

Historical Perspective

The full name of this policy is Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Strategy and Policy Framework.

This policy was last amended on February 23, 2017.

In January 2016, the Metro Board of Directors approved the AHSC Program Strategy and Policy Framework. That strategy was intended to align and direct Metro's efforts around the AHSC Cap-and-Trade funding program, and to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve competitive standing of Los Angeles County projects;
- Inspire high quality, high impact project applications; and
- Secure funding for Metro Board programs, notably First/Last mile

AHSC Strategy and Policy Framework

Revised, February 2017

- Policy framework

The program guidelines as adopted by the Strategic Growth Council in 2016 provide competitive points for projects that align themselves with established policies and plans intended to reduce transportation related greenhouse gasses and vehicle miles traveled. While Metro has a substantial body of such policies, including the Countywide Sustainability Planning Policy, it will be more clear and efficient for applicants for Metro to create a specific policy framework for the AHSC program. The purpose of Metro policy for AHSC is to clearly communicate Metro's preferences for development and local transportation infrastructure in areas surrounding Metro transit stations, to prompt project applications with the greatest regional benefit, and to allow communities a clear way to position projects for competitive advantage. To that end, staff is proposing adopting a policy statement as follows:

AHSC requires multi-component project applications that include affordable housing, transportation infrastructure, transportation amenities, transportation programming, urban greening and other investments. Metro supports project applications in Los Angeles County that:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing near transit particularly at the lowest income levels feasible;
- Implement Metro's First/Last Mile Strategic Plan and Planning Guidelines, improving accessibility and safety for transit passengers;
- Include transportation infrastructure improvements in the public right-of-way;
- Utilize Metro's Urban Greening Plan and Toolkit;
- Include creative partnerships to achieve community development objectives identified through a community engagement process;
- Where feasible, fund implementation of Metro Bikeshare stations, Metro Bike Hubs, or other Metro infrastructure;
- Where feasible, provide Metro Transit Passes to housing project residents.

In order to provide support letters for individual projects, or for Metro to be involved as a partner applicant or participating entity, Metro strongly encourages a resolution from the local agency where any given project is located acknowledging and supporting these priorities.

It should be noted that this policy framework is closely related to the Metro's emerging work on Transit Oriented Communities. To that end, the Metro Board may wish to review and revise this policy periodically for consistency.

- Metro role in individual projects - The competitive framework established by the current guidelines creates a strong incentive for transportation agencies to be included as partner applicants. Metro generally views this program as an appropriate funding source for local transit supportive projects such as first/last mile improvements. In all cases, Metro is seeking to catalyze partnerships that include transportation infrastructure investments with broad public benefits. Each potential project will be considered separately, with options to include:
 1. Metro as a partner/co-applicant (where Metro receives funds for bike share, bike hubs, or other Metro-specific activities such as stop or station improvements).
 2. Metro as a participating entity, facilitating transportation infrastructure investment with a local city or the County of Los Angeles (e.g. first/last mile or active transportation project in a local right-of-way).
 3. As a supporter based on consistency with the policy framework proposed here.

Any level of Metro participation in any given project will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the policy considerations laid out in this framework, our assessment of the competitive viability of the project, the level of benefit and risk for Metro, and other factors.

- Outreach/training/technical assistance - Metro collaborates with various entities in Los Angeles County to provide broad based capacity building, training and outreach for local agencies. Metro's activities include communication on program basics (timelines, eligible projects, etc.) to all interested jurisdictions, presentations to subregional Council of Governments meetings, and coordination with other entities including SCAG to provide a basic level of knowledge about the program. Additionally, Metro is currently offering training programs for local agencies around First/Last Mile and Complete Streets. The purpose of the training is to orient local staff to the first/last mile planning methodology, and to prompt the creation of concept plans that are ready to compete for funding. Metro works with partners and stakeholders to in Los Angeles County to establish a collaborative process that will address a broad range of technical assistance and capacity building needs for both the public sector and for private housing developers. These partners, convened by the LA THRIVES collaborative, include philanthropic foundations, local government agencies, housing, public health, transportation, and environmental experts, and community development financial institutions. The goals of this TA effort are to accelerate public-private partnerships and support high quality competitive applications - particularly

integrated projects with both affordable housing and transportation infrastructure elements. Metro's aim leverage available resources in its targeted partnerships described above.

- Plan development - The AHSC program requires that planning for projects be complete, or near complete, in order to compete for funding. Metro is engaged in a variety of efforts to facilitate plan development that can lead to high quality, competitive AHSC projects. This includes Metro-led planning for first/last mile improvements Countywide, future rounds of TOD and related planning grants, and coordination on planning funding made available through SCAG.
- Municipal level partnership/ pipeline development - As part of this overall strategy Metro has initiated activities with a limited number of interested jurisdictions (6-8) in order to pilot planning and project delivery techniques geared to AHSC. Metro will continue these efforts subject to on-going involvement and interest from the technical assistance collaborative described above, and resource availability.
- Menu of Metro components- Metro's primary objective in any given project application is roadway improvements for first/last mile and active transportation. The program also creates opportunities for lower cost, less process-intensive investments such as bike hubs, bike share stations, and improvements to Metro stops and stations. Metro staff has developed a concise menu describing how each of these components can be included in project applications. The menu is available online at <https://www.metro.net/projects/countywide-planning/ahsc/>, noting that inclusion of any Metro component in any project will be considered on a case-by-case basis.