

## Regional Roundtable: Sustainable Streets

### Meeting Summary

#### Focus Meeting on Solutions

1515 Clay Street, Oakland, Room 11

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

### 1. Opening Remarks - Tomás Torres, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region IX Water Division Director

- EPA often hears from public agencies about challenges with implementation and funding for stormwater.
- EPA recognizes the multi-benefits of green infrastructure (GI) and is working with the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) to incentivize GI in the regulatory environment.
- EPA funding sources for GI include:
  - EPA's San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund (SFBWQIF), and
  - State revolving funds can be used for GI, although a funding source is needed for loan payment.
- The recent SFBWQIF RFP has an emphasis on assisting disadvantaged communities.
- EPA is pleased to be funding BASMAA to conduct these roundtable discussions.
- The SFBWQIF has helped to showcase GI, such as the San Pablo Ave Green Spine demonstration project.
- A mix of funding for GI needs to be utilized such as a sustainable fee, grants and loans.
- Acknowledged Proposition 218 challenge for generating local funding, due to the requirement for a two-thirds majority vote; however, some agencies have succeeded, such as Palo Alto.
- California Senate Bill 231 may alleviate the two-thirds majority requirement.
- Currently, EPA's most significant funding source that could support GI is the State Revolving Fund administered by the SWRCB.
- The new administration has indicated interest in increasing support for infrastructure, which should include GI.
- EPA appreciates the excellent work of the local entities and is committed to helping to improve local capacity to implement and finance storm water controls including GI.

### 2. Case Study: Sustainable Street Solutions

- **Introduction – Matt Fabry**, Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA), Chair of the Board of Directors
  - The Roundtable will produce a Roadmap identifying specific actions to improve funding of sustainable streets projects
  - Case studies will be included in the Roadmap
  - "Sustainable streets" refers to complete streets projects + GI
- **Storm Water Grant Program (SWGPP) Case Study – Laura Prickett**, Horizon Water and Environment (Horizon), Senior Associate
  - SWRCB staff provided information for the case study.
  - Funding is from Prop 1; eligibility requirements are dictated by the proposition.
  - Some complete streets components may be eligible, such as:
    - Bike, pedestrian or transit features with quantified greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction,
    - Pervious paving, and/or

- Project features that are necessary to convey runoff to a GI facility.
  - Solutions to improve the funding of sustainable streets in the SWGP include:
    1. Include in grant applications a quantification of GHG reductions; Clarify in the 2018 solicitation that GHG-reducing transportation features are eligible; Influence future propositions to provide full eligibility of sustainable streets.
    - 3a. Prepare guidance on packaging sustainable streets for grant applications; Influence future propositions to coordinate application requirements with other grants.
    - 3b. Prepare guidance on demonstrating the eligibility of transportation elements, which may allow non-State funded transportation grants to serve as match; Influence future propositions/legislation to go in Chapter with lower match.
    - 3c. Identify opportunities to coordinate reporting with other grant programs;
    - 3f. Coordinate with other agencies to join SWRCB in funding fairs and CA Financing Coordinating Committee website; Develop database of grants/upcoming solicitations; Inform other funding agencies on timing of RFPs.
  - Solutions that are not applicable to the SWGP include:
    2. Single distribution of pooled grants – Infeasible due to proposition constraints.
    - 3d. Broadening scoring criteria – Not applicable because scoring does not penalize projects with ineligible components.
    - 3e. Coordinate timing of funding cycles - Infeasible due to Prop 1 and bond law.
    - 3g. Advertise extension in solicitation - Infeasible due to extension constraints.
    - 3h. Influence future propositions to allow maintenance - Infeasible because grants can only cover costs incurred within the grant period.
- **Questions Regarding the SWGP**
  - **Sam Ziegler**, EPA, asked what proportion of the funded SWGP projects have supported GI.
  - **Kelley List**, SWRCB, responded that the majority of implementation projects included GI/ green streets components, totaling about \$15 million.
  - **Amanda Booth**, City of San Pablo, asked whether there is a target GHG per dollar amount for projects that include GHG reduction as a multiple benefit.
  - **Kelley List**, SWRCB staff, responded that a project must first demonstrate a stormwater benefit (treatment, use, infiltration). GHG reduction is a ‘secondary benefit’ – on a list of quantifiable benefits to choose from, in the Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP) guidelines. The SWGP has funded projects that have included bike lanes, etc. SWRCB is still working on how to demonstrate how these meet main goal of stormwater benefit.
  - **Kelley List** provided the following clarifications on Prop 1 funding slides:
    - The slide on the difficulty of mixing funds from multiple sources was based on the challenges of mixing left-over funds from different propositions into the SWGP -- each with different eligibility, etc. Analysts must match correct funds to projects.
    - For slide on cost-benefit ratio, Kelley clarified that SWRCB puts together all similar eligible projects then identifies the top projects of each type that can be funded.
  - **Steven Moore**, SWRCB Board Member, asked whether a guidance package for sustainable streets funding could be a product of this roundtable.
  - **Laura Prickett** responded that guidance is not included in the defined deliverables for the Roundtable project, but guidance could be an action in the Roadmap of Funding Solutions.
- **One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG) Case Study – Adrienne Miller**, Geosyntec Consulting, Senior Engineer
  - Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) staff provided information for case study.
  - Funding is from federal transportation sources; federal requirements apply.
  - Some GI components may be eligible, such as:
    - GI is eligible if required for mitigation;

- Pervious paving;
    - Landscaping as part of streetscape improvement or safety improvement.
  - Solutions to improve the funding of sustainable streets in the OBAG Program include:
    1. Coordinate with Caltrans to develop guidance clarifying eligibility of GI elements; Develop guidance for applicants to demonstrate multiple benefits of GI components in transportation projects; 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.
    - 3a. Coordinate application requirements where feasible; Funding agencies may consider other related grant programs (timing, criteria, etc.) in developing future programs.
    - 3b. Prepare guidance on demonstrating the eligibility of GI elements, which may allow some GI grants to serve as match;
    - 3e. Coordinate timing of funding cycles – MTC is looking to ways to coordinate regional programs.
    - 3f. Develop database of grants/upcoming solicitations; Inform other funding agencies on timing of RFPs.
  - Solutions that are not applicable to the OBAG Program include:
    2. Single distribution of pooled grants – Not applicable due to federal law.
    - 3c. Coordinating reporting with other grant programs - Not applicable because MTC does not have OBAG reporting requirements (Caltrans has reporting requirements).
    - 3d. Broadening scoring criteria - Not applicable because OBAG does not include a requirement to look at cost-benefit.
    - 3g. Advertise extension in solicitation – Not applicable as extensions are not available.
    - 3h. Influence future propositions to allow maintenance - Infeasible because federal grants can only be used for short-term establishment.
- **Questions Regarding the OBAG Case Study**
  - **Amanda Booth**, City of San Pablo, asked whether OBAG makes a distinction between functional and non-functional landscaping.
  - **Mallory Atkinson**, MTC, responded that OBAG allows both functional and non-functional landscaping. The Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) has more prescriptive approach, specifying that landscaping have a “functional” purpose, such as serving as a safety barrier.
  - **Steven Moore**, SWRCB Board Member, noted that traditional drainage/stormwater conveyance is eligible under federal transportation funding, therefore shouldn't green approaches to drainage/stormwater conveyance be eligible?
  - **Mallory Atkinson** noted that MTC would have to look into this issue and provide a follow-up response.
  - **Steven Moore** asked about the amount of OBAG funding.
  - **Anne Richman**, MTC, responded that there is approximately \$125 million per year through Fiscal Year 2021/22.
- **Roundtable Discussion of Case Studies**
  - **Matt Fabry**, BASMAA, observed that some transportation elements are eligible under the SWGP, and recalled that GI at a pedestrian bulbout may be 100% fundable under the Caltrans ATP if it provides a safety benefit. He asked if describing these projects in a different way would make funding more feasible.
  - **Sam Ziegler**, EPA, commented that having a common language and similar criteria across funding sources could unify efforts to fund sustainable streets projects. He noted that, with regard to matching funds, each funding agency seeks the most “bang for the buck” –

the Roundtable may need to explore what an appropriate funding mix is for sustainable streets. Reporting needs to consider financial accountability and information sharing. With regard to information sharing – common reporting among funding agencies and a method to share the reports may benefit sustainable streets.

- **Amanda Booth**, City of San Pablo, commented that, if a coordinated grant application is infeasible, then the different requirements of each grant (reporting, contracting, disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) requirements, etc.) – can be challenging to manage. She noted that Caltrans' requirements are particularly difficult, and aligning other grants with Caltrans may be a good solution. Otherwise, for example, there may be seven different types of contracting structures that must be applied to these projects. Different DBE requirements are also challenging to navigate.
- **Eugene Maeda**, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), observed that, if there is the option for a countywide transportation ballot, funding is more flexible. This was done in Santa Clara County, Measure B, which will produce revenue of \$6.5 billion over 30 years from a half-cent sales tax for transportation. Measure B includes a complete streets requirement, and VTA is including GI in its complete streets checklist to get cities to think about incorporating GI in their city projects.
- **Paul Wells**, Department of Water Resources (DWR) explained that DWR grant proposals have been relying on the region to prioritize projects through the Integrated Regional Water Management process, and then present to DWR what is most valuable for the region. DWR would like to see more coordination from the regional end. DWR seeks multiple benefits in stormwater projects, including groundwater and flood benefits. DACs receive points in grant review; funds are set aside for DACs, and matching funds can be reduced or waived.
- **Kelley List**, SWRCB, clarified that, for reporting requirements, the Prop 1 deliverables are identified in the application. For example, if the applicant is building something, then the various plans, geotechnical report, etc. are submitted with reports. Invoicing and reports are on a quarterly basis. Prop 1 does not place bid requirements on the grantee. Design/build is OK, as long as you follow your own methods. Prop 84 had labor compliance requirements, which are not required for Prop 1. Match is a big part of Prop 1, but economically disadvantaged areas (EDAs)/ DACs have a reduced match. A funding fair website could be a good way to share information. For example, Prop 50 had a coordinated calendar with everything online. If other agencies could do the same, this may help with information sharing and coordination for grantees.
- **Julie Alvis**, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) commented that there is a challenge in trying to combine grant programs, each of which is put together with primary objectives, secondary objectives layered underneath, on top of the agency mission, and the funding source needs. This contributes to the complexity of funding goals and eligibility. Sustainable streets, which have multiple objectives – almost need their own pot of funding, so that a funding agency considers this “its own thing.” It will be important to get a legislative solution that specifies what you mean by sustainable streets – get a funding source, get a champion, etc. When new funding programs are shaped, typically there is a focus on the goal, not a lot of attention to “boring” details like match, eligibility, etc. The details are often added at the end, and are just lifted from earlier calls and put into the grant. Providing specific input earlier in the grant program development process can help shape these components.

### 3. Prioritizing Solutions in the Roadmap for Funding Sustainable Streets - Laura Prickett, Horizon

- The Roadmap of Solutions that is produced by the Roundtable will identify specific actions to achieve the funding of green stormwater infrastructure as an integral component of complete streets projects, and potentially other types of infrastructure projects.
- Prioritizing solutions will inform timeframes and sequencing of specific actions.
- An electronic survey was sent to Roundtable Participants and interested parties to obtain information on priorities for solutions to fund sustainable streets.
- Twenty-eight responses were received from 21 agencies that seek funding, one funding agency, two agencies that both provide and seek funding and four interested parties/other.
- For top priority, 15 responders identified “better integration” of GI and complete streets; 11 identified “single distribution” of pooled funds from different grant programs; and 2 identified “improve conditions for using multiple grants for a single project.”
- The top 3 solutions for improving conditions for using multiple grants: broaden scoring criteria, coordinate on grant application process, and modify eligibility criteria for project activities.
- A show of hands at the March 28 Roundtable meeting corroborated the high priority status of “better integration,” “single distribution,” and “coordinate grant application process.”
- The Roadmap will screen out from further consideration any solution that lacks support from agencies that would be responsible for implementing the solution.
- The draft prioritization criteria are effectiveness (the extent to which the solution would help to make more funding available for sustainable streets projects), ease of implementation (level of time and resources required), and support demonstrated for the solution.
- A preliminary draft prioritizes the following solutions: better integration, coordinate on grant application process, broaden scoring criteria, and modify eligibility criteria for project activities.
- **Roundtable Discussion of Prioritization**
  - **Geoff Brosseau**, BASMAA, commented that any solutions that are screened out of the Roadmap will be described in an appendix. He added that legislation is a long-term solution, and perhaps solutions could be bifurcated into short term and long term.
  - **Allison Brooks**, Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC), observed that, in order to evaluate the ease of implementation for a solution, it would be important to identify the “quarterback” or agency to implement the solution.
  - **Dan Cloak**, Contra Costa Clean Water Program (CCCWP), commented that when problems cannot be solved at the funding agency level, they are pushed down to municipalities to figure out these tough issues. There is a need for capacity building, because municipalities have limited budgets, and it is difficult to find, hire, and retain people who can bring all the necessary elements together to make things happen. One option would be to fund grant coordinator positions. Priorities for GI are set in the regional NPDES permit. The next reissuance of the permit could include more emphasis on supporting local agencies to build capacity and solve funding problems.
  - **Dale Bowyer**, Regional Water Board, suggested exploring the idea of a “camp” or workshop to develop local capacity to obtain grants. The “stars” at local municipalities (those who are very good at getting grants) could train others.

#### 4. Types of Collaboration to Consider for Roadmap of Funding Solutions

- **Sam Ziegler**, USEPA Region 9, Chief, Watersheds Section, described the National GI Collaborative, which consists of federal agencies, NGOs, and private-sector entities that, since 2014, have sought to leverage joint efforts, share and build knowledge, and facilitate shared inquiry regarding GI.
- Each federal agency in the collaborative committed to various actions, some of which they were going to do anyway.
- Lessons learned from the collaborative include:

- Identify leadership champions that will stay with the process
- Smaller partnerships may have more success than larger partnerships
- More may be accomplished at a regional level, which allows for more specificity, than at the national level.
- It is important to include long-term financial and technical planning, and to establish meaningful, measurable metrics.
- **Matt Fabry**, BASMAA, Chair of the Board, presented the following potential types of collaboration that may be included in the Roadmap:
  - Collaborate on joint application/instructions/policies
  - Improve instructions for grant applicants in coordination with other funding agencies
  - Collaborate on advocacy for legislative changes
  - Encourage/fund actions with mutual benefit
  - Convene/lead collaborative processes
  - Potentially form some type of collaborative group
- **Roundtable Discussion of Potential Types of Collaboration**
  - **Julie Alvis**, CNRA recommended framing solutions around specified time periods. Some actions may deal with immediate needs. Some funding programs are not intended to have additional funding cycles. Identify which programs are anticipating additional funding cycles and consider how to align things that are important between programs. This may involve a long-term plan for Sustainable Streets acceptance and funding. If that is the direction we are going, consider how to get the legislature, governor, etc., on board with changing the status quo.
  - **Anne Richman**, MTC, commented that MTC has many collaborative efforts – regionally, statewide, and nationally. She cannot comment on whether MTC would sign onto the Roadmap. MTC might consider how its various efforts may fit with Roadmap and solutions. She asked whether the collaborative group that Matt Fabry described would be part of the Roadmap, or separate from the Roadmap. Anne added that it would be helpful to include specific example of what the steps for specific actions might look like. For example, it may be possible to explore how steps in Roadmap could be carried out in the 2018 funding cycle. Who are the partners? How would activities be different from what is done now?
  - **Matt Fabry**, BASMAA, responded that the suggestion for a collaborative group is envisioned to be part of Roadmap. The Roadmap will identify specific solutions, and agencies would carry out the solutions. It would be ideal if the Roadmap could call out specific things for specific agencies, and then agencies could sign on to these roles. The Roadmap is intended to include case studies and call out specific actions in the case studies. SFEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) is a potential model. It includes 32 actions and sub-actions. It identifies a lead agency and supporting agencies for actions.
  - **Allison Brooks**, BARC, observed that it is hard to commit to supporting the Roadmap without understanding how it will play out. Perhaps there could be a regional pilot project to focus in on specific projects in communities that may need capacity support to apply for/manage grants. The experience of several pilot studies could test of some of these concepts.
  - **Miriam Torres**, BCDC, described the Elber Avenue project in Los Angeles, which included 24 home retrofits. It was mainly a stormwater project and included planting native trees, installing rain barrels, retrofitting streets. It was implemented through a partnership with the county, NGOs, the City Department of Sanitation. It involved a large process to get NGOs on board. Ultimately, the project led toward a stormwater fee. A supervisor just announced the fee getting rolled out this year. One funding idea

would be a local funding measure that includes highly visible collaboration. This could help gain public support.

- **Amanda Booth**, City of San Pablo, A lot of environmental agencies are aware of other environmental grants, requirements – a lot of knowledge
- However, there is a gap between transportation and environmental funding – typically projects in ROW will want to include transportation funding
- Helpful if environmental agencies could reach out to Caltrans, MTC when a grant comes up for ROW projects
- Agencies could understand difficulties for Cities, help them from the get-go
- Having that mindset early on may help with coordination
- Environmental agencies could talk to grantees that have worked on these projects already, or talk to Caltrans to have the awareness of the transportation side
- **Sam Ziegler**, EPA, commented that one idea would be to develop a statement of intent (SOI) for a collaborative pilot project concept. Before committing to higher levels of action, perhaps some funding agencies could sign an SOI simply committing to ideas and principles. The process could start now, by holding meetings with the intent of better coordination of grant funding. This could involve a commitment to meet for a set period of time, such as 12 months, in order to develop future actions.
- **Julie Alvis**, observed that many conversations about collaboration involve suggesting a coordinated solicitation. She recommended moving beyond that concept, in order to avoid many pitfalls that agencies encounter when attempting a coordinated solicitation. She offered that coordination, sharing, and guidance are all good ways to go. However, each program's restrictions on the timing of funds and other aspects of agency programs is different for a reason. It would be very difficult to do a one-size-fits-all approach. This was attempted with the Urban Parkways and DWR Urban Rivers programs. The two programs have many commonalities, so it was thought to be easy to integrate. However, there was just enough difference between eligible applicants and what could be funded, the grant application became extremely complicated. Stakeholders who wanted it beforehand ended up finding it cumbersome.
- **Matt Fabry**, BASMAA, responded that it makes sense that people want to see something before they sign up. At the next meeting there will be draft sections of the Roadmap, so Roundtable Participants can develop a better idea of the types of actions and activities that would be included. Today we are plant a seed, to get agency staff thinking about partnerships and what they would be willing to commit to.
- **Allison Brooks**, BARC, recommended providing some capacity building assistance, in which agencies can work with local jurisdictions. There is a need to outline how to support jurisdictions in implementing important projects. Agencies can work together to make this as simple as possible.

#### **5. Outline for Roadmap of Funding Solutions for Sustainable Streets – Laura Prickett**, Horizon Water and Environment, Senior Associate

- The purpose of the Roadmap is to achieve the funding of green stormwater infrastructure as an integral component of multi-benefit projects, with an emphasis on streets due to:
  - The water quality impacts of motor vehicles,
  - The stormwater collection and conveyance function provided by roadway surfaces, and
  - The integration of storm drain systems into streets and roads
  - State and regional focus on investing in active transportation
- The Roadmap is anticipated to include the following sections:
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 1 – Introduction

- Statement of Purpose
- Financial Needs and Anticipated Benefits
- Organization of the Roadmap
- Section 2 – Pathways, which will categorize four types of specific actions:
  - Better Integration of Funding for Multi-benefit Projects
  - Coordination Regarding Grant Application Processes
  - Improving Conditions for Projects that Are Funded by Multiple Grants
  - Additional Funding Options
  - The actions in each of the four categories will be further categorized as:
    - Immediate solutions
    - Short-term, administrative solutions
    - Long-term solutions, including legislation
- Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities, which will assign the following roles
  - Roadmap Committee – overseeing Roadmap implementation
  - Representatives of Participating Agencies
  - Champions – providing advocacy, guiding legislative actions
  - Tracking and Follow-up
- Appendices
  - List of Acronyms and Definitions
  - List of Potential Funding Sources
  - Solutions Considered and Withdrawn
- **Roundtable Discussion Regarding the Draft Roadmap Outline**
  - **Geoff Brosseau**, BASMAA, commented that it seems that people are asking funders to do things differently, while also asking funding recipients to do things differently. The Roadmap should present goals and actions for both groups.
  - **Elizabeth Grassi**, Strategic Growth Council (SGC), observed that the State is looking at infrastructure around systems, related to climate change. We should also consider how to look at projects within a system. Currently, individual projects seem isolated, but how do they work within a system? Executive Order B-30-15 includes the principle of considering full life cycle costs – cradle to grave. The Legislature wants to be a world leader in climate change mitigation. To prioritize GI in projects that state is investing in, the projects need to align with the state’s perspective.
  - **Steve Moore**, State Water Board, commented that a precedential SWRCB order in June 2015 allows Permittees to opt into doing regional stormwater planning as an alternative compliance pathway. This opened up a link to watershed planning from the 1990s. Also, the State Water Board’s intent is to encourage a systematic approach to stormwater infrastructure, incorporating green and gray infrastructure. For example, in the 1990s a systematic approach was developed to do asset management in sanitary systems – now this is status quo. This is needed for stormwater assets as well. When camera work is done in gray infrastructure, issues are found everywhere. Now jurisdictions are developing stormwater resource plans, which include GI as a focus. The state encourages a collaborative approach – so agencies can show us how collaboration can be done with transportation. The home for this regional planning effort is alternative compliance. Consider institutional collaboration as well, a topic of research by Michael Kiparsky, of UC Berkeley, which may help to solve the issue of having too many grant applicants.
  - **Allison Brooks**, BARC, described the Bay Area Resilient by Design project as a potential area for overlap among disciplines. The call for projects and design teams will be released May 31<sup>st</sup>. The project is looking for complex, multi-dimensional projects that touch on every county in region. A brain trust is needed to address the issue of financing, drawing on all funding agencies to collaborate on multi-dimensional projects.



- **Dan Cloak**, Contra Costa Clean Water Program, recommended pulling together three or four ideas for next steps. First, the idea of a collaborative – try focusing such a group on a particular task or effort. For example the focus could be on a particular funding cycle or set of grants. The focus could be on melding resource funding and transportation funding. We could seek to get some sustainable streets projects built on a large scale. This could help in the area of capacity building. It could be used as a model for how agencies can pull together different sources of funding for sustainable streets projects.
- **Jill Bicknell**, Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, commented that other benefits of complete streets may be able to enhance GI funding. GHG reduction is one benefit, but there are also others, such as community benefits. Social benefits are part of a triple bottom line analysis. To make a project successful, buy-in is needed from the community. Stormwater resource plans can help facilitate this. Identifying projects that are highly ranked for community preference or benefits could be part of a scoring exercise for project selection.
- **Laura Tam**, SPUR, observed that the long-term solution is legislative. A policy shift is needed to encourage agencies to fund multi-benefit projects in an integrated way. To achieve legislative solutions it would be helpful to include case studies at the state or regional level, and at municipal level, to demonstrate to legislators and others why there is a challenge, and why we don't see more multi-benefit projects being developed rapidly. The report could be peppered with a lot of examples, in order to help communicate these concepts.

#### **6. Closing Remarks and Next Steps – Matt Fabry, BASMAA Chair of the Board**

- Matt Fabry (BASMAA) gave closing remarks and described next steps in the Roundtable process.
  - BASMAA use information from the meeting to prepare a Draft Roadmap.
  - Another focus meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 19, to obtain feedback on the Draft Roadmap.
  - A larger meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 23, 2018, to present the Final Roadmap.
  - There is no need to wait for the Roadmap to improve funding for sustainable streets. For example, the San Mateo County/City Association of Governments (C/CAG) is currently integrating GI into a call for transportation projects.