

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: August 13, 2018

To: The Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395
Attention: Honorable Mike Bonin, Chair, Transportation Committee

From:  *for* Seleta J. Reynolds, General Manager
Department of Transportation

Subject: **2018 HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CYCLE 9 CALL FOR PROJECTS**

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) requests approval of the project selection methodology and authority to submit grant applications to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to compete in the State's 2018 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 9 Call for Projects grant award process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. APPROVE LADOT's proposed project selection and prioritization methodology (as described under the Discussion section of this report) for HSIP Cycle 9; and
2. AUTHORIZE the General Manager of LADOT to submit grant applications to Caltrans for the most competitive projects identified through this prioritization methodology; and
3. AUTHORIZE the Director of the Bureau of Street Services to submit grant applications to Caltrans to compete for the guardrail upgrades set-aside; and
4. DIRECT the General Manager or Director of the respective lead City department to identify any additional resource needs, including staff and/or overtime funding, for the implementation of the projects that are awarded funding through this grant opportunity, and to seek approval for any additional staffing needs from the City Council prior to accepting the funds; and
5. AUTHORIZE the General Manager or Director of the lead City department to execute any necessary funding and contractual documents, subject to the approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality, for accepting the grant.

BACKGROUND

Congress signed into law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST) Bill in December 2015, establishing the HSIP as a core federal-aid program. The goal of this program is to achieve significant reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. Caltrans allocates HSIP funds to local agencies for infrastructure-related safety improvements, traffic calming measures on public roads, public surface transportation facilities and public-owned bicycle or pedestrian pathways or trails. These funds

are for the purpose of assisting local agencies in improving safety by eliminating and reducing the number and severity of traffic collisions at critical and high concentration locations. HSIP projects are most competitive based on crash experience, crash potential, crash rate, or other related data-supported means.

Funding Opportunity

Approximately \$140-160 million in federal funds will be made available statewide to fund this Cycle 9 program in the following six competing application categories:

1. Common BCR projects (75% of HSIP Cycle 9 Funding) (\$10 million maximum per agency)
2. Set-aside for High Friction Surface Treatment projects (\$5 million) (\$10 million maximum per agency for categories 1 and 2 combined)
3. Set-aside for Guardrail Upgrades projects (\$20 million) (\$1 million maximum per agency)
4. Set-aside for Horizontal Curve Signing projects (\$5 million) (\$250,000 maximum per agency)
5. Set-aside for Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements projects (\$8 million) (\$250,000 maximum per agency)
6. Set-aside for Tribes (\$2 million) (\$250,000 maximum per tribe)

The goal of the HSIP program is to fund safety projects that can be designed and constructed expeditiously. Projects shall not require the acquisition of a significant amount of right-of-way, nor should they require extensive environmental review and mitigation. Projects that require horizontal and vertical curve realignments and shoulder widening that require longer time to deliver will need to show that an incremental approach of lower cost countermeasures have been considered and have not proven to be effective. For a project to be eligible for HSIP funding, specific safety problems and the proposed countermeasure(s) must substantially address the conditions. All proposed projects must lead to and complete the construction of safety improvements and must be consistent with the California's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Non-safety related items, such as landscaping, highway beautification, maintenance, etc., shall not exceed 10% of the project's construction cost.

DISCUSSION

Notice of Funding Availability

On April 30, 2018, Caltrans released a Notice of Funding Availability making agencies aware of this grant funding opportunity. Grant applications are due to Caltrans on August 31, 2018. The City of Los Angeles is eligible to apply under application categories #1 and #3.

Project Selection and Prioritization Methodology (Category #1 - Common BCR Projects)

Caltrans' primary rating factor for selecting and awarding HSIP funding is the Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR). The BCR calculation takes into consideration the number and severity of collisions that a countermeasure may reduce, the crash reduction capabilities of the selected countermeasures, and the cost of the countermeasures. The keys ways to maximize a project's competitiveness and yield a higher BCR for HSIP funding are to (a) select corridors with the highest number of incidents, (b) select the appropriate countermeasures with the highest Crash Reduction Factors (CRF), and if possible, (c) combine multiple countermeasures with similar characteristics into one application to improve safety effectiveness and improve project delivery efficiencies.

Vision Zero seeks to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2025. The Vision Zero Action Plan identified the High Injury Network (HIN) which represents only 6 percent of the City's streets, but accounts for 65 percent of all fatal and severe injuries. The HIN is based on crash data over a five-year period (from 2009 to 2014), and accounted for crash severity, vulnerability of road users, and social equity.

LADOT selected a sub-group of 40 priority corridors from the HIN based on clusters of high incidence locations. These priority corridors are where the City will initially focus to achieve the greatest reduction in severe and fatal injuries. LADOT implemented temporary, short term improvements, such as intersection tightening treatments, at select key intersections along some of these priority corridors and now wishes to use this HSIP funding opportunity to make these temporary improvements permanent.

LADOT will determine which projects will yield the highest BCRs and prepare HSIP funding applications that are most competitive under this funding program. Applying this methodology will help meet the City's goals as identified in the Vision Zero Action Plan and enhance the competitiveness of the City's applications. LADOT anticipates submitting applications to seek funding for up to the maximum \$10 million cap set for any individual agency.

Guardrail upgrades (Category #3 – Set-aside for Guardrail Upgrades)

Up to \$20 million statewide has been set aside by Caltrans for agencies that seek funding for upgrades of existing guardrails. The applications under this category are not required to have a BCR, nor is it required to identify exact locations of proposed guardrail locations. The Bureau of Streets Services anticipates applying for the maximum \$1 million set-aside under the guardrail upgrades category, and will draw upon their existing backlog of requests from community and council offices.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the City's general fund. The HSIP program reimburses 90%-100% of the project's cost depending on the proposed countermeasure. The necessary 10% local match will come from Local Proposition C funds, if needed. Per the HSIP guidelines, the City can receive a maximum of \$11 million in grant funding; therefore, the maximum local match contribution needed would not exceed \$1.1 million.

There is also no immediate impact on special funds. However, future appropriations by the Mayor and the City Council will be required to deliver the projects. For projects awarded grant funding, LADOT, in conjunction with the CAO and CLA, will identify the recommended appropriation source(s) of funds from available revenues during the development of each fiscal years' budget, as well as multi-year schedules for transportation special funds.

c: Borja Leon, Office of the Mayor
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