



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.1

Meeting Date: August 14, 2024

From: John A. Corella, Director of Public Works

Title: Resolution to Authorize the City Manager, or Designee, to Submit an Application for Fiscal Year 2024 Safe Streets and Roads Safe for All Grant Program for a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

To adopt a resolution authorizing submittal of an application for the fiscal year 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant program to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) for a grant funding opportunity to create a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, and authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute all documents necessary to implement and secure payments.

BACKGROUND:

On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also referred to as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” or “BIL”) established the Safe Streets and Roads for All (the “SS4A”) discretionary grant program (BIL Section 24112) and appropriated funds to the United States Department of Transportation (the “USDOT”) under Division J, Title VIII of BIL to implement the program.

The purpose of the SS4A grant program is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing and eventually eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The program focuses on the development of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (Action Plan) and its implementation for all users of highways, streets, and roadways, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators.

On April 16, 2024, the USDOT released the FY 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the SS4A program. The closing date for applications is August 29, 2024.

The funds are available to provide federal financial assistance to support local initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets, commonly referred to as “Vision Zero” or “Toward Zero Deaths” initiatives. The program provides funding to develop tools to strengthen a community’s approach to roadway safety and save lives and prevent serious harm.

The estimated total funding available is \$1.26 billion. Funds for the FY 2024 SS4A grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis, with an award amount ranging from \$100,000 to \$25 million. The SS4A grant program requires a local match of no less than 20 percent of the total project funding cost.

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants:

- Planning and Demonstration Grants provide federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement an action plan. Having an action plan in place is the foundation of the SS4A grant program. The goal of an action plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribal area, or region.
- Implementation Grants provide federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an eligible action plan to address a roadway safety problem.

As a political subdivision of a State, the City of Cathedral City is eligible to apply for this SS4A grant funding opportunity.

The City of Cathedral City is looking at the Planning and Demonstration Grant funding opportunity to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. The plan will include evaluating roadway safety for all modes of travel, incorporating safe routes to school, and planning and surveying of the existing pedestrian network for accessibility issues in an effort to establish safe routes for all.

DISCUSSION:

Currently, the city has several plans such as Local Road and Safety Plan (LRSP), Active Transportation Plan (ATP), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan, that identify projects and set goals and objectives to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries. These plans need to be updated at least every five years and are required for the city to obtain grant funding from federal or state programs when funding opportunities are available.

The SS4A program provides the opportunity to update and incorporate the above-mentioned plans into one comprehensive document that will be acceptable under federal and state programs to apply for grant programs including but not limited to the Active Transportation Program (ATP), the Safe Routes to School Program, and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The benefit of a single Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is to allow the city to optimize its grant application process.

Additionally, development and updates of separate safety plans incorporated into one Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will no longer be necessary.

The proposed estimated time to develop the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will be 18 months. During this period, the city will work with engineering and planning specialists to conduct safety audits and studies throughout the city. A committee will also be established to perform community outreach to discover citizen's concerns and help identify evidenced

based low-cost, high-impact strategies to reduce risk for all road users, with special consideration for disadvantaged communities. The Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will establish a ranking system to identify the top priority corridors and intersections for implementation while adopting innovative technologies. The city will use this plan to set safety goals and policies to promote safety and equity throughout the city.

The estimated cost to develop the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is \$499,700. The SS4A Grant Program requires a local match of no less than 20 percent (20%) of the total project funding cost. Staff have identified Measure A funds that may be used for the local match and will encumber (reserve) those funds for potential utilization. If awarded, the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will be funded as follows:

SS4A Federal Funds (80%)	\$399,760.00
Local Match – Measure A (20%)	\$ 99,940.00
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Total Estimated Cost	\$499,700.00

Staff are requesting to adopt a resolution authorizing submittal of application for the fiscal year 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program to the United States Department of Transportation for grant funding opportunity, and authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute all documents necessary to implement and secure payments.

One of the components of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan includes leadership commitment and goal setting. This will be an official public commitment by the City Council to eventually achieve a goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries for the city. By adopting this resolution, the city takes the first step towards the leadership commitment and goal setting of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

Overall, staff is requesting the City Council adopt a resolution to authorize the City Manager, or designee, to submit an application for Fiscal Year 2024 Safe Streets and Roads Safe for All Grant program for a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The adoption of the resolution does not have a fiscal impact at this time. Staff will bring back this item to the City Council for approval of the respective grant participation funding from available budget funds if awarded this grant.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

GOAL B: COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Objective: Cathedral City roads, gateways, public spaces, and other city infrastructure are well planned, designed, constructed, and maintained.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Adopting Submittal of Application for FY2024 Safe Street and Roads for All Grant Program

