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City Manager's Report
July 9, 2024 City Council Meeting
Prepared by: Melissa McConnell, City Engineer
Item #: 7.8

Subject: Consider approving Cooperative Agreement (03-0848) with the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the US 50 Trip to Green Congestion Management and Resiliency Strategy project (CIP #42502) and authorizing the City Manager to execute the same.

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution:

Approving Cooperative Agreement (03-0848) with the California State Department of Transportation for the US 50 Trip to Green Congestion Management and Resiliency Strategy project (CIP #42502) and authorizing the City Manager to execute the same.

Purpose: The purpose of this item is to approve a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans outlining the obligations and responsibilities for the City of Placerville to implement a project on the state highway system.

Strategic Plan Strategy: Strategy 4 - Update and Maintain City-Owned Infrastructure

Background: The El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) and the City of Placerville have partnered together for decades, along with Caltrans and first responders, to identify actionable solutions to improve climate resiliency and reduce congestion on US 50 through the City of Placerville. From the 1990s through early 2000s, Caltrans studies evaluated potential options, like a flyover freeway, to address the three signalized intersections and associated traffic congestion and delay on US 50. No viable solutions ever came to fruition.

In 2021, a new concept was developed to evaluate the effectiveness of setting all eastbound and westbound traffic signals to “green” on US 50 to efficiently and safely move vehicles through Placerville. The US 50 Access Control Action Plan was executed for a proof of concept for the new concept, known as “Trip to Green.” Trip to Green was implemented over three weekends in 2022 and the data and results were thoroughly analyzed in the US 50 Corridor Action Plan. The success of the pilot program, as well as the success of Trip to Green implementation during the Caldor Fire, led to a Local Transportation Climate Adaption Program (LTCAP) grant application in 2023. The grant funding that was secured will enable the City to design and install permanent Trip to Green infrastructure on US 50.

The US 50 Trip to Green Congestion Management and Resiliency Strategy (Trip to Green) (CIP #42502), will install traffic management devices such as barriers, mechanical stop bars, channelization devices for turn lanes, and other ITS features, and will construct a bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Canal Street. During implementation of Trip to Green, all three traffic signals in Placerville will be held in a solid green phase for a designated time, only during high congestion periods or in the event

of an emergency evacuation. The traffic control devices will prevent left turns and north-south crossings of US 50 during Trip to Green, with the exception of emergency vehicle access.

The LTCAP funding includes the environmental, design, and right of way phases of the project. Construction funding has not yet been identified.

Discussion: Cooperative Agreement (03-0848) with Caltrans (Attachment B) addresses the obligations and responsibilities for the City to implement a project on the state highway system. This Cooperative Agreement covers the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA/ED) phase, Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) phase, and Right of Way (R/W) phase of the project. As the Implementing Agency, the City is responsible for managing all aspects of project delivery and managing the quality of work to be delivered. Caltrans, as the owner of US 50, will perform quality management work including Quality Management Assessment and owner approvals for the work within the state highway system.

As a part of this process, the City is also requesting to be designated the CEQA Lead Agency for the project. Although this project is on-system, some of the environmental concerns involve potential impacts to Hangtown Creek, local roads, and local private properties. The City requests CEQA lead agency delegation to ensure all local concerns are addressed, as well as ensure timely project delivery.

The Cooperative Agreement will allow the City to move forward with requesting allocation of funding for the PA/ED phase of the project, and enable the City to proceed with the consultant procurement process.

Options:

1. Approve the Cooperative Agreement as recommended by staff.
2. Provide other direction to staff.

Environmental: Not applicable to this item.

Budget Impact: This item has no budget impact. On June 25, 2024, the City Council adopted the 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Program budget which included the new US 50 Trip to Green Congestion Management and Resiliency Project (CIP #42502). Staff will return to City Council to recommend budget appropriations following allocation of funds and upon consultant selection.



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager



Melissa McConnell, City Engineer

Attachments:

Attachment A: Resolution

Attachment B: Cooperative Agreement (03-0848)