



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: December 18, 2007

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Resolution Certifying Availability Of Matching Funds For Bicycle Transportation Account Grant

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Certifying that the City Will Make Available the Required Ten Percent Local Share of Funding, \$10,000, for the Green Bike Needs Assessment Project (Project) Should a Bicycle Transportation Account Award be Made in 2008.

DISCUSSION:

The State of California is currently soliciting applications for bicycle projects with the potential to improve the safety and convenience of bicycle commuting. For the purpose of this application, the Streets and Highways Code Section 890.3 defines a bicycle commuter as "... a person making a trip by bicycle primarily for transportation purposes, including, but not limited to, travel to work, school, shopping, or other destination that is a center of activity and does not include a trip by bicycle primarily for physical exercise or recreation without such a destination." Because the City has a State-approved Bicycle Master Plan, the City is eligible to apply for these Bicycle Transportation Account funds, but must first adopt a resolution certifying the availability of matching funds.

Staff proposes to apply for funds to conduct a needs assessment for a green bike program as described in Circulation Element Implementation Strategy 4.3.10, which specifies that the Bicycle Coordinator shall explore the feasibility of creating a "green bike program" designed to provide communal bicycles for local trips.

REVIEWED BY: _____Finance _____Attorney

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A green bike program provides a fleet of publically shared bicycles and aims to increase available, affordable travel options within the City for current and new bicycle commuters. Bicycles will have designated locking stations positioned in the public right-of-way. Members of the program can access bicycles with "smart card" technology and generally ride gratis for an initial amount of time. A nominal fee is charged thereafter for additional time increments. A green bike program in Santa Barbara would provide the public with visible and convenient access to bicycles for transportation purposes, as locations will serve popular originations and destinations within the City. A needs assessment will determine where and how a green bike program would be best implemented in Santa Barbara.

City staff first explored this idea in 2002, but was unable to find a successful model that did not suffer from excessive maintenance costs, poor aesthetics, and theft. At that time, the Public Works Department implemented a bicycle fleet for City staff. Since then, the bicycle fleet has grown to twelve bicycles that supplement the motor vehicle fleet available for City and personal business. Because the City fleet has successfully substituted motor vehicle trips with bicycle trips, expansion of this communal bike program is a component of future Bikestation membership benefits. Before pursuing integration of a fleet bicycle program into the membership-based Bikestation operations, staff has determined that it is necessary to conduct a needs assessment for an expanded program that would be made available to the public.

Within the past five years, technological and mechanical advances in communal bike programs have allowed their successful implementation in many European cities including Paris, Vienna, and Lyons. Washington, D.C. will roll out the first American program this year, with Portland, Chicago, and San Francisco also considering vendor options. The success of existing programs can be attributed to the large number of bicycles available, the advanced reservation and accountability software, and the technological improvements related to bicycles and their racks.

If awarded the Bicycle Transportation Account grant funds, staff will solicit proposals to conduct a needs assessment using these funds. Proposed objectives for this assessment include:

- Feasibility assessment of a Citywide program with many convenient sites for bicycle layovers
- Identification of potential partners and operating scenarios
- Cost estimates for start-up and ongoing operations
- Creation and implementation of a public awareness outreach campaign
- Preliminary architectural design and review of bike racks

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The grant application is in the amount of \$100,000. The City's 10% share of \$10,000 can be provided by the Citywide Bicycle Amenities account.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

By providing alternative modes of transportation for trips one to three miles in length, the Project will explore feasibility of a program that would benefit the City's sustainability goals by reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions related to motor vehicle use.

PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/DvH/mh

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Casey, Acting Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office