

# Breaking Down Barriers

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING PROCESSES



Improve processes that delay transportation projects and help create thousands of much-needed jobs now.



### Accelerating project delivery to create jobs

California, along with the rest of the nation, has done more with less over the past few years while weathering the economic downturn. Decreased capital investment in transportation coupled with the length of time it takes for federally funded projects to begin construction has resulted in unprecedented unemployment in the transportation industry.

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) began the Breaking Down Barriers initiative in the summer of 2009 in search of ways to improve federal processes that delay the creation of thousands of good-paying jobs urgently needed now to jump-start the economy.

Working in concert with other efforts spearheaded by top Department of Transportation officials and key Congressional leaders, OCTA has garnered widespread support of its initiative. Breaking Down Barriers will help unlock projects trapped in the federal project delivery process and assist to get people back to work in Southern California and the rest of the nation without the need for massive amounts of additional federal investment.

### Specific recommendations to improve lengthy federal processes

Through research and in-depth interviews with transportation providers across the country, the Breaking Down Barriers initiative has identified more than 22 changes to existing federal law, regulations or practices that will help expedite projects and create jobs now. The recommendations from this initiative improve federal processes without eliminating any of the necessary environmental protections required by law.

Here are some examples of barriers which can be broken down to expedite project delivery:

### Project programming

**Barrier:** Lengthy Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process

**Processing Time:** Each TIP amendment can take up to two to four months to clear the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the 30-day public review period, the State Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

**Recommendation:** Delegate or shorten the TIP amendment process to create jobs sooner

- Review TIP & State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) concurrently
- Advance pre-construction activities

### Project contracting and design standards

**Barrier:** Limited bidding options and no pre-award authority

**Recommendation:** Implement broad authority for innovative procurements and designs

- Use design-build to expedite projects
- Expand use of qualified, short-listed consultants
- Combine projects to accelerate construction
- Use prefabrication / other off-site technologies
- Expand use of public-private partnerships

### Project development

**Barrier:** Environmental process delays

**Processing time:** Months to years

**Recommendation:** Improve environmental process

- Improve efficiency of environmental reviews
- Advance pre-construction activities
- Promote integrated planning and programming
- Clarify environmental roles and eliminate duplication
- Identify environmental community and economic goals early
- Involved attorneys early to avoid problems later
- Expand use of programmatic agreements
- Expand use of "in lieu" fees and mitigation banking
- Flexibility in ROW acquisition and utility relocation
- Construction Manager / General Contractor (CM/GC) project delivery method

### Tracking Transportation's RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**\$1 billion = 18,000**  
INVESTMENT = JOBS



**\$48.2 billion**  
INVESTED ANNUALLY  
IN TRANSPORTATION  
PROGRAMS THROUGH  
SAFETEA-LU



**868,000**  
JOBS



### MORE INFORMATION

**Marnie O'Brien Primmer**  
Mobility 21 Executive Director  
949.698.2856 (cell)  
949.288.6884 (office)  
mprimmer@mobility21.com  
www.mobility21.com