

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	41995	Agenda Number	19.
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Meeting Date:	5/7/2015	Department:	Transportation
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Subject

Approve an ordinance accepting \$102,300 in grant funds from the AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION TEXAS CHAPTER; and amending the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Austin Transportation Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20140908-001) to appropriate \$102,300 for the implementation of a pilot project to improve accessibility to healthcare, nutritious food, and physical activity in the communities of North Central Austin.

Amount and Source of Funding

The City of Austin is a sub-recipient of \$102,300 funding awarded to the American Planning Association Texas Chapter by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Dissemination and Implementation Program, Division of Community Health, Funding Opportunity Announcement # DP14-1418. There are no matching funds required with this grant award.

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is attached.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	
For More Information:	Robert Spillar, 512-974-2488, Laura Dierenfield, 512-974-7189, Gilda Powers, 512-974-7092.
Boards and Commission Action:	
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

BACKGROUND

In September of 2014, the American Planning Association in partnership with the American Public Health Association issued the 'Plan 4 Health' Request for Proposals (RFP) to advance community strategies for equitable access to nutritious food as well as opportunities for physical activity. The American Planning Association Texas Chapter (APA Texas Chapter) invited coalitions throughout the state to apply for funding made available through this 'Plan 4 Health' RFP. The City of Austin formed a coalition consisting of representatives from the Austin Transportation Department (ATD), Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (A/TCHHS), Office of Sustainability, Planning and Development Review Department (PDRD), Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) and Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro). The Austin coalition's pilot project was one of 15 awards out of a total of 90 applications received nationwide. The Austin coalition was the only project awarded out of eight other cities in Texas.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The pilot project provides resources for a first-in-state equitable mobility program that will serve the neighborhoods in North Central Austin, as defined by railroad tracks west of Metric Boulevard and Lamar to the west, Research Boulevard/ Anderson Lane to the south, Cameron Road to the east Braker Lane to the north. Residents in this area of Austin are at higher risk to be disproportionately burdened with chronic disease such as diabetes, hypertension, chronic stress, and certain cancers due to lack of access to healthy foods and safe environments for physical activity, as identified in the 2012 Austin/Travis County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The pilot project will involve planning, community outreach, and program implementation designed to improve access to nutritious food and physical activity using evidence-based strategies in district food planning and active transportation encouragement. ATD will serve as the lead department on the project in close collaboration with the Office of Sustainability and the A/TCHHS Department with contributions from PARD, Capital Metro, and PDRD.

FUNDING

A total of \$110,000 was awarded to the APA Texas Chapter. The APA Texas Chapter will keep 7% of the grant funds to cover administration and management of the grant. Upon council acceptance and appropriation, the APA Texas Chapter will transfer a total of \$102,300 to the ATD to implement the grant activities in partnership with other coalition members.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

A subset of neighborhoods within the North Central Austin service area will be identified through outreach to area stakeholders.. Funds will be used for language support and outreach materials to conduct community-based focus groups in these neighborhoods to identify barriers in the food and transportation systems. From there, the Office of Sustainability will develop a Food System Toolkit with identified food system community priorities. At the same time, ATD will implement the “Smart Transportation Education Program” (STEP) or Programa para Instigar Senderismo, Actividad y Rutas, translated: “Program to Instigate Walking, Activity, and Routes” (PISAR). STEPS/PISAR will consist of a portfolio of community-based encouragement and education programs designed to help people access medical facilities, schools, employment and recreational opportunities through active transportation such as transit and walking. Residents will be encouraged to participate in these programs through mailings and a community-based media campaign. HHS will assign staff to support the grant by convening the coalition, documenting the grant activities, as well as provide any technical assistance needed by the coalition. Other City of Austin departments as well as Capital Metro will provide support to ATD, HHS, and the Office of Sustainability as follows:

- Capital Metro will provide resources in the form of a transportation planner to help identify bus routes in the North Central Austin area that serve key destinations such as schools, medical facilities, grocery stores and recreational areas as well as provide training in the development of encouragement and education programs.
- PARD will assist with identifying existing PARD programs that may fit well with the ATD STEPS/PISAR program and help facilitate access to the community garden in the area.
- PDRD will provide guidance to align the project’s activities with Imagine Austin goals as well as bring other APA professionals in touch with the program.

TIMEFRAME

The project period will span from April 2015 to March of 2016. The coalition will be responsible for quarterly reports to the funder to ensure timely success of grant deliverables. Outcomes of this project will be shared with planning and public health professionals throughout Texas through publications as well as professional meetings such as conferences. The coalition will be eligible to apply for future funding opportunities over the next three years to expand the program.