

AB 2796 (Bloom)

Active Transportation Program: minimum funding percentages for planning and non-infrastructure

Fact Sheet

PURPOSE

To enable active transportation planning and non-infrastructure projects to compete fairly in the Program, this bill designates an ongoing minimum percentage of Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds for planning and non-infrastructure projects in statute, as follows: a minimum of 5% for planning efforts in disadvantaged communities, and 10-30% for non-infrastructure activities, including Safe Routes to School.

SUMMARY

AB 2796 would amend the statute that established the Active Transportation Program (Section 2381 of Division 3 of the Streets and Highways Code) to specify that each funding component—statewide, rural and small Urban, and Metropolitan Planning Organization administered competitions—of the Active Transportation Program shall award *a minimum of 5 percent for planning and community engagement for active transportation in disadvantaged communities and a minimum of 10 percent and maximum of 30 percent for non-infrastructure programming, including Safe Routes to Schools, of the total funds.*

EXISTING LAW

Existing law allows communities to apply for ATP grants allocated by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and administered by the Department of Transportation. Created in 2013 to increase walking and bicycling, the Active Transportation Program provides competitive transportation grants statewide for bikeways, sidewalks, trails, and crossing safety improvements, also known as “infrastructure” for people walking and biking. Additionally, the ATP also funds master planning activities in disadvantaged communities, as well as non-infrastructure grants for education, encouragement, and enforcement activities, including those related to Safe Routes to School.

BACKGROUND

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) and Caltrans, which oversee and administer the Program, have put particular emphasis on funding infrastructure grants in the first two grant cycles of the ATP, and

consequently, planning and non-infrastructure proposals have struggled to compete. In the first grant cycle, roughly 8% of the overall program funded planning and non-infrastructure grants. In the second cycle, which was adopted in 2015, less than 5% of program funds went to grants of this type.

Planning continues to be a huge need for active transportation—especially in low-resourced communities. According to the Office of Planning and Research’s 2013-14 Annual Planning Survey,¹ less than 50% of respondent cities and counties reported an adopted Bicycle Master Plan and less than 1 in 7 respondents reported an adopted Pedestrian Master Plan. Planning funds enable the development of meaningful and transformative infrastructure proposals that make the most of our limited state dollars for active transportation, all while addressing community residents’ identified mobility and safety needs.

Non-infrastructure activities are also critical to engage and excite residents to walk and bike more, as car-free street events like CicLAvia and programs like Safe Routes to Schools have demonstrated. Both planning and non-infrastructure are essential components of Safe Routes to School activities, which promote safe walking and bicycling to school in thousands of schools statewide.

Recent administrative actions by the CTC in developing guidelines for the Program’s third grant cycle further reduce the percentage of funding for planning and increase the competitive advantage of infrastructure projects, discouraging under-resourced jurisdictions from applying for planning and non-infrastructure grants.

SPONSORS

California Bicycle Coalition
California Walks
Safe Routes to School National Partnership

SUPPORT

None on file.

OPPOSITION

None on file.

Version: 3/8/2016

¹ https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/2013-14_APS_final.pdf