



Board Report

File #: 2017-0888, File Type: Program

Agenda Number: 7.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MARCH 14, 2018

SUBJECT: OPEN STREETS CYCLE 3

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Metro Open Streets Grant Program Cycle Three Application and Guidelines (Attachment B).

ISSUE

In June 2013 the Board introduced Motion 72 (Attachment A), directing staff to award up to \$2 million annually to support Open Street events. Cycle Three Application and Guidelines (Attachment B) build on the Cycle One and Two framework and support a competitive process. Board authorization of the Open Streets Cycle Three competitive grant program framework and release of competitive application package and guidelines are needed in order to proceed.

DISCUSSION

Open Street events are temporary one-day events that close streets to automotive traffic and open them to people to walk, bike or roll. Cycles One and Two of the Open Streets Grant Program were successful in encouraging participants to ride transit and walk and ride a bike on urban streets, possibly for the first time. In doing so the program fits into Metro objectives by encouraging future mode shift and encouraging civic engagement to foster the development of multi-modal policies and infrastructure at the local level. The Open Streets Grant program provides opportunities for economic development and the improvement of public health, since they get people out onto the street patronizing local businesses, all while exercising and interacting with their community. The Metro Outreach Booth at Open Streets events provides a platform for public input on Metro active transportation corridor projects such as the LA River and Rail to River, including the Countywide Bike Share Program. During the Cycle Three event, the booth will continue to provide a location in the community to promote Metro programs.

Cycle One Implementation

In response to Motion 72 (Attachment A) staff developed a comprehensive framework and competitive grant process to solicit and evaluate applications for Open Street events throughout Los Angeles County. At the September 18, 2013 meeting, the Board awarded \$3.7 million to 12 separate

event applications. Eleven of the 12 events awarded funding in Cycle One were completed totaling nearly 84 miles of streets closed to cars and opened to pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation across 18 separate jurisdictions. The events allowed participants to experience the region in a car-free and or car-light manner and ride transit possibly for the first time.

To support cities in executing Open Street events, staff held a half day workshop that highlighted the objectives of the program; the process for planning, implementation and reimbursement; and showcased examples of previous successful regional events.

Cycle Two Implementation

On March 16, 2016 the Metro Board authorized staff to release the Cycle Two Application and Guidelines. An Amendment by Board Member Hilda Solis was included that asked staff to seek opportunities to work with Councils of Governments and provided additional points to multi-jurisdictional events and events that included disadvantaged communities as determined by CalEnviroScreen. Staff provided outreach to cities across the County and hosted application workshops at Metro Headquarters and LA County Councils of Government offices. In total 19 competitive applications were received. In September 2016 the Board awarded \$4.04 million to 17 Cycle Two events scheduled through December 2018, programmed \$200,000 in supplemental funds to a Cycle One event that was postponed due to natural disaster, and reprogrammed \$100,000 from a cancelled Cycle One event to Cycle Two . Thirteen of the 17 awarded Cycle Two events include disadvantaged communities and 7 are multi-jurisdictional (Attachment C). To date 8 events have been staged totaling over 41 miles. 10 events covering an additional 45 miles of car-free streets are expected to be delivered by December 2018.

Open Streets Evaluation Study

Per Board Motion 72, 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. Due to inconsistency in the data collected independently by cities during Cycle One, the contractor will also include an appendix of standardized data that the contractor collects at the 17 Cycle Two events. The initial event data shows:

- Systemwide rail boarding increased an average of 8% on the day of events;
- Lines directly adjacent to events saw the largest increase, with Metro Gold Line boarding increasing by 32% during the May 31, 2015 CicLAvia: Pasadena;
- Overall sales of TAP Cards increased an average of 11% systemwide on the day of events indicating introduction of new riders to the system, and;
- Event-day sales for commercial stores along Open Street event routes increased an average of 10% on the day of events.

The final evaluation study will be delivered to Metro upon completion of Cycle Two in December of 2018.

Cycle Three Initiation

The success of the Open Streets Grant Program-funded events to date has been the result of the

strong partnership between Metro; the grantee cities and nonprofits such as CicLAvia, Bikeable Communities, BikeSGV and others. Staff will encourage similar partnerships with the Cycle Three Open Street Grant Program solicitation process.

The proposed Application and Guidelines for Cycle Three are informed by feedback from applicants, grantees and participants of Cycles One and Two, as well as recommendations solicited from the Open Streets Evaluation Study contractor. In response to feedback and in order to ensure that the Cycle Three program continues to serve to increase multi-modal access, advance active transportation at local levels and encourage transit usage, the following modifications have been made to the event data collection methodology and the program's guidelines, application, and rubric:

- Additional detail on routing mistakes to avoid is provided, such as magnitude and lengths of grade to avoid, routes with poor pavement quality, routes that cross railroad tracks or freeway ramps, routes that box in residential areas, and routes that traverse residential areas for extended distances.
- Separate criteria for new and existing applicants have been included. Existing applicants should demonstrate success with previous events and what they have learned, while new applicants should demonstrate that they are ready and have the capacity to produce a successful event.
- Scoring criteria for bike-trains and bike-bus shuttle ridership have been removed as the one-off nature of Open Street events makes them unlikely.
- A standardized data collection template is provided to grantees to ensure a standard universe of event data for Cycle Two and Three.
- Additional scoring criteria have been included that evaluate how applicants will satisfy Metro's data collection requirements (i.e. agency staff, volunteers, consultant, etc.).
- Additional scoring criteria have been included for innovative events that help to ensure Open Street events remain relevant and continue to increase multi-mobility in the region.
- During Cycle Two a maximum funding ceiling was implemented based on population share for large cities and \$149,000 for smaller cities not partnering with other jurisdictions. The funding ceiling amount was based on FHWA procurement process guidelines. Based on feedback from grantees it has been determined that \$149,000 is not a sufficient amount of funds to create a community-scaled open streets event. Because the Program is no longer utilizing federal funds and based on grantee feedback, staff is increasing the funding floor to \$167,000. The increase to \$167,000 is based on the goal of reaching 12 events per year. The increase in funding ceiling does not increase the Open Streets Grant Program annual budget and is consistent with the new Equity Platform Framework in that it increases the amount of Metro funds available to cities that would otherwise not be able to produce an Open Street event in their community due to lack of City funds available.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the FY 2018 budget. Up to \$2 million annually for Cycle Three will be requested during the FY 2019 and FY 2020 budget process. Staff will work with Regional Programming, Budget and Local Programs and the Office of Financial Services to identify a funding source through FY 2020. As this is a multi-year program it will be the responsibility of the cost center manager and the

Chief Planning Officer to budget funds in future Cycles.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board has the option to not approve the Cycle Three initiation. This alternative is not recommended as it is not in line with Board goals to increase awareness of opportunities throughout Los Angeles County for taking public transportation, walking and riding a bicycle.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will release the application package for the Open Streets program. An easy to fill out web-based application will be utilized and an informational workshop will be held for applicants. It is anticipated that the application will be released in early Spring 2018 with staff returning for Board approval of the Cycle Three Open Street Grant Program in late Summer 2018.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - June 27, 2013 Board Motion #72

Attachment B - Open Streets Cycle Three Application Package & Guidelines

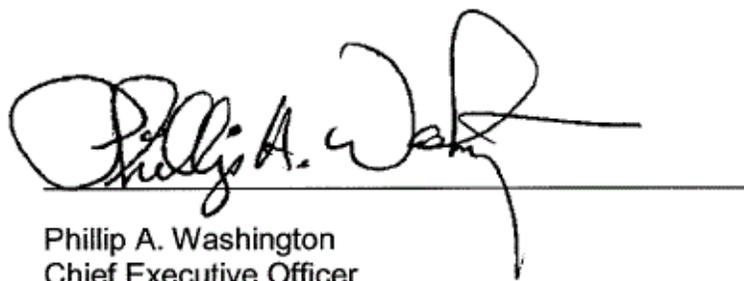
Attachment C - Cycle Two Summary and Funding Recommendation

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