



## HIGHWAYS FOR LIFE PROGRAM

### I. BACKGROUND

The Highways for Life (HfL) program was established in 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Sections 1101(a)(20) and 1502. The purpose of Highways for Life is to accelerate the rate of adoption of innovations and technologies, thereby, improving safety and highway quality while reducing congestion caused by construction.

The program provides funding to demonstrate and promote state-of-the-art technologies, elevated performance standards, and new business practices in the highway construction process that result in improved safety, faster construction, reduced congestion from construction, and improved quality and user satisfaction. For each proposed project the **State must be willing to consider making a standard practice of the innovation after a successful demonstration.**

### II. POLICY

Funded by contract authority, funds remain available for four (4) years. Funds are subject to the overall Federal-aid obligation limitation. States are required to submit an application that includes a description of the proposed project(s). A proposed project shall be eligible for assistance under the pilot program if the project:

- Constructs, reconstructs, or rehabilitates a route or connection on a Federal-aid highway eligible for assistance under Chapter 1 of Title 23, United States Code (USC)
- Uses innovative technologies, manufacturing processes, financing, or contracting methods that improve safety, reduce congestion due to construction, and improve quality
- Will be ready for construction within one (1) year of approval of the project proposal
- The amount allocated for a HfL project may be up to 20% but not more than \$5 million, of the total project cost. HfL funds may be used as the 20% non-Federal match requirement of a project constructed under 23 USC. The Federal share for such a project would be 100%.
- Each local agency should be prepared to provide technical specifications for the proposed innovation, if requested

Historical national funding authorizations for each Federal Fiscal Year:

2005 = \$0    2006 = \$15 M    2007 = \$20 M    2008 = \$20 M    2009 = \$20 M

### III. PROCEDURE

The District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE) is the primary contact for local agencies. The Headquarters, Local Assistance HfL Program Coordinator (PC) is the direct contact for the DLAEs. The PC is notified by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) when there is a call



for applications. The PC then forwards the application packet to the DLAEs. The DLAEs notify the local agencies of the call for projects and are sent an application packet. A local agency seeking HfL funding completes an application and submits it electronically to the DLAE. The DLAE coordinates with local agencies timelines for submittal of the applications and provides quality control for completeness, and that program criteria are satisfied on all applications received and forwards them to the PC. The PC coordinates with the DLAEs the timelines for submittal and provides quality assurance reviews on all applications before making a consolidated statewide submittal of all local agency applications to the Headquarters, Division of Budgets, Office of Federal Resources (OFR).

The applications are then forwarded to OFR and are reviewed and ranked according to the criteria. The OFR is Caltrans primary point of contact with the FHWA California Division. If OFR approves the application, it is forwarded to FHWA for review and evaluation for partial or complete HfL funding. The FHWA HfL review panel makes recommendations, and the Secretary of Transportation makes the final decision on which projects will be funded. Once the project awards are announced by FHWA, the PC notifies the DLAEs. The DLAEs inform the local agencies whether or not their project was awarded.

**IV. APPLICABILITY/IMPACTS**

The HfL program applies to and impacts local agencies. This program applies to all local agencies that apply for HfL funding. Such funding will impact local agencies/communities by bringing innovative technologies to local roads and highways and will reduce congestion and improve safety by facilitating faster and safer construction processes. The Local Assistance Program Guidelines will be updated at a later date.

Each year that HfL funds are available Caltrans will distribute the solicitation for project applications. There is normally a one-to-two month window to submit applications each Federal Fiscal Year, which begins each October 1. The time frame has varied from year to year since the programs inception. For the most recent Federal Fiscal Year, re-solicitation was started in July 2009 and FHWA accepted applications until December 2009. For more information on this program you may access the FHWA HfL web site at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hfl/>

The local agency points of contact for this program are the DLAEs in each district. A complete listing of DLAEs is located on the internet at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/dlae.htm>  
The Headquarters Local Assistance Special and Discretionary Programs staff for this program are April Nistos (Program Coordinator) at (916) 653-8450 or David Silva (Assistant Program Coordinator) at (916) 651-8903.

Recommended: Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_ April 7, 2010  
David Silva \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Office of Special and Discretionary Programs

Approved: Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_ April 7, 2010  
Kevin Pokrajac, Chief \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Office of Special and Discretionary Programs

- Attachments:  
1) HfL Application Template and Instructions