



DATE: September 17, 2024

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: John R. Gillison, City Manager

INITIATED BY: Matt Burris, Deputy City Manager of Community Development
Jason Welday, Director of Engineering Services/City Engineer
Justine Garcia, Deputy Director of Engineering Services
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SUBJECT: Consideration to Accept the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program Grant Revenue in the Amount of \$200,000, Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Administered by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for Federal Fiscal Year 2025; and Authorization to Appropriate \$200,000 From the Federal Grant Fund (Fund 275) for Approved Grant Expenses. (CITY)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Accept grant revenue in the amount of \$200,000 awarded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) through the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) under the Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program; and
2. Authorize the appropriation of \$200,000 for implementation of grant program objectives and deliverables.

BACKGROUND:

In January 2024, the City submitted a grant application to the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Grant Program, which is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The overarching goal of the annual program is to improve safety for all roadway users and prevent serious injury or death resulting from motor vehicle crashes. Through the City's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program in the Engineering Services Department, City staff applied under one (1) of the required OTS Priority Program Areas, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program (Project). Pedestrians and bicyclists are some of the most vulnerable roadway users every time they are out on the road. In the City, this may be exacerbated by the particularly large number of schools distributed across its 40-square mile area, along with the high levels of pass-through vehicular traffic from nearby urban centers. Safety concerns from parents have also led to increased driving to and from local schools, further aggravating traffic congestion around school neighborhoods and discouraging active mobility choices such as walking and bicycling.

The City's SRTS Program is designed to increase the physical activity of schoolchildren by encouraging walking and bicycling, and creating safer, connected routes for students to get to and from school. It serves to enhance schoolchildren's health and well-being, ease traffic

congestion near schools, and improve air quality and overall quality of life by making it easier and safer for families to choose active modes of transportation when traveling to and from school. The City's proposed OTS grant Project includes the implementation of SRTS best-practice strategies to improve safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and reduce collisions involving these roadway users. These strategies include educational outreach, targeted trainings such as bicycle rodeos, community events, presentations, and creating Suggested Walking and Bicycling Routes to School Maps for all 31 public elementary and middle schools in the City.

In July 2024, OTS notified the City, pending final agreement execution, that it has been awarded \$200,000 to implement its proposed Project. As a pass-thru grant program from NHTSA, the grant term follows a federal fiscal year, with Project implementation expected to begin in October 2024 and completed in September 2025. A copy of the agreement for Grant No. PS25051 is on file with the City Clerk office.

ANALYSIS:

While the City has recently completed its Active Transportation Plan (Connect RC) and engaged all five (5) school districts in several public meetings and events to solicit feedback about their specific transportation needs and issues, there are still internal capacity concerns at the school level, including an overall desire to rejuvenate SRTS programming and to better equip schools with tools that will help them successfully champion their respective SRTS programs. The proposed grant Project will help address these concerns by supporting overall SRTS operations, providing funding to purchase pedestrian and bicycle safety equipment for communitywide distribution, and facilitating the use of a technical consultant to create comprehensive and user-oriented Suggested Walking and Bicycling Routes to School Maps for all public elementary and middle schools in the City.

These objectives align consistently with the City's General Plan (PlanRC) in supporting the City to "create places where people want to be and can thrive; places that people will find vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive, connected by safe, comfortable streets for all users." PlanRC places the utmost importance on safety for all modes of travel in the City. One of the key areas referenced in PlanRC relates to managing and minimizing collisions, especially those that involve vulnerable users such as pedestrians and bicyclists, and prioritizing the reduction of these incidents.

OTS implements a Safe System Approach into all its programs, acknowledging that crashes will happen, and that traffic safety is a proactive, shared responsibility. The City's proposed Project will implement SRTS best-practice strategies designed to help reduce crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. They will include robust community engagement, safety trainings and presentations, and enhancing each school's SRTS toolkit (i.e., school-specific mapping) to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in their neighborhoods. Furthermore, the impacts of these strategies extend far beyond roadway safety alone. Less vehicles on the road translate to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality conditions, increased physical activity leads to reduced rates of obesity and chronic diseases, and a better understanding of how to facilitate safer active modes of travel further reduces dependence on automobiles for short-range trips within the City and effectively promotes active transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Grant funding has been approved in the amount of \$200,000 in federal funding. No matching contributions are required.

Staff requests that the City Council accept the grant and approve the following appropriation necessary to receive the grant funds and budget the related expenses:

Revenues:

Account No.	Funding Source	Description	Amount
F275 CC303 RC5100 GR-000069	Federal Grants Fund (F275)	Grant Income - Federal	\$200,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES:			\$200,000.00

Expenditures:

Account No.	Funding Source	Description	Amount
F275 CC303 SC2106 GR-000069	Federal Grants Fund (F275)	Grant Expenditures – Contract Services	\$200,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:			\$200,000.00

The City will be reimbursed from grant funds when invoices for eligible expenses are submitted to the grant administrator throughout the duration of the grant period.

COUNCIL MISSION / VISION / VALUE(S) ADDRESSED:

This item addresses the City Council's core value of promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy community for all, as well as intentionally embracing and anticipating our future. It also incorporates working together cooperatively and respectfully with each other, staff, and all stakeholders.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.