Recommendation for Action

File #: 22-3630, **Agenda Item #:** 51. 12/8/2022

Posting Language

Approve a resolution authorizing the submittal of the Southeast Austin Connector project as a candidate for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grant program, administered by the United States Department of Transportation.

Lead Department:

Public Works Department and Corridor Program Office.

Fiscal Note:

This item has no fiscal impact. A city funding match (50%) is required and is available from the 2020 bond.

For More Information:

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Susan Daniels, Deputy Director, Corridor Program Office, (512) 974-7916.

Additional Backup Information:

The City seeks funding for the construction of the Southeast Austin Connector project from the United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program. This infrastructure modernization and connection project is comprised of the Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail, the South Pleasant Valley corridor and the Country Club Creek Trail extension. Funds for the Fiscal Year 2023 RAISE grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that decrease greenhouse gas emissions, address environmental justice and racial equity, and reduce barriers to opportunity. $1.5 billion is available to be awarded by the US DOT for RAISE grants with the award size not to be greater than $25 million.

Per the resolution under consideration for this item, Council authorizes the City Manager to submit an application for construction funding of the Southeast Austin Connector project.
The Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail is a planned six-mile urban trail extending from Vinson Drive to East Riverside Drive near US 183 and the Austin Bergstrom International Airport. This trail provides a recreational opportunity in a high-density, low-income, and park-deficient area. It also provides safe east/west pedestrian and bike connectivity where none currently exists and adds key connections to transit including the future Project Connect Orange and Blue Lines.

The South Pleasant Valley Road extension furthers multimodal network connectivity in southeast Austin, connecting the dead-end of South Pleasant Valley Road near Oltorf to Burleson Road, supporting a planned Capital Metro MetroRapid line. Also included is the extension of an all ages and abilities bicycle and pedestrian connection from the existing Country Club Creek Trail across Ben White/SH 71 to the proposed Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail.

Funded by the 2020 Bond, this partnership project will unlock access and create critical connections for southeast Austin. Together, these projects provide more ways for people in a historically underserved area to safely access transit, schools, employment centers, and other key destinations. The project is located in Districts 2 and 3 and is currently in design phase with an estimated project cost of $40.5 million. The award of

any grant funds will require the City to match funding by entering into an Agreement for Award with USDOT. Final grant applications are due in early 2023.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Mobility.

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