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Title: RESOLUTION - Authorizing application for additional formulaic funds from the Local Partnership Program for the Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project (Council Districts 1 and 7)

Sponsors: Public Works Department

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Attachments: 1. 23-464 Vicinity Map, 2. 23-464 Resolution

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3/30/2023	1	City Council	ADOPTED	Pass

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

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SUBJECT

RESOLUTION - Authorizing application for additional formulaic funds from the Local Partnership Program for the Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project (Council Districts 1 and 7)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the resolution authorizing the application for additional formulaic grant funds for the Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project from the State of California Local Partnership Program (LPP) and authorize the execution of all grant documents and agreements by the Director of Public Works or designee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff is requesting authorization to apply for additional formulaic grant funds from the State LPP

Program, with the support of the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA). Formulaic grant funds are allocated by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to the region through the FCTA. Previously adopted Resolution No. 2022-236 approved an application for \$1,904,000 in LPP Formulaic grant funds. The City will revise this application to seek \$1,998,000 in additional funds, for a total of \$3,902,000 for the Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation. The City may also apply for additional LPP Formulaic grant funds made available in future funding cycles. The recommended action is consistent with the multi-year Measure C regional funding plan, which has been previously approved by the Boards of the Fresno Council of Governments and the Fresno County Transportation Authority.

BACKGROUND

The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (SB1 gas tax) created the LPP and continuously appropriates two hundred million dollars (\$200,000,000) annually to be allocated by the CTC to local or regional transportation agencies that have sought and received voter approval of taxes (such as Fresno County's Measure C), or that have imposed fees which are dedicated solely for transportation improvements. Sixty percent of the funding is allocated through formula, while the remaining forty percent is distributed via competitive and incentive programs. Eligible projects include improvements to the state highway system, transit facilities, and rolling stock, improvements to the local road system and bicycle and pedestrian safety or mobility, air quality improvement/mitigation projects, and sound walls.

On March 25, 2020, the California Transportation Commission adopted the 2020 LPP Formulaic Funding Share Distribution for fiscal years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. The formulaic program allocation to the Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) is \$5,712,000, equally divided across three fiscal years. The LPP requires agencies match funds awarded to projects at a minimum 1:1 ratio or 50% share of costs. The FCTA is responsible for nominating eligible projects and has recommended the Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project for funding in fiscal year 2022/23. The original nomination was for \$1,904,000 in LPP Formulaic funding, but the FCTA has since updated their nomination to include an additional \$1,998,000, for a total of \$3,902,000 in LPP Formulaic funding.

The Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue corridors serve as primary routes by the community, the City's Bus Rapid Transit system, emergency vehicles, and is also part of the Southern Blackstone Avenue Smart Mobility Plan providing Class IV protected bicycle facilities along Blackstone Avenue through the project area. The project location has experienced the highest traffic volumes and number of accidents of any at-grade crossing on the BNSF corridor. The Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project will eliminate two existing at-grade crossings by grade separating North Blackstone Avenue and East McKinley Avenue under the BNSF Mainline Track.

Measure C funding awarded to the project to date totals \$35,119,938 with an additional \$44,380,062 in funding available for future amendments. The City intends to leverage these funds as a local match towards federal and state funding sources for the project.

The current cycle of formulaic grant funds from the LPP must be allocated by June 2023. The City Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the Resolution as to form.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15378, this item is not a project for the purposes of CEQA.

LOCAL PREFERENCE

Local preference is not applicable to this resolution.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Blackstone Avenue and McKinley Avenue BNSF Grade Separation Project is located in Council Districts 1 and 7. This resolution will have no impact on the General Fund. Should the formulaic grant be awarded, local matching funds will be identified through future fiscal year capital budgets. Matching funds will come from Measure C. No funds will be expended prior to CTC allocation and formal notice to proceed documentation is received, ensuring the availability of funds before costs are incurred.

Attachments:
Vicinity Map
Resolution