



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 9

Agenda Date: February 27, 2025

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Public Works Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Razi Hosseini

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 2

SUBJECT:

Funding Agreement: Rittiman Road Grade Separation Project

SUMMARY:

An ordinance approving a funding agreement between the City of San Antonio and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), accepting federal grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$4,800,000 for design-related expenses for the Rittiman Road Grade Separation project, located in Council District 2, and authorizing a City match in the amount of \$1,200,000. Funding is available from debt proceeds included in the FY 2025 Capital Budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As part of the FY 2024 Budget, a total of \$1.2 Million was authorized for design and environmental review of an overpass to eliminate an at-grade Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Crossing at Rittiman Road and Gibbs Sprawl Road.

In 2018, TxDOT completed the Central Texas Grade Crossing Study to provide planning support to communities along approximately 330 miles of UPRR track located in a five-county area in Central Texas consisting of Williamson, Travis, Hays, Comal, and Bexar counties. The study identified Rittiman Road and Walzem Road in Bexar County as potential crossings for

improvement. A feasibility study completed in 2021 developed alternative concepts and evaluated grade separations at Rittiman Road and Walzem Road to provide both mobility improvements for vehicular traffic, as well as rail operational benefits due to the proximity of UPRR's Kirby Yard. The study included traffic analysis, conceptual engineering, preparation of cost estimates, and stakeholder engagement to improve efficiency of freight movement. Four highway-rail grade separation alternatives were developed for Rittiman Road and evaluated for feasibility based on technical, operational, and institutional criteria.

In June 2023, the City of San Antonio was selected to receive federal grant funding in the amount of \$4,800,000 from the Federal Rail Administration for the design and environmental review of an overpass to eliminate an at-grade Union Pacific Railroad Crossing at Rittiman Road and Gibbs Sprawl Road.

ISSUE:

This ordinance approves a funding agreement between the City of San Antonio and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), accepting federal grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$4,800,000 for design-related expenses for the Rittiman Road Grade Separation project, located in Council District 2, and authorizing a City match in the amount of \$1,200,000.

Rittiman Road is a four-lane minor arterial that serves approximately 23,450 vehicles per day, it serves more truck traffic than other corridors in the area due to its proximity to several industrial areas and its five-mile connection between I-10 and I-35. Currently, motorists traveling through this corridor encounter trains blocking the railroad crossing multiple times per day. Without improvements made to this area, blocked traffic is projected to increase by 40% during peak traffic periods by 2045.

The proposed project will support project development, final design, and environmental clearance to eliminate an at-grade crossing where Rittiman Road and Union Pacific's rail line intersects and build an at grade-separated road overpass. The project will design solutions to eliminate issues with vehicular traffic due to high rail volumes and rail operations. Approval of these ordinances will continue the City's commitment to maintaining and improving existing infrastructure in collaboration with other governmental agencies.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose not to approve this ordinance; however, the City will lose the opportunity to receive grant funding from the Federal Rail Administration, delaying the project or requiring a change in scope to stay within budget. The most cost-effective option would be to approve the Funding Agreement with the Federal Rail Administration.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of funds from the Federal Rail Administration for design related expenses in an amount not to exceed \$4,800,000 for the Rittiman Road Grade Separation

Project, located in Council District 2 and authorizes a city match in the amount of \$1,200,000. Funding is available from debt proceeds included in the FY 2025 Capital Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.