



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 16.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

SUBJECT: OPEN STREETS GRANT PROGRAM

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. AWARDING \$4 million to 15 new Open Streets events scheduled through December 2020 (Attachment B-1);
- B. REPROGRAMMING \$447,000 from two cancellations of Open Street Cycle Two events, Meet the Hollywoods and Burbank on the Boulevard, towards Cycle Three; and
- C. AMENDING the award amount of the lowest scored event application (Paramount & Bellflower Open Streets Neighborhood Connectivity Event) to \$161,000 per Cycle Three Application and Guidelines (Attachment C).

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 up to \$2 million.
- Competitive process and program.
- Technical process to collect data and evaluate the events.

In March 2018 The Metro Board approved initiation of Cycle Three of the Open Streets Grant Program (Attachment C). Per a Director Fasana and Garcetti motion the maximum funding ceiling per event was increased to \$500,000 and the funding ceiling per jurisdiction was removed. The Cycle Three recommendation includes funding for 15 new events and supplemental programmatic elements, for a total of \$4 million over 2 calendar years. This funding recommendation is within the approved framework of an annual allocation of up to \$2 million. Board approval is necessary to program the funds to 15 Cycle Three events and reprogram two (2) canceled Cycle Two events.

BACKGROUND

Open Street events are one-day occurrences funded by grants that close public streets to automobile traffic and open them for bicyclist and pedestrians to provide opportunities to experience 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 and Two 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. To date 23 events awarded funding in Cycle One and Cycle Two have been completed totaling nearly 150 miles of streets across 28 separate jurisdictions. By December 2018, 3 additional events in 5 jurisdictions covering more than 13 additional miles of car-free streets are expected to be delivered. Attendance from Cycle One events estimated at 459,000 people, and tabulation of Cycle Two attendance data is ongoing.

The Burbank on the Boulevard and Meet the Hollywoods events were cancelled at the request of the cities due to financial constraints. Staff recommends the \$447,000 grant award for these cancelled Cycle Two events to be reprogrammed in Cycle Three.

Open Streets Evaluation

Staff released a Request for Proposals Package (RFP) in the spring of 2016 seeking the professional services of a contractor to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the 11 implemented Cycle One events utilizing grantee's post-implementation reports, transit TAP data and other sources. The contractor will all also include an appendix of standardized data that the contractor collects at the Cycle Two events. The goal of the Evaluation Study is to determine the effectiveness of the program at providing opportunities for walking, riding transit and riding a bike on a city street, possibly for the first time; encouraging future mode-shift to more sustainable forms of transportation; and promoting civic engagement to foster the development of multi-modal policies and infrastructure at the local level. The initial event data shows the following:

- Similar to other large community events, Metro Rail system ridership increased by an average of 8% on the day of events compared to the average for non-event weekend day days during the previous month.
- Sales of new TAP Cards increased an average of 11% at Metro Rail system stations on the day of events which indicated introduction of new riders to experience riding Metro.
- 29% of Open Street participants arrive by bike, 18% by transit and 7% on foot, compared to

1%, 7% and 3% respectively for regular LA County travel.

- According to consultant's survey result 62% of participants attending an event for the first time report that they ride a bike regularly; whereas 80% of participants attending an event for the second time or more report that they ride a bike regularly.

Overall, the evaluation of Cycle One has shown that Open Street events provide opportunities for using non-automobile forms of transportation, attract new riders to experience the Metro system, and positively impact travel behavior of Los Angeles County residents on the day of events. However further evaluation is needed in order to determine whether the events have a lasting impact on travel behavior and meet the Board goals as listed above. The task can be completed by looking back at the impact that past events completed during Cycles One and Two created on travel behavior and infrastructure development. In addition, the assessment should also look forward at the impact of events during Cycle Three via the standardized data collection template discussed below. The final results of the Evaluation Study of Cycle One and appendix of data for Cycle Two will be delivered upon completion of Cycle Two events in December 2018.

DISCUSSION

Open Streets Cycle Three

Outreach

Following Board approval, staff conducted extensive outreach, presenting the program to the Councils of Governments (COG), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Streets and Freeways Subcommittee. Staff released the Open Streets Grant Application online on April 11, 2018 and subsequently hosted an Open Streets Program Workshop on May 8, 2018. The workshop featured speakers from across the region that have implemented Open Street events sharing guidance on how to plan and implement an event and Metro staff providing 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 an 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 26 project applications were received on June 8, 2018 that included a total of \$7.2 million of

funding requests. Of the 26 applications received, 15 were for routes along disadvantaged communities, and 9 applications received were for multi-jurisdictional events. All of the 26 applications submitted received passing scores and the top 15 are recommended based on funding allocation (Attachment B-1). The total recommended events account for \$4.528 million of funding requests. We recommend that the top 14 applicants receive their full funding request, and that the 15th applicant receive an amended reduced award in order to use all available funding including funds reprogrammed from the two cancelled Cycle Two events. These recommended events are regionally diverse (Attachment B-2), connected to transit stations, regional bikeways and major activity centers.

Cycle Three includes 2 years of Open Street programming, with the first event being proposed for winter/spring 2019 and the final event being proposed for fall/winter 2020. The 2-year timeline will allow for the staging of events within the December 2020 deadline and ensure that events will maximize attendance and regional participation by not being held on consecutive dates.

Staff will utilize funds from the FY 18/19, 19/20 and 20/21 budget allocation to cover expenses for Metro Rail Operations, Marketing and Community Relations support for Open Streets events through December 2020. Operations 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.

Cycle Three Evaluation

During Cycle Three, jurisdictions will be provided with a standardized data collection template developed by the Cycle 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 including providing post-implementation reports that include plans for new active transportation infrastructure and what the jurisdictions will do to increase bicycle and pedestrian mode shares post event.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The Open Streets Grant Program Cycle Three will not have any adverse safety impacts on our employees and patrons.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The funding of \$2 million for the first year of the program is included in the FY 18/19 budget in cost center number 4320, under project number 410077, Open Street Grant Program. We expect \$2 million to cover anticipated invoices for events (including Cycle Two and Three) in this fiscal year. Since this is a multi-year program, the cost center manager and Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budget 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. SCAG identifies Open Street Events as Transportation System Management / Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) programs 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

Metro Open Streets Cycle Three aligns well with Strategic Plan Goal 3. By introducing local communities and stakeholders to the value of car-free and car-light mobility and providing 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 Cycle Three of the Open Streets Grant Program. This alternative is not recommended as it is not in line with the June Board Motion 72 establishing the Metro Open Streets Grant Program.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval, staff will notify project sponsors of the final funding award and proceed to initiate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Staff will also follow up with grantees on post event implementation, per the Cycle Three evaluation requirements, which include enhancement efforts to invest on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and promoting public transportation mode shift.

ATTACHMENTS

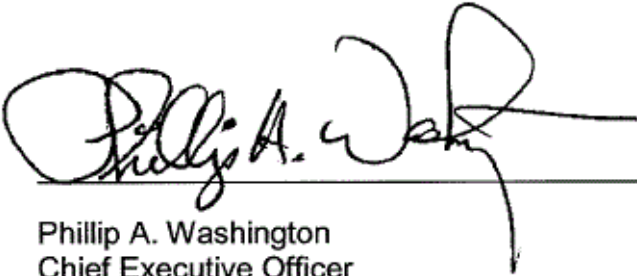
- Attachment A - June 2013 Metro Board Motion 72
- Attachment B-1 - Open Streets Cycle Three Scoring and Funding Recommendations
- Attachment B-2 - Open Streets Cycle Three Recommended Events (Map)
- Attachment C - Open Streets Cycle Three Application Package & Guidelines

Prepared by: Brett Thomas, Sr. Transportation Planner, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-7535

Dolores Roybal Saltarelli, Sr. Director, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-3024

Frank Ching, DEO, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-3033

Reviewed by: Therese W. McMillan, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 922-7077



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer