

Supporting Businesses During Light Rail Construction

Community Advisory Committee

April 9, 2026

Construction can affect how people access, perceive and choose local businesses.

Understanding what businesses need and what keeps customers coming back during construction is key to supporting businesses and keeping corridors active.

The most effective business support strategies are shaped by real customer, business and community input.

This is ATP's approach to create a program that the support is practical, impactful and responsive to real needs.



How Program Priorities Inform the Program

- ✓ **Who:** Who is eligible to receive support
- ✓ **What:** What types of support the program provides
- ✓ **Distribution:** How resources are distributed across businesses and areas
- ✓ **Prioritization:** How support is prioritized for the most impacted and vulnerable businesses
- ✓ **Alignment:** How the program aligns with ATP goals and community priorities



Program priorities help define how limited resources are prioritized to achieve the greatest impact

Informing Program Priorities

CORE PRIORITIES

- Reflect ATP goals and priorities
- Strategy driven
- Community input
- Best practices
(Foundational Criteria Used in Programs)

AREA-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Refinement, context-based
- Data driven
- Reflect needs assessment insights
- Criteria tailored to respond to the corridor:
 - ✓ business & community feedback
 - ✓ local economic conditions
 - ✓ cultural priorities
 - ✓ political climate

Establishes the program eligibility foundation + flexibility to address local conditions.

Informing Program Priorities

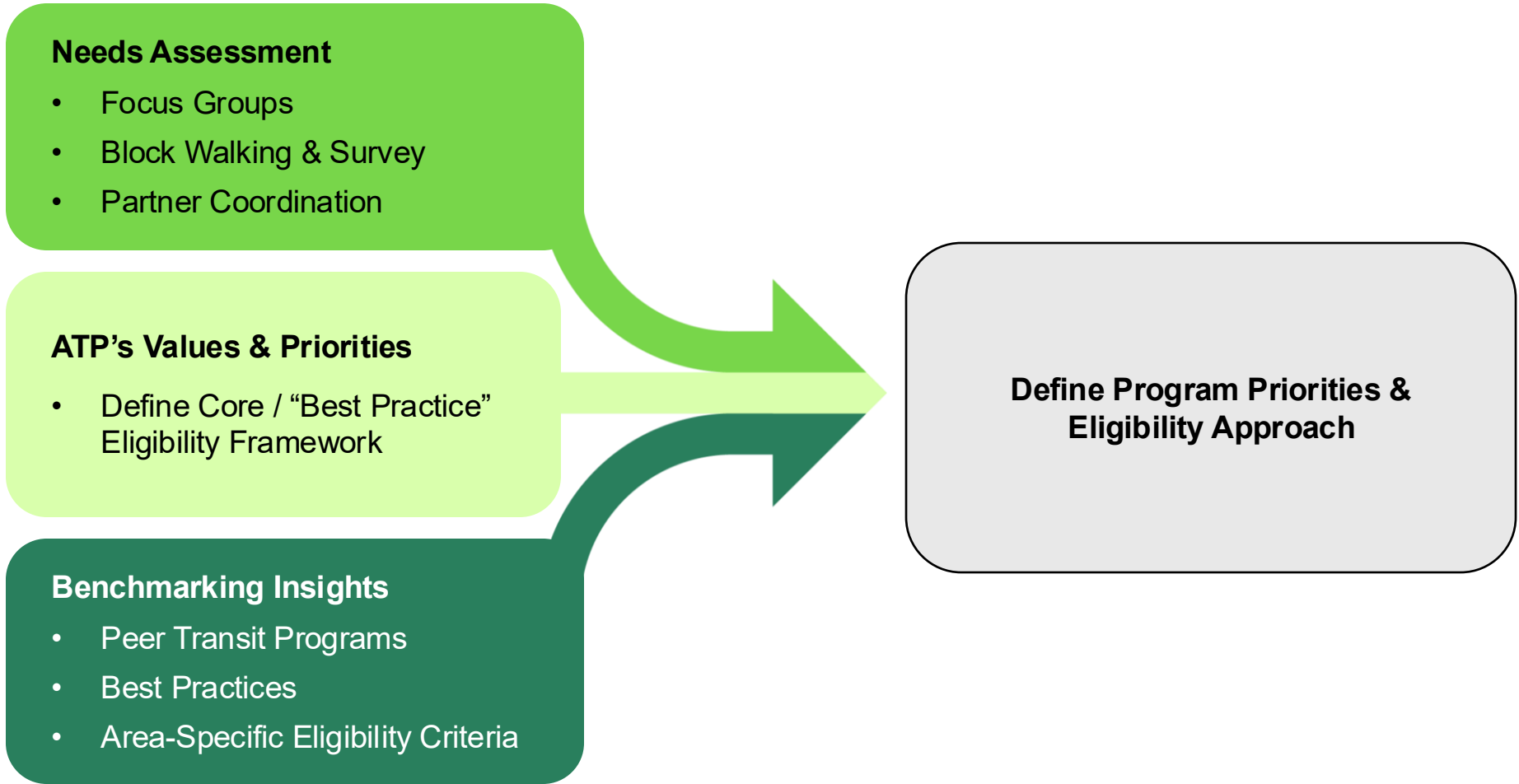
CORE PRIORITIES

- Located on corridor
- Operating prior to construction
- Small business
- Customer-facing
- Show revenue loss
- Business license & tax compliance

AREA-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Legacy or cultural business
- Minority owned
- Locally owned
- Historic protection
- Industry vulnerability
- Corridor conditions
- Other – per needs assessment

Developing the Program Priorities



Developing the Program Priorities

Needs Assessment

- Focus Groups
- Block Walking & Survey
- Partner Coordination

ATP's Values & Priorities

- Define Core / "Best Practice" Eligibility Framework

Benchmarking Insights

- Peer Transit Programs
- Best Practices
- Area-Specific Eligibility Criteria

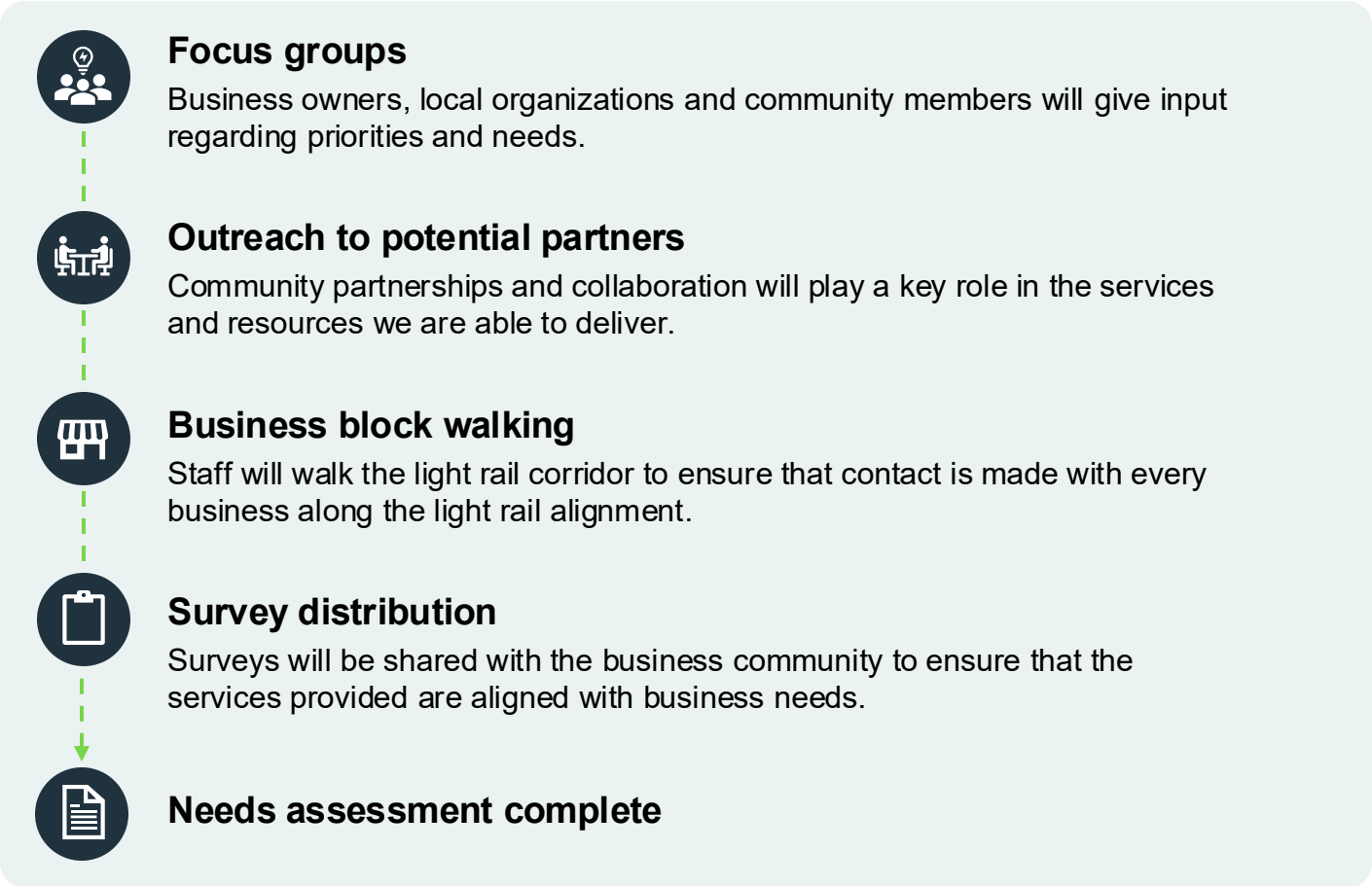
Define Program Priorities Framework
& Eligibility Approach

Needs Assessment

Outreach to local businesses and communities to better understand needs and concerns



Activities we anticipate completing in the next six months include:



Feedback & Dialogue

Business Focus Group



Top Challenges and Needs During Construction



Support Ideas
(marketing, operational, promotional, training)



Resource and Collaboration Ideas
(skills, space, outreach)

Community Focus Group



Supporting Businesses



Barriers



Incentives and Motivators

Business Focus Group Feedback Results

Support Needs



Financial and Technical Assistance

Businesses emphasized the need for grants, low- or zero-interest loans, and free or subsidized services, with special attention to micro-businesses



Strategic and Operational Support

Support needs extended beyond financial to include business strategy, marketing, legal assistance, PR, and e-commerce support



Shared Events and Programming

Businesses expressed interest in curated events near construction areas, pop-ups, and programming that they could participate in without planning burden



Clear Project Communication and a Single Point of Contact

Businesses want real-time updates, a clear understanding of timelines, and someone who can help them navigate construction processes



Knowledge Sharing

Businesses want opportunities to learn from each other, understand how other cities have handled similar disruptions, and share best practices

Community Focus Group Feedback Results

Themes

- Access, parking and mobility constraints
- Coordinated programming and partnerships
- Promotion, marketing and visibility
- Convenient and flexible ways to support
- Values-driven and relationship-based support
- Construction impacts and safety concerns
- Up-to-date information and predictability
- Construction experience and perception

Comments

- Make it easier for customers to reach businesses
- Leverage organizations and coordinated activities to drive customers
- Increase awareness and encourage word-of-mouth support
- Support businesses beyond traditional in-person visits
- Strengthen long-term loyalty and community connection
- Construction creates real or perceived safety and comfort issues
- Uncertainty and anticipated difficulty lead people to choose alternative destinations

Block Walking

Light Rail Is Coming to Austin.

Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) is bringing light rail to Austin, with construction activities anticipated to begin in some areas in 2027. Before construction starts, we want to give your business an opportunity to provide input on how we can support your business needs during construction.



Please scan the QR code to complete the survey and stay informed.

Please contact input@atptx.org if you have any questions.

We appreciate your time in completing this survey and look forward to receiving your response.



Go differently.

El Tren Ligero Llega a Austin.

Austin Transit Partnership (ATP, por sus siglas en inglés) va a construir un tren ligero en Austin, y se prevé que las obras comiencen en algunas zonas en 2027. Antes de que inicie las obras, queremos ofrecer a su negocio la oportunidad de compartir su opinión sobre cómo podemos apoyar sus necesidades durante el periodo de construcción.



Ayúdenos a conocer mejor su negocio. Escanee el código QR para completar la encuesta y mantenerse informado.

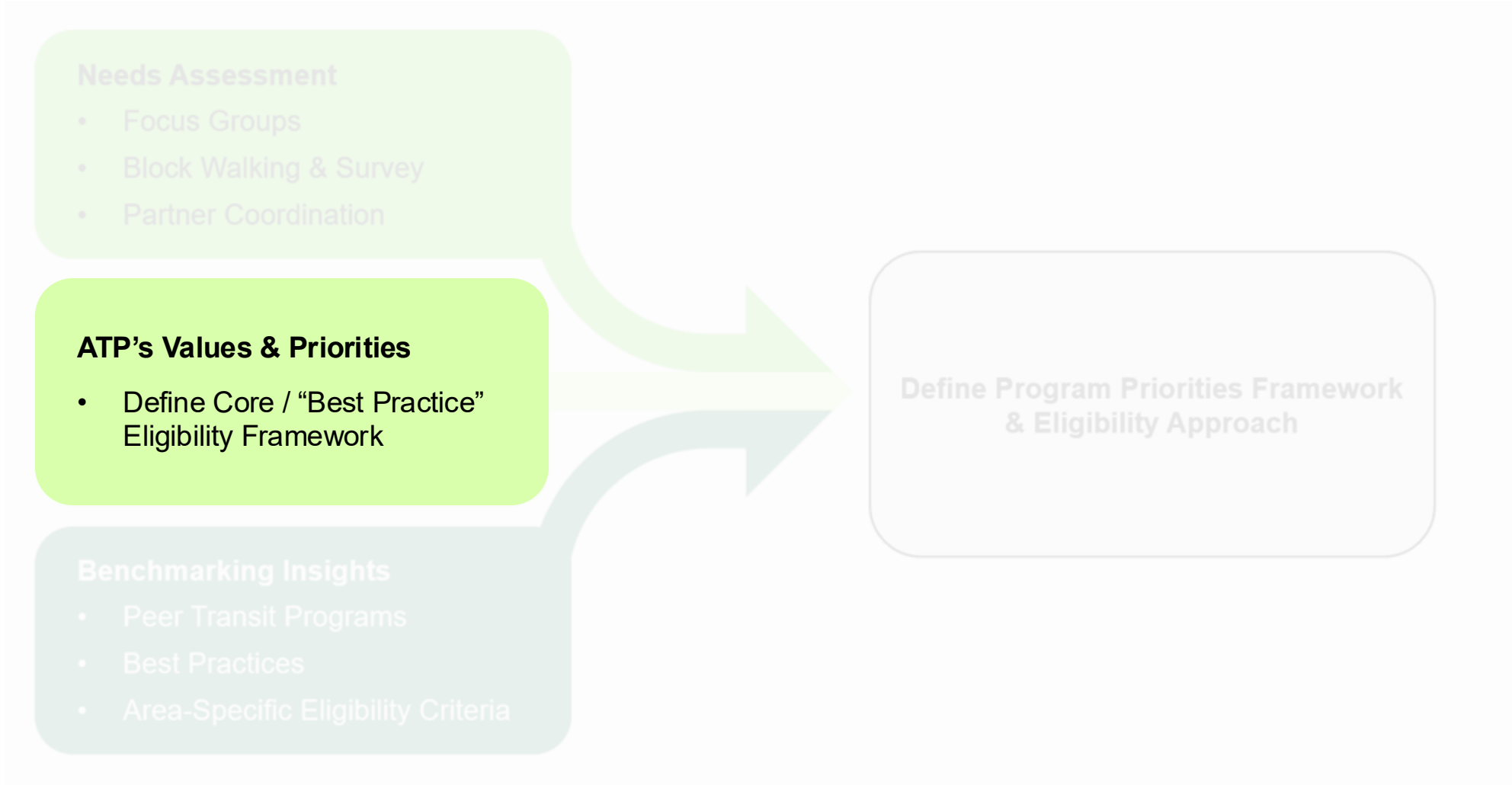
Si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese con input@atptx.org.

Agradecemos el tiempo que dedique a completar esta encuesta y esperamos recibir su respuesta.



Go differently.

Developing the Program Priorities Framework



Inform Program Priorities

Consistency VS Flexibility

- Standardized across corridors?
- Priorities shift significantly based on local conditions?

Depth VS Reach

Help fewer businesses more deeply, or more businesses more lightly?

Early VS Impact Based

- Provide assistance before impacts fully materialize?
- Provide assistance based on demonstrated impacts?

Program Priorities – Next Steps

- ✓ Complete block walking
- ✓ Draft needs assessment
- ✓ Incorporate benchmarking insights
- ✓ Develop draft plan for implementation
- ✓ Receive input and finalize plan