



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

### File Number:

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**Agenda Item Number:** 16

**Agenda Date:** September 12, 2024

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Transportation Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Catherine Hernandez

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** District 1, District 2

**SUBJECT:**

Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Grant

**SUMMARY:**

Ordinance authorizing acceptance of the USDOT Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Planning Grant funds in the amount of \$2,960,000, and authorizing matching funds in the amount of \$740,000 from the Hotel Occupancy Tax Redemption Fund.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued a notice of funding opportunity for the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program. The RCN application represented a combined funding opportunity comprised of the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) and Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) programs. The programs aim to revitalize and reconnect communities that have been disconnected by past transportation infrastructure investments. The grants were made available to projects which mitigate the impacts of freeways by improving connectivity, mobility, access, and economic development.

Following a briefing to the Transportation and Infrastructure Council Committee in September 2023, the City of San Antonio submitted an application for funds to conduct develop conceptual

design solutions to overcome the barrier created by Interstate 37 (I-37). Through this planning effort and eventual construction, the City has the opportunity to improve physical connections between downtown and the Eastside.

#### **ISSUE:**

In March 2024, the USDOT awarded \$3.3 billion in funding to over 130 planning and capital projects. The City of San Antonio was awarded a \$2.96 million federal planning grant through the Neighborhood Access and Equity program, and will provide matching funds in the amount of \$740,000.00 for a total project budget of \$3.7 million. The grant will fund a comprehensive community-driven planning process and the engineering and planning studies necessary to develop a project that minimizes the barrier created by Interstate 37 (I-37) and better connects downtown San Antonio and Hemisfair to historically underserved communities on the Eastside.

The planning process will include public workshops, individual stakeholder meetings, small group meetings, and numerous outreach events to encourage participation and inform the public of the effort. An oversight committee that includes leadership from Hemisfair, UTSA, City, TxDOT, neighborhood associations, community organizations, and others will be established to provide feedback on the effort and oversight of the process. The deliverables from the planning grant will produce a project concept developed through a community driven planning process that will serve as the foundation for a federal grant application seeking the capital funds necessary for the project's construction.

Following acceptance of the grant, the City will issue a solicitation for consultant services to include community engagement, concept development, and preliminary design. Work funded by the grant will commence in late 2024 and last approximately one year.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

Without the grant and local match funds, the planning project would not be undertaken.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ordinance authorized the acceptance of the USDOT Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Planning Grant in the amount of \$2,960,000 and appropriates a 20% local match of \$740,000 from the Hotel Occupancy Tax Redemption Fund.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends authorizing the approval and acceptance of the USDOT Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Planning Grant funds in the amount of \$2,960,000, and authorizing matching funds in the amount of \$740,000.

