



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 8.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MAY 15, 2019

**SUBJECT: OPEN STREETS GRANT PROGRAM 2020 MINI-CYCLE FUNDING
RECOMMENDATIONS**

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. AWARDING \$1,053,341 to five new Open Streets events scheduled through December 2020 (Attachment B-1);
- B. REPROGRAMMING \$242,000 from one cancelled Open Street Cycle Three event, Paramount and Bellflower Open Streets Neighborhood Connectivity Event, towards the next-highest-scored Cycle Three event, Beach Streets Downtown, in accordance with funding policy; and
- C. RESERVING the remaining \$44,347 in Board-awarded Cycle Three and 2020 Mini-cycle funds to be REPROGRAMMED in any future Board-authorized funding cycles of the program.

ISSUE

In September 2013 the Metro Board approved the Open Streets Competitive Grant Program framework to fund a series of regional car-free events in response to the June 2013 Board Motion 72. The approved framework includes the following:

- An annual allocation of up to \$2 million;
- Competitive process and program; and
- Technical process to collect data and evaluate the events.

At its September 2018 meeting, the Board approved a third funding cycle of the program. With a focus on regional equity, Directors Hahn, Dupont-Walker and Garcia put forth a motion for staff to create a \$1 million dollar mini-cycle in FY 2020 of Open Street grant applications that is open to all communities and Councils of Governments in Los Angeles County, excluding those that have already received funding from the Cycle Three Grants. In January 2019 The Metro Board approved initiation of a 2020 mini-cycle of the Open Streets Grant Program (Attachment C). Board approval is

necessary to program the funds to five mini-cycle events and reprogram one canceled Cycle Three event toward the next-highest-scored Cycle Three event.

BACKGROUND

Open Street events are one-day occurrences that close public streets to automobile traffic and open them for bicyclists and pedestrians in order to provide opportunities for walking, riding a bike, and riding transit possibly for the first time. In addition the program encourages future mode shift to walking, bicycling and public transportation, and promotes civic engagement to foster the development of multi-modal policies and infrastructure at the local level.

Open Streets Cycle One, Two and Three Summary

Staff created a comprehensive framework and competitive grant process to solicit and evaluate applications for Open Street events throughout Los Angeles County.

At the June 2014 meeting, the Board awarded \$3.7 million to 12 jurisdictions for Cycle One of the Open Streets Grant Program. At the September 2016 meeting, the Board awarded \$4.14 million to 17 jurisdictions for Cycle Two. At the September 2019 meeting, the Board awarded \$4 million to 15 additional events. To date 27 events have been awarded funding in Cycles One, Two and Three totaling nearly 170 miles of streets across 29 separate jurisdictions. By December 2020, 13 additional events in 11 jurisdictions covering nearly 72 additional miles of car-free streets are expected to be delivered.

The Cycle Three Paramount and Bellflower Open Streets Neighborhood Connectivity event was cancelled at the request of the City of Paramount due to financial constraints. Staff recommends that the \$242,000 grant award for this cancelled Cycle Three event be reprogrammed to the next-highest-scored Cycle Three event, Beach Streets Downtown.

DISCUSSION

Outreach

Following Board approval, staff conducted extensive outreach, presenting the Open Streets 2020 Mini Cycle program to the Councils of Governments (COG's), and the Technical Advisory Committee. Staff released the Grant Application online on February 4, 2019 and subsequently hosted an Open Streets Grant Program Workshop on February 21, 2019. The workshop featured a detailed presentation on the history and goals of the program, details and guidelines of the current funding cycle, and a walk through of the application, including detailed instructions on how to apply for grant funding. Over 100 people representing cities and agencies across the Los Angeles region were in attendance at the events that Metro attended and hosted.

Application Review and Recommendation

Event applications have become more standardized in length and scope as the program has matured. Additional scoring criteria were added to applications for innovative scope, multi-

jurisdictional events, and routes in disadvantaged communities as determined by the CalEnviroScreen score. Separate criteria were added for new and existing applicants. The application evaluation was conducted by a joint internal and external technical team with experience in multi-modal transportation, including representatives from Metro Planning and Operations and the Southern California Association of Governments. The events were evaluated based on their ability to meet the project feasibility and route-setting guidelines approved by the Board that stressed readiness, partnership expertise and connections to transit and existing active transportation infrastructure.

A total of five project applications were received on March 8, 2019 with \$1,053,341 of funding requests. Of the five applications received, three were for routes along disadvantaged communities, and one was for a multi-jurisdictional event. All of the five applications submitted received passing scores and are recommended based on funding allocation (Attachment B-1). These recommended events (Attachment B-2) are regionally diverse, connected to transit stations, regional bikeways and major activity centers.

The 2020 Mini-cycle includes one year of Open Street programming, with the first event being proposed for winter/spring 2020 and the final event being proposed for fall/winter 2020. The 1-year timeline will allow for the staging of events within the December 2020 deadline of the Cycle Three funding cycle and ensure that events will maximize attendance and regional participation by not being held on consecutive dates.

Staff will utilize funds from the FY19/20 and FY20/21 budget allocation to cover expenses for Metro Rail Operations, Marketing and Community Relations support for the events. Operations staff are required to support the events with increased rail supervisors at grade crossings, at stations for crowd control, and to provide a bus and operator for community outreach on the day of events. Community Relations and Marketing is needed for day-of-event support, management and procurement of marketing materials, transport of marketing and outreach goods, staff training and TAP outreach and sales.

Mini-cycle Evaluation

In coordination with Cycle Three, the 2020 Mini-cycle jurisdictions will be provided with a standardized data collection template developed by the Cycles One and Two Evaluation Study contractor. Additional reporting criteria will be added to the MOU and standardized data collection template to better evaluate the progress of the program toward achieving the objectives of the program goals presented in Board Motion 72. Post-implementation reports will be included that request plans for new active transportation infrastructure and information on what the jurisdictions will do to increase bicycle and pedestrian mode shares post-event.

Equity Platform

By providing additional scoring points to disadvantaged communities during the competitive application review process, as defined by the CalEnviroScreen, the mini-cycle delivers an aspect of Pillar III of the multi-point approach of the Equity Platform. Metro outreach participation in Open

Streets events, many of which are in disadvantaged communities, provides opportunities for Metro staff to discuss and answer questions about ongoing and planned initiatives with community members in the communities where they live.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The Open Streets Grant Program 2020 Mini-cycle will not have any adverse safety impacts on our employees and patrons.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding of \$3.26 million is included in the FY20 proposed budget in cost center number 0441, under project number 410077, Open Street Grant Program, to cover anticipated invoices for events (including the 2020 Mini-cycle, Cycle Three, and remaining Cycle Two invoices) in this fiscal year. Since this is a multi-year program, the cost center manager and Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting the costs in future years.

Impact to Budget

A local funding source, Proposition C 25%, will be utilized for Open Streets. These funds are not eligible for Bus and Rail Operating and Capital expenses. Proposition C 25% funds are eligible for transportation system management/demand management (TSM/TDM) programs such as Open Streets events which SCAG identifies in the 2012 RTP Congestion Management Appendix in the section titled Congestion Management Toolbox - Motor Vehicle Restriction Zones. Should other eligible funding sources become available, they may be used in place of the identified funds.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The Metro Open Streets 2020 Mini-cycle aligns well with Strategic Plan Goal 3, Enhancing Communities and Lives. The program introduces local communities and stakeholders to the value of car-free and car-light mobility and provides opportunities to experience this mobility first hand and possibly for the first time. Metro is leveraging its investment through the Open Streets Grant Program to promote the development of communities that are not reliant on personal automobile. Metro outreach participation in Open Streets events, many of which are in disadvantaged communities, provides opportunities for Metro staff to discuss and answer questions about ongoing and planned initiatives with community members in the communities where they live.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose to not approve the recommended funding of the 2020 Mini-cycle of the Open Streets Grant Program. This alternative is not recommended as it is not in line with the September 2018 Board Motion 16.1 directing staff to develop the one-time expansion of the program.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval, staff will notify project sponsors of the final funding award and proceed to initiate

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).

Staff will also follow up with grantees on post event implementation, per the 2020 Mini-cycle evaluation requirements (Attachment C), which include enhancement efforts to invest in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and promote public transportation mode shift.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - June 2013 Metro Board Motion 72

Attachment B-1 - Open Streets 2020 Mini-cycle Scoring and Funding Recommendations

Attachment B-2 - Open Streets 2020 Mini-cycle Recommended Events (Map)

Attachment C - Open Streets 2020 Mini-cycle Application Package & Guidelines

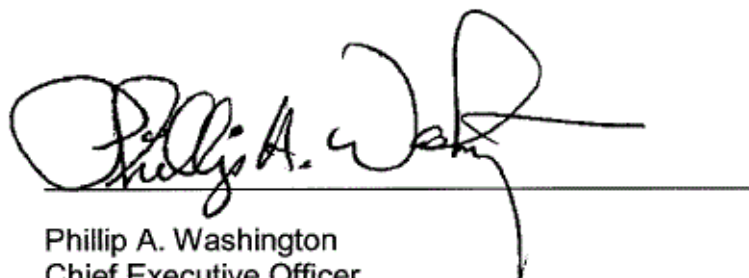
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