



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-2778, Agenda Item #: 54.

9/21/2023

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Special Revenue Budget (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) of the Parks and Recreation Department to accept and appropriate \$347,625 in grant funds from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Project.

Lead Department

Parks and Recreation Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$347,625 is available from Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. A City match is not required. A fiscal note is attached.

Prior Council Action:

February 15, 2018 - Council approved Ordinance No. 20180215-021, which approved acceptance of grant funds for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Project for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Casar off the dais.

January 27, 2022 - Council approved Ordinance No. 20220127-046, which amended the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Parks and Recreation Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund to accept and appropriate \$155,482 in grant funds from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to provide funding for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Project on an 11-0 vote.

For More Information:

Jodi Jay, Assistant Director, 512-974-6772; David Crabb, Division Manager, Community Recreation Division, 512-974-6759; Tim Dombeck, Business Process Specialist, 512-974-6716.

Additional Backup Information:

The Federal Transit Authority Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Section 5310 Program provides funding to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and ADA complementary paratransit services.

The grant funds will be used to supplement the operating budget of the PARD Senior Transportation Program, which has been providing rides to the transit-dependent population for over three decades. The program provides transportation to pre-qualified individuals with the goal of enhancing quality of life and promoting independence for persons sixty years or older residing in the City limits. Three types of transportation are offered: 1) Regular Routes/Lunch Program is a free service that provides service from the patron's door to the nearest congregate meal lunch location and back home again; 2) Reserve-a-Ride is a door-to-door service to and from the requested destination within the City limits for a fee of \$6 round trip; and 3) Group Travel (minimum of seven riders is required) is offered to destinations within the City limits for \$6 round trip per rider.

The proposed grant will provide partial program funding for the period beginning October 1, 2023, through

September 30, 2025, and will allow PARD's Senior Transportation Program to allocate the funds to pay the salaries of six part-time drivers and one part-time dispatcher to meet the increasing demand. Additionally, grant funding will augment the current operational budget and allow more seniors to have access to services.

Moreover in 2022, PARD added two new congregate meal sites and increased service at one existing site from three to five days per week, resulting in an increased demand for transportation services from seniors taking advantage of these programs. The additional funding has allowed PARD to expand the number of routes, resulting in an additional 252 rides per week. This funding will allow the program to continue to operate at the level of service that was created by the 2021 FTA 5310 grant award and will allow PARD to provide transportation access in areas of the City that have been underserved, allowing for greater access and equity to City senior programs.

Council action will allow PARD to enhance its Senior Transportation program, resulting in increased service to Austin's transit-dependent population.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute additional funds beyond those currently budgeted to this grant. When the grant funds expire, the Department's need for continued funding will be evaluated and may be denied.