



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Planning and
Development
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: February 13, 2018
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Glenn S. Russell, Ph.D., Director, Planning and Development,
Director(s) (805) 568-2085
Contact Info: Daniel Klemann, Deputy Director, Long Range Planning,
(805) 568-2072
SUBJECT: Caltrans Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant Application

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: No

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

- a) Adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Director of the Planning and Development Department to apply for a grant from Caltrans for the Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant Program for Fiscal Years (FY) 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 in the amount of \$1,000,000, and enter into a contract accepting any grants that are awarded.
- b) Determine that the proposed grant application is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA guidelines Section 15262 and the Notice of Exemption (Attachment 2).

Summary Text:

The overall purpose of the Caltrans Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant Program is to encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and support implementation of Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS). Successful projects will also contribute to the State's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets for 2020 and 2035, employ best practices for regional mobility and transportation, and address the needs of disadvantaged communities. The Planning and Development Department requests authorization to apply for a grant of \$1,000,000 to fund studies and public outreach necessary to update the Circulation Element of the County's

Comprehensive Plan. The application deadline is February 23, 2018, with awards announcements expected in May 2018. If this project receives an award, work would occur over a three year period from July 2018 to June 2021 (Fiscal Years 2018-2019 through 2020-2021).

Background:

The Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1980 and has not been substantially revised since then. Significant changes have occurred to the region's land uses, transportation needs, available resources, and State law. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors authorized staff to begin an update to the Circulation Element in the FY 2017-2018 Work Program. The update will involve: a thorough review of current state law; community studies examining multi-modal transportation needs and opportunities; updating the Circulation Element with regard to current traffic information and roadway requirements; and integrating new state requirements into the Circulation Element. The new state requirements seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, facilitate multi-modal transportation, and create complete streets to support and promote all forms of transportation. Another component of the Circulation Element Update project involves the development of environmental thresholds to address vehicle miles traveled (VMT), contingent on the Office of Planning Research's completion of the rulemaking procedures for new VMT environmental thresholds that will be included in the State CEQA Guidelines.

The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program was created to support Caltrans' mission to "[p]rovide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability." Approximately \$17 million in state road and highway maintenance and rehabilitation funding will be distributed through a competitive grant program. In addition to promoting regional and state planning priorities and climate adaptation goals, grant applicants should demonstrate: how the proposed project would advance transportation-related GHG emission reduction strategies; identify and address deficiencies in the multi-modal transportation system; coordinate transportation, housing, and land use planning; and foster active community engagement. Sustainable Communities Grants should also address public health, social equity, environmental justice, and other important community benefits. Grant-funded projects can range from community mobility needs assessments, to multi-modal transportation studies and plans, to planning for future transportation modes (zero emission vehicles and autonomous vehicles), to plans that incorporate health or climate change adaptation with transportation needs.

The Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant could fund the background studies and future needs assessments that are required to inform a comprehensive Circulation Element update, as well as fund efforts to update the Element itself. Background studies would include the assessment of circulation and multimodal needs as well as traffic counts and VMT. Needs assessments and policy development work would include future traffic volumes and VMT, "Complete Streets" goals and potential policies, a sustainable transportation access study, and linkages between community health and transportation needs. Related work undertaken by the County as well as other agencies and nonprofits related to climate change adaptation and alternative / autonomous vehicles would be incorporated into the Circulation Element Update as well.

As part of the grant package, Caltrans requires a signed Local Resolution that references the title of the project and the title of person authorized to enter into a contract with Caltrans on behalf of the applicant (Attachment 1).

Environmental Review

The grant application for baseline transportation studies and future needs assessments would qualify for a statutory exemption from environmental review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 because the project involves planning studies for identification of possible future actions that have not been approved, adopted or funded by the County of Santa Barbara (Attachment 2). Partial funding has been allocated in the FY 2017-2018 budget, but it is insufficient to complete the entirety of the project.

Fiscal Analysis: The Long Range Planning Budget Program on page D-302 of the Planning and Development Department's Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget includes funding for the Circulation Element Update. The project has not yet begun, so staff salaries and other costs for the fiscal year to date total zero dollars.

The grant application will request \$1,000,000 for this potential project. Caltrans requires a minimum 11.47 percent local match, in non-federal funds or an in-kind contribution. The cost of salaries and benefits for existing departmental staff to update the Circulation Element will be used as the match (\$114,700) and will be distributed across Fiscal Years 2018-2019 through 2020-2021. No additional appropriations will be necessary.

The Community Environmental Council (CEC) has been identified as a potential co-applicant for sustainable transportation planning and outreach activities. Additional community partners will be identified within the County and solicited to provide additional in-kind services (e.g., meeting facilities, workshop materials, and advertising).

Special Instructions:

Please return two executed original resolutions and one Minute Order to Selena Evilsizor, Planning and Development Department, Long Range Planning Division.

Attachments:

1. Resolution Approving an Application for Grant Funding from the Caltrans Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant Program and Delegating Authority to Enter Into Contracts for the Project to the Director of Planning and Development
2. Notice of Exemption, CEQA Section 15262 and Public Resources Code 21102

Authored by: Selena Evilsizor, Planning & Development, (805) 568-3577