

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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Be energy efficient!*

November 21, 2013

Dear Partner Agencies and Native American Tribes:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is pleased to announce the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014–15 Transportation Planning Grant Programs. This year we are updating our grant programs to support the multi-modal transportation system of the future, one that improves mobility and accessibility for all people. This integrated, connected, and resilient multi-modal system will support Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 375 implementation and California's planning goals: Economy, Equity, and Environment.

To support those goals, we will be awarding \$5.3 million grant dollars in the following areas:

- Partnership Planning for Sustainable Transportation
- Transit Planning for Sustainable Communities
- Transit Planning for Rural Communities

The Partnership and Transit Planning grants have a new focus on sustainability and you are encouraged to work with your Caltrans District contact as you develop your grant applications for these programs.

There is another important change to announce: There will not be any new awards for the Environmental Justice (EJ) or Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) programs during FY 2014–15 only. This will be a one year hiatus to review and refocus the grant objectives as well as improve delivery of these two important grant programs. The updated EJ and CBTP grant programs will return in November 2014 for FY 2015–16. In the meantime, all existing EJ and CBTP grant activities will continue as planned and necessary.

We appreciate the importance of these grant programs to communities and tribes, and ask for your understanding that this short hiatus will allow the EJ and CBTP grant programs to become stronger in the long term. Caltrans EJ and CBTP grant programs have benefitted communities throughout the state and have proved to be catalysts of change around the state for over ten years. This is the first major review of these programs since inception and we want to further build upon the successes of the grant programs, confirm lessons learned and retool for more effective EJ and CBTP programs into the future. This review will also focus on meeting the latest state transportation planning goals.

The one year hiatus also allows a re-tooling of the grant programs' processes for a more efficient and effective delivery. We are investigating a streamlined application submittal and award process in preparation for future awards.

**Anticipated Use of FY 2014-15 EJ/CBTP Funding**

Here is how the EJ/CBTP funding will be used on a *one-time* basis in FY 2014-15:

\$1,000,000	Partnership Planning for Sustainable Communities
\$300,000	Consultant study for EJ/CBTP programs
\$4,200,000	Emerging priorities and pilot studies
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\$5,500,000	Total

The EJ and CBTP grant funding will be used for planning work which benefits community outreach and public participation, and improves sustainable planning partnerships across the state. Part of the funding will be moved to the Partnership Planning for Sustainable Transportation program in FY 2014–15 with the goal of considering grants that advance our knowledge and understanding of the current planning environment at regional and community levels. Regional agencies, tribes, cities, counties and/or community organizations are encouraged to work together.

Part of the funding will be used to take a look back at the history and benefits of the EJ and CBTP grant programs and determine how best to support planning work at the community level to improve the safety, mobility, and sustainability of the State's transportation system through future grants. This study will include the opportunity for partners and grantees to comment on the grant process and priorities.

Finally, part of the funding will be used for emerging priorities and pilots, including improving data collection for the California Household Travel Survey, and a climate change survey to provide data and guidance on state transportation system assets and performance in local communities. This will inform prioritization of multi-modal transportation investments.

We look forward to working with you over the next year to refocus and strengthen the EJ and CBTP programs. If you have comments, concerns, or questions please contact Alyssa Begley, Chief, Caltrans Office of Community Planning, at [alyssa.begley@dot.ca.gov](mailto:alyssa.begley@dot.ca.gov) or (916) 651-6882.

*Katie Benouar*

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