



Community Benefits Program Overview

Large infrastructure projects such as the proposed Delta Conveyance Project inevitably create adverse effects on the communities and the local environment in which they are built.

A community benefits program is a set of commitments made by project proponents to address these local effects, particularly when project benefits are not local. These commitments can include a wide range of possible approaches, including economic and social benefits from job training programs and local hiring targets or funding for local improvement projects such as infrastructure or recreational facilities.



Creating a Community Benefits Program for the Delta Conveyance Project is an acknowledgment that:

- 1 The direct project benefits related to SWP water supply reliability do not directly benefit the communities of the Delta;
- 2 The project, if approved, could have potential adverse effects that Delta communities experience through the term of construction; and
- 3 The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other required environmental mitigation typically do not address all adverse effects on the local communities.

Community Benefits Program - Two Components

Two main components are being proposed: a Delta Community Fund and Economic Development and Integrated Benefits:

Delta Community Fund. A fund would be established to implement community-prioritized projects in the Delta. While no specific projects have been identified or funded, early input from community members identified a number of possible types of project categories, including things like recreation, water and air quality, public safety and emergency response, habitat conservation, culture and history, economy, infrastructure, education and workforce development, and levee maintenance and improvement.

Economic Development and Integrated Benefits. These are benefits that would be realized through construction of the project facilities. One element would be to include targeted hiring, job training and business participation programs. Another would be commitments to "leave-behind" infrastructure or other construction-related features that could provide local benefits, including things like fiber optics, walking trails, river overlooks, park-and-rides, or converting access roads to bike trails.

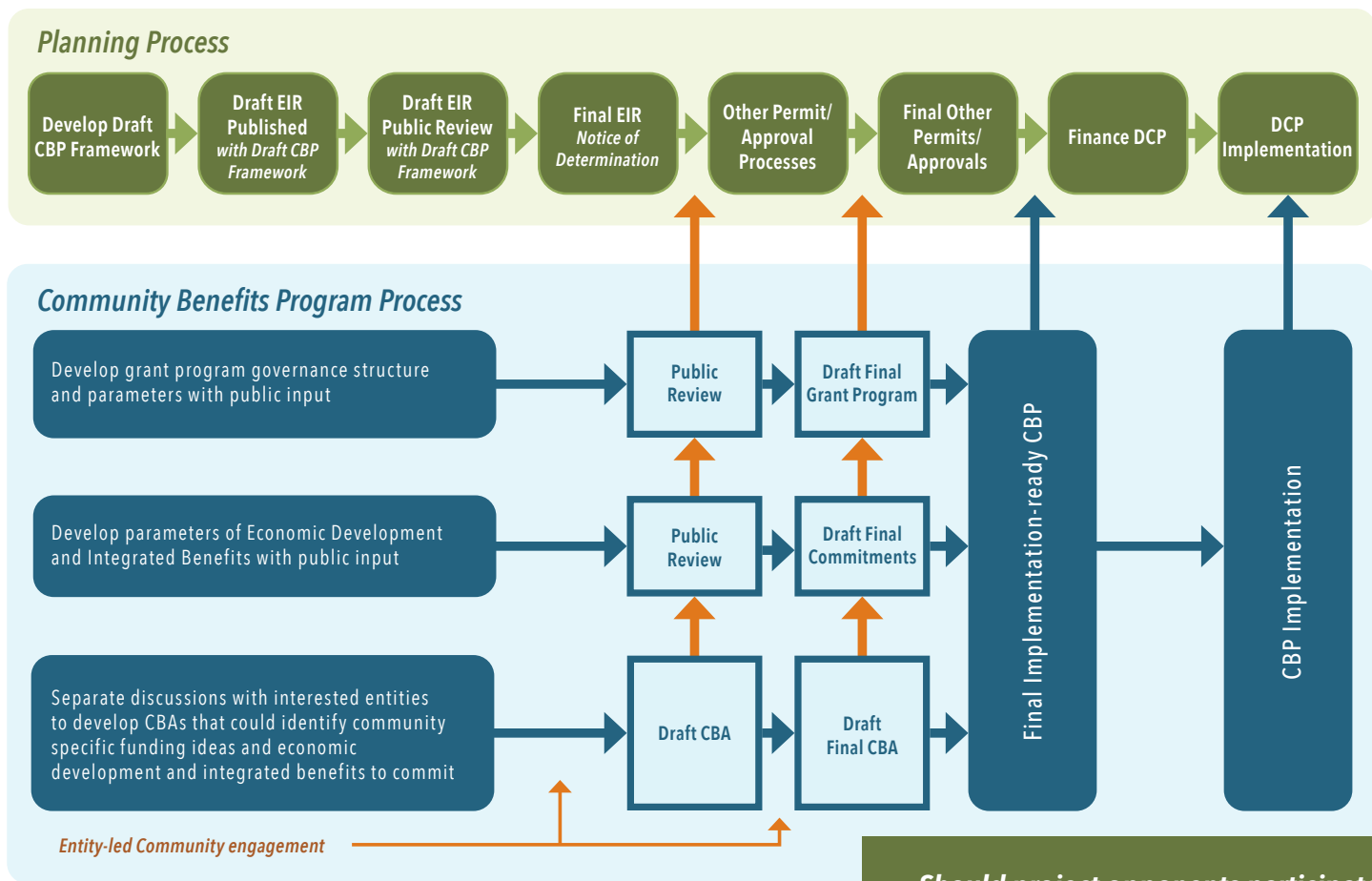
Next Steps

Community Benefits Programs are unique to both the project and the community they are supporting. DWR will include the Draft Community Benefits Program Framework as an appendix to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This is meant to signal DWR's commitment to the program and will also provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the concepts included in the Draft Framework. DWR will implement an approach that supports a wide and diverse audience and encourages broad community involvement. This may include supplementing the grant program and integrated benefits approach with one or more Community Benefits Agreements (CBA).

- These CBAs may be developed with a single entity representing a single geographic location or town, or with an entity representing a larger region, or in combination.
- CBAs can provide an opportunity for more targeted collaboration with communities.
- Exploring town/regional interests will proceed simultaneously to development and finalization of the EIR.
- Communities interested in pursuing the program in their own local areas (and possible community-specific CBAs) are encouraged to reach out to DWR to collaborate on possible next steps.

Implementing the Community Benefits Program, as described in the Draft Framework, would be part of Delta Conveyance Project implementation, and could not move forward until a decision is made on whether to proceed with a project after certification of the EIR and receipt of all other essential permits and approvals. No decision will be made, no commitments implied, and no CBAs will be finalized until completion of the CEQA review and if DWR decides to approve the proposed project.

General Process for Development of Community Benefits Program



The Community Benefits Program for the Delta Conveyance Project would be one of three distinct, but complementary, processes intended to address effects within local communities.

The other two processes are the more traditional concepts of a) mitigation, used to address environmental impacts related to compliance with specific regulatory requirements; and b) an ombudsman program, which would serve as a clearing house for construction information and support and facilitate the process for obtaining just compensation for direct construction impacts.

Should project opponents participate in creating community benefits?

Yes! Delta community members have an opportunity to harness this major capital works project to create lasting, tangible and potentially significant economic and social benefit. Participation is not seen by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) as a sign of support for the project and in no way prevents continued ability to oppose the project.

Three Distinct but Complementary Processes		
Regulatory Mitigation	Community Benefits Program	Ombudsman Program
Purpose: Address project impacts related to specific regulatory requirements (e.g. CEQA/NEPA)	Purpose: Provide resources to direct benefits toward communities most impacted by implementation, based on community collaboration	Purpose: Clearinghouse single point of contact to streamline information, support and claims. Includes facilitating the process for obtaining just compensation for direct construction impacts

