info on cycles				
3g - Advertise max grant periods				
3h - Modify eligible activities				

Roundtable Discussion

- Where is the low-hanging fruit / easy changes to make?
- Which solutions would provide the greatest relief to sustainable streets projects?
- Who needs to be included in discussions of solutions?