County of Fresno

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Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	23-0323	**Name:**	Retroactive Approval of FY 2023-24 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant
		In control:	Public Works & Planning
On agenda:	5/23/2023	**Final action:**	5/23/2023
Enactment date:		**Enactment #:**	

Title: Retroactively approve and authorize Director of Public Works and Planning's previous submittal of a grant application to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for FY 2023-24 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant ($300,000)

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Agenda Item, 2. Attachment A - Location Map, 3. Grant Application

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/23/2023	1	Board of Supervisors	Consent Agenda be approved	Pass

DATE: May 23, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

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

SUBJECT: Retroactive Approval of FY 2023-24 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Retroactively approve and authorize Director of Public Works and Planning's previous submittal of a grant application to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for FY 2023-24 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant ($300,000)

To meet the grant filling deadline, the Department of Public Works and Planning (Department) submitted the Grant Application on March 9, 2023 for the FY 2023-24 Sustainable Transportation Planning competitive grant contingent upon your Board's approval. Grant announcements are scheduled to begin by the fall of 2023. This item is Countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended action is not approved, the Department will withdraw the grant application, and the project will no longer be considered for State funding under the current FY 2023-24 cycle.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County cost associated with the recommended action. If the grant is awarded, it will fund development of an expanded active transportation that focuses on the needs of the County's Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs). The local match of $50,000 will be paid for out of the Department of

Public Works and Planning's Measure "C" Flexible Allocation Org 4510, and sufficient appropriations will be included in the FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the Sustainable Communities Competitive Grant is to provide much needed funding to support regional sustainable communities' strategies and ultimately achieve the State's greenhouse gas reductions targets of 40 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 2050, respectively. The County adopted the Bicycle and Trails Master Plan in 2013. The County also took part in the development of the Regional Active Transportation Plan, along with Fresno Council of Governments, their consultant, and several cities in 2017, and is again working with these groups on an update of the Plan. However, the regional plan was not able to cover all the widespread needs of the County. In order to make informed decisions on resource allocation and remain competitive in applying for various grants, a more comprehensive, in-depth plan that covers all of the County, including rural and mountainous areas and county islands, and highlights the needs of the disadvantaged communities is required. The projects that are generated by this study will be considered for selection for state and Federal grants, primarily the Active Transportation Program (ATP); however, some of the projects identified in the study may be submitted to the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program (CMAQ), Surface Transportation Block Grant program (STBG), or others.

The study would use research methods which address the effects of climate change, transportation integration, and social equity. This project will launch a comprehensive study to advance efforts toward the creation of a master project index which will provide details of the transportation needs of DUCs throughout the County. These communities will be studied regarding safety and reconstruction/rehabilitation of vehicular, bicycling, and pedestrian transportation facilities.

The previous application for the FY 2022-23 Sustainable Transportation Planning grant was not awarded. One of the reasons given by the State was that we did not clearly identify community partners who would be involved in the planning and outreach of the plan. Staff have made additional efforts to obtain the support of several community partners, who are an important resource in highlighting some of the obstacles citizens face in their access to active transportation.

ATP grants are the most competitive in California, and the Department has had significant success in securing funding for four out of the five applications submitted during Cycle 6. The Department has been successful in previous ATP cycles in the communities of Biola, Laton, Riverdale, Dunlap, Calwa, and West Park. In 2022, staff submitted four projects to ATP Cycle 6 at the state level. One application, Del Rey Sidewalk Project, was successful and will be funded in FY 2023-24 ($3,014,000). The other three projects and an additional project were submitted to Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) for the regional bid. Of the four applications submitted, three were awarded funding. The Herndon-Barstow Elementary HAWK System will receive funding of $603,000, the Calwa Sidewalk project $3,000,000, and the Tranquillity Sidewalk project received partial funding to cover preliminary engineering ($455,000). Congressionally Directed spending requests for Complete Streets projects consisting of $4,000,000 for Calwa and $1,000,000 for Tranquillity were announced earlier this year. The Department will return to your Board with a separate item to approve the projects and any necessary grant agreements.

While the Cantua Creek Sidewalk project submitted in Cycle 6 was not funded through ATP, staff has and will continue to pursue other sources of funding, such as through State and Federal community project requests submitted directly to state and federal legislators. For Cycle 7, the ATP program is anticipated to be underfunded and incredibly competitive.

The Department's goal with the Sustainable Transportation Planning grant is to become a collaborator with these communities in order to meet their transportation needs, especially the elderly and disabled, in the most efficient way possible. The new Plan will engage divisions within PWP, such as the Community Development Division, the Development Services Division, and the Road Maintenance and Operations Division. Outside of

PWP, the County's Department of Public Health will be engaged to assist in health data acquired from the various DUCs. Additionally, because most of the people who make decisions regarding project prioritization do not live in the DUCs, staff will hold regular events called "Meet the Streets," that include local leaders to visit potential project locations so they can experience for themselves what the community's needs are.

This year's revised application, if awarded, will be used to investigate and analyze the needs of the County's 36 DUCs (see Attachment A) and provide the necessary information to identify those areas within the County most in need of infrastructure improvements.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Attachment A - Location Map
On file with Clerk - Grant Application

CAO ANALYST:

Salvador Espino