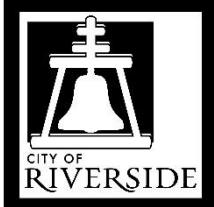


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City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JANUARY 27, 2026

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION OFFERED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMERCE FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM – RIVERSIDE INNOVATION CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIVITY PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,500,000

ISSUE:

Authorize the submittal of a grant application for \$1,500,000 in funding for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program offered by the United States Department of Transportation Commerce to install high-speed traffic signal communications intelligent infrastructure systems along University Avenue and Central Avenue corridors. The total project cost is estimated at \$1,500,000.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council authorize the Public Works Department to submit a funding application for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program offered by the United States Department of Transportation Commerce in an amount up to \$1,500,000 for the Innovation Corridor Transportation Connectivity Project that will install high-speed traffic signal communications intelligent infrastructure systems along the University Avenue and Central Avenue corridors which represent a critical investment in economic development, and establishes the baseline for future advancements in transportation technology.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Riverside has participated in several federal grant programs, seeking funding for important transportation infrastructure investment and capital projects through the submission of multiple grant applications. To date, the city has been successful in securing millions of dollars in federal and state grants through these efforts.

On September 16, 2025, US Department of Transportation Commerce announced the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program Call for Projects for Fiscal Year 2025. The Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant have historically awarded projects in the average amount of \$1.4 million in federal grant funds. There are no application deadlines under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis subject to the availability of funds or until this NOFO is amended or a new program is published. Economic Development Administration (EDA) may cancel, modify, or withdraw this NOFO at any time.

DISCUSSION:

The following are reasons for the city to construct intelligent infrastructure along the University Avenue (“Innovation Corridor”) and Central Avenue corridors as Strategic Testbed for Future Mobility and Sustainability:

1. **Geographic and Strategic Significance** - A six-mile stretch of University Avenue between UCR, the California Air Resources Board, and downtown Riverside, positioned at the nexus of transit networks, research hubs, and vibrant urban entertainment destinations.
2. **Advanced Connectivity and Infrastructure** - All traffic signal controllers are being upgraded to be compatible with Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) connectivity standards. Dedicated Short Range Communication (DSRC) roadside units are mounted at each intersection to broadcast real-time Signal Phase and Timing (SPaT) messages, alongside Radio Technical Commission for Maritime (RTCM) Services and mapping data that enable geofencing and accurate positioning. The City anticipates that this technology will have congestion management, safety, and public health benefits.
3. **Key Applications and Testbed Purpose** - The corridor serves as a critical testbed for Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) applications, including eco-approach and departure (EAD), eco-transit operations, smart intersection management, and more. In-vehicle Digital Visual Interfaces (DVIs) display signal status, countdown timers, and target speed recommendations to guide drivers in optimizing energy consumption and traffic flow. Coupled with the City’s ongoing partnership with UCR’s Center for Environmental Research and Technology, enhancement of our testbed will also allow for research oriented technology to expand into the commercial sector.
4. **Environmental and Sustainable Innovations** - New generation air quality sensors are planned for deployment at bus stops, intersections, and near freeway corridors to evaluate traffic-related air quality and public health impacts. Additional futuristic elements, such as shared zero-emissions mobility services, renewable energy generation, and vehicle-to-grid interactions, will further enhance the corridor’s multi-disciplinary approach to sustainable urban mobility.

Additionally, the advanced traffic signal and communication systems will retrofit all traffic signal controllers along the corridor, enhance traffic signal information systems, and improve in-vehicle digital visual interface. If constructed, the performance improvements along the corridor are anticipated to reduce delays by 5%-20% with potential energy consumption reduction by 10%-20% as documented in the website - [City of Riverside Innovation Corridor | Center for Environmental Research & Technology](#)

The City is actively working with Alvord Unified School District, Riverside Unified School District, Riverside Transit Agency, University of California Riverside and Western Riverside Council of Governments to garner letters of support from each entity that wishes to support the intelligent infrastructure investment. This effort will bolster Riverside’s status as a living transportation technology laboratory, creating research and development opportunities that provide fertile ground to grow next-generation transportation companies in our city.

Grant Matching Strategy & Development

The full scope of the project is pending final estimates; however, to stay within the defined project size ranges and to remain competitive for federal funds, the Riverside Innovation Corridor Transportation Connectivity Project will be capped at \$1,500,000 in total project costs to be

consistent with the average award sizes for the Public Works Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program.

The proposed projects will not only modernize critical infrastructure but also help bridge socioeconomic gaps, attract new business investment, and improve quality of life for thousands of residents. This project will serve as a cornerstone for regional development and will enhance the connection to University of California Center for Environmental Research & Technology (UCR CE-CERT).

City Staff are requesting authorization from the City Council for a grant application in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total estimated fiscal impact of this recommendation is \$1,500,000 to complete the Riverside Innovation Corridor Transportation Connectivity Project (Table 1). There is a City match of \$600,000 for this grant.

Table 1 – Project Costs

Project Name	Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program Funds Requested	City Matching Funds	Total Project Cost
Riverside Innovation Corridor Transportation Connectivity Project	\$900,000	\$600,000	\$1,500,000

If successful, the Public Works Economic Adjustment Assistance grant funding will be used for design and construction of the Riverside Innovation Transportation Corridor Connectivity Project.

Staff will return to Council if awarded the grant with a definitive recommendation for appropriation of grant funds and matching funding, in the amount of \$600,000 from the potential funding sources, including bond proceeds, Measure A, Measure Z, gas tax or others as available.

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