THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: January 11, 2022

Subject: Grant Application for Eastern Patton Avenue Corridor Study

Staff Resource(s): Todd Okolichany, Planning and Urban Design Director; Ken Putnam, Transportation Director; Steph Monson Dahl, Urban Design and Place Strategies Manager

Action Requested: Consideration to authorize the City Manager to submit a grant application to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) in the amount of $350,000; and if awarded, accept the fund and execute the necessary agreements.

Background:

- The Planning Work Program (PWP) Grant of the FBRMPO funds planning and feasibility studies that can begin work in FY 2023; previously funded projects include the Transit Master Plan and the Biltmore/McDowell Corridor Study.
- The Metropolitan Planning Organization issued a call for PWP applications from November 18 until December 23, 2021.
- Transportation and Planning staff propose to request funds for a comprehensive land use and transportation network plan for an approximately ½ mile wide corridor of Patton Avenue; starting from the eastern end of the Captain Bowen Bridge and ending at Pritchard Park.
- This project would use anticipated changes in land use and transportation as part of the upcoming I-26 Connector Project as the starting context for the plan; it would build on a significant number of plans and investments recognizing the significance of future development of this area, such as the 2018 Sam Schwartz Final EIS Technical Memorandum.
- City staff was unable to get the action on the agenda for the December 14, 2021 meeting due to the short time-frame between learning of the grant opportunity, identifying an eligible priority project, and the application deadline.
- Therefore, the requested action constitutes a request for retroactive approval.
- The FBRMPO has not set a budget amount for the program; the City's requested amount of $350,000 reflects a scope of work that can be scaled down if that amount is not available.
- A 20% local match is required;the Planning and Urban Design and Transportation staff can work with Budget staff to consider the match as part of the FY22-23 budget process.

Council Goal(s):

- An Equitable and Diverse Community; Transportation and Accessibility, Well Planned and Livable Community, Clean and Healthy Environment; Thriving Local Economy; Quality Affordable Housing

Committee(s):

- Staff did not present this item for Planning and Economic Development Committee (PED) review due to the short time staff had to learn about and consider the call for projects.

Pro(s):

- Provides authorization for the City to receive grant funding to implement a strategy outlined in the city's adopted Comprehensive Plan, Living Asheville; and implement Goal 20 of Council's 2018 Strategic Priorities list.
- Will help provide planning guidance for future capital improvements that may impact adjacent communities, including neighborhoods in lower income census tracts.

Con(s):

- None.

Fiscal Impact:

- If the grant is awarded, the City is required to provide 20% of the grant amount in matching funds (up to $70,000) in order to sign an agreement and accept the funds.
- Matching funds are not currently part of the adopted budget, but as noted above would be included for consideration as part of the FY 22-23 budget process if the grant is awarded.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution approving the grant application and the City's acceptance of the grant and adopt its associated funds via budget amendment if the grant is successful.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 22-_____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FRENCH BROAD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TO PREPARE A TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE NETWORKS STUDY FOR EAST PATTON AVENUE IN RELATION TO THE I-26 INTERSTATE CONNECTOR PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City has the authority pursuant to N.C.S.G. 160A-17 to apply for and receive grants from the Federal Government and to enter into contracts with said grants; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization is a consistent partner for funding regional improvements to the City of Asheville's transportation network; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville's Comprehensive Plan states that the City should " Leverage the I-26 Connector project as a means to construct multimodal transportation and placemaking improvements, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, public spaces and opportunities for transit, enhance connectivity to existing residential neighborhoods and mixed-use centers, and alleviate regional vehicular traffic within city limits; and to explore opportunities to repurpose underutilized rights-of-way within the I-26 and Patton Avenue footprint for urban redevelopment consistent with city and community goals; and

WHEREAS, the City must comply with all applicable budgeting, accounting, contracting, reporting and other compliance requirements for FBRMPO funds;

WHEREAS, the City wishes to NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City does hereby authorize the City Manager to submit a grant application to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) in the amount of $350,000; and if awarded, to take all actions necessary to accept the fund and execute the necessary agreements.

Read, approved, and adopted this 11th day of January, 2022.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

_____

City Attorney