

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	August 31, 2023
SUBJECT:	Consider Alternative Funding Approach to Provide Technical Assistance to Local Agencies in Support of Upcoming Active Transportation Grant Cycles
AGENDA ITEM:	15
STAFF CONTACT:	Keith Williams, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

SRTA staff applied for \$700,000 in SB 1 competitive planning grant funds to continue an assistance program for local partners preparing walking and bicycling infrastructure projects for Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycles 7 and 8 and other active transportation discretionary grant programs. Award announcements have been delayed for weeks but are anticipated by August 31, 2023. If SRTA is not awarded SB1 funding, staff recommends the board of directors approve the use of \$400,000 in regional planning funds to support projects seeking funding from ATP Cycle 7 and grant programs with similar deadlines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors approve \$400,000 in SRTA planning funds to hire a consultant to assist local partners with public engagement, preliminary designs, and grant writing to secure competitive capital funding for active transportation projects should SRTA not receive SB 1 competitive planning grant funds.

DISCUSSION:

SRTA staff applied for competitive SB1 grant funds in March 2023 to continue assisting local partners in preparing their active transportation projects for competitive capital grant funding. If successful, SRTA would provide \$177,664 in matching funds to receive \$700,000 in grant funding to help prepare these projects for Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 7, Cycle 8, and programs funding such improvements in similar timeframes. This strategy of securing grant funds to assist local partners has brought over \$39 million in capital grant funding to the Shasta region in just two grant cycles.

If SRTA's competitive SB1 grant application is unsuccessful, staff proposes using \$400,000 in regional planning funds for consultant assistance to partners to prepare 5-7 projects over one grant cycle instead of up to thirteen or more projects over two cycles. This approach would commit the region to one cycle of assistance and leave open the future opportunity to secure grant funds to assist partners with ATP Cycle 8 projects (call for projects anticipated for March-June 2026). Continued assistance can lead to increased safety for all modes of transportation and expanded mobility and accessibility for many residents who currently face challenges accessing key destinations and essential services. Continuing this assistance and SRTA's 10% match commitment could bring up to a total of \$72,000,000 to the region for three corridor projects and two network projects.

ALTERNATIVES:

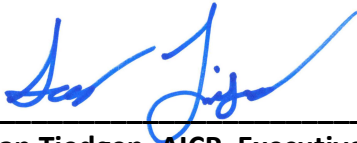
The board of directors can request additional information and move this item to a future meeting. This would narrow the window to complete required work before the June 2024 ATP Cycle 7 deadline and similar application deadlines for other grant programs. The board of directors could choose to not use regional funds for seeking grants, but the city of Redding would likely seek funding for fewer projects and other local partners would likely abandon ATP Cycle 7 projects due to insufficient local resources.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Local agencies and partners were consulted in the selection and prioritization of ATP Cycle 7 and 8 projects.

FISCAL IMPACT:

If SRTA was awarded competitive SB 1 grant funding, no changes would be anticipated to SRTA's FY 2023/24 Overall Work Program (OWP). If competitive SB 1 grant funding is not awarded and the board approves staff's recommendation, grant funding would be removed and \$400,000 in regional funds (e.g., SB1 formula funds; Planning, Programming, and Monitoring funds; Regional Non-Motorized Program funds; and federal funds from the Active Transportation Planning work element) would be added or re-directed as part of an amendment to SRTA's FY 2023/24 OWP at the October board meeting.



Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director