



Recommendation for Action

File #: 22-3499, Agenda Item #: 52.

12/8/2022

Posting Language

Approve a resolution authorizing the submission of a grant application to the Texas Department of Transportation's 2023 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program to fund the expansion of the MetroBike system.

Lead Department

Austin Transportation Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

Resolution No. 20220728-085, authorizing negotiation and execution of an amended to an interlocal agreement with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the co-management of MetroBike, was approved on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Fuentes off the dais.

Resolution No. 20200604-016, authorizing negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority related to expansion and management of Bike Share of Austin and B-Cycle Austin, a station-based bike share system, for an initial term of four years, and a renewal term of up to three years was approved on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Harper-Madison off the dais.

For More Information:

Richard Mendoza, Interim Director, 512-974-2488; Jason Jon-Michael, Assistant Director, 512-974-7028; Kirk Scanlon, Division Manager, 512-809-7925; Gilda Powers, Administrative Manager, 512-974-7092.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

October 26, 2022 - Briefing to the Joint Sustainability Committee with an update of Austin Transportation's implementation of the Transportation & Climate Equity Plan where Goal 1: Strategy 4 aims to launch a fully electric bike sharing program centered on low-income communities and communities of color to support functional, low-cost zero emissions mobility.

Additional Backup Information:

The Austin Transportation Department (ATD) intends to submit a grant application to the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) 2023 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program Call for Projects (see Exhibit 1), established to provide grants to eligible public sector agencies focused on active transportation network enhancements. TxDOT administers TA funds for locally sponsored bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects in communities across the state.

ATD seeks a total of \$15,000,000 to purchase MetroBike assets with \$12,000,000 of the total as state funding. If the City is successful and the funds are awarded, the City will be required to contribute 20% - the remaining \$3,000,000 - in matching funds, and staff will return to Council in 2023 seeking authorization to accept the state funds and to contribute the matching City funds.

The City's MetroBike bike-share program has been active since 2012. The City of Austin owns the assets for MetroBike and partners with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (CapMetro) for operations and maintenance of the system. Currently, the MetroBike system consists of 500 classic bikes, 347 electric bikes, and 79 stations. ATD and Capital Metro is working to fully electrify the fleet along with expansion. The primary goal of MetroBike is to reduce single occupancy vehicle driving and increase biking and multi-modal options for all. The MetroBike program supports the policies established in the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, Austin's Vision Zero Program and Strategic Direction 2023 to reduce traffic congestion, emissions, and collisions citywide.

In November 2020, Austinites resoundingly echoed their support for better mobility options with the passing of Proposition A to fund Project Connect and Proposition B to fund the expansion of Austin's urban trails and All Ages and Abilities bikeway network. These investments represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity to grow MetroBike as an essential public mobility service that is fully integrated with Capital Metro's bus and rail network.

That same year, Council approved an interlocal agreement with Capital Metro to manage, operate, and expand Austin's bike share system, rebranded as MetroBike. The parties then drafted the MetroBike Strategic Expansion Plan (see Exhibit 2), which is the guiding, long-range plan for a multi-phased expansion of the system to achieve mobility, equity, and climate goals. The ILA authorized a 10-year term to fund the full expansion of the MetroBike system; however, the TA program provides an exceptional opportunity to fund the full expansion much sooner.

The MetroBike Strategic Expansion Plan establishes strategies to modernize the MetroBike system, align its growth with Capital Metro's core public transit services, and serve as a building block for equitable community development and mobility improvements. Expansion of the MetroBike system will help address the pressing need to reverse the destabilizing effects of racial inequity and displacement on Austin's black, indigenous, and people of color communities by improving access to critical services, lessening the financial burden of transportation, expanding sustainable transportation options, and improving health outcomes for those who need it most.

On May 23, 2022, the Capital Metro Board of Directors approved a resolution to finalize and execute an amendment to the interlocal agreement with the City to improve, expand, and electrify the MetroBike program through joint funding contributions for an additional period of up to 10 years.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Mobility, Safety, Government that Works for All, Economic Opportunity and Affordability, Health and Environment.