

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY AND RECORD OF ACTION

January 28, 2025

FROM

NOEL CASTILLO, Director, Department of Public Works – Transportation

SUBJECT

Grant Application Submission to United States Department of Transportation –Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development Program ~~Transportation—Rebuilding—American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Program~~ for Bridge Reconstruction on National Trails Highway in the Daggett and Amboy Areas

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Approve and authorize the submission of a grant application to the United States Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Program ~~Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Program~~, in the amount of \$25,000,000, towards the \$71,800,000 total cost for reconstruction of 27 timber bridges, located on National Trails Highway, between Daggett-Yermo Road and Amboy Road.
2. Authorize the Director of the Department of Public Works to electronically sign and submit the grant application, subject to review by County Counsel.
3. Direct the Director of the Department of Public Works to transmit the grant application to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors within 30 days of submission.

(Presenter: Noel Castillo, Director, 387-7906)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Create, Maintain and Grow Jobs and Economic Value in the County.

Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner.

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item will not result in the use of additional Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The total estimated cost to reconstruct the 27 timber bridges located on National Trails Highway between Daggett-Yermo Road and Amboy Road (Project) is \$71,800,000. The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) ~~Rebuilding—American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)~~ Program guidelines require a minimum local match of 20% for selected Rural Surface Transportation (RURAL) Grant projects and provide that the maximum request is \$25,000,000. The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) committed allocating \$40,300,000 for use by the County towards the local match. If the grant is awarded, \$5,000,000 in local matching funds will be funded by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad. If awarded, the County expects to receive a Letter of Commitment from BNSF in connection with the Project and a funding agreement regarding the \$5,000,000 local match. If awarded, the Department will present an item to the Board of Supervisors (Board) to accept the grant award, request any necessary budget adjustments, and will work with BNSF Railroad to bring a funding agreement before the Board for approval of the \$5,000,000 contribution. It is anticipated the remaining \$1,500,000 will be funded with Senate Bill 1 Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (SB1) Funding. Should the grant be awarded, the Department will return to the Board to adopt a revised SB1 Project List to incorporate the Project and allocate the \$1,500,000 in SB1 Funding.

Funding sources for the local match amount may be funded with Local Partnership Program, Surface Transportation Program, and State Transportation Improvement Program funds administered by the SBCTA. The ~~BUILD RAISE~~ grant applies to urban and rural areas and the SBCTA funds that will be used as a local match for this grant are available only for projects in the North Desert Subarea, where National Trails Highway is located. If awarded, sufficient appropriation and revenue will be included in future recommended Road Operations budgets to fund the costs associated with submission of this grant application (Attachment B).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Approval and submission of the grant application will allow the Department to compete for grant funds under the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) ~~BUILD RAISE~~ grant program to replace 27 bridges on National Trails Highway (Historic Route 66) that are 20 feet or less in length. Bridges 20 feet or less in length are not eligible for the Federal Highway Bridge Program funding and San Bernardino County (County) must find other funding sources to reconstruct these bridges.

Historic Route 66 is extremely important to both local and regional traffic circulation. This section of National Trails Highway provides a critical alternate route when Interstate 40 experiences unanticipated emergency closures due to accidents, freeway construction, or storm events. The United States Marine Corps also utilizes National Trails Highway as a critical route for the movement of heavy equipment necessary for national defense training activities in this region. There are 33 bridges that are 20 feet or less in length that were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s that are now beyond their intended design life and would benefit from reconstruction to maintain public safety and the structural integrity of the roadway. Six of these bridges are being replaced with funding from SBCTA. The Department is requesting funding under this grant opportunity to supplement funding from SBCTA for the reconstruction of the Project. The ~~BUILD RAISE~~ grant program provides ~~such a competitive~~ funding opportunity. ~~BUILDRAISE grant funding will be awarded on a competitive basis~~ for projects that demonstrate a significant local or regional impact, cost-effectiveness and improve and expand infrastructure in rural areas.

The deadline for the submission of the ~~BUILDRAISE~~ grant application to the DOT is January 30, 2025. The grant application, exhibits, and required federal forms are submitted electronically. The federal SF-424 form to be submitted with the grant application requires a certification that the information contained in the grant application is true and correct, County provides assurance to comply with federal law, and that funding for the local match has been committed to the Project. No wet signature is required. Instead, electronic submission of the SF-424 constitutes the signature certifying and transmitting the grant application. Approval of this item will authorize the Department of Public Works Director to electronically sign and submit the grant application via electronic application submission, subject to review by County Counsel.

These actions meet the County and the Chief Executive Officer's goals and objectives of creating, maintaining, and growing jobs and economic value in the County by ensuring a primary and alternate route for the movement of people and goods; operating in a fiscally-responsible and business-like manner by pursuing grant opportunities for County projects; and providing for the safety, health and social service needs of County residents by replacing bridges beyond their design life.

PROCUREMENT

Not applicable.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Aaron Gest, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on January 16, 2025; Finance (Kathleen Gonzalez, Administrative Analyst, 387-5412) on January

24, 2025; and County Finance and Administration (Paloma Hernandez-Barker, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on January 24, 2025.