

## SBCAG STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program

**MEETING DATE:** December 17, 2020 **AGENDA ITEM:** 4L

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jared Carvalho and Dylan Tonningsen

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize SBCAG staff to pursue three planning grants through Caltrans' Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program consists of two grant types:

*Sustainable Communities Grants* (\$29.5 million) to encourage local and regional planning that furthers state goals, including, but not limited to, the goals and best practices cited in the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines adopted by the California Transportation Commission.

*Strategic Partnerships Grants* (\$4.5 million) to identify and address statewide, interregional, or regional transportation deficiencies on the State highway system in partnership with Caltrans. A sub-category funds transit-focused planning projects that address multimodal transportation deficiencies.

It is envisioned that these planning grants will provide much needed funding to support regional sustainable communities' strategies and ultimately achieve the State's greenhouse gas reductions targets of 40 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 2050, respectively

The proposed timeline for the 2021-22 cycle is as follows:

- November/December 2020 - Release final Grant Application Guide/call-for-applications.
- January 2021 - Grant application deadline (exact date to be determined)
- June 2021 – Grant announcements
- Fall 2021 – Grant recipients begin project activities
- Winter-Summer 2024 – Grant projects are completed, and grant funds expire (expiration dates depend on grant recipient and fund-type)

SBCAG Staff are proposing submitting applications for three projects, described below:

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

*SBCAG's update of its 2006 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan seeks to improve opportunity by improving access to essential services for vulnerable populations. The region is served by roughly a dozen public providers and an unknown number of private services. Coordination of service lacks and could provide for user benefit. Additionally, the demographic characteristics of the region are changing. There is a growing population of rural elderly that have unique transportation challenges to meet their essential needs. The region is also*

*experiencing growth in the immigrant population, which also has its own unique transportation needs.*

*The intersection between fixed-route and specialty transit services, as well as private services will be explored and planned for. The plan involves analysis and coordination of the County's local, regional, inter-county, and private services. A significant portion of the project's proposed budget is for public outreach. The deliverable of this plan is a written document that can be used to inform future decisions and strategies that best fit the needs of Santa Barbara's population and their transportation needs.*

#### Highway 246 Livable Street Project – Western Buellton

*The focus of this project is on the segment of SR 246 between its junction with Avenue of Flags and the western limit of the City of Buellton, a distance of approximately one mile. By contemporary standards SR 246 is a complete street in the project area; it has bike lanes and sidewalks along its entire length. However, the fundamental flaw of SR 246 in the project area is it is significantly overbuilt for automobile traffic which renders it as a barrier for the community. Recent traffic counts (pre-COVID-19) found 13,150 vehicles per day which corresponds to it serving less than 30 percent of its designed capacity. The highway's pavement is approximately 80 feet wide and includes bicycle lanes, four through lanes, and a two-way left turn lane (For reference, US 101 at its interchange with SR 246 has four through lanes and a total pavement width of approximately 65 feet). The City of Buellton was awarded an Active Transportation Program grant for a rectangular rapid flashing beacon crosswalk. A woman walking her dog in the new crosswalk was struck by a vehicle in the short period of time between the completion of construction and the ribbon cutting ceremony.*

*SR 246 in the project area is straight, flat, and wide, coupled with no traffic control west of Industrial Way and becoming a rural highway with a 65 miles per hour speed limit outside of the city, it possesses all of the attributes that contribute to excessive vehicle speeds despite the posted 40 miles per hour speed limit. The final deliverable for this project will be a conceptual corridor re-design that both serves the travelling public and meets the needs of City's residents, businesses, and visitors.*

#### Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

*In response to Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-79-20, which will attempt to accelerate meeting greenhouse gas emission targets by requiring auto manufacturers to only sell zero emission passenger vehicles/trucks by 2035 and medium- and heavy-duty trucks by 2045, the Central Coast Coalition of regional transportation agencies in Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties will conduct a Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.*

*The Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy will ultimately represent the results of research, analysis, and planning conducted to help the Central Coast region achieve the goal of being ZEV ready. The strategy will build on previous alternative fuel vehicle readiness planning efforts. These include efforts captured separately in plans and various climate action plans. These documents provide an introduction to the zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) ecosystem and will help identify the key planning elements that require further research, analysis, and planning to help the Central Coast Region achieve the goal of being ZEV Ready. The ultimate goal is to identify gaps and opportunities to implement ZEV infrastructure on the Central Coast, including on or near the State Highway System and transit hubs, with an emphasis on ensuring access for low income households.*

#### **COMMITTEE REVIEW:**

During its December 3, 2020 meeting the Technical Planning Advisory Committee voted to recommend the SBCAG Board authorize staff to submit the three grant applications.