



City of Arts & Innovation

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      DATE: DECEMBER 13, 2022**

**FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT      WARD: 1**

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY \$2,340,000 IN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM CYCLE VI GRANT FUNDING THROUGH THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS AND RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO FUND A RIVERSIDE CIVIL RIGHTS WALK**

## **ISSUE:**

Authorization and acceptance of \$2,340,000 in Active Transportation Program Cycle VI grant funding through the Southern California Association of Governments and Riverside County Transportation Commission.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Approve the acceptance of a grant award in the amount of \$2,340,000, or the actual awarded amount, under the Active Transportation Program Cycle VI program as administered by the Southern California Association of Governments and Riverside County Transportation Commission; and
2. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all necessary documents in the process of applying for and securing funds under the Active Transportation Program Cycle VI, including making minor and non-substantive changes and executing agreement amendments and extensions, subject to the availability of budgeted funds.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of the State of California's Active Transportation Program is to support active modes of transportation by achieving the following goals:

1. Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking;
2. Increase safety and mobility for non-motorized users;
3. Advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals;
4. Enhance public health;
5. Ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program; and

6. Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

The City of Riverside has participated in the ATP grant program since its inception in 2014, seeking funding for important active transportation projects through the submission of multiple grant applications during the first five calls for projects. To date, the City has been successful in securing millions of dollars in federal and state grants for five projects under ATP Cycles I, II, and III benefiting the City and its resident by constructing critical pedestrian and cyclist safety and mobility enhancements.

On June 7, 2022, the City Council authorized the Public Works Department to submit an Active Transportation Program Cycle VI grant application to the California Department of Transportation in an amount up to \$3,500,000 for improvements to connect 17 points of historic interest in the Downtown and adjoining areas to create a Riverside Civil Rights Walk.

**DISCUSSION:**

The proposed project will develop a themed active transportation loop named the “Riverside Civil Rights Walk.” Thermoplastic markings, similar to the Boston Freedom Trail, and wayfinding signs will guide pedestrians through a series of stops relating to Riverside’s rich history of Civil Rights achievements and occurrences of importance. The core 1.8-mile loop will be upgraded with continental and other high visibility crosswalks, LED Signage, detectable warning surfaces and reconstructed ADA ramps, Accessible Pedestrian Signal push buttons, and traffic signal wraps. The core loop will route participants through 18 points of interest.

The expanded loop will feature wayfinding signage and markers, high visibility crossings, LED Signage, and ADA ramp / warning surface upgrades. Seven stops will be featured along the 2.9-mile expanded loop. Signage and phone-based guidance will educate walkers on the importance of each location as it relates to our individual civil liberties. By formalizing and marking the Civil Rights Walk, Riverside will develop a unique active and educational opportunity. Students, residents, and visitors will benefit from touring the Civil Rights Walk, and those who live, work and play in the Downtown will benefit each day from the safety enhancements installed along the route.



*Figure 1: Stops will include the MLK statue and Harada House*

The grant application for the Civil Rights Walk consisted of the following improvements totaling \$3,216,000 in requested grant funds:

1. Reconstruct 170 Linear Feet of sidewalk;
2. Reconstruct 87 pedestrian ramps;
3. Enhance 76 individual crosswalks;
4. Install Accessible Pedestrian Systems and Leading Pedestrian Intervals at approximately 13 traffic signals;
5. Install 10 decorative traffic signal wraps;
6. Install 1.8 miles of thermoplastic wayfinding;
7. Install 4.7 miles of wayfinding signage; and
8. Enhance 4 intersections with LED Signage

Grant Matching & Funding:

The Civil Rights Walk received a preliminary score of 80 points out of 100 from the State Department of Transportation. This score falls short of the funding threshold to receive State funding but remaining eligible for funding through the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The City of Riverside's MPO is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) serves as a recommending body to SCAG with respect to allocating its Active Transportation Program MPO funds. RCTC reached out to City staff to inform them that it plans to recommend funding of the project to SCAG. The project's score has yet to be officially adopted by the California Transportation Commission; should the score change, it could impact RCTC's recommendation to fund the Civil Rights Walk project.

At the time of application, no matching funds were required to request State funds for the Civil Rights Walk project. While the project did not meet the awarded point threshold to receive funding directly through the State, the Riverside County Transportation Commission has recommended to award funds for the Civil Rights Walk to Riverside based on the California Transportation Commission's draft score and award list. RCTC is recommending partial funding of the Civil Rights Walk to SCAG in the amount of \$2,340,000 leaving a funding gap of \$876,000 to be matched by the City. City staff recommends budgeting for this funding gap using Measure A funds to meet the planned construction start window of Fiscal Year 2025-26. City staff will continue looking for alternative grant funding to leverage the proposed \$2,340,000 grant award and cover the \$876,000 funding gap.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

The proposed project contributes to **Strategic Priority 1 - Arts, Culture and Recreation** and **Goals 1.1 to 1.5**, and **Strategic Priority 6 - Infrastructure, Mobility & Connectivity** and **Goals 6.1, 6.2, and 6.4**.

This project aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The project is supported by the priority objectives of the Riverside PACT. The Civil Rights Walk would serve public interest, benefit the City's diverse populations, and meet the needs of the community based on their feedback.
2. **Equity** – The purpose of the Active Transportation Program is to encourage a healthy

lifestyle and enhance public health by increasing safety and mobility of biking and walking, and ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program.

3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Riverside is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City’s financial resources by awarding construction and consultant services contracts to the lowest responsive bidders and utilizing available grant funding from the State’s Active Transportation Program.
4. **Innovation** – Riverside is inventive and timely in meeting the community’s changing needs and prepares for the future through collaborative partnerships and adaptive processes. The City will partner with several entities to develop an outdoor, interactive learning opportunity for students and visitors with the use of a mobile application and AR technology.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The proposed ATP project aims to increase the proportion of biking and walking to connect residents to economic & educational opportunities, improve community resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The estimated fiscal impact is \$3,216,000 of which \$876,000 is the City match coming from Measure A funding. After the receipt of the grant award, Department will return to Council at a later date to appropriate the grant award and the required City match. Project accounts for this award will also be established at that time.

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Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation