

Chapter 1 Introduction and Overview

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Chapter 1 Introduction and Overview

1.1 Purpose

The Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM) is intended to assist California Local Public Agencies (LPAs) scope, organize, design, construct, and maintain local public transportation facilities utilizing Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) federal-aid or state funding. The LAPM describes the required processes, procedures, documents, authorizations, approvals, and certifications to receive federal-aid and/or state funds for many types of local transportation projects.

1.2 Background

The LAPM is a compilation and summary of information from many sources including federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines. It reflects the practices and procedures developed over many years of providing federal-aid funding and state funding for LPA projects. These practices and procedures have been modified by superseding legislation which has provided LPAs with broad delegation, latitude, and responsibility for developing its projects. However, under Title 23 of the United States Code (U.S.C), Caltrans is responsible for the administration of federal-aid transportation projects in California and cannot delegate this overall administrative responsibility.

1.3 Related Manuals

The LAPM is intended to be used in conjunction with the [Local Assistance Program Guidelines \(LAPG\)](#). The LAPG describes each of the federal-aid and state-funded Local Assistance programs and the requirements for obtaining project funding for these individual programs.

The Standard Environmental Reference (SER) provides departmental policy and guidance on compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related federal environmental laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies. The reference is intended for statewide use by LPAs and Caltrans.

For LPA projects on the State Highway System (SHS), all applicable Caltrans manuals and guidelines must be used. These describe the processes and procedures for developing state system projects. These also contain discussions of the regional and state planning and programming processes.

The LAPG provides detailed descriptions of the various state and federal programs available for financing local public transportation projects.

1.4 Terms and Definitions

A glossary of terms and definitions commonly utilized in the LAPM / LAPG is available at: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/local-assistance/documents/guide/dla-glossary.pdf>

1.5 Acronyms and Description

A list of acronyms commonly utilized in the LAPM / LAPG is available at: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/local-assistance/documents/guide/dla-acronyms.pdf>

1.6 LAPM Organization

The LAPM is divided into individual chapters that describe processes and/or procedural steps important to the development of a Local Assistance project. Projects may not need to fulfill each process to be successfully implemented and to be eligible for federal or state funding, but each should be considered.

Federal-Aid Projects

Federal-aid projects require consideration of the processes described in each chapter in this manual. For these projects, each chapter should be reviewed to determine whether the actions, activities, and decisions required are applicable to the individual project.

State-Funded Projects

Projects utilizing only state funds require less oversight and review than those with federal-aid funds. Not all of the processes described in the chapters of this manual apply to these projects. [LAPM](#) Chapters [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [10](#), [16](#), and [17](#) apply in whole, or in part, to these projects. The [LAPG](#) further defines these programs.

Chapter Summaries

The chapters are generally in chronological sequence when developing a project; however, some of the procedures can be performed concurrently, or must be repeated for the next phase of a project.

[Chapter 2: Roles and Responsibilities](#) defines the roles and responsibilities for the various entities involved in developing a local assistance project.

[Chapter 3: Project Authorization](#) describes the process to obtain project authorization and fund obligation required for each phase of a federal-aid project.

[Chapter 4: Agreements](#) describes the agreements needed between the LPA and the State and between the State and FHWA to obtain reimbursement of funds.

[Chapter 5: Invoicing](#) describes the general accounting procedures necessary to receive reimbursement for work done in any phase of the project.

Chapters 6-8: [Environmental Procedures](#), [Field Review](#), and [Public Hearings](#) discuss the project initiation and environmental procedures needed to bring a project to the stage at which the LPA decision-makers commit the project to final design and implementation.

[Chapter 9: Civil Rights and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises](#) describes the requirements for establishing and reporting DBE program and project goals. This process may be necessary during the initial project stage, or may not be required until a later phase.

[Chapter 10: Consultant Selection](#) describes the requirements for selecting and hiring consultants to perform project activities.

Chapters 11 & 12: [Design Guidance](#) and [Plans, Specifications, & Estimate](#) describe the design standards to be used and the Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) development necessary to bring the project to the advertising and construction stage.

Chapters 13 & 14: [Right of Way](#) and [Utility Relocations](#) describe the procedures used to acquire right of way or relocate utilities.

Chapters 15-17: [Advertise and Award Project](#), [Administer Construction Contracts](#), and [Project Completion](#) describe the procedures from advertising through construction administration, project completion, and completion of the final reports.

[Chapter 18: Maintenance](#) describes the ongoing maintenance responsibilities and activities needed to assure that the project remains a functional public asset, and the related inspection and reporting requirements.

Chapter 19: Reserved for future use.

[Chapter 20: Audits and Corrective Actions](#) describes the expectations, roles, and responsibilities for audits conducted by the Caltrans Internal Audits Office (CIAO) or the Independent Office of Audits and Investigations (IOAI).

1.7 LAPM Updates

The LAPM is updated on an annual basis and published every January:
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/guidelines-and-procedures/local-assistance-procedures-manual-lapm>.

Comments and suggestions for improvement to the manual or the processes and procedures therein can be submitted to: DLAPublications@dot.ca.gov.