

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	June 30, 2022
SUBJECT:	Receive an Update on the Shasta Regional Active Transportation Network Grant Development Effort and Approve a Local Agency Funding Match for ATP Projects
AGENDA ITEM:	11
STAFF CONTACT:	Keith Williams, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

The Shasta Regional Active Transportation Network (SRATN) program supports partners seeking grant funding by providing public engagement activities, conceptual drawings for high-quality bicycle and pedestrian projects in or connecting to the region's Strategic Growth Areas, and grant writing support. The region submitted four Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant applications on June 15, 2022. A project match of 20%, or more, is needed to ensure the competitiveness of these projects.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Receive a presentation on the Shasta Regional Active Transportation Network grant development effort; and
2. Approve a dollar-for-dollar match with local agencies up to a total of 20% of the ATP Cycle 6 projects if awarded.

DISCUSSION:

Background – The City of Redding Active Transportation Plan and the 2018 GoShasta Regional Active Transportation Plan provide a vision for creating healthy and appealing alternatives to driving in the Shasta Region. Instrumental to this vision is the concept of safe, comfortable, intuitive, and high-quality facilities for people walking and bicycling along key corridors connecting major destinations, as well as feeder routes. Sustainable Shasta and the Shasta Regional Active Transportation Network (SRATN) project development assistance program, funded mostly by Caltrans planning grants, have turned proposed active transportation projects into competitive applications for construction funding. Specific activities have included public engagement, conceptual drawings, and SRTA-funded (State Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Funding) grant writing assistance.

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Project Assistance – SRTA staff received requests for project assistance for the projects listed in the table below.

	Project Implementing Partner	Project	Project Type	Grant Program	Grant Application Submittal Status
1	City of Redding	Calaboose Creek	Corridor	Clean California Local Grant Program	Not Submitted Yet
2	City of Redding	Hilltop Improvement Project	Corridor	Active Transportation Program Cycle 6	Submitted
3	City of Redding	Victor Improvement Project	Network	Active Transportation Program Cycle 6	Submitted
4	City of Redding	Butte Street Boogie Network Project	Network	Active Transportation Program Cycle 6	Submitted
5	City of Redding	Park Marina Drive Rapid Implementation Project	Quick-Build	Active Transportation Program Cycle 6	Submitted
6	City of Redding/Caltrans D2/SRTA/Shasta County	North Redding Active Transportation Trunk Line (NRATTTL)	Corridor	Active Transportation Program Cycle 6	Not Submitted Yet
7	Pit River Tribe	Munik'Chun (All My Children) Walking and Biking Network	Network	Active Transportation Program Cycle 7 (tentative)	Not Submitted Yet

Six of the seven projects identified for assistance were developed for the ATP. The ATP is the primary source of state funding for walking and bicycling infrastructure but is small when compared to statewide needs. In ATP Cycle 5, agencies statewide submitted grant applications for over \$2.2 billion, of which approximately \$441 million was awarded. A competitive grant application requires an exceptional project, local match, and hundreds of staff hours to conduct public engagement, analyze data, design the project, and prepare a responsive application.

SRTA staff dedicated a significant amount of resources to develop projects under the SRATN project development assistance program, and worked closely with the city of Redding, the Pit River Tribe, other project partners, and residents to ensure each project was developed as closely

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as possible to what the community envisions, accounts for known constraints, and maintains competitiveness.

Collectively, the projects submitted for grant funding proposed low-stress active transportation improvements (e.g., separated paths, protected bike lanes, speed tables, mini-roundabouts, bulbouts, and more) that allow people to walk or bicycle separated from vehicles or on roadways with fewer vehicles and lower speeds. Projects ranged from traditional corridor projects to networks of low-stress streets, and one “quick-build” project, which enables implementing agencies to pilot a comparatively inexpensive project with semi-permanent materials and respond more nimbly to challenges as they arise. If built, these projects would provide safer routes to schools, reduce conflict with vehicles, offer healthier commuting alternatives, and assist the Shasta Region in achieving its active and regional transportation planning goals.

Improving Project Assistance – Each round of project assistance presents opportunities to improve projects and the process for their development. Following assistance for ATP Cycle 5 projects, the board of directors authorized the executive director to develop and enter into partnership agreements with partners seeking SRTA’s grant assistance. The intent was to maximize the use of limited assistance funds by making mutual understandings and expectations clear prior to the unnecessary expenditure of consultant and staff resources on projects that may ultimately not be competitive in grant programs or are withdrawn late in the application process.

In this round of assistance, one of seven partnership agreements was completed. Partner agencies were delayed in identifying projects, and the reduced timeframe to prepare projects translated into a compressed schedule and the omission of time-consuming tasks (e.g., extensive application reviews, communication with a broad range of partners for support letters, additional engagement strategies, and partnership agreements). Despite these challenges, staff from SRTA, partners, and consultants managed to prepare compelling applications once the projects were identified. Staff intends to meet with regional partners in the coming weeks to discuss ways of identifying projects sooner and other strategies for improving the development of competitive grant applications.

Three projects were not submitted to grant programs: The Calaboose Creek project, the North Redding Active Transportation Trunk Line, and the Munik’Chun (All My Children) Walking and Biking Network. These projects did not move forward due to technical issues with submittal, concerns over escalating costs, and partner staff capacity challenges should a grant be awarded. These projects can all move forward in future grant efforts with continued agency collaboration.

Approve Match – Dozens of ATP projects can land on the funding threshold, so every point earned is important. An application can earn five points by providing a 20% local match. Given the ATP’s highly competitive nature, staff considers it a success if even one or two of the projects

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from the Shasta region were awarded. To improve the projects' competitiveness, SRTA staff recommends the board of directors approve a dollar-for-dollar match, up to a total of 20% of the project cost (10% SRTA, 10% local agency) if awarded ATP funding. This is consistent with prior board action taken for ATP Cycle 5.

ALTERNATIVES:

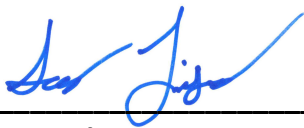
The board of directors may modify ATP project match fund sources depending on funding availability. This action is best suited for a future meeting when the number of grants awarded is known.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA staff solicited project nominations from all eligible partners in the region. Staff worked closely with the city of Redding, the Pit River Tribe, Shasta County Public Health, and Caltrans District 2 to conduct public engagement and prepare grant applications. The Technical Advisory Committee received a verbal update on the ATP application effort.

FISCAL IMPACT:

SRTA's ATP match may come from the Regional Non-Motorized Program (\$163,731) and the Regional Improvement Program (\$2.6 million). SRTA's match of \$2.8 million would leverage over \$22 million in ATP funding.



Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director