



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-3022, **Agenda Item #:** 30.

10/1/2020

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance authorizing negotiation and execution of an advance funding agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for the Highway Safety grant funds initiative for the implementation of the Safe Systems Initiative to Address Failure to Yield project to improve safety for people walking and bicycling; amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Austin Transportation Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to accept funds from the Texas Department of Transportation in the amount of \$182,110; and amending the Austin Transportation Department Capital Budget (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to transfer in and appropriate \$182,110 for the implementation of the project.

Lead Department

Austin Transportation Department

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$182,110 is available from the Texas Department of Transportation. The required City funding match of \$47,596 is available in the FY 2020-2021 Austin Transportation Department's Operating Budget. Fiscal notes are attached.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information: **BACKGROUND**

As part of the City of Austin's Vision Zero initiative to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on Austin streets, the Austin Transportation Department has sought funding through the Texas Department of Transportation's Highway Safety Grant program to address one of the key dangerous behaviors contributing to severe injuries and fatalities on Austin streets: Failure to Yield.

Failure to Yield contributed to more than 15% of all 2019 traffic-related crashes in Austin (source: Analysis by the City of Austin of 2019 crashes recorded in the Texas Department of Transportation's Crash Record Information System (CRIS)). Failure to yield contributed to 13% of fatal crashes and 17% of serious injury crashes for the same period (2019).

Failure to Yield is of concern to vulnerable users, especially pedestrians. Looking more closely into vehicle-pedestrian interactions, Failure to Yield was the contributing factor most frequently cited by the responding officer in vehicle-pedestrian crashes, making up 53% of recorded factors for motorists and pedestrians combined (source; City of Austin Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, 2018).

The Failure to Yield issue represents the type of behavior that the City's Vision Zero Program seeks to address through a systemic safety approach that combines education with engineering improvements.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Safe Systems Initiative to Address Failure to Yield intends to improve yielding behavior by delivering a

citywide educational effort that is strategically focused around existing and newly built infrastructure that is designed to improve yielding. This includes protected intersections, signalized and unsignalized pedestrian crossings and other similar types of infrastructure. Education will take the form of strategic educational messages mailed to people living near these improvements as well as on-street education targeted at people passing through these areas, including drivers, people walking and people on bicycles. The on-street education will be delivered through street teams which consist of traffic safety educators positioned safely and conspicuously along the street. Yielding behavior will be measured before and after these educational activations to evaluate if the initiative was effective

FUNDING

A total of \$229,706 was awarded to the project, with approximately 80% coming from the Texas Department of Transportation Highway Safety Program fund and 20% from the Austin Transportation Department's Operating Budget. The matching City funds will cover staff time devoted to grant management and implementation. TxDOT grant funding will cover costs to do a comprehensive pre and post evaluation to measure success as well as educational activities. The Texas Department of Transportation will also contribute other in-kind support in the form of printing materials.

TIMEFRAME AND PROGRAM PHASING

The project period will span from Fall 2020 through Summer 2021. The first phase of the project will be to procure services and conduct the pre-intervention evaluation. The second phase will consist of developing the educational collateral and establishing the street team education team. The third phase will consist of delivering the citywide educational efforts, both on-street and via mail to nearby residents. The final phase will consist of the post evaluation, analysis and final reporting.

This project is expected to be implemented citywide, in all Council Districts.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute to this grant.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Mobility; Safety