



Department Source: Public Works

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: May 15, 2023

Re: Authorizing the City Manager to pursue a grant application to the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program for partial costs associated with Vision Zero-related projects and activities.

Executive Summary

Staff has prepared for Council consideration a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for FY2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program grant funding. The funding request will be used for various Vision Zero-related projects and programs throughout the City. The application is expected to request assistance with projects and activities totaling \$9,853,000 (\$7,882,400 in federal funding with a City match of \$1,970,600). Notification of the grant award is estimated to be in late 2023 or early 2024 and if successful, staff will return to Council to accept and appropriate the grant funds.

Discussion

In late 2021, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also referred to as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” authorized and appropriated \$5 billion to be awarded by the US Department of Transportation for the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant program. The program was allocated \$1 billion a year (up to five years) to award through a competitive process. The SS4A program is used to fund local initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The program supports the US Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy and its goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on U.S. roadways. This philosophy is in line with the City's Vision Zero resolution and resulting work over the last several years and funding from this grant would allow the City to move numerous Vision Zero projects and initiatives forward.

The purpose of SS4A grants is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and implementation focused on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The FY 2022 process allowed entities to apply for planning or implementation grants based on having an eligible Vision Zero-related plan. The City's plan qualified to allow us to apply for an implementation grant.

In September 2022, the City applied and requested just over \$13 million in federal funding for both implementation and supplemental planning projects. Staff received notification at the end of January 2023 that we were selected to receive \$1,440,000 of federal funding to pay for several supplemental planning activities included in our application. With the required City match, we will be able to pay for \$1,800,000 of planning work. Staff is currently working



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with the Missouri division of the Federal Highway Safety Administration to draft an agreement for that award. The projects this award is anticipated to fund include:

- Highway Safety Manual Analysis of CATSO priority planned projects
- High Injury Network analysis update
- Comprehensive reexamination of City's Complete Streets Policy
- Comprehensive examination of signals for leading pedestrian intervals
- GoCoMo comprehensive transit route study
- Creation of a Pedestrian Level of Comfort Map

This year's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released on March 30, 2023 and the FY2023 grant application is due July 10, 2023. The project awards are expected to be announced in late 2023 or early 2024. All FY 2023 SS4A funds must be expended within five years after the grant agreement is executed and the US Dept of Transportation obligates the funds.

The FY 2023 applications are divided into two categories: Planning and Demonstration and Implementation. Planning and demonstration grants are expected to help applicants develop or update comprehensive safety action plans and Implementation Grants are intended to help implement strategies or projects that are consistent with an existing action plan. Since the City has a qualifying action plan, we would again be able to apply for an Implementation Grant while simultaneously working to update our existing plan.

For cities awarded Implementation Grants, the minimum annual award is expected to be \$2,500,000 and the maximum award is expected to be \$25,000,000 for the FY 2023 year. An 80-20 match (with the City providing the 20% match) is required to receive the funding. The estimated total cost for projects and initiatives is \$9,853,000. The City's match would be \$1,970,600. Funding for the City's 20 percent match will be funded by the ¼-cent Capital Improvement Program sales tax.

Criteria for scoring grant applications are:

1. Safety impact (highest priority)
2. Equity, engagement and collaboration
3. Effective practices and strategies
4. Other US Department of Transportation Strategic Goals (ex - sustainability and economic competitiveness)

Project readiness ratings and a plan to spend funds in underserved communities will also be considered in evaluating applications, with an emphasis on supplemental planning and demonstration activities.

The short time frame between the release of the NOFO and the application deadline has necessitated identifying projects for this grant period very quickly. Staff considered the previous potential project lists and the above criteria to narrow down the list to those that would be a good fit for the application emphasis. Through that process, staff has identified several construction, demonstration and supplemental planning projects and activities that



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support the City's last Vision Zero plan and could help move it forward. Through the course of determining which projects/initiatives to include in this grant application, staff also identified several projects/initiatives that would be better suited (and more feasible) for future grant applications.

Please see the attached exhibits for lists of potential projects/initiatives, as well as the estimated cost for each. Attachment A includes the information for potential 2023 application items and Attachment B includes potential future items. The lists are not all-inclusive, as there are many worthy projects throughout the City that could be funded. For this reason, staff felt it would be helpful for Council to see projects that could be considered for future grant periods. Some of these projects and activities should be ongoing; others are better candidates for more long-term solutions.

As an early adopter of a Vision Zero policy, Columbia has had the opportunity to build a good foundation for a Safe Systems approach to traffic safety. The amount of our first SS4A award is indicative of our past work being in line with best practices at a nationwide level. Our Vision Zero work has been multifaceted and makes us well positioned for an implementation and demonstration activity grant opportunity in FY 2023. Funding from the SS4A program will help us move toward safer streets for all of Columbia's transportation users.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: To be determined. If grant application is successful and fully awarded \$1,970,600.

Long-Term Impact: Unknown. Long term maintenance of some items unknown. Some items may lead to reduced or additional maintenance costs.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Reliable Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Safe Neighborhoods, Tertiary Impact: Inclusive Community

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility, Secondary Impact: Infrastructure, Tertiary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities

Legislative History

Date	Action
08/01/2022	R112-22: Authorizing application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant to fund projects and activities associated with the Vision Zero Program.
06/21/2021	REP49-21: City of Columbia Vision Zero Program Update
08/19/2019	Vision Zero Action Plan Annual Update 2019 (Pre-Council)



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06/04/2018	REP51-18: Vision Zero Annual Action Plan Update
05/15/2017	REP37-17: City of Columbia Vision Zero Action Plan 2017-2020.
12/19/2016	PR178-16: Adopting a "Vision Zero" Policy; setting a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries in Columbia by 2030. The vote on PR178-16, as amended, was recorded as follows: VOTING YES: TRAPP, SKALA, THOMAS, NAUSER, PETERS, TREECE, RUFFIN). VOTING NO: NO ONE. Policy resolution declared adopted.

Suggested Council Action

Adopt the resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for \$7,882,400 from the FY2023 Safe Streets for All (SS4A) funding program to support and further the City's Vision Zero work.