



Staff Report

File #: 24-0254

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 04/03/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Public Works Department

SUBJECT:
RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION DRAFT TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report provides an update on the proposed Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) 2024 Draft Traffic Relief Plan (Plan). In order to meet the public comment deadline, a letter has been sent by staff with a funding strategy similar to the letter from the City of Riverside to RCTC, which includes a recommended funding allocation and a list of priority projects to be included in the Draft Traffic Relief Plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council provides comments and direction on the list of projects and the City's letter to RCTC to be included in the 2024 Draft Traffic Relief Plan.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

On February 7, 2024, City staff provided a presentation to the City Council on RCTC's Draft Traffic Relief Plan in preparation for RCTC's presentation of the Plan on March 6, 2024. The Plan is included in the Exhibits to the staff report and is summarized as follows.

In October 2023, the Commission approved the Draft 2024 Plan for circulation and public input. RCTC staff had conducted extensive outreach to hear from Riverside County residents on their transportation needs and feedback on the Plan. This feedback and input will inform the Commission as they finalize the Plan. Funding of the plan would be reliant on a potential one-cent sales tax measure, which is forecasted to generate \$20 billion in revenues for western Riverside County throughout the plan's 30-year lifespan.

As detailed in the Plan, funding allocation would remain in the three regions of Riverside County: Palo Verde Valley, Coachella Valley, and Western Riverside County. Projects would be eligible within

eight investment categories. For Western Riverside County, of which Corona is a part, a specific percentage of funding is reserved for each category, and the Commission is the decision-making authority for most funds allocated for the region. Seven of the eight categories apply to the Western Riverside County region, and the percentages allocated in the Draft TRP are as follows:

- Safe Streets and Roads (8%)
- Highways (25%)
- Public Transportation (25%)
- Regional Connections (12%)
- Commuter Assistance (2%)
- Active Transportation (3%)
- Environmental Mitigation (25%)

ANALYSIS:

On January 19, 2024, City staff received a copy of a letter sent to RCTC from the City of Riverside to consider an allocation that would provide more funding to the local agencies with a list of priority projects. Working with RCTC, the City of Riverside refined the list with their Mobility and Infrastructure Committee on March 14, 2024, that would be more appropriate to be included in the TRP. Staff recommends sending a letter to RCTC with the same funding allocation for consideration with the City of Corona’s priority ranked projects and additional project list for consideration:

Proposed Funding Allocation

- Safe Streets and Roads - Increase to 20% (with full 20% direct allocation)
- Highway - 25% (no change)
- Public Transportation - Reduce to 20%
- Regional Connections -12% (no change)
- Commuter Assistance - Reduce to 0% and include in Highway allocation
- Active Transportation - 3% (propose as a direct allocation for agencies)
- Environmental Mitigation - Reduce to 20%

Priority Ranked Project List

Based upon feedback from the City Council at the RCTC presentation on March 6th, City staff, in conversation with RCTC staff, is providing a list of priority projects that are more appropriate to be included in the Plan. These are projects deemed to be capacity and operational enhancements on the regional/State highway network. These projects will specifically be listed in the Traffic Relief Plan.

1. 15 Aux Lanes (Various Locations)
2. 15 Express Lanes Southern Extension (Cajalco to SR-74)

3. SR-91 Widening (I-15 to Pierce)
4. Rail transit connection from Corona to Temecula (new request)

Additional Projects

The RCTC Draft Traffic Relief Plan identifies various categories of investment. These categories are broadly defined and allow for flexibility in plan expenditures throughout the envisioned 30-year lifetime of the plan. Local agencies will have opportunities to seek funding for individual projects not explicitly listed in the Plan that qualify under the plan investment categories. Alongside the list of priority-ranked projects, City Staff will provide the below list of projects, shown in no particular order, eligible for funding through the Plan.

- Santa Ana River Trail - Enhancement & Local/Regional Connectivity
- Fleet Conversion to Zero Emissions & Supporting Infrastructure
- Parking structure serving Downtown and Transit Oriented Communities
- Widen Railroad Street from 2-4 Lanes (Violet St. to Grand Ave.)
- Citywide implementation of the Trails and Bike Master Plans
- Citywide Adaptive or Intelligent Transportation Systems
- Continual bridge inspection and repair funding

Staff is seeking comments and direction on the list of projects and letter. RCTC is scheduled to vote on the proposed TRP at its meeting this month and the proposed tax increase at its meeting in June.

Based on the Commission's actions, staff may bring the item back to the City Council for further direction or consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with the recommended action.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Action (CEQA), as the action is not a "project" as defined by CEQA (PRC Section 21065 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15378), guidelines which define a "project" as the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or reasonable foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is an activity directly undertaken by any public agency including public works construction and related activities. This action is seeking comments and direction of the City Council on a list of projects and a letter to RCTC regarding its 2024 Draft Traffic Relief Plan. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: SAVAT KHAMPHOU, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Presentation

2. Exhibit 2 - Letter to RCTC
3. Exhibit 3 - Draft Traffic Relief Plan
4. Exhibit 4 - February 7, 2024, City Council Staff Report