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# **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM CYCLE 1**

## **APPLICATION Part 2**

**(Includes Narrative Sections II, III & IV)**

## II. PROJECT INFORMATION

(Please read the “ATP instructions” document prior to attaching your responses to all of the questions in Sections II. Project Information, Section III. Screening Criteria and Section IV. Narrative Questions - 20 pages max)

### 1. PROJECT LOCATION

In Mojave, Kern County, the project will be constructed on the streets immediately adjacent to the Mojave Elementary and High School, including (east & west) Nadeau, Belshaw, Cerro Gordo, Inyo, Panamint, Shasta, Trinity, Park, HWY-58, Barstow Rd, and (north & south) Sierra Highway, K St, L St, M St, N St, O St, P St, and Q St. The entire project will be included within a half mile of the school, and will ensure that both sides of all streets in the downtown area have navigable sidewalks.

2. **PROJECT COORDINATES** Latitude  Longitude   
(Decimal degrees) (Decimal degrees)

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The first purpose of this project is to better protect children walking to and from the Mojave Elementary and High Schools, and improve accessibility throughout the community. 60 percent of the students in Mojave walk or bike to school, and there is currently no safe passage for them away from vehicular traffic. This problem is exacerbated in the winter months when most students walk home in the dark. This project will address this problem by constructing navigable sidewalks on all of Mojave’s residential streets in the downtown area. The project will capitalize on recent infrastructure upgrades, which installed curb and gutter on each street in the downtown area. Sidewalks will also connect the school to the Mojave Gardens neighborhood on Highway-58 and Barstow Rd. This section will require curb and gutter upgrades to precede the sidewalks, as well as a brick retaining wall to keep pedestrians safely away from the adjacent highway. It will be wheel chair accessible, which will dramatically improve the mobility of elderly and disabled residents in this area. These investments will impact 100 percent of the children walking to and from school, as well as enhance the connectivity for all residents to critical service and amenities. Additional community resources to be accessed safely via sidewalks include: the community center and Vets Hall on O St, the Post Office and medical clinic on Belshaw, Shops and Family Resource Center on K St, but stop on Inyo, and a myriad of churches peppered throughout intersections in Mojave.

### 4. PROJECT STATUS

This project is in the conceptual phase, and is designed to capitalize on recent infrastructure investments in curb and gutter. Each phase can be executed within existing right-of-ways, and no environmental issues are anticipated.

### **III. SCREENING CRITERIA**

#### **1. DEMONSTRATED NEEDS OF THE APPLICANT**

##### **Describe the need for the project and/or funding**

Of the 764 students that attend Mojave Elementary and High School, about 60 percent walk to school, according to Mojave Unified School District. Those students are currently walking home in the dark, on dirt shoulders or in the middle of the roadway. This can be especially dangerous in winter months or in adverse weather conditions. There have been three pedestrian fatalities in November 2014, including a 16-year old girl on her way to school.

Mojave is a relatively poor rural community, with 4,000 people and 40 percent poverty, according to the 2011 U.S. Census. Many parents do not own vehicles, and children have no choice but to walk to school. There are also a large number of elderly and disabled residents who are mostly homebound due to the lack of paved walkways and wheelchair accessible ramps, especially on HWY-58. This can be particularly dangerous when a vehicle is parked on the dirt shoulders, which can force the pedestrian to walk between the roadway and the parked vehicle, and onto oncoming traffic.

#### **2. CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (100 WORDS OR LESS)**

##### **Explain how this project is consistent with your Regional Transportation Plan (if applicable). Include adoption date of the plan.**

This project is consistent with Kern County's Regional Transportation Plan and its goal to increase Non-Motorized (Active Transportation) Facilities. By increasing the amount of sidewalk and improving accessibility for those who utilize wheelchairs, this project will encourage students and other residents to walk rather than drive.

The latest version of the Regional Transportation Plan is currently out for public review, with approval expected in December 2014.

#### **IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

- 1. POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED WALKING AND BICYCLING, ESPECIALLY AMONG STUDENTS, INCLUDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF WALKING AND BICYCLING ROUTES TO AND FROM SCHOOLS, TRANSIT FACILITIES, COMMUNITY CENTERS, EMPLOYMENT CENTERS, AND OTHER DESTINATIONS; AND INCLUDING INCREASING AND IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY OF NON-MOTORIZED USERS. (0-30 POINTS)**

- A. Describe how your project encourages increased walking and bicycling, especially among students.**

This project will encourage students who primarily live west and south of the school to walk to Mojave Elementary and High Schools. Currently, any student living in any direction of the school who desires to walk must navigate a patchwork of dirt shoulders and sporadic sidewalks and ramps. During the winter months, those shoulders become wet and muddy, tempting students to risk the traffic walking in the street. Mojave Unified School District Superintendent, Aaron Haughton, states that numerous parents and children would prefer to walk to school but choose to drive because of the safety concerns.

Disabled students and elderly residents have even fewer options as it is extremely difficult to operate a wheelchair in the dirt. Paved sidewalks and wheelchair ramps would greatly increase the student traffic and allow disabled residents to connect with the rest of the community.

- B. Describe the number and type of possible users and their destinations, and the anticipated percentage increase in users upon completion of your project. Data collection methods should be described.**

An estimated 62% of the students at Mojave Elementary and Mojave High Schools currently walk or ride their bicycles to school. Approximately 450 students live in the area affected by this project. Therefore we estimate that there are 450 current users whose destination is the school. Due to hazardous condition for pedestrians, especially at night, we anticipate a 20% increase in the number of student foot traffic and 30% increase in residential foot traffic once safe conditions are provided. This information is available from Mojave Unified School District and focus groups conducted at the Mojave Airport.

- C. Describe how this project improves walking and bicycling routes to and from, connects to, or is part of a school or school facility, transit facility, community center, employment center, state or national trail system, points of interest, and/or park.**

This project will improve the walking route to Mojave Elementary and High Schools, as the new sidewalks will connect those 60% of students who rely on walking as their sole mode of transportation and who live primarily west and south of the school to the school's entrance.

It will also provide pedestrians and wheelchair users with a connection to existing sidewalks in the business district on K Street and where there are no contiguous sidewalks on the remaining streets of Mojave. There they can find transit connections through Kern County Regional Transit, the public transportation system for the county of Kern. Kern County Regional Transit provides a connection to community centers, educational opportunities and employment centers throughout all of Antelope Valley. There is also a community employment center and a Human Services Agency located on Highway 58 just west of the proposed project's location.

**D. Describe how this project increases and/or improves connectivity, removes a barrier to mobility and/or closes a gap in a non-motorized facility.**

The proposed sidewalks around Mojave Elementary and High Schools clearly improve connectivity, as the schools are located on O St, just .25 miles north of a Mojave Community Center, the future location of the Mojave Library, and an existing park. It will also connect access to Highway 58 and to existing sidewalks on Sierra Highway, two of the busiest collector roads that have many businesses, dining establishments and community resources.

While there are no sidewalks on Highway 58, along the west side of O St, and the absence of wheelchair accessible ramps on Highway 58 and on the east side of O St creates a significant barrier to mobility. The proposed ramps along Highway 58 and O St will remove that barrier and allow those who utilize wheelchairs access to the community and Vetern's center on O St, businesses, dining establishments, community resource centers, employment centers and bus stops.

- Projects with significant potential- 21 to 30 points
- Projects with moderate potential- 11 to 20 points
- Projects with minimal potential- 1 to 10 points
- Projects with no potential- 0 points

#### **IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued**

### **2. POTENTIAL FOR REDUCING THE NUMBER AND/OR RATE OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST FATALITIES AND INJURIES, INCLUDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF SAFETY HAZARDS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS. (0-25 POINTS)**

#### **A. Describe the potential of the project to reduce pedestrian and/or bicycle injuries or fatalities.**

The risk of students getting hit by a vehicle is very high due to students walking or biking on the roadway with no separation between vehicle and pedestrian. Vehicles traveling on Highway 58 at a high rate of speed (average speed 58 mph according to Kern County Sheriff's Department) in an area with a speed limit of 45mph with no barrier between the pedestrians and the vehicles puts students and citizens at significant risk of injury or death. Parked vehicles on the dirt shoulders create another risk for children walking to school. Whenever a vehicle is parked on the dirt shoulder, it creates an obstruction to the pedestrian and forces the children to walk between the travel way and the parked vehicle. Currently many parents who own a vehicle prefer to drive their children to school because of the unsafe condition around the school.

This project would construct new sidewalks that would offer pedestrians a safer alternative to walking in the street, with the new curb and erected wall provide a physical barrier separating them from the roadway.

This is an older neighborhood, and the areas that already have sidewalk do not have wheelchair accessible ramps at the intersections. This can force wheelchair users to operate their wheelchairs in the roadway, putting them at a significantly increased risk of being hit by a vehicle.

This project offers significant potential for reducing injuries and fatalities to pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair users by moving them off of the roadway and onto sidewalks, creating a separation between the two.

#### **B. Describe if/how your project will achieve any or all of the following:**

- **Reduces speed or volume of motor vehicles**
- **Improves sight distance and visibility**
- **Improves compliance with local traffic laws**
- **Eliminates behaviors that lead to collisions**
- **Addresses inadequate traffic control devices**
- **Addresses inadequate bicycle facilities, crosswalks or sidewalks**

This project will eliminate behaviors that lead to collisions by moving pedestrians out of the roadway and onto the safety of a sidewalk. It also addresses inadequate sidewalk by constructing sidewalk where none currently exists, replacing damaged asphalt concrete walkways with concrete sidewalks, and adds wheelchair accessible ramps at intersections.

Sidewalks on the streets surrounding Mojave Elementary and High Schools would eliminate the need for students to walk in the middle of the street, significantly reducing the potential for collisions. Sidewalks would channel pedestrians or those in wheelchairs safely away from vehicular traffic and would encourage safely crossing the street at intersections and crosswalks.

A concrete barrier on the southern portion of Highway 58 would provide physical protection from vehicles, discourage pedestrians from crossing Highway 58 where there is no crosswalk, and would significantly reduce the volume of passing vehicles.



*↑ Pedestrians and Bicyclists on north side of Highway 58*



- c. Describe the location's history of events and the source(s) of data used (e.g. collision reports, community observation, surveys, audits) if data is not available include a description of safety hazard(s) and photos.**

The "Safe Routes to School Collision Map Viewer" tool found in TIMS (Transportation Injury Mapping System), created by researchers at the Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) at the University of California, Berkeley, provided a list of pedestrian and bicycle accidents that occurred with 1/2 mile of the school over the seven-year period of 2004 – 2011. It was determined that between 2004 and 2011, there were four pedestrian and two bicycle accidents that occurred within 1/2 mile of Mojave Elementary and High School.

Tragically, in November 2013, the community of Mojave suffered a great loss when a Mojave High School student was struck and killed by a vehicle while she was crossing Highway 58 on her way to school.

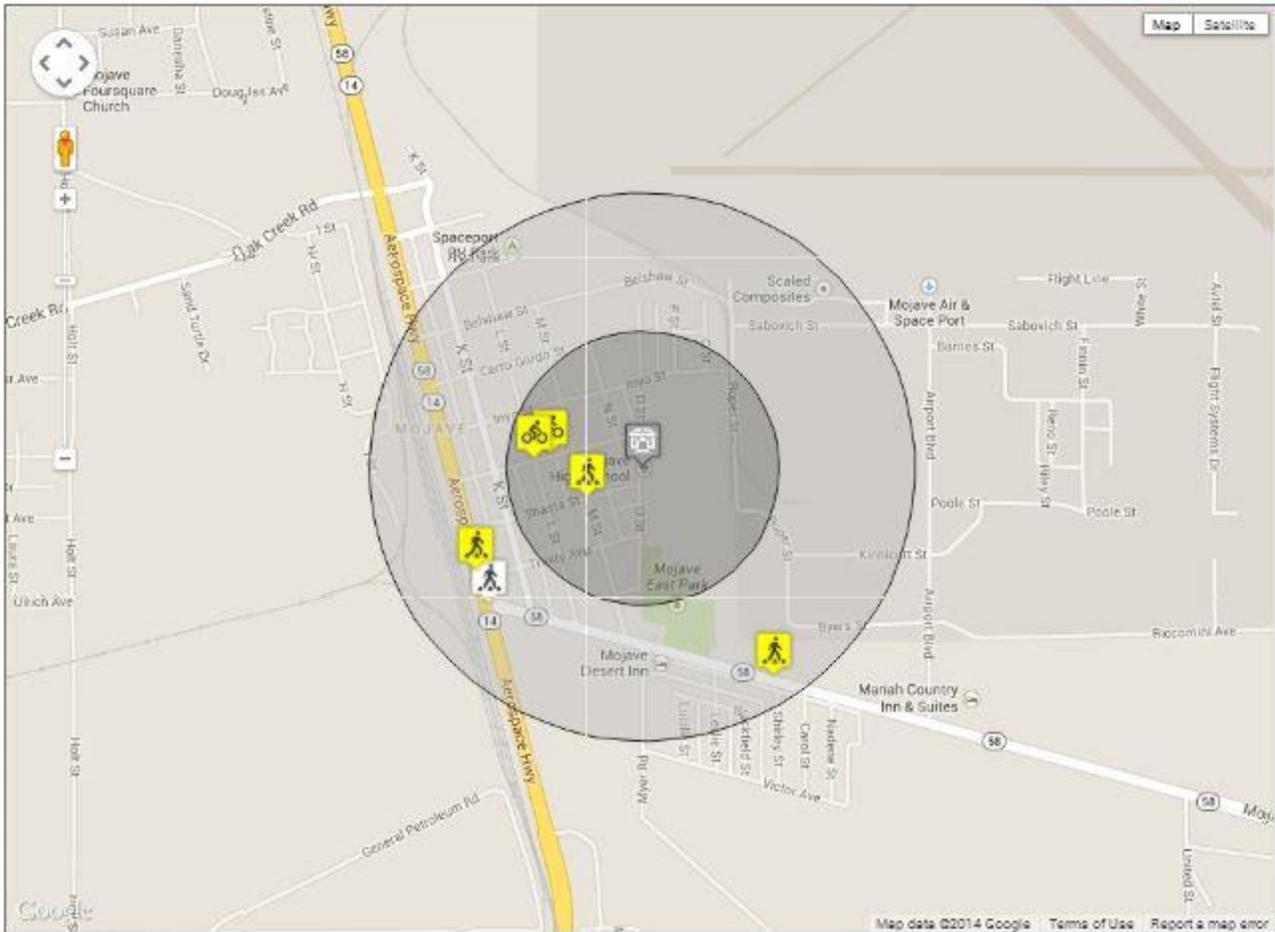
Additionally, discussions with the school's principal and teachers reveal numerous accidents involving students that happened prior to that period, and a frightening number of close calls that happen far too frequently.

Finally, the engineering staff at the Kern County Roads Department, with decades of experience in transportation engineering, recognizes that the addition of sidewalks and wheelchair accessible ramps will greatly increase the safety for pedestrians in that area.

### Mojave Jr./Sr. High

15732 O St. | Mojave | Kern County | CDS: 15636771534460

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Summary Statistics							
Radius	Fatal	Severe Injury	Visible Injury	Complaint of Pain	Pedestrian	Bicycle	Total
< 1/4 mi.	0	0	3	0	1	2	3
1/4 - 1/2 mi.	0	0	2	1	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>

- Projects with significant potential- 16 to 25 points
- Projects with moderate potential- 8 to 15 points
- Projects with minimal potential- 1 to 7 points
- Projects with no potential- 0 points

#### **IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued**

### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION and PLANNING (0-15 POINTS)**

#### **A. Describe the community based public participation process that culminated in the project proposal or plan, such as noticed meetings/public hearings, consultation with stakeholders, etc.**

The Revitalize Mojave Committee included SR2S as part of their vision plan that was adopted in March 2013 in partnership with Kern County Planning and Community Development. Mojave Unified School District also adopted a SR2S plan on September 8, 2011. The Kern County Sheriff's Department Mojave substation deputies work closely with the community of Mojave to monitor traffic concerns and pedestrian safety in historically problematic areas.

Kern County has been applying for Safe Routes to School funds since cycle one. An established a SR2S committee includes representatives from the Kern County Roads Department, the Kern Council of Governments, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, the California Highway Patrol, and the Kern County Environmental Health Department. The purpose of the committee is to identify and address safety issues for children walking or bicycling to schools throughout Kern County.

The Kern County Roads Department receives calls throughout the year from parents and school officials expressing safety concerns along school routes throughout the County. These safety concerns are documented and investigated. Whenever possible, the safety concerns are resolved by installing additional signs or painting new crosswalks and/or additional striping. Unfortunately, sometimes these safety concerns require more than just signage and striping. They require infrastructure improvements that cost a significant amount of money. It is these safety concerns that are documented and presented to the SR2S committee for evaluation.

A list of proposed projects is created and ranked based on the number of students walking, accident history and risk factors. Once a project is selected, the school district is contacted and presented with the proposed project. They are encouraged to share the project with parents and students to get their feedback. Comments coming from the school officials and parents are also presented to the SR2S committee. After the feedback is evaluated and the project is finalized, it is presented to the school district and a letter of support for the project is requested.

The urgent need for a safe crosswalk on Highway 58 resulted in a proposal by the Kern County Roads Department that included installation of a rectangular rapid flashing beacons and a center raised median. While anticipating the installation, and while still recognizing the need for students and citizens to cross the highway safely, a private Mojave resident stepped forward and volunteered his time, wearing a safety vest and carrying a hand-held stop sign to safely assist pedestrians across four lanes of traffic on Highway 58.

#### **B. Describe the local participation process that resulted in the identification and prioritization of the project**

The Kern County Roads Department have been aware of the need for a sidewalk around Mojave Elementary and High Schools for quite some time, especially after the death of a student when she was struck by a vehicle as she was crossing the highway on her way to school in 2013. The concept for the project was also brought to us by the Mojave Union School District, to which Mojave Elementary and High Schools belong.

C. Is the project cost over \$1 Million? Y/N  Y

**If Yes- is the project Prioritized in an adopted city or county bicycle transportation plan, pedestrian plan, safe routes to school plan, active transportation plan, trail plan, circulation element of a general plan, or other publicly approved plan that incorporated elements of an active transportation plan? Y/N**  Y

- Projects with substantial participation of community members- 11 to 15 points
- Projects with moderate participation of community members - 6 to 10 points
- Projects with minimal participation of community members- 1 to 5 points
- Projects with no participation of community members- 0 points

#### IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued

#### 4. COST EFFECTIVENESS (0-10 POINTS)

- A. Describe the alternatives that were considered. Discuss the relative costs and benefits of all the alternatives and explain why the nominated one was chosen.**

The problems for pedestrians that exist around this school and the adjoining neighborhood can really only be addressed by the solutions proposed in this project. Children are walking to school on dirt shoulders or in the roadway. Wheelchair users are unable to access existing sidewalks because the intersections do not have wheelchair accessible ramps. There are no other reasonable alternatives to be considered.

- B. Calculate the ratio of the benefits of the project relative to both the total project cost and funds requested (i.e.,  $\frac{Benefit*}{Total\ Project\ Cost}$  and  $\frac{Benefit*}{Program\ Funds\ Requested}$ ).**

*\*Benefits must directly relate to the goals of the Active Transportation Program.*

The benefit-cost ratios for this project were calculated using TIMS (Transportation Injury Mapping System), created by researchers at the Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) at the University of California, Berkeley.

Using the “Safe Routes to School Collision Map Viewer” tool, it was determined that between 2004 and 2011, there were four pedestrian and two bicycle accidents that occurred within 1/2 mile of Mojave Elementary and High Schools.

This information was then inputted into the Benefit / Cost Calculator. Based on the estimated project cost of \$1.4 million, the benefit-cost ratio for the project was determined to be 60%.

As there is no matching requirement for Safe Routes to School projects, the benefit-cost ratio for the Total Project Cost is the same as for the Program Funds Requested.

- Applicant considers alternatives and exceptionally justifies the project nominated - 5 points
- Applicant considers alternatives and adequately justifies the project nominated - 3 to 4 points
- Applicant considers alternatives and minimally justifies the project nominated - 1 to 2 points
- Applicant did not consider alternatives or justify the project nominated - 0 points

- Applicant logically described how project benefits were quantified and has a benefit-cost ratio greater than 1 - 5 points

- Applicant logically described how project benefits were quantified and has benefit-cost ratio less than 1- 3 points
- Applicant did not logically describe how project benefits were quantified - 0 points

#### IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued

##### 5. IMPROVED PUBLIC HEALTH (0-10 points)

###### A. Describe how the project will improve public health, i.e. through the targeting of populations who have a high risk factor for obesity, physical inactivity, asthma, or other health issues.

Kern County residents suffer from obesity and chronic disease at a level that is considered epidemic by the Kern County Public Health Services Department. In 2010, they along with many other health based organizations in the County issued a report entitled "Call to Action: Building a Foundation for a Healthy Kern County." According to the report, 60.3% of Kern County's population is considered overweight or obese. The report states that "poor nutrition and physical inactivity not only reinforces overweight and obesity but also has increased the risk of many chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and many types of cancer." Kern County is the worst county in California when it comes to heart disease as a cause of death.

This project can improve public health through two avenues, both of which are encouraged in the report. It establishes a safe route for children to walk to school, thereby encouraging them to increase their physical activity. Also, because it targets young people, it can encourage lifelong changes in behavior that will prevent them from suffering from chronic diseases when they are adults.

- Applicant exceptionally described how the project will improve public health and addresses high risk populations- 7 to 10 points
- Applicant adequately described how the project will improve public health and addresses high risk populations - 4 to 6 points
- Applicant minimally described how the project will improve public health - 1 to 3 points
- Applicant did not describe how the project will improve public health - 0 points

#### IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued

##### 6. **BENEFIT TO DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES** (0-10 points)

A. I. Is the project located in a disadvantaged community? Y/N

II. Does the project significantly benefit a disadvantaged community? Y/N

a. Which criteria does the project meet? (Answer all that apply)

- Median household income for the community benefited by the project:  
\$35,513
- California Communities Environmental Health Screen Tool (CalEnvironScreen) score for the community benefited by the project:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- For projects that benefit public school students, percentage of students eligible for the Free or Reduced Price Meals Programs:  
84.2% Mojave Elementary School  
80.7% Mojave High School

b. Should the community benefitting from the project be considered disadvantaged based on criteria not specified in the program guidelines? If so, provide data for all criteria above and a quantitative assessment of why the community should be considered disadvantaged.

**B. Describe how the project demonstrates a clear benefit to a disadvantaged community and what percentage of the project funding will benefit that community, for projects using the school based criteria describe specifically the school students and community will benefit.**

The attendance boundaries for Mojave Elementary and High Schools encompass a relatively large area directly adjacent the schools, with the outlying areas primarily rural. With just over 80% of the students at the school eligible for reduced or free lunch, it is very clear that the school is situated in a disadvantaged community. According to the US Census, unemployment in the community of Mojave is over 26%.

According to the school's principal, many of the families' whose children attend the school do not have access to a vehicle and therefore have no choice but to walk to school. Other parents have expressed to the principal that they would like to have their children walk to school but feel that the lack of sidewalks make it unsafe to do so.

Wheelchair users from the neighborhood who would like to access the school or the O Street corridor cannot use the existing sidewalks due to the lack of wheelchair accessible ramps. The post office is located on Belshaw St just east of K Street known as the business district with an array of shopping and dining opportunities plus access

to Kern Regional Transit, the north Antelope Valley's public transportation system that connects to education, work and business centers throughout the county.

The barriers currently faced by the residents of this disadvantaged neighborhood would be removed and the ability (and incentive) to walk would be greatly increased by this project.

- Project clearly and significantly addresses health, safety, and/or infrastructure challenges in the disadvantaged community- 5 points
- Project adequately addresses health, safety, and/or infrastructure challenges in the disadvantaged community - 3 points
- Project minimally addresses health, safety, and/or infrastructure challenges in the disadvantaged community - 1 points

- 80% to 100% of project funding benefits the disadvantaged community- 5 points
- 60% to 79% of project funding benefits the disadvantaged community- 4 points
- 40% to 59% of project funding benefits the disadvantaged community- 3 points
- 20% to 39% of project funding benefits the disadvantaged community- 2 points
- 1% to 19% of project funding benefits the disadvantaged community- 1 points
- 0% of project benefits the disadvantaged community- 0 points

**IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued**

**7. USE OF CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) OR A CERTIFIED COMMUNITY CONSERVATION CORPS (0 to -5 points)**

The applicant must send the following information to the CCC and CALCC prior to application submittal to Caltrans:

Project Description  
Project Map

Detailed Estimate  
Preliminary Plan

Project Schedule

The corps agencies can be contacted at:  
California Conservation Corps at: [www.ccc.ca.gov](http://www.ccc.ca.gov)  
Community Conservation Corps at: <http://calocalcorps.org>

- A. The applicant has coordinated with the CCC to identify how a state conservation corps can be a partner of the project. Y/N  N

  - a. Name, e-mail, and phone # of the person contacted and the date the information was submitted to them

  
- B. The applicant has coordinated with a representative from the California Association of Local Conservation Corps (CALCC) to identify how a certified community conservation corps can be a partner of the project. Y/N  N

  - a. Name, e-mail, and phone # of the person contacted and the date the information was submitted to them

  
- C. The applicant intends to utilize the CCC or a certified community conservation corps on all items where participation is indicated? Y/N  N

I have coordinated with a representative of the CCC; and the following are project items that they are qualified to partner on:

I have coordinated with a representative of the CALCC; and the following are project items that they are qualified to partner on:

Points will be deducted if an applicant does not seek corps participation or if an applicant intends not to utilize a corps in a project in which the corps can participate\*.

- The applicant intends to partner with a conservation corps to the maximum extent possible- 0 points
- The applicant did not seek partnership with a conservation corps, or indicated that they do not intend to partner with the corps to the maximum extent possible- (-)5 points

*\*If the applicant has indicated intended use of the CCC or CALCC in the approved application, a copy of the agreement between the implementing agency and the CCC or CALCC must be provided by the implementing agency, and will be incorporated as part of the original application, prior to request for authorization of funds for construction.*

#### **IV. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS- continued**

##### **8. APPLICANT'S PERFORMANCE ON PAST GRANTS** ( 0 to -10 points)

###### **A. Describe any of your agency's ATP type grant failures during the past 5 years, and what changes your agency will take in order to deliver this project.**

The Kern County Roads Department has not had any grant failures during the past five years.

- The applicant has no past grant experience or has performed satisfactorily on past grants - 0 points
- The applicant has not performed satisfactorily on past grants and/or has not adequately described how they will deliver this project (-)10 points