



# Board Agenda Item 78

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DATE: June 18, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director  
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Retroactive Approval of FY 2024 RAISE Grant and Rural Surface Transportation Grant Submissions for Millerton Road Widening and Safety Improvements

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

**Retroactively approve and authorize Director of Public Works and Planning’s previous submittal of two grant applications to the United States Department of Transportation’s FY 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Discretionary Grant Program (\$25,000,000), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant program, (\$71,000,000), both of which grant applications are for proposed Millerton Road Widening Safety improvements that would widen a 3.2-mile stretch of Millerton Road from a two-lane rural roadway to a four-lane divided arterial roadway, and include additional safety features.**

To meet the grant application filing deadlines, the Director of Public Works and Planning (Director) submitted the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant application on February 28, 2024, and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant (RSTG) application on May 6, 2024, contingent upon your Board’s approval. Grant awards are scheduled to be announced by the summer of 2024. If either of these grants are awarded, the Department will return to your Board with the necessary agreements required for grant acceptance. This item pertains to a location in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended action is not approved, the Department will withdraw the grant applications, and the project will no longer be considered for funding under the RAISE or RSTG programs for the 2024-25 fiscal years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County cost associated with the recommended action. The estimated total project cost for Millerton Road Widening and Safety Improvements is currently \$76,000,000. The \$25,000,000 RAISE grant would only cover a portion of the construction costs for the project. The \$71,000,000 RSTG grant amount would cover the majority of the project costs with a \$5,000,000 contribution required of the County. The Director will continue to pursue additional grant funding opportunities to meet the remaining costs of the project.

DISCUSSION:

Background

On May 20, 2008, the County entered into Agreement #08-233 with Table Mountain Rancheria (TMR). This agreement authorized TMR to select and hire, at TMR's cost, all consultants necessary to provide complete environmental documents and engineering design documents for the improvement of Millerton Road between Friant and Auberry Roads available to the County in order to have a "shovel ready" project that would be eligible for construction grants. The environmental studies for the project have since been completed. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review was completed and approved by the Board on December 10, 2013. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review was completed in June 2022.

#### RAISE Discretionary Grant Program

The goal of the RAISE program is to fund eligible surface transportation projects that will have a significant local or regional impact that advance the USDOT'S priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability. The Director previously applied to FY 2023 and FY 2022 RAISE cycles for infrastructure projects. The program was formerly known as Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER). The Director submitted similar applications to fund road widening projects on Millerton Road to 2015 and 2017 TIGER grant programs, and the 2018 BUILD grant program (see referenced agenda items below) but was not successful. Since then, the scope and project limits have changed and estimated costs have risen.

#### RSTG Program

The RSTG supports projects that improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth and improve quality of life. The program falls under the umbrella of the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) opportunity, which contains three grant programs: the National Infrastructure Project Assistance grants program (MEGA), the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects grants program (INFRA), and the RSTG. The funding opportunities are awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects - including highway and bridge, intercity passenger rail, railway-highway grade crossing or separation, wildlife crossing, public transportation, marine highway, and freight projects, or groups of such projects - with significant national or regional impact, or to improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas.

#### Purpose of the Grant application

The Millerton Road Widening and Safety Improvements Project proposes to widen a 3.2-mile stretch of Millerton Road from a two-lane rural roadway to a four-lane divided arterial roadway, and include additional safety features such as roundabouts, striping for bicycle lanes, and left-turn pockets. It spans from North Fork Road in the community of Friant, to the intersection of Millerton Road and Marina Drive/Winchell Cove Road, where a roundabout will be installed. An additional roundabout will be installed at Morningside Drive, about 0.7 miles west of Marina Drive. The bridge at Friant-Kern Canal will be expanded to accommodate the four-lane road. This project was selected to submit to the RAISE grant because of the impact it will create on increasing safety. According to data pulled from the Transportation Injury Mapping System by UC Berkeley's SafeTREC system, in the period of 2012-2022, there have been 95 crashes in the area from North Fork Road to Marina Drive, including 10 fatalities. By expanding the lane capacity and installing proven safety countermeasures, crashes and fatalities can be drastically reduced. Additionally, these improvements will reduce congestion for residents and visitors accessing popular destinations such as Millerton Lake State Park and Table Mountain Casino Resort, and make the area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

Federal grant application processes are highly competitive and successful applications are not guaranteed. The Department has applied for other funding opportunities and plans to submit an application to the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) later this year. The Department will continue to pursue viable opportunities to fully fund the project.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

USDOT

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #59, September 25, 2018

BAI #50, November 14, 2017

BAI #46, June 2, 2015

BAI #7, December 10, 2013

BAI #12 May 20, 2008

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Location Map

On file with Clerk - RAISE Grant Application

On file with Clerk - RSTG Application

CAO ANALYST:

Salvador Espino