

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL



DATE: July 24, 2018

TITLE: Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 4 Grant Applications

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RECOMMENDATION

Authorize City Staff to submit the conceptual design and ATP Cycle 4 Grant Application for the CV Link Desert Hot Springs Extension Project.

BACKGROUND:

On July 3, 2018, the City Council approved Option 2 as the primary route for the CV Link Extension Project; authorized the application/design process to move forward; and directed Staff to bring back the final application and conceptual design prior to submittal.

Text from July 3, 2018 Staff Report

On September 26, 2013, Governor Brown signed legislation creating the Active Transportation Program (ATP) in the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The ATP consolidated federal and state transportation programs, including the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), and State Safe Routes to School (SR2S), into a single program with a focus in active transportation.

The objectives of the ATP program include the following goals:

- Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking.
- Increase safety and mobility for non-motorized users.
- Advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals.
- Enhance public health.
- Ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program.
- Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

On May 16, 2018, Caltrans released the “Call for Projects” accepting grant applications from agencies for projects to receive ATP Cycle 4 grant funding. The Call for Projects included specific applications requirements and scoring guidelines. The following lists the milestones for the development and adoption of the ATP Cycle 4 grant application process;

- Call for Projects – May 16, 2018
- Caltrans Training on new application forms – May 21, 2018
- Project applications due to Caltrans – July 31, 2018
- Caltrans recommendation for program posted – December 31, 2018
- California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopts the program – January 2019
- MPO DRAFT project programming recommendation to the CTC – February 2019
- CTC adopts MPO selected projects – June 2019

DISCUSSION

City Staff has been working with consultants and partnering agencies on completing and submitting ATP Cycle 4 Grant Applications for the following projects:

1. Hacienda Ave Improvement Project

- a. Lead Agency: City of Desert Hot Springs
- b. Location: Hacienda Ave, from West Drive to Foxdale Drive
- c. Scope: Installation of new sidewalk, curb and gutter, street lights, ADA ramps, bike lanes
- d. Estimated Cost: \$1.5 Million
- e. Status: Staff is working with consultant to complete technical studies and compile all required application materials, exhibits, reports, etc.

The Hacienda Ave Improvement Project was selected as part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as one of the highest-ranking projects. The scope of work is expected to score highly, based on this grant cycle's scoring criteria for small projects. The City is the lead agency in applying for this grant and implementing the project. The project will connect missing links and gaps, eliminate barriers, and provide a safer path for pedestrians, bicyclist, and vehicles. It is estimated to cost \$1.5 Million, with \$1.3 Million from ATP funding and \$200,000 from City matching funds.

2. Non-Infrastructure – Safe Routes To School Program Desert Hot Springs (Education Program)

- a. Lead Agency: Riverside University Health System (Riverside County Health Department) with support of the City of Desert Hot Springs
- b. Location: Various schools within the City of Desert Hot Springs
 - i. Bella Vista Elementary
 - ii. Bubbling Wells Elementary (in Riverside County)
 - iii. Cabot Yerxa Elementary
 - iv. DHS High School
 - v. Desert Springs Middle School
 - vi. Corsini Elementary
 - vii. Painted Hills Middle School
 - viii. Two Bunch Palms Elementary
- c. Scope: Provide Safe Routes To School Program through student programs at various schools, mixed with some community events
- d. Estimated Cost: \$600,000 over 3 years
- e. Status: Riverside University Health Systems Staff is working with their consultants and our Staff in finalizing all required application materials.

The Safe Routes To School Program project will benefit a total of eight school city-wide by organizing and implementing a Safe Routes To School student educational program over a three-year period. Riverside University Health Systems will be the lead agency in the grant application and in implementing the project. There are no City funds expended for this project.

3. CV Link Desert Hot Springs Extension Project

- a. Lead Agency: City of Desert Hot Springs with support from CVAG
- b. **Location: To Be Determined**
- c. **Scope: To Be Determined**
- d. Estimated Cost: To Be Determined
- e. Status: Based on Council's determination of a route, City Staff will work with CVAG Staff and their consultants to move into completing the technical studies and all required application materials.

For the CV Link Desert Hot Springs Extension Project, City Staff and CVAG Staff have discussed various routes that will qualify for ATP funding and score high based on the application scoring guidelines and submittal requirements. However, direction is needed from Council on how to proceed. The City will be the lead agency in submitting the grant application

and implementing the project, with the support and assistance of CVAG and their Consultant. The CVAG Executive Committee has approved a contract amendment with their lead CV Link consultant that includes funds to assist the City of Desert Hot Springs in completing technical studies and required submittals for this grant application. Based on the project's size and scope, it is anticipated to be a "large" project, and the application will score better if a match is committed. The City's local match portion of this grant application will utilize existing earmarked funds that were previously awarded for other projects along the route, such as the Palm Drive Traffic Signals and Lighting Project, and the Palm Drive Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Project. If there is a need for additional local matching funds, the CVAG Executive Committee has approved the use of regional funding as a local match per the current regional funding policy of 75% CVAG / 25% Local.

With SB 1 in place, this ATP Cycle is larger than usual, both in terms of the amount of funds available – \$440 million statewide – and the number of fiscal years (until FY 2022/23) will be programmed. Additionally, the CTC has put an increased focus on larger projects that are innovative and transformative. This creates a prime opportunity to go after a larger project. Based on all this, it is Staff's recommendation that the Council choose a CV Link extension route and seek funding for design and construction as part of ATP Cycle 4.

Time is of the essence as the application is due July 31. With Council's endorsement of a route, CVAG and the City can finalize the required technical studies and the grant application. In working with the City and reviewing the grant application requirements, CVAG staff has presented six alternative routes that can be used as connections to the CV Link. The six alternative routes are listed below and exhibits attached.

Alternative Routes:

Class I Bike Routes – Separated from road, off-street path

Class II Bike Routes – On-street, but with a designated area for bikes/pedestrians

Class III Bike Routes – Established route, but shared lane with vehicles and bikes

1. **Palm Drive Central Core Loop** – Possibly Class II from I-10 north to Mission Lakes Blvd., west to West Drive, south to Two Bunch Palms Trail and east to Palm Drive.
2. **Palm Drive Central Core Loop 2** – Possibly Class II from I-10 north to Mission Lakes Boulevard, west to Little Morongo Road, south to Dillon Road and east to Palm Drive.
3. **Worsley Rd Loop** – Palm Dr. from I-10 north to Pierson Blvd., west to Worsley Rd., south to 20th Ave., east to Wall Road (overpass), south to Garnet Road, and east to N. Indian Canyon Drive. This mainly serves the wind turbine area but does connect to an I-10 overcrossing at Wall Rd. that connects to Garnet Rd.
4. **Mission Creek Levee Loop** – Class I along the top of the Mission Creek levee north to Pierson Boulevard; east to Palm Dr.; south to I-10.
5. **Palm Dr./Cabot's Museum Loop** – Palm Dr. north to 18th Ave.; east to the wash just west of Avenida Manzana; north along the wash to Verbena; north to Desert View Dr.; east to Miracle Hill Rd. (Cabot's Museum); south to Two Bunch Palms Trail; south and west to Palm Dr.
6. **North Indian Canyon Dr. Loop** - Possibly Class II on N. Indian Canyon Dr. from I-10 north to Dillon Rd.; east to Palm Dr.; north to Pierson Blvd.; west to Little Morongo Rd.; south to Dillon Rd.

Attached are maps showing each route with the underlying zones of disadvantage communities. These exhibits show how each route will reflect the corresponding disadvantage community. The application is scored on a 100-point scale, and the impact on disadvantaged communities account for 10 points.

Along with the maps, CVAG submitted a memorandum to the City, based on the City's request for analysis, with these alternative routes and provided the following explanations:

CVAG staff believes that most of the options have a good chance of being funded. All are in disadvantaged areas and have elements that will receive strong consideration from reviewers. However, two options may be challenging for reviewers to score highly. Option 3 (Worsley Road) and Option 4 (Mission Creek) have very long stretches of improvements in open space and sparsely populated areas, making them seem more like recreational trails than the types of improvements that ATP funds. Based on the size and scope, all of these are likely to be under ATP's "large project" category, so a site visit by Caltrans staff would be likely.

In ATP workshops, officials have made it clear that they are looking for transformative projects that significantly expands the active transportation opportunities in a community or region. Applications that can show connectivity to parks, educational locales (schools, museums), employment centers and activity centers also fare well.

Historically, most ATPs are within urban and suburban areas and sparsely populated areas may not perform as well in meeting many of the ATP objectives, at least on a \$/person or \$/mile standard. Accident rates and other indicators are relatively low in these open space areas.

Additionally, CVAG matching funds are tied to the regional street system, such as Palm Drive or N. Indian Canyon Drive., etc. where substantial investments have been made and are clearly a part of the regional arterial system (CVAG's TPPS).

Staff is recommending that the City Council approve a primary option for CV Link Desert Hot Springs Extension Project and authorize staff to apply for design and construction funding through the state's ATP Cycle 4.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

EXHIBIT(S)

- 1) Draft Application
- 2) Map Exhibits
- 3) Photos of Existing Conditions