



Approve Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant Award from U.S. Department of Transportation

Consent

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Attachments: No

Approved by: James Corless

Referring Committee: Transportation

1. Issue:

In 2022, SACOG submitted an application for a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant, which was selected for award by U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). To move forward with the grant and obligate the funding, SACOG seeks approval from the Board to accept the \$5,000,000 grant award, including the ability to move forward with any associated contracting and budget actions.

2. Recommendation:

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board of Directors accept the \$5,000,000 RAISE Grant Award from DOT and authorize the Executive Director to take all contract and budget actions necessary to begin implement the program.

3. Background/Analysis:

The US DOT has made funding available through the RAISE grant program to assist communities with transportation projects that will have a significant local or regional impact, and align with the Department's strategic goals to improve safety, economic strength and global competitiveness, equity, and climate and sustainability. Projects awarded through the competitive process included those that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and designed with specific elements to address climate change impacts, as well as that proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of barrier.

RAISE grants were available for both capital/infrastructure and planning projects, both with minimum awards of \$5,000,000 in urbanized areas and a 20 percent local match requirement. Approximately \$75,000,000 in total was available for planning grant projects during the 2022 call for projects. The US DOT evaluated applications based on statutory primary selection criteria: safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair, and mobility and community connectivity. Additional considerations included partnership and collaboration, innovation, demonstrated project readiness, and cost effectiveness. Grant applications were due in April 2022, and grant awards announced in fall 2022.

4. Discussion/Analysis:

During the 2022 call for projects under RAISE, SACOG submitted a grant application for the Mobility Zones project, in partnership with PCTPA, EDCTC, and CivicThread. SACOG was successful and awarded a \$5,000,000 planning grant. This was the only successful planning grant in Northern California, and one of two RAISE grant awards in the region (Yuba-Sutter Transit received a RAISE capital grant for the Next Generation Transit Facility).

The Mobility Zones project plans to build on the success of the Green Zones concept, and design and develop a similar type of program aimed at transportation infrastructure, with a goal of expanding low-carbon and low-VMT transportation infrastructure investments throughout the six-county region. Centered on existing strong partnerships with our local utilities, air districts, transit operators, and city/county agencies, the program will develop investment zones that prioritize 'bottom up' transportation strategies that promote clean, shared and active mobility, as well as innovation and equity. These zones may include: transit priority, active transportation, microtransit, micromobility, clean car share and charging, clean truck, and clean transit facilities.

The project is structured to develop the mobility zones projects and programs, as well as assist with early-phase implementation. Activities will include identification and prioritization of zones and infrastructure needs/projects within each of the six counties, and will advance top priorities through pre-construction activities (such as design, engineering, and environmental clearance) in order to poise these critical community projects for future capital funds to complete implementation. At the end of the planning phase, the project will yield a regional map of the zones with all the different layers – a map that is meaningful and locally-owned (in the vein of the Green Zones).

The success of this program will be hinged on the partnerships not only with existing agencies but also local community-based organizations (CBOs). The program will be co-created with local partners, including CBOs and equity organizations, and will be "owned" by cities, counties and transit agencies. The zones and resulting infrastructure projects will set a high bar for the types of infrastructure that will truly promote mode shift and clean vehicles, and through an inclusive and collaborative planning process with agencies and community members/groups, will be a true reflection of the communities in which they are located.

Work on the Mobility Zones project is anticipated to begin in April 2023, with the start of procurement for consultant services and initial outreach strategy (in partnership with CivicThread). Once a consultant is procured, we expect to begin technical scope work to begin no later than July 2023, with work extending through 2025.

5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

This action would authorize expenditures of the RAISE program in the amount of \$5,000,000 upon execution of the agreement with DOT by April 1, 2023, and authorize the executive director to take all budget actions consistent therewith, including use of \$1,200,000 in the SACOG Managed Fund for the required 20 percent grant match.