THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: March 22, 2022

Subject: Grant Application for Buses, Livingston Street improvements and Swannanoa Greenway through French Broad MPO Locally Administered Project Program

Staff Resource(s): Ken Putnam, Director of Transportation
Jessica Morriss, Assistant Director of Transportation
Lucy Crown, Transportation Planner

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for $8,800,000 in grant funds from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's Locally Administered Project Program (LAPP), and if awarded, accept the funds and sign all necessary agreements.

Background:

- In January 2022, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) issued a call for Locally Administered Project Program projects as part of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) and the Transportation Alternative Project Program (TAPP-DA) program.
- These federal funds are awarded on a competitive basis through a call for projects that are typically held every two years by the MPO.
- The total available amount of funding in this grant cycle is $13,987,000, to be available in FY 2027-FY 2028.
- Eligible uses of these funds include transportation capital facilities and buses and bus facilities.
- Staff in Transportation and Capital Projects Departments reviewed existing CIP projects and current City transportation priorities to determine which projects most closely align with the requirements and criteria for the LAPP funding, as well as the timing of the LAPP funding.
- The grant requires a minimum 20% local match.
- Staff identified three potential projects to apply for (in no particular order):
    a. $2,000,000 (match = $400,000) - Asheville Rides Transit (ART) bus replacement purchases. In 2027 and 2028, approximately 10 existing ART buses are expected to be near the end of their useful life. While the funding requested will not fund the entirety of these replacements, it will support the continued investment in transit and reduce the impact on the Capital Fund. Matching funds for the purchases would need to be programmed in a future Capital Improvement Program.
    b. $6,500,000 (match = $1,300,000) - Livingston Street "Complete Street" Project. This project currently has a completed design, however, staff would like to revisit the project design and conduct additional community engagement to determine if changes in the design are desired. The grant funding would support additional engagement, redesign if necessary, and construction). Matching funds for this project would need to be programmed in a future Capital Improvement Program.
    c. $2,700,000 (match = $540,000) - Swannanoa River Greenway. This grant request is to add additional funds to the existing $3.6 million in transportation General Obligation (GO) bond funding already allocated to the project. The GO bond funds will be used to meet the match requirements, therefore no additional matching funds would need to be budgeted.

Council Goal(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s):

- N/A

Pro(s):

- These funding opportunities will allow us to proceed with existing transportation projects and to purchase more buses.

Con(s):

- The City will be responsible for providing matching funds in the amount of $1,700,000: however, matching funds for the Swannanoa Greenway project are already accounted for via the GO bond program funds dedicated to the project.
- If awarded, grant funds would not be programmed and available until 2027 or 2028, which has an impact on project schedules but also assists with budget planning.

Fiscal Impact::

- The total 20% City match for this grant will be $2,240,000. As noted above, $1,700,000 of this match will need to be considered for funding in future capital budgets.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for $8,800,000 in grant funds from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's Locally Administered Project Program, and if awarded, accept the funds and sign all necessary agreements.

Attachments

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 22-_____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS FROM THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION'S LOCALLY ADMINISTERED PROJECT PROGRAM, AND IF AWARDED, ACCEPT FUNDS AND SIGN ALL NECESSARY AGREEMENTS.

WHEREAS, the City has the authority, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160A-17.1, to apply for and receive grants from other governmental entities and to enter into contracts for the administration of said grants; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization has issued a call for projects for grant funding through the Locally Administered Project Program; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has identified three funding requests to support bus purchases, construction of the Livingston Street "Complete Streets" project, and supplemental funds for the construction of the Swannanoa River Greenway; and

WHEREAS, if awarded, funding agreements will be executed between the City and the granting and administering agencies prior to receipt of the grant; and

WHEREAS, the required local match will need to be programmed in future capital budgets based on the project's inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is hereby authorized Adopt to apply for $8,800,000 in grant funds from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's Locally Administered Project Program, and if awarded, accept the funds and sign all necessary agreements.

Read, approved, and adopted this 22nd day of March 2022.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney