



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

24-0004

Agenda Date: 2/15/2024

Budget Proposal Summary Form

NUMBER

2024-01

TITLE Hire an Active Transportation Planner

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Department of Public Works

Sponsor:

Board/Commission: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

SCOPE OF ISSUE

What are the key elements of the proposal? What precipitated it?

The City does not have the current bandwidth of staffing resources to apply for as many Active Transportation (AT) grants necessary for large capital projects or track the progress of the plan implementation as desired by the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission. The Transportation and General Fund Grant Matching Capital Improvement Project (CIP) (836340) provides funding to serve as local matching funds when grants are received. This CIP also provides some funds for consultant time to provide grant writing assistance. The existing CIP does not provide funding for City staff time which is budgeted separately in the City's operating budget.

To augment resources for AT projects, a permanent, full-time Active Transportation Planner is proposed. The AT Planner's role could be to:

- Review and approve design documents of city transportation projects to ascertain they meet standards of National Association of City Transportation Officials and other similar agencies
- Identify AT needs, including soliciting input from the community
- Ensure that AT infrastructure and programs serve the City in an equitable manner
- Prioritize and plan AT capital projects and ensure timely implementation
- Track and report progress of AT capital projects including those in the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) and Vision Zero Plan (VZP)
- Apply for AT grant funding
- Conduct AT encouragement programs
- Partner with the city's Safe Routes to School Program
- Collaborate with community groups and businesses to support AT
- Provide input to Department of Public Safety about safety issues that need improved enforcement

The budget proposal would provide funding for a permanent, full-time AT Planner. If approved, the

position would help the City achieve its AT goals.

How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

While Sunnyvale has made significant progress toward AT after adoption of the VZP in 2019 and the ATP in 2020, it lacks the resources to implement the plans within each plan's optimal timeline. The population of Sunnyvale continues to grow (Moffett Park Specific Plan will add about 16,000 to 20,000 more housing units), creating more potential conflicts between motorists, bicycles and pedestrians over time.

Is the budget proposal a: Operating

If the proposal is operating, specify the change in service level(s) that would result (from what, to what). If the proposal is a project, write N/A.

The ATP identifies a number of recommendations and actions under each section for implementation. Dedicated staffing resources would coordinate and lead these actions with a goal to accelerate the overall implementation of the ATP. Dedicated staffing could also manage and coordinate applications for grant funding to help pay for the overall implementation of the ATP.

FISCAL IMPACT

Projected cost (list rough annual cost of budget proposal):

Operating Issue (Annual Operating Costs, ongoing)	\$ 219,525
Capital/Project (Project Cost, one-time)	\$ 0
Total (Associated Annual Operating Costs)	\$ 219,525

Recommended funding source:

General Fund

Please describe recommended funding source:

Funding would be provided from the General Fund.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Refer budget proposal for consideration in Recommended Budget.

Explanation: Based on the proposed responsibilities and duties, the new position would best be filled by a Transportation/Traffic Engineer with budgeted annual FTE costs of \$189,525 and an additional \$30,000 annually anticipated in non-personnel costs (e.g., technology, training and office supplies). The twenty-year cost is estimated at \$5,488,125. The needs for the new position are for technical experience and knowledge to perform engineering review of plans and specifications for project implementation.

Currently, the responsibilities under consideration for the proposed position of Active Transportation Planner are being performed by existing Transportation and Traffic Division staff across varying position levels. The creation of a new position would allow additional time and resources for the division to perform their current tasks as well as create a position responsible for tracking active transportation efforts in the City.

A proposed Active Transportation Planner will not likely significantly increase the delivery of active

transportation projects as the proposed Active Transportation Planner will not take on enough responsibilities at an engineering level to complete and deliver projects. The duties as originally proposed encompass duties and responsibilities of midlevel and upper managers which will not increase capacity and bandwidth at the appropriate levels needed. The delivery of projects occurs within multiple divisions and departments in the City. A typical transportation improvement project requires staffing resources to plan, oversee design, manage and inspect construction, as well as procurement and bidding support at several stages of the project. A single position would not accomplish many of the desired tasks within the scope of the proposal. Accelerating delivery of ATP projects would also require an increase in the City's capital projects budget to fund the design and construction of the additional projects.

Staff recommends that a Transportation/Traffic Engineer is more adequately suited to help create some capacity for delivery of ATP projects, as well as the inclusion of the tracking and delivery of ATP and VZP projects. Because multiple divisions and departments are involved in project delivery, a more holistic review of needs and constraints would be necessary to create additional capacity for significant increases in the delivery of active transportation projects.

Prepared by: Angela Wong, Transportation Engineer
Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Department of Public Works
Reviewed by: Tim Kirby, Director, Finance Department
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager