



# CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



October 25, 2022

## ITEM TITLE

Grant Submittals: Authorize the Submittal of Three Active Transportation Program Grant Applications to SANDAG

**Report Number:** 22-0271

**Location:** (1) F Street between Broadway and Fourth Avenue; (2) westerly and parallel to Bay Boulevard between Lagoon Drive and H Street within the inactive railroad corridor for the Coronado Branch Line Railroad; (3) citywide, no specific geographic location.

**Department:** Development Services & Engineering

**Environmental Notice:** Applications 1 and 2: The activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") State Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities); Section 15303 Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures); Section 15304 Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land); Section 15183 (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning); and Section 15061(b)(3).

Application 3: The activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the CEQA State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines.

## Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution authorizing the submittal of three Active Transportation Program grant applications to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) for the (1) F Street Promenade – Phase 2, (2) Bayshore Bikeway – Lagoon Drive to H Street, and (3) Trails Master Plan projects, and state the City's assurance to complete the projects.

## SUMMARY

In the interest of obtaining grant funding toward roadway improvement projects and planning a citywide recreational trail system, City staff has prepared three (3) applications for the Regional Active Transportation Program – Cycle 6 grant administered by the San Diego Association of Governments ("SANDAG"). The goal of this program is to fund projects that encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as biking and walking, increase safety and mobility for non-motorized vehicles and

advance active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. The grant applications are for (1) the F Street Promenade – Phase 2, (2) the Bayshore Bikeway – Lagoon Drive to H Street, and (3) the Trails Master Plan. Additional funding has been made available for the ATP program at the regional level; therefore, staff is returning to Council recommending the application of these additional projects. The City was not successful in the first round of grant applications for the Cycle 6 of the Regional Active Transportation Program.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Applications 1 and 2: The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with CEQA and has determined that the activity qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the CEQA State Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities); Section 15303 Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures); Section 15304 Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land); Section 15183 (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning); and Section 15061(b)(3). Thus, no further environmental review is required.

Application 3: The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with CEQA and has determined that the activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change in the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. In addition, notwithstanding the foregoing, the Director of Development Services has also determined that the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Thus, no environmental review is required.

## **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

On March 21, 2022, the California Transportation Commission (“CTC”) announced the Active Transportation Program (“ATP”) - Cycle 6 Call for Projects. The purpose of the ATP is to increase the roadway usage by all active modes of transportation, giving preference to areas of high pedestrian and bicycle activity, as well as disadvantaged communities. Cycle 6 is expected to include about \$854M in ATP funding made up of Federal funding, State SB1 and State Highway Account (“SHA”) funding. The funding/programming years include the 23/24, 24/25, 25/26, and 26/27 fiscal years. At the September 8, 2022 SANDAG Mobility Working Group meeting, local agencies were made aware that the ATP – Cycle 6 program is receiving a significant increase in funding for the regional competition (from \$23.6M to \$61.9M) and that SANDAG extended the application deadline to October 31, 2022.

On June 7, 2022, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2022-133, which authorized the submittal of ATP – Cycle 6 applications for F Street Promenade – Phase 1 (Bay Blvd to Broadway) and Bayshore Bikeway – E Street to Lagoon Drive. With the additional regional funding recently made available, staff recommends that the City apply for additional grant funding for the projects as described below:

### **Proposed Project 1: F Street Promenade – Phase 2**

Project Location:

Overall Project – F Street (Bay Boulevard to Third Avenue)

## **Phase 2 – F Street (Broadway to Fourth Avenue)**

### Project Description:

The goal of the F Street Promenade project is to develop a balanced, connected, safe, and convenient transportation network designed to serve all users, regardless of their age or ability, that will also provide multi-modal access (via walking, biking, and transit) to downtown Chula Vista on Third Avenue, the Chula Vista Civic Center, the E Street Transit Center, and the Chula Vista Bayfront. The need for the project is identified in the City's General Plan, the Urban Core Specific Plan, and the F Street Promenade Streetscape Study (March 2018):

<https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/development-services/planning/f-street-master-plan>

Proposed improvements include enhancing pedestrian and bicycle facilities by expanding the existing five-foot wide sidewalk to create a 12' wide multi-use pathway on both sides of the street, as provided in Attachment 1. The project will also include landscaped and lighted parkways, bulb-outs, new or improved crosswalks, and the undergrounding of overhead utilities. The added space for these improvements is within the existing street width east of Ash Avenue. A transition for the vehicular travel lanes would still be required just east of Broadway. On-street parking would remain.

Since ATP requires all projects to be completed within four years of being awarded funding, staff recommends applying for grant funding to cover preliminary engineering ("PE"), right-of-way ("R/W"), and construction costs ("CON") for only Phase 2 of the F Street Promenade project (from Broadway to Fourth Avenue). There is a \$4,148,570 local match provided by the Utility Underground Program 20A funds in addition to \$70,000 in CIP STM-0407 and \$410,075 in local TransNet funds.

Total - Estimated Cost: \$36,109,944 (PE, R/W, UUD, CON)

Phase 2 - Estimated Cost: \$16,103,683 (PE, R/W, UUD, CON)

(ATP Contribution: \$10,842,253/Local Contribution: \$4,628,645)

### **Proposed Project 2: Bayshore Bikeway - Lagoon Drive to H Street**

Project Location:

**MTS Inactive Coronado Branch Line Railroad Corridor parallel to and west of Bay Blvd between Lagoon Drive and H Street**

### Project Description

The goal of the Bayshore Bikeway –Lagoon Drive to H Street project (Attachment 2) is to provide a critical gap segment closure of bikeway for the overall Bayshore Bikeway route that continues through Chula Vista along the 24-mile perimeter of the San Diego Bay. This project will install a Class I Separated Bikeway that provides improved safety for cyclists traveling to and from Chula Vista along the Bayshore Bikeway (from National City) and along the Sweetwater Bike Path (from Bonita). This project will also encourage travel to Chula Vista's Bayfront and Downtown areas. The need for the project is identified in the City's Bayfront Master Plan, the Bayshore Bikeway Master Plan, and the Chula Vista Active Transportation Plan.

[https://www.sandag.org/uploads/projectid/projectid\\_63\\_5152.pdf](https://www.sandag.org/uploads/projectid/projectid_63_5152.pdf)

<https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/engineering/active-transportation-plan>

Proposed improvements include enhancing bicycle facilities by providing at least a 12' minimum to 15' wide Class I Separated Bikeway along the existing inactive MTS Coronado Branch Line Railroad Corridor approximately 200' to the west of, and parallel to, Bay Boulevard. The presence of the Collins Aerospace Facility restricts any widening of Bay Boulevard along this corridor. MTS has agreed to the addition of the proposed bikeway along the railroad corridor, similarly, to actions they have approved in Imperial Beach and South San Diego segments. A Construction and Maintenance Agreement between the City and MTS was amended in 2021 to include the proposed improvements still needed within their railroad corridor between E Street and H Street (Attachment 3). On October 4, 2022, MTS provided the City a letter of support for the Bayshore Bikeway – Segment 6B project (Attachment 4).

Since ATP requires all projects to be completed within four years of being awarded funding, staff recommends applying for grant funding to cover preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction costs. If this grant application is approved, future Council action will be taken on creating a CIP for project accounting purposes.

Total - Estimated Cost: \$4,818,000 (PE, R/W, CON)  
(ATP Contribution: \$4,818,000)

### **Proposed Project 3: Trails Master Plan**

Project Location:

**Citywide**

#### **Project Description**

The goal of the Trails Master Plan is to develop a city-wide comprehensive trail system that will identify existing and planned facilities within the City's open space areas. This network of hiking trails, paths, and off-road bikeways will connect Chula Vista's neighborhoods with its numerous parks and recreation facilities as well as link to local and regional circulation systems in adjacent communities. The Trails Master Plan would also complement the City's Active Transportation Plan (approved in May 2020) which guides future pedestrian and bicycle improvements along the City's roadways.

#### **Background**

There currently exists a mix of planned and authorized trails as well as many unofficial trails that have been pioneered through city open space areas and, in some cases, within sensitive habitat that is damaging natural resources. While some existing trails are recognized by the City in various communities, the Trails Master Plan will formalize a network to add some of the currently unofficial trails and close off others to allow the repair of plant communities within these sensitive habitat areas.

Both the City's General Plan and Parks & Recreation Master Plan acknowledge the need for a trail system within the City:

- General Plan - Policy E 11.4 states, "Prepare and implement a City-wide Trails Master Plan that defines staging and access areas, trail types, standards, and siting criteria, consistent with the Greenbelt Master Plan and the Chula Vista MSCP Subarea Plan, including the placement of appropriate limitations on public access outside of designated trails and staging and access areas."
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan ("PRMP") - Policy 1.30 reads, "Enhance access to the parks and recreation system by continuing to grow the citywide network of open space, trails, paths, and bikeways linking park and recreation facility locations."

Action Item: Develop a comprehensive trails master plan that identifies existing & planned facilities citywide.

Action Item: Encourage the development of trails, paths, and bikeways within master-planned communities that not only link the community's parks and recreation facilities but also provide connections to parks and recreation facilities in adjacent communities, including the Otay Valley River Park."

A comprehensive trails system supports City initiatives such as Healthy Chula Vista and the City's Climate Action Plan goals by promoting physical activity and alternative modes of transportation and develops awareness of City's urban forest and open space. Additionally, creating a citywide trails master plan will assist in overall development along the eastern portion of the City. As these planned communities begin to start construction, having the context of where these citywide trails will be located will assist in overall development patterns, park space connectivity and connecting roadways. The connecting roadways will include all modes of transportation as development continues to occur in the eastern portion of the City.

The mountain biking community expressed a strong desire to formalize the many unofficial existing trails throughout the City during public outreach meetings and correspondence as staff was seeking input on the 2018 update to the PRMP. Staff acknowledged the need for this growing recreational sport and the need for a formal trail system, creating Policy 1.30, mentioned above. PRMP Figure 4-4, Greenbelt / Open Space & Network Trails / Paths also notes the intention to develop the Master Plan (Attachment 5).

#### Pilot Project

In July 2020, the City of Chula Vista embarked on a pilot project within Snake and Rice Canyons in the Rancho del Rey community. The pilot project formalized a loop trail and allowed the official use of mountain bikes on existing trails and recognizes some previously unofficial trail segments, while closing off others to reestablish sensitive habitat. On September 17, 2020, staff presented an update to the planned Master Plan and the Snake and Rice Canyon Loop Trail Pilot Project to the Parks & Recreation Commission, and while no formal recommendation was provided, the commissioners expressed full support of the projects. Staff has been documenting operations and maintenance costs associated with the pilot project and will be bringing forward its findings to City Council at a meeting later this fiscal year.

#### Master Plan

If awarded Cycle 6 funding, staff will issue a request for proposals from qualified consultants to prepare the Trails Master Plan. Staff will work with the selected consultant to develop a scope of work (including but not limited to, an existing inventory of trails, goals and objectives, framework of the trail system, proposed alignments, trailheads, staging areas and linkages, guidelines for design and construction, operations and management, program implementation, etc.) and schedule to prepare the plan.

Total - Estimated Cost: \$500,000 (\$400,000 Master Plan Preparation/\$100,000 CEQA Analysis)  
(ATP Contribution: \$500,000)

#### **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Proposed Project Application 1: Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the City Council and has found that, Councilmember McCann has real property holdings within 1,000 feet, but beyond 500 feet, of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action.

Staff has determined that the decision could change the parcel's development potential, income-producing potential, highest and best use, character, and/or market value. Consequently, pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 2, sections 18700 and 18702.2(a)(8), this item presents a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.) for the above-identified member.

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

Proposed Project Application 2: Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the City Council members and has found no property holdings within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action. Consequently, this item does not present a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(7) or (8), for purposes of the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code §87100, et seq.). Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

Proposed Project Application 3: Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.). Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

## **CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no current year fiscal impact to the General Fund or the Development Services Fund as a result of this action. If a grant is awarded, staff will return to Council with recommendations to accept and appropriate grant funds.

## **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

Proposed Project Application 1: F Street: Upon construction completion, the project will require routine maintenance and landscape maintenance along the F Street parkway areas.

Proposed Project Application 2: Bayshore Bikeway: Upon construction completion, the bike path will be maintained per the Bayshore Bikeway Cooperative Agreement adopted by Council Resolution 9035, dated October 30, 1978. CIP STM-369 Bike Facilities Gap Project Program is a TransNet funded maintenance project that is currently used for bike facility maintenance citywide, including Bayshore Bikeway.

Proposed Project Application 3: Trails Master Plan: There is no ongoing fiscal impact to the General Fund or Development Services Fund as a result of this action. If the grant is awarded, staff will return to Council to appropriate grant funds.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. F Street Promenade – Phase 2 Exhibit
2. Bayshore Bikeway – Lagoon Drive to H Street Exhibit

3. Construction & Maintenance Agreement for Bayshore Bikeway – Amendment No. 1 MTS
4. MTS Letter of Support for Bayshore Bikeway – Segment 6B
5. PRMP Figure 4-4, Greenbelt/Open Space & Network Trails/Paths

*Staff Contact: (Applications 1 & 2)*

*William S. Valle – Director of Engineering and Capital Projects/City Engineer*

*Patrick Moneda – Senior Civil Engineer*

*(Application 3)*

*Laura C. Black, AICP – Interim Director of Development Services*

*Mark Caro, Landscape Architect, Development Services*