

Montgomery City Council
AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: May 28, 2023	Budgeted Amount: \$0
Department: Admin	Prepared By: Dave McCorquodale

Subject

Consideration and possible action on a Resolution supporting the City of Montgomery's Application to TxDOT's 2023 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Call for Projects.

Recommendation

Motion to adopt the Resolution supporting the City's application for TxDOT's 2023 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects.

Discussion

Background

TxDOT offers a grant program for non-roadway mobility projects every two years. Projects can either be physical improvements (e.g., a sidewalk or trail) or planning documents that serve as a guide for future physical projects. The city submitted grant applications in 2021 for two sidewalk projects. While we scored well according to a TxDOT follow up meeting, we were not awarded grant funding for either project. The primary feedback from TxDOT was that the projects were small in scope and did not serve enough community members. Another takeaway was that the projects were not part of a planning document adopted by the city.

Purpose

City staff submitted a Preliminary Application for an Active Transportation Mobility Plan in March for TxDOT's 2023 Call for Projects. The need for the plan is twofold:

1. Serve as the guide for staff and council to identify projects and budgets if the city decides to self-fund high-priority projects.
2. Increase our competitiveness when applying for mobility grants.

The grant award process is highly competitive. The 2023 Call for Projects received \$1.7 billion in funding requests for an anticipated \$250 million worth of federal funds. In other words, 85% of this year's grant applications will *not* get funded. To get grant funding, an application needs to score every possible point during the grant application review process. 20% of those points are based on whether a proper planning process has been followed and a plan has been adopted that includes the project.

In short, without an adopted plan that identifies proposed projects and illustrates how those projects connect to the rest of the community, we will be at a significant disadvantage and there is a good chance future grant applications will not be funded. An Active Transportation Mobility Plan is the document that meets the city's current needs to pursue mobility grants for non-roadway projects.

TxDOT Transportation Alternatives grants are 80% federally funded with a 20% local match. The budget estimate used in the Preliminary Application is \$120,000 for the development of an Active Transportation Mobility Plan. While that figure may be slightly high, using that as a starting point means the city will need to budget \$24,000 in next year's budget for the Plan.

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The proposed Resolution provides official support for the grant application and a commitment to meet local funding obligations under the grant (20% of the project cost plus any cost overruns).

Approved By		
Assistant City Administrator & Planning & Development Director	Dave McCorquodale	Date: 05/18/2023
City Administrator	Gary Palmer	Date: 05/18/2023