



Parks & Recreation

To: Mayor and City Council Members
Doug Faseler, City Manager

From: Jack Jones, Director of Parks and Recreation

Through: Rick Cortes, Assistant City Manager

Date: August 19, 2014

Subject: **Resolution authorizing the submission to the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization of the New Community Park Trails and Sidewalk Connector project and the Walnut Branch Hike and Bike Trail Extension project for funding as part of the Agency Call for Transportation Alternatives Program; committing matching funds for the project and declaring an effective date.**

On June 1, 2013, the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) issued a call for Surface Transportation Program – Metropolitan Mobility (STP-MM) funded projects for the FY 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The development of the TIP was a process by which federal transportation funds are allocated to major road, street, highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation projects within the San Antonio-Bexar County MPO area. On November 19, the City Council approved a Resolution authorizing the submittal of four projects for MPO funding and committed 31% in matching funds for the projects. One of the projects submitted for funding was the Walnut Branch Hike and Bike Trail Extension project. The trail project did not get approved by the MPO for funding as this project was competing against higher prioritized road projects such as the Tor Drive project, which did receive MPO funding.

On May 1, 2014, the now renamed Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) issued an agency call for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funded projects. The TAP is a reimbursable federal funding program and all applicable federal rules apply. Contingent upon the availability of federal funding, the expected TAP amount available for this program is \$11,500,000. This is currently the funding available for fiscal years 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016.

TAP projects require a minimum 20% local match. Every project submitted will need to include a formal commitment of this local match from the implementing agency as well as for the project development costs. Project development costs include design, engineering, TxDOT contract fee, and possible utility relocations. The MPO will provide funding assistance for construction costs only if the project is approved.

The MPO will accept submittals for the following types of projects:

- Construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
- Construction of infrastructure related projects that will provide safe routes for non-drivers.
- Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
- The safe routes to school program eligible projects and activities listed at section 1404(f) of the SAFETEA-LU:
 - Infrastructure related projects.
 - Non-infrastructure related activities, including Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Assuming more projects are submitted than there is funding available, the submitted projects will be scored as follows:

Technical Scoring: Bicycle Projects

- 30% Improves mobility (part of an adopted plan, available transit service, and connectivity to existing bicycle facilities)
- 40% Considers safety (facility type)
- 30% Improves accessibility (further the multi-modal function of a corridor, supports an adopted long range plan growth scenario, supports bicycle travel near a school)
 - +50 points for providing a local match of 21%-30%
 - +100 points for providing more than a 30% local match
 - +100 points for projects serving identified environmental justice areas

Technical Scoring: Pedestrian Projects

- 20% Supports an adopted long range plan growth scenario
- 10% Supported by a Walkable Community Workshop or city or county adopted plan
- 10% Completes a sidewalk gap
- 30% Considers pedestrian travel comfort
- 20% Directly supports pedestrian travel near a school
- 10% Project incorporates pedestrian design enhancements
 - +50 points for providing a local match of 21%-30%
 - +100 points for providing more than a 30% local match
 - +100 points for projects serving identified environmental justice areas

Multi-use paths will be scored as both a bicycle and pedestrian project and the higher score will be used. Projects submitted will be evaluated and scored by the Bicycle Mobility Advisory Committee (BMAC) and Pedestrian Mobility Advisory Committee (PMAC), based on the criteria listed. The scoring system is based on a 1,000 point system with additional points being awarded for certain project components as noted above. Using technical scoring information, public input, project readiness information and agency priorities, BMAC and PMAC will make a recommendation on project funding.

The funding recommendation will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee and the Transportation Policy Board along with technical score, submitting agency priorities, additional notations, and public comments. The Technical Advisory Committee will make a recommendation on project funding to the Transportation Policy Board and the Board will take action on funded projects to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Similar to the City Council action regarding the proposed TIP projects last year, staff is proposing to submit two trail projects for TAP funding committing to a 31% local match in order to be awarded the extra points for providing a higher local match. The first priority would be the New Community Park Trails and Sidewalk Connector project. The proposed project includes adding a 5 foot sidewalk along the east side of North Vaughn Avenue from Court Street to Kingsbury Street and along the south side of San Antonio Avenue from North Vaughn Avenue to Guadalupe Street. This includes constructing a pedestrian walkway to the existing bridge over the Walnut Branch along the east side of North Vaughn Avenue. In addition, the project would include any trails not funded as part of the New Community Park project. Using approved Parks Bond funding, the City can use the portion of funding within the new community park for the trails and sidewalks within the park to leverage it for the matching funds for the additional trails and sidewalks. The estimated total project cost is \$1,100,000 (\$759,000 Federal Match; \$341,000 Local Match inclusive of all project development costs). The City will leverage \$250,000 in Parks Bond money to increase the Federal Match portion while reducing the Local Match portion leaving a remaining balance of \$91,000 that need to be allocated to this grant. Please note that the City will be responsible for any additional engineering costs associated with the construction of the sidewalks and any corresponding TxDOT fees which still need to be determined.

As proposed, the Walnut Branch Hike and Bike Trail Extension will consist of a 5 to 14 foot wide, AASHTO compliant path that will connect the southern terminus of the 2009 STEP trail at Convent Street to Max Starcke Park. The path will start at the Convent Street right-of-way and roadway and then go south along the east side of Guadalupe Street. The path will turn east along the north side of Klein Street and onto the north side of SH 123 Business (South Austin Street) going under the Walnut Branch bridge where it will link to the existing hike and bike trail in Max Starcke Park East. The estimated total project cost is \$1,716,948 (\$916,948 Federal Match; \$800,000 Local Match inclusive of all project development costs).

Staff recommends approval of a Resolution authorizing the submission to the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization of the Walnut Branch Hike and Bike Trail Extension project for funding as part of the Agency Call for Transportation Alternatives Program; committing matching funds for the project and declaring an effective date.