

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	October 21, 2021
SUBJECT:	Authorize Active Transportation Partnership Agreements
AGENDA ITEM:	5-12
STAFF CONTACT:	Keith Williams, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

SRTA assisted partners in preparing active transportation projects for competition in Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle Five, which contributed to funding for three new projects in the Shasta Region. Staff seeks to maximize the use of limited funds for a new round of assistance by making mutual understandings and expectations clear prior to unnecessary expenditures of consultant and staff resources on projects that may ultimately not be competitive in grant programs or are withdrawn late in the application process. Staff recommends authorizing the executive director to enter into partnership agreements to make mutual expectations clear and ensure that SRTA and local agency staff resources are not used on projects that will ultimately be withdrawn or non-competitive.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the executive director to enter into partnership agreements with agencies, tribes, and other partners seeking assistance from SRTA and its consultants to prepare competitive active transportation projects for the ATP and other grant programs.

DISCUSSION:

Background: In preparation for the fourth and fifth cycles of the state's highly competitive ATP, SRTA hired consultants to assist delivering agencies in the preparation of walking and biking infrastructure applications. Assistance comprised public engagement (workshops, meetings, online advertisement, surveys, etc.), technical drawings, and grant application writing. Lessons learned from ATP Cycle Four led to success in Cycle Five. Three out of the six projects submitted to ATP Cycle Five were approved for funding.

Current Assistance Effort: SRTA's current active transportation assistance program, the Shasta Regional Active Transportation Network (SRATN), has the same aim as its predecessor, Sustainable Shasta, which is to maximize the competitiveness of the region's applications for future ATP cycles and other grant programs. SRTA is supporting partners' efforts to increase the number and quality of applications, focusing on large, transformative projects that would be both competitive and justify the substantial

resources involved with submitting ATP applications. However, facilities that connect these projects to the rest of the active transportation network play an important role too and need not be transformative to compete well in other grant programs. If partners express interest, SRATN will also help prepare these projects for competition in alternative grant programs.

Maximizing Competitiveness, Transparency, and Efficiency: Every point matters when competing for highly competitive grant funding. Design decisions need to be carefully considered early in the planning process, so the Shasta region ensures efficient delivery of the most competitive applications. To this end, SRTA is introducing a partnership agreement for active transportation assistance divided into a five-step process (see attachment). Directors from SRTA and partners will sign off and document decisions made at each step. Once the preliminary project design has largely taken shape, project designs will be brought before the SRTA Board of Directors and partners' governing bodies for approval. This process will improve transparency, allow for greater efficiency in the use of funds, commit all parties to developing competitive active transportation projects, and assure grant evaluators of buy-in from elected officials.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may reject the staff recommendation; add, remove, or modify steps to the process; or request staff research alternative methods for solidifying project expectations early and increasing project competitiveness and efficiencies.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA and delivering agencies collaborated on the preparation of active transportation grant applications for ATP Cycles Four and Five.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Efficiencies gained through commitments to project designs will maximize limited funding and staff resources for future grant applications.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachment:

SRTA-Partner Active Transportation Partnership Agreement



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Daniel S. Little, Executive Director

SRTA Active Transportation Partnership Assistance Agreement

The Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) looks forward to partnering with _____ to develop low-stress, high-comfort active transportation facilities and feeder routes that remove barriers to walking and bicycling. The purpose of this agreement is to make mutual understandings and expectations clear prior to unnecessary expenditures of consultant and staff resources on projects that may ultimately not be competitive in grant programs or are withdrawn late in the application process. The parties agree that resources are limited, and it is best to identify any fatal flaws as early in the development process as possible.

In an effort to provide transparency to elected officials on the efficient use of funds, this agreement commits SRTA and **Partner** to a five-step process to develop competitive active transportation projects. Directors from SRTA and **Partner** will sign off and document decisions made at each step before proceeding to the next step. At Step Two, partners will agree on leverage commitments. Progress beyond Step Four requires SRTA and Council/Board of Supervisors concurrence to proceed per this agreement. Following Step Five, minor adjustments may be made to the project concept (e.g., decisions on type of physical buffer) if SRTA and **Partner** agree, but the project's scope should not change fundamentally (e.g., whether to provide a physical buffer) unless significant new information comes to light that would make the project more competitive in the grant program, or overwhelming public input steers the design in a direction that brings the region closer toward agreed upon goals in the GoShasta Regional Active Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

Project Title:					
Steps		Signatures		Date	Notes
		SRTA Executive Director	Partner's Project Manager		
1	Following initial discussion and review of the general project area, agree on high-level project alignment(s).				

Corridor(s)						
2	Following a walk and bike audit of the proposed corridor(s) and additional technical input (incl. all relevant parties who could impact project), agree on recommendations for facilities, traffic control devices, and markings for the proposed corridor(s). At this point, leverage commitments reflecting all commitments as a percentage of total grant program-eligible costs will be agreed upon.					
Treatment(s)						
Max Leverage (% of eligible costs per the grant program)	SRTA	Partner				SRTA may offer more leverage, depending on how many projects are awarded and available funding.

3	Following input received from the opening public engagement event, agree on any major changes to project design.				
Design Change(s) from Opening Public Engagement					
4	Following input received from any task force meetings with key community representatives, agree on any major changes to project design. Prior to Task 5, the project design must receive approval by SRTA and Council or Board of Supervisors.	Signature of SRTA BOD Chair	Signature of Council or Board Supervisors Chair		
Design Change(s) from Task Force Meetings w/key community reps					

5	Following input received from the closing public engagement event, agree on any changes to project design.				
Design Change(s) from Closing Public Engagement					