

INVESTING *in* PLACE

Policy Brief: Measure M Guidelines
Analysis of Board-Adopted Guidelines
June 22, 2017

Overview

Since Measure M was approved by Los Angeles County voters last November, Metro has been developing the administrative guidelines that will determine how funding from the new \$120 billion transportation measure can be spent. As part of this collaborative process, Investing in Place has been working hard with our partners to advocate for rules that will strengthen Metro's commitment to equity, safe street access for everyone, and accountability.

This is a pivotal moment for Los Angeles. We believe that the transformative potential of Measure M relies on its promise of a connected, multimodal future for L.A. These guidelines represent an opportunity for Metro to establish a set of priorities that will unequivocally affirm the importance of moving our region toward that future. That is why Investing in Place has been actively involved in the development of the Measure M guidelines throughout the process. Through policy analysis, public comments, meetings, letters signed by stakeholders, and through our role on the Metro Policy Advisory Council, Investing in Place, in partnership with so many allies, has achieved significant victories for inclusive, safe, data-driven, equitable transportation investments through Measure M.

When the first draft of the guidelines were released in April, [we identified key areas](#) for improvement that we felt needed to be addressed before final adoption by the Metro board. In May, following the release of the updated draft, we issued a [comment letter to Metro signed by a group of transportation advocacy and social justice partners](#) detailing where we felt that the rules needed to be amended or clarified to help make Measure M as impactful as we know it can be. Earlier this month, [we released a policy brief](#) noting which recommendations of ours had been addressed, and which we felt still needed to be addressed in the final guidelines.

Today, after a substantial dialogue with stakeholders from around the county, Metro's Board of Directors voted to adopt the final Measure M guidelines. Many of the changes that we advocated for are represented in the latest revisions. We are pleased that the final guidelines clarify that active transportation, complete streets, and greenway projects are eligible for highway funds; that safety for all road users is now a core objective for highway expenditures; and that references to the outdated Level of Service have been completely stricken from the guidelines. Investing in Place's specific recommendations for the final Measure M guidelines throughout the process, and the extent to which those recommendations were included in the final guidelines approved by the Board today, are below.

What's next? Continued advocacy and bridge building are needed to ensure the implementation of Measure M strengthens mobility and access for all, especially our vulnerable community members, including low-income residents, youth, older adults, and communities of color. Many elements of Measure M will be further defined in administrative processes for each funding program as well as the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is expected to be adopted in 2018. Please join this process and weigh in with your experience, perspective, and leadership. Two key ways to do that are to attend the monthly Policy Advisory Council (PAC) meetings and/or join our Investing in Place #JustGrowth work group. To find out more please email Amanda Meza at amanda@investinginplace.org.

General Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Clarify that Metro's Complete Streets Policy applies to all funding programs, including Multiyear Subregional Programs, and define Metro's oversight role to ensure compliance.

Mostly Addressed. While final guidelines for the Multiyear Subregional Programs have been deferred for further development, Metro's Complete Streets Policy has been explicitly included as an eligible expenditure for Highway Subfund Projects. The adopted guidelines state specifically that Highway Subfund expenditures should reflect Metro's Complete Streets Policy, and that improvements achieved through projects in this subfund should optimize safety for all road users.

Recommendation #2: Ensure broad eligibility of programs that support behavior change (i.e. TDM), planning, project development, and data collection, not just capital projects.

Partially addressed. The adopted guidelines expand eligibility to include subregional program administration (capped at 0.5% of each program’s annual funding) and project development. Many planning and data collection tasks can be addressed under program administration or project development, as long as they directly relate to the scoping or performance monitoring of eligible projects. Non-infrastructure programs, such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM), are still not eligible in many programs.

Recommendation #3: Avoid distributing funding in any program on a “first come, first served” basis.

Addressed. The adopted Multiyear Subregional Programs and Subregional Equity Program will create a transparent prioritization process for these funds. All references to “first come, first served” distribution of funding have been deleted.

Recommendation #4: The final guidelines should anticipate a transportation equity policy in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and include mechanisms to advance social equity in the implementation of Measure M programs, such as prioritization and/or set-asides in funding programs.

Partially addressed. While the adopted guidelines did not add social equity as a prioritization criteria for any funding programs, they significantly increased flexibility to consider new performance metrics at a later date, particularly through the Multiyear Subregional Programs and Countywide Active Transportation Program. Investing in Place will continue to advocate for the adoption of a transportation equity policy and its implementation via appropriate funding programs in the LRTP.

Multiyear Subregional Programs

Recommendation #5: The Multiyear Subregional Programs essentially have to be built from scratch in order to develop administrative processes that are transparent, performance-driven, accountable to stakeholders, and assign the appropriate level of authority to the appropriate decision-makers. Due to the complexity of this issue and the many stakeholders involved, Investing in Place would support up to a one year extension

for Metro staff and the Policy Advisory Council to develop specific guidelines for the Multiyear Subregional Programs.

Addressed. The adopted guidelines outline a general framework for involvement of the COGs and other stakeholders in the development of project lists for the subregional programs and defers administrative details to additional guidelines developed within the next six months.

Recommendation #6: Remove references to Mobility Matrices for determining eligibility or priority within funding programs, and instead have clear criteria for project selection consistent with current policies.

Addressed. The new collaborative administrative process for Multiyear Subregional Programs provides broad flexibility to consider new projects and new performance measures other than those included in the Mobility Matrices.

Recommendation #7: Include advance planning functions, including programmatic studies, data collection, project development, pre-construction, and evaluation activities, within administration of Multiyear Subregional Programs.

Partially addressed. The adopted guidelines allow up to 0.5% of each Multiyear Subregional Program to be spent on program administration. These functions would likely be eligible, though it will be up to each COG to decide whether to integrate them into program administration.

Recommendation #8: Develop a framework to include the COGs in Multiyear Subregional Programs that addresses the core values of: *Transparency and Accountability, Collaborative Decision-Making, Public Participation, Performance Measures, Innovative Project Development, and COG Capacity and Standards.*

Mostly addressed. The adopted guidelines include a strong framework within which each COG will nominate 5-year project lists for approval by the Metro Board of Directors. Each COG will be required to meet minimum standards for public participation in the development of these lists. The specific administrative details of this process will be developed over the next six months. Investing in Place will continue to advocate for addressing these core values in the Multiyear Subregional Programs.

Highway Programs

Recommendation #9: Include multimodal performance metrics that reflect current planning practice, such as travel time reliability and vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), rather than outdated metrics like Level of Service (LOS) in the highway programs. Add metrics addressing public health, sustainability, and social equity. Tie program metrics to regional performance metrics in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) to ensure that projects contribute toward regional goals.

Addressed. The adopted guidelines removed references to the car-centric Level of Service metric, but do not determine an alternative metric, such as VMT. Metro staff will need to develop one or more metrics to evaluate highway projects with a multimodal perspective.

Recommendation #10: Make safety the first objective for all highway programs, with particular emphasis on people walking and biking. Require all subregional highway programs to evaluate fatal and serious injury collision hotspots within their program area (i.e. a High Injury Network) and include safety countermeasures in projects within those areas.

Mostly Addressed. The final guidelines integrate the language of Metro's Complete Streets Policy into the evaluation of projects for Highway Subfund expenditures. Each program will need to develop procedures for addressing safety for all users during project development. A countywide Vision Zero policy that would coordinate safety across all programs may be included in the upcoming LRTP.

Recommendation #11: Promote context-sensitive solutions by employing a complete streets approach to all projects on city streets, with unambiguous objectives to meet the needs of people walking, biking, and taking transit as well as people driving. Clarify eligibility of streetscape elements, such as pedestrian amenities, shade trees, and green streets, that have functional purposes aside from beautification.

Addressed. By explicitly referencing Metro's Complete Streets Policy, the full range of appropriate project elements that enhance walkability are now clearly eligible.

Countywide Active Transportation Program

Recommendation #12: Support up to a one year period to develop more detailed guidelines for the Countywide Active Transportation Program, including integrating social equity metrics into this program.

Addressed. Detailed program guidelines determining priorities for the Countywide Active Transportation Program will be developed over the next year in consultation with stakeholders.

Recommendation #13: Set aside money within the Countywide Active Transportation Program (2%) for ongoing Metro program needs, including bike share operations, open streets programs, bicycle safety education, and safe routes to school non-infrastructure programs. This funding should also support planning and project development in disadvantaged communities and pilot projects that advance the state of the practice.

Deferred until later. Program guidelines for the Countywide Active Transportation Program will be developed over the next year. Investing in Place continues to recommend the consideration of non-infrastructure program needs and planning in disadvantaged communities.

Subregional Equity Program

Recommendation #14: Require each subregion to prioritize its subregional equity funds in a transparent process with public participation.

Addressed. The new collaborative administrative process for Multiyear Subregional Programs will include minimum standards for public participation. The resulting five-year project lists, updated annually, will be adopted by each COG board and the Metro board at public meetings. The Subregional Equity Funds will also be allocated through this process as they become available.

ADA Paratransit & Student and Senior Discounts

Recommendation #15: Provide up to one year to establish sub-guidelines for this investment category to allow for additional public participation, similar to processes proposed in various other investment categories.

Addressed. Metro staff worked with partners including AARP to incorporate feedback into the adopted guidelines. Changes include new eligibility for education and outreach programs that familiarize older adults and people with disabilities to the transit system in order to increase independent mobility and reduce reliance on ADA Paratransit, which is more expensive to provide.

Local Return

Recommendation #16: Clarify eligibility of Local Return for Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) investments by referencing existing Metro policies and programs. Explicitly support local return investments into not just the creation but the preservation of existing affordable housing in order to ensure existing transit dependent residents can remain in TOCs.

Partially Addressed. The adopted guidelines now reference a Transit Oriented Communities Program. Additional work is needed to define this program and ensure that it includes the most effective strategies for increasing housing affordability near transit and reducing displacement of existing communities.

Recommendation #17: Reconsider policy basis for potential local return “floor” that is actually a fund transfer from lower-income areas to wealthy suburbs and industrial tax havens. Clearly articulate definitions for any use of terms like “fair” or “equitable” that aren’t actually based on advancing social equity, safety, or other policy objectives.

Addressed. Based on the PAC’s recommendation, the adopted guidelines removed the problematic local return floor proposal that Investing in Place found to be a funding transfer from low-income communities to wealthy ones.

Investing in Place appreciates Metro staff and the board's diligence in responding to comments and incorporating significant changes based on stakeholder input. The approved Measure M guidelines are a step forward for safe, healthy, and equitable communities. Investing in Place will continue to advocate for accountability, transparency, and equity in the administrative guidelines of the Multiyear Subregional Programs and the Countywide Active Transportation Program as they are developed in the coming months.

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