

## REPORT FROM

# OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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Date: May 2, 2023

CAO File No. 0220-06098-0000

Council File No. None

Council District: All

To: The City Council

From:  Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer

Subject: **AUTHORITY TO APPLY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, EQUITY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (SCP CEEEJ) GRANT**

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize the General Manager of the Bureau of Street Services (BSS), or designee, to prepare grant applications for the proposal outlined in the Attachment 1; and,
2. Instruct the General Manager of the BSS, or designee, to report back if the City is awarded the grants, to request authority to accept the grant awards, and to identify front funding.

## SUMMARY

The Sustainable Communities Program for Civic Engagement, Equity, and Environmental Justice (SCP CEEEJ), administered by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), provides technical assistance and resources to local government and transit agencies for the support of local planning efforts and enables implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), also known as Connect SoCal. The SCP CEEEJ projects are funded through the Regional Early Action Planning Grant Program for 2021 (REAP 2.0) and Senate Bill 1 (SB1). The SCAG anticipates \$5 million to be available for SCP CEEEJ projects. There is no pre-determined allocation or number of projects per county. The application due date is May 15, 2023. Award announcements are expected in the summer of 2023. The grant is reimbursable, will require front funding and invoices can be submitted for reimbursement through December 31, 2025.

This Office has received one project proposal from BSS – Linking Warner Center as an Active Transportation Hub to Jobs and Housing.

### Applicant Eligibility and Priority Populations

Eligible applicants include local or regional agencies, transit agencies or districts and tribal governments.

SCAG seeks to prioritize funding in areas that have been traditionally disadvantaged, underserved, underrepresented, and under-resourced. For this grant, SCAG has identified Priority Populations as follows:

- Senate Bill 535 Disadvantaged Communities (CalEnviroScreen 4.0);
- SCAG Communities of Concern;
- Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC)/Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Opportunity Areas (High segregation and poverty, low resource, and moderate resource communities are eligible; Affordable housing production in high resource and highest resource communities will also be prioritized). For the TCAC/HCD opportunity map, visit this link: [CTCAC Tax Credit Programs](#); and,
- Assembly Bill 1550 Communities.

### SCP CEEJ Multimodal Communities Projects

SCP CEEJ grant has two project categories:

- Housing and Land Use Strategies; and,
- Multimodal Communities.

The project categories are funded through separate funding sources which each have their own objectives. The BSS will apply through the Multimodal Communities category. All SCP CEEJ multimodal communities are funded through Senate Bill 1 (SB1).

All projects must achieve the following funding objectives:

- Have a direct transportation nexus that directly benefits the multi-modal transportation system;
- Support the implementation of Connect SoCal;
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG); and
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Multimodal Communities are defined as those which are served by a variety of transportation modes for the public to access daily destinations. Applications submitted for this project type should focus on increasing accessibility, mobility, resiliency, and safety. Projects are eligible when they leverage transportation planning, policies, and investment strategies that increase travel options to homes, jobs, services, and other key destinations that provide, support, or enhance Multimodal Communities. Multimodal options can include, but are not limited to, complete street improvements for active transportation, improving access to transit, and creating high quality transit stops. These projects must reduce the number or length of vehicle trips. Applicants must describe and demonstrate how the plan or project reduces VMT and GHG emissions.

Example plans and projects include:

- Community E-Bike Rebates and E-Bike Share Plans & Pilots (e-bike pilots are eligible when done alongside planning activities);
- Highways to Boulevards and Freeway Cap Plans – Improvements for Non-Motorized Vehicles and Pedestrian Traffic (Motorized Vehicle Infrastructure improvements are ineligible);
- Park and Greenway Connectivity Plans;
- Multimodal Corridor Studies (alongside planning activities);
- Transportation Accessibility and Safety Demonstration Projects (alongside planning activities); and
- Vision Zero Policy and Programs or Safety Plans.

#### Cost Sharing or Matching Fund Requirements

There is no matching fund requirement for this grant.

#### Scoring Criteria

All project categories will be evaluated using the following scoring criteria:

- Project Design and Outcomes;
- Project Need and Priority Population Benefits;
- Inclusive and Equitable Engagement; and
- Local Partnership.

This Office met with the BSS to discuss and evaluate if the grant proposal met the scoring criteria of the grant. The project meets the purposes, eligibility, and all four of the scoring criteria and the proposed project is likely to score high.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Approval of the report recommendations will not result in a General Fund impact.

#### **FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT**

The recommendation in this report complies with the City's Financial Policies.

# ATTACHMENT 1 - PROPOSED GRANT PROJECT

Grant Administrator: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

Name of Grant: Sustainable Communities Program for Civic Engagement, Equity, and Environmental Justice (SCP CEEJ) Grant

NOFO Release Date: April 12, 2023

Due date: May 15, 2023

Award Date: Summer 2023

Award amount for multi-modal communities project: \$200,000 to \$500,000 per project

Performance Period: Final work and invoices submitted through December 31, 2025

Lead Department	Project Name	Project Description	Total Project (Budget)	Total Grant Request	Planned Completion Date
Bureau of Street Services	Linking Warner Center as an Active Transportation Hub to Jobs and Housing	This project will create an active transportation plan for Warner Center area and connect the San Fernando Valley region with safer pedestrian and cyclist options to destinations, jobs, and housing. Warner Center is a 1.75 square mile commercial center in the southwest San Fernando Valley, serving 40,000 employees, housing 17,000 Angelenos, and including a large medical center and Los Angeles' largest shopping center. The Specific Plan anticipates adding 20,000 housing units and 14 million square feet of commercial space by 2035, and calls for improving active transportation to sustainably accommodate that growth. To ensure an integrated active transportation network, the Project Area also includes Pierce College, local schools, and portions of the Canoga Park and Woodland Hills neighborhoods. Warner Center's streets are largely wide, high-speed thoroughfares and 1,250' x 2,000' superblocks, making walking and biking uncomfortable and unsafe, and requiring long walks to transit stops. Several Warner Center arterials are included in Los Angeles' High Injury Network. Along Warner Center's southern edge, the US-101 Freeway creates a barrier to active transportation, including unsignalized ramps. Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SR-27) runs along the western edge. Both require Caltrans involvement in plan development. LA Metro recently relocated Warner Center's main transit hub from centrally-located Owensmouth Avenue to the Orange Line Canoga Station in its northeast corner. A network of Class I and II bikeways (including along the Los Angeles River) reaches the edges of Warner Center but lacks connections to its many destinations and amenities.	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	June 2025

## ATTACHMENT 2 - PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA

Scoring Criteria	Name of Project
	Linking Warner Center as an Active Transportation Hub to Jobs and Housing
<b>Project Design and Outcomes:</b> - Community and Vision Summary - Funding Objectives & Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Implementation - Anticipated Project Outcomes - Scope of Work & Project Feasibility	The project will produce the Warner Center Active Transportation Plan and directly meet the following goals of the grant: 1 - Serve as the transportation nexus for the surrounding communities of San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles; 2 - Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG); and 3 - Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Additionally, the project will support and advance the following objectives: sustainability, accessibility, safety, preservation, innovation, economic vitality, public health, social equity, and provide other important community benefits.
<b>Project Need and Priority Population Benefits:</b> - Priority Populations - Addressing Historic/Current Inequities & Priority Population Benefit	A robust community-driven outreach process will result in a Warner Center Active Transportation Plan that: 1) identifies existing barriers to active transportation; 2) proposes active transportation facilities that connect Warner Center's jobs, housing and other destinations to the regional network; 3) creates design treatments for typical intersections and roadway configurations within the plan area; 4) coordinates and leverages future development, including LA's largest infill development opportunity (47 acres); and 5) develops criteria to prioritize projects, and a funding strategy that leverages Mobility Fees collected under the Specific Plan Integrates technology. All these activities will benefit priority population.
<b>Inclusive and Equitable Engagement:</b> - Priority Populations Engagement & Letters of Support - Inclusive, Diverse & Equitable Engagement	The Warner Center Active Transportation Plan, when completed, can identify multimodal connections and other community benefits in the area, as well as an integrated approach to land use and transportation planning. Extensive public outreach particularly to priority populations will be conducted to achieve inclusive and equitable engagement.
<b>Local Partnerships:</b> - Reciprocal Relationships and Impact - Governance & Decision-making	The project includes an integrated approach to land use and transportation planning. The project will be contracted out to a consulting firm who can provide the community engagement and produce the final Warner Center Active Transportation Plan document. The project will be coordinated with the Department of City Planning, LA METRO and Caltrans.