



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-2759, **Agenda Item #:** 97.

9/21/2023

Posting Language

Approve a resolution authorizing the submittal of a grant application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Notice of Funding Opportunity for construction of improvements associated with the I-35 Cap and Stitch Program.

Lead Department

Transportation and Public Works Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

February 23, 2023 - Resolution 20230223-044 regarding the I-35 Capital Express Projects, including official comments from the City Council to the Texas Department of Transportation on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the I-35 Capital Express Central Project was approved as amended by a 10-1 vote with Mayor Watson voting no.

September 28, 2022 - Resolution No. 20220929-059 authorizing the submittal of the Our Future 35: Connecting Equitably Study - Planning Grant as a candidate for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot program. Resolution was approved on an 8-0 vote with Council Member Kelly abstaining, Council Member Harper-Madison off the dais, and Council Member Fuentes absent.

For More Information:

Richard Mendoza, Interim Director, 512-974-2488; Karla Taylor, 512- 974-7246; Gilda Powers, Administrative Manager, 512-974-7092.

Additional Backup Information:

The Office of the United States Secretary of Transportation has released a joint Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot and Neighborhood Access and Equity programs. Together, this combined program will be known as the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program. The RCN program is part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the most significant federal transportation investment made in decades, that provides discretionary funding for planning and capital construction. Funds for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 RCN Program construction grants will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that prioritize disadvantaged communities; aim to improve access to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, and recreation; foster equitable development and restoration; and reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development. A complete project will score higher.

Our Future 35: Austin's Cap and Stitch Program Phase 1 RCN construction grant application will request \$105,200,000 to fund caps located from East Cesar Chavez to Fourth Streets. With a local City match of \$45,000,000, the total cost for Phase 1 construction will amount to \$150,200, 000.

In February 2023, the City of Austin was awarded a 1.12 million dollar planning grant from the United States Department of Transportation 2022 Reconnecting Communities Program, and now seeks a construction grant to continue moving the I-35 Cap and Stitch Program forward.