

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: February 12, 2024

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Council File No. None

Council District: All

To: The City Council

From: *for* Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer 

Subject: **AUTHORITY TO APPLY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) GRANTS PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize the General Managers of the Port of Los Angeles (POLA), the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), or designees, to prepare and submit grant applications for the proposals outlined in the Attachment 1; and,
2. Instruct the General Managers of the POLA, BOE, or designees, to report back if the City is awarded the grants, to request authority to accept the grant awards, and confirm any additional required match and/or front funding.

SUMMARY

The RAISE Grants Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), is a competitive initiative providing funding to eligible public sector agencies for significant surface transportation infrastructure projects at the local or regional level. Aimed at enhancing safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility, community connectivity, economic competitiveness, and innovation, this program also supports state of good repair, partnership, collaboration, and tourism. Alongside capital awards, a portion of the funds is reserved for planning, preparation, or design phases that do not involve construction. Applications for this grant cycle are due no later than February 28, 2024. Grant award announcements are expected by June 27, 2024.

In the Fiscal Year 2024, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, also known as the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law" (BIL), allocated \$1.5 billion to the RAISE grants program. The USDOT has released the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and invites eligible applicants to seek these grants.

Eligible projects under the RAISE grants program include both capital and planning projects.

- Capital projects can be highway, bridge, or other road projects, public transportation

projects, passenger and freight rail transportation projects, port infrastructure investments, the surface transportation components of an airport, intermodal projects, projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff, projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land and any other surface transportation infrastructure project that the RAISE grant considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program.

- Planning projects which include planning, preparation, or design (for example- environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, benefit cost analysis (BCA), and other pre-construction activities) of eligible surface transportation capital projects that will not result in construction with RAISE FY 2024 funding.

Each agency is restricted to submitting a maximum of three funding applications. This Office received two project proposals from POLA and BOE for Council consideration. All two proposals are seeking capital grants and include:

- National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47-Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project; and,
- Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project.

Cost Sharing and Matching Fund

The RAISE grants program necessitates cost sharing and matching funds. Applicants are obligated to contribute a minimum of 20 percent of the total project cost through non-federal matching contributions, unless the project falls within a rural area, a historically disadvantaged community (HDC), or an area of persistent poverty (APP). In these cases, the Federal share can cover up to 100 percent of the project costs.

Urban or rural designation depends on the project's location. If the project is within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urbanized area with a population exceeding 200,000 in the 2010 Census, it is deemed urban. Conversely, if it lies outside such an area, it is considered rural.

A project is located in an Areas of Persistent Poverty if:

- The county in which the project is located consistently had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty in all three of the following datasets:
 - The 1990 decennial census;
 - The 2000 decennial census; and
 - The 2021 Small Area Income Poverty Estimates, or,
- The census tract in which the project is located has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census; or,
- The project is located in any territory or possession of the United States.

A Historically Disadvantaged Community is defined by the Justice40 Interim Guidance Addendum, issued by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), and Climate Policy Office (CPO):

- Any census tract identified as disadvantaged in the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov) (CEJST), created by CEQ, which identifies such communities that have been marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution; or,
- Any Federally Recognized Tribe or Tribal entity, whether or not they have land.

The RAISE website provides a list of counties and census tracts meeting the APP and HDC criteria: <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc>.

Merit Criteria (Attachment 2)

Applications will be evaluated according to the following merit criteria:

- Safety;
- Environmental sustainability;
- Quality of life;
- Mobility and community connectivity;
- Economic competitiveness and opportunity;
- State of good repair;
- Partnership and collaboration; and,
- Innovation.

This Office convened meetings with POLA and BOE to assess whether the grant proposals align with the scoring criteria established for the grants. Upon evaluation, it has been determined that the projects satisfy the intended purposes, eligibility requirements, and the specified scoring criteria of the grant.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The General Fund impact is unknown at this time. The Port has been awarded \$41,790,000 under the California State Transportation Agency SB198 Port and Freight Infrastructure Program which counts towards the non-Federal match requirement of \$12,772,000. The Bureau of Engineering has not identified front funding for the grant nor the matching funds requirement of \$6,599,800. Should a grant award be received, match funding and front funding will be identified at that time.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

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

ATTACHMENT 1 - PROPOSED GRANT PROJECTS

Grant Administrator: U.S. Department of Transportation

Name of Grants: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program FY 2024

NOFO Release Dates 12/5/2023

Due date: 2/28/2024

Award date: 6/27/2024

Maximum Award There is no minimum award amount for planning awards. The maximum award amount for both capital and planning

Performance Period: Funds will be available for obligation until September 30, 2028. Funds must be expended by September 30, 2033.

Lead Department	Project Name	Project Description	Total Project (Budget)	Total Grant Request	Planned Completion Date
Port of Los Angeles (POLA)	National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47- Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project	This project will augment an existing partial interchange at State Route (SR) 47/Seaside Ave and Navy Way; remove last traffic signal and at-grade intersection on SR47 between I-110 and I 710; new west bound auxiliary lane on SR47 between Pier S & Navy Way; and new east bound 2-lane collector-distributor road between Ferry St and Pier S Ave.	\$ 67,110,000	\$ 20,000,000	January 2028
Bureau of Engineering (BOE)	Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project	This project will improve pedestrian and active transportation access in the Sepulveda Basin area, along Balboa Blvd. and Victory Blvd. Improvements include: mobility hub gateways into the basin, new traffic signals, pavement rehabilitation, improved curbs ramps, curb extensions, bike lane separation via painting and bollards, pedestrian refuge islands, streetscape enhancements, and enhanced planting and street trees.	\$ 32,999,000	\$ 25,000,000	July 2026

ATTACHMENT 2 - PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA

Scoring Criteria	National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47- Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project	Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project
Safety	<p>The project supports the National Roadway Safety Strategy (transportation.gov) goal of "Safer Roads" in the areas of planning, design and implementation of safer roads and streets in communities using available and applicable Federal funding resources. In addition, the project will eliminate or ameliorate safety problems and reduce the potential for accidents. The following describes the specific safety improvement elements of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elimination of State Route 47 upstream queuing in both directions, and subsequent ramp blockages; • Elimination of signalized westbound left-turn movement at Navy Way/Seaside Ave; and, • Improvement of merging in all directions and weaving via new westbound auxiliary lane. 	<p>The proposed project aims to enhance pedestrian and active transportation accessibility in the Sepulveda Basin area, specifically along Balboa Blvd. and Victory Blvd. The planned improvements encompass the installation of mobility hub gateways leading into the basin, the introduction of new traffic signals, pavement rehabilitation, upgraded curb ramps, curb extensions, delineation of bike lanes through painting and bollards, establishment of pedestrian refuge islands, streetscape enhancements, and the incorporation of enhanced planting and street trees.</p>
Environmental sustainability	<p>The POLA is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) that has some of the worst air quality in the nation. The project is located 1.3-1.8 miles away from the Wilmington and San Pedro communities, which are federally designated "Areas of Persistent Poverty" (APP) and "Historically Disadvantaged Communities" (HDC). The project will benefit the communities in the form of reduced vehicular delay and emissions, improved mobility and roadway safety for workers and residents of these areas.</p> <p>The reduced vehicle delay will reduce 37,745 metric tons of emissions (including green-house gases) cumulatively over the 20-year analysis period, which will aid in reducing the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>Enhancements to mobility and access along Victory Blvd. are designed to benefit disadvantaged communities located north of the basin. These improvements aim to facilitate access to a range of resources, including nature, cooler environments with reduced urban heat island effects, and areas resilient to climate challenges.</p>
Quality of life	<p>The reduced emissions improves public health for workers in the Port and residents in the adjacent HDC. In addition, the project will potentially reduce accidents in the area which in turn help to improve public health for motorists and emergency responders using State Route 47.</p>	<p>The project contributes to the establishment of healthy communities by fostering opportunities for active transportation and recreation through designated bike lanes and promenades. It enhances the overall quality of life by expanding access to riverfront greenways, nature reserves, and parks.</p>

ATTACHMENT 2 - PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA (CONT)

Scoring Criteria	National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47- Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project	Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project
Mobility and community connectivity	<p>The project will improve overall daily delay on the transportation network (2,008 daily vehicle-hours in opening year 2029, up to 3,386 daily vehicle-hours in horizon year 2048).</p> <p>It is estimated that about 60 percent of traffic on State Route 47 on a daily basis is non-port traffic to and from the surrounding communities, outside the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Many of these non-port trips are made by people who live or work in the Palos Verdes Peninsula, San Pedro, Wilmington, Carson, the South Bay, and Long Beach.</p>	<p>The project establishes improved multi-modal transportation routes, broadening non-auto commute options, increasing access to high-quality transit lines and employment hubs, and enhancing recreational opportunities for both Los Angeles residents and visitors.</p>
Economic competitiveness and opportunity	<p>The project's intersection is at the centroid of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and 10% of all containers at ports in the United States utilize this intersection. Therefore, reducing delay at this intersection increases the efficiency of port operations, and the impacts spread throughout the national supply chain. The delay reduction increases cargo velocity, and improves cargo reliability and predictability. These benefits in turn reduce transportation and inventory carrying costs.</p> <p>The construction of the project will also create an estimated 414 direct and indirect jobs.</p>	<p>The project has the potential to elevate its equity score by reinforcing pedestrian and bicycle connections within disadvantaged communities. This improvement aims to assist residents in commuting to employment opportunities, transit services, and other destinations that serve the community.</p>
State of good repair	<p>The project entails modification to an existing highway. New asphalt cement pavement and new reinforced concrete barriers will be constructed, thus extending the useful life of this important highway. The removal of the mainline traffic signal, which significantly reduces braking (deceleration) and acceleration, will also reduce pavement wear.</p>	<p>The project creates enhanced multi-modal transportation routes that provide access to the Sepulveda Basin.</p>

ATTACHMENT 2 - PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA (CONT)

Scoring Criteria	National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47- Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project	Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project
Partnership and collaboration	<p>The POLA have engaged the communities of Wilmington, San Pedro, and Long Beach for many years on transportation and environmental improvements in and adjacent to this project's areas. The POLA is currently constructing approximately \$150 million in rail infrastructure on Terminal Island that will help to reduce truck-miles traveled, truck-hours of delay, and corresponding emissions.</p> <p>The POLA has directly working the communities of San Pedro and Wilmington communities on redevelopment of their respective waterfronts, which are located within the POLA boundaries and jurisdiction.</p> <p>In 2015, the POLA developed the Public Access Investment Plan (PAIP), providing a 10-year budgetary guideline for continued development and operations of the LA Waterfront. The PAIP was originally developed via a broad public outreach process including over 500 individual participants in community meetings and multiple community based organizations. For the PAIP, the POLA confers with the San Pedro and Wilmington communities, and their respective Neighborhood Councils, on a continuous basis.</p> <p>The POLA routinely confers with the various trade unions involved in construction projects and hires staff via various trade hiring halls.</p> <p>As the project is located on a designated State Route, the POLA is collaborating with State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Port of Long Beach on the design of the project.</p>	<p>The successful execution of the project will necessitate collaboration with various internal partners, including the Department of Recreation and Parks, Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Bureau of Street Services, Bureau of Street Lighting, and the General Services Department. Additionally, external partnerships with entities such as LA Metro and the US Army Corps of Engineers will be crucial to the project's overall success.</p>

ATTACHMENT 2 - PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA (CONT)

Scoring Criteria	National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) Improvement Program - State Route 47- Seaside Avenue & Navy Way Interchange Improvement Project	Sepulveda Basin Games Accessibility, Mobility, Equity, & Safety (GAMES) Legacy Project
Innovation	<p>The new traffic signal at the intersection of Navy Way and the Seaside Avenue collector-distributor road will be connected to the City of Los Angeles Transportation Department's Advanced Traffic Surveillance and Control system via fiber optic (FO) cables. Traffic surveillance cameras will also be installed and connected to the POLA security system via the FO system, for on-going incident/accident management, including truck queuing management. This will also be used to aid in on-going performance monitoring and possible mitigation. The cameras will also be connected to the Port of Long Beach's security system via FO, and possibly the planned Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority I-710 Integrated Corridor Management Project, scheduled for design completion in mid-2023.</p> <p>Other traffic technology elements that will be explored during the design phase are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadside Bluetooth/Wi-Fi readers for travel time and origin-destination data; and, • Signal Performance Measurement (SPM). <p>Conduit will also be installed to enable the possible installation of FO cables to serve on-ramp metering if in the future Caltrans seeks formal Route Adoption for this segment of SR 47. The FO conduit can also be used for possible future connected-vehicle deployments by the State.</p>	<p>The project will play a crucial role in supporting a key transportation corridor for the LA28 Olympic Games and will serve as a lasting legacy project for the area.</p>