



City Council

Approval of Surface Transportation Program Funding Requests

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Agenda Item:

Approval of Surface Transportation Program Funding Requests

Issue:

On March 4, 2013, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) issued an expedited call for grant projects in the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP). Because grant applications were due March 21, 2013 under a very tight timeline, City staff submitted three projects and now seeks City Council approval of the priority of the projects submitted.

City Manager's Recommendation:

Move to approve the priority of the projects submitted for federal STP grants through TRPC.

Staff Contact:

Randy Wesselman, Public Works Transportation, 753.8477

Presenter(s):

Randy Wesselman, Public Works Transportation, 753.8477

Background and Analysis:

Each year, staff looks for federal and state grant opportunities to stretch City dollars and help complete our highest priority projects in the *Capital Facilities Plan* (CFP).

The City of Olympia is estimated to receive approximately \$2,196,043 in federal STP funds over the next six -years (2013-2018). Depending on the number of grant applications received, only a portion of this amount will be available for obligation in 2013 and 2014.

Priorities for the 2013/2014 regional STP funding process are those projects or programs that improve the safety, preservation and efficiency of the multimodal transportation system. Our proposed projects meet this criteria and are consistent with the *Regional Transportation Plan*.

Additionally, new accountability measures are in place concerning obligation of project funds. Failure to obligate funds in a timely manner will result in sanctioning of funds. Funds could be removed from a project and from the region, and will not be restored. Construction type projects will no longer be awarded full funding at the time of project selection. Funds are awarded on a phase-by-phase basis. For this reason, Olympia's proposed projects for 2013/2014 funding are to complete design and planning work.

Regional STP Funds

Proposals were developed for the following projects targeting the regional STP funds:

1. West Olympia Access - Interchange Justification Report (IJR) - (\$850,000 requested)
2. Boulevard Road and Morse-Merryman Road Roundabout Design - (\$574,256 requested)

At this time, staff is requesting \$1,424,256 of the total estimated amount of STP funds (\$2,196,043) the City will receive over the next six years. Staff proposes that the City target the remaining funds (\$771,787) in future years for the construction phase of the Boulevard Road and Morse-Merryman Road Roundabout project.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds - successor to Transportation Enhancements funding

Staff did not submit any projects for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. The main reasons were the small amount of funds available (\$360,000) and the lack of available City funds to provide local match for a project. In addition, the added cost to administer federal funds on a small project is typically not cost effective.

Potential Statewide STP Funds

There is the potential that some additional funding will be available for statewide selection in early August 2013. The following proposal was developed for the statewide STP funds (if made available):

1. 22nd Avenue/Eastside Street Sidewalk (Fir Street to Wheeler Avenue) - Design only

Attachment 1 for a more detailed description of the proposed projects listed above. Attachment 2 provides additional information on local match and the overall funding strategy for these projects.

The Transportation Policy Board will review all the regional grant applications at their April 10, 2013 meeting and make a recommendation to the TRPC Board. The TRPC Board will review and select the projects for grant award at their May 3, 2013 meeting.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The West Olympia Access IJR is identified in the CFP and received extensive public review during the West Olympia Access Study process. The West Olympia Business Association, Capital Medical Center, Thurston County and others strongly support the project.

The Boulevard Road and Morse-Merryman Road Roundabout is identified in the CFP and would be the third roundabout constructed in the Boulevard Road Corridor. Guidance for this recommendation is based on previous City Council direction. The Boulevard Road Corridor roundabouts were identified as the City's top priority for transportation improvements.

The 22nd Avenue/Eastside Street sidewalk is identified in the *2003 Sidewalk Program*. Neighborhoods had multiple opportunities to review and provide comment on this program and project. Several public requests have been made for sidewalks on this street.

Options:

1. Approve the priority of the projects submitted for federal STP grants through TRPC.
2. Re-prioritize the projects submitted for federal STP grants.
3. Withdraw the submitted projects from consideration in the current STP funding process.

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Financial Impact:

See Attachment 2 for more detailed information.