



Metro


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November 17, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON 
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: JAMES DE LA LOZA 
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

SUBJECT: METRO OPEN STREETS GRANT PROGRAM
COVID-19 RESPONSE

ISSUE

In June 2013 the Metro Board of Directors introduced Motion 72, directing staff to award up to \$2 million annually to support Open Streets events. Beginning in 2014 the Board awarded competitive grants to jurisdictions through biennial funding cycles. The current program funding Cycle Three had awarded events planned between March 2019 to December 2020. However, in March 2020, the Safer at Home Order restricted all but essential travel and prohibited large scale public gatherings such as Open Streets.

This report provides program updates and Metro staff's intent to extend Cycle Three to December 2021 to allow ample time for sponsors to produce events or repurpose the awarded grant funding for the Board-approved motion on Slow Street concept programs.

DISCUSSION

Cycle Three and 2020 Mini-Cycle Implementation

On September 27, 2018, the Metro Board awarded \$4 million in funding to 15 new Open Streets events scheduled through December 2020, and reprogrammed \$447,000 from two cancelled Cycle Two events toward Cycle Three. In total, 15 out of 26 events that applied had received funding. A motion put forth by Directors Hahn, Garcia, and Dupont-Walker directed staff to report back on the regional diversity of previous cycles and potential strategies to ensure regional diversity of funding in future cycles; and to create a \$1 million Mini-Cycle in 2020.

After initial authorization and subsequent workshops, staff returned to the Board for approval authorizing the 2020 Mini-Cycle. In May 2019, the Board awarded \$1,053,341 to five additional Open Streets events scheduled through December 2020; reprogrammed \$242,000 from one cancelled Cycle Three event towards the next-highest-scored Cycle Three event, Beach Streets Downtown, in accordance with funding policy; and reserved the remaining \$44,347 in Board-awarded Cycle Three and 2020 Mini-Cycle funds to be reprogrammed in any future Board-authorized funding cycles of the program.

COVID-19 Impact and Slow Streets Concept

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Los Angeles County issued the Safer at Home Order on March 20, 2020. The order required Angelenos to stay at home for all except essential activities and restricted large gatherings throughout the County, including Open Streets. As a result, all Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle events were postponed to later dates.

During the Regular Board meeting held May 28, 2020, the Metro Board of Directors approved Motion 2020-0375 (Attachment A) authorizing the CEO to negotiate administrative scope changes to awarded Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle events, at the written request of the grantee, such that funds may be repurposed for COVID-19 response to Slow Streets or similar programs including:

- Expanding one-day events to longer-term temporary traffic interventions;
- Replacing a large, single-corridor event intended for regional audiences with many smaller, neighborhood-scale interventions catering to local audiences;
- Creating spaces within the public right-of-way to support economic activity such as dining and vending; and
- Providing education, encouragement, and monitoring for safe physical distancing in accordance with the Safer at Home Order in partnership with and supporting community-based leadership.

Following Board Motion 2020-0375, all Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle grantees were notified via email and telephone of the option to postpone their awarded event or repurpose their funds toward the Slow Streets concept. As of November 2020:

- 3 event sponsors have been administratively approved to repurpose funds toward Slow Streets;
- 3 event sponsors are in the approval process to repurpose funds towards Slow Streets;
- 2 event sponsors have expressed interest in repurposing funds toward Slow Streets; and
- 5 event sponsors have indicated interest in postponing their Open Street event to later dates.

The table below illustrates the current status of all Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle Open Street events and their funding balance.

Open Streets Grant Program Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle Status November 19, 2020

Event	Cycle	Date	Lead Jurisdiction	Status	Invoiced or Expected
CicLAvia Culver City meets Palms	Cycle Three	March 3, 2019	Culver City	Event Complete	\$300,000
626 Golden Streets Mission to Mission	Cycle Three	May 19, 2019	South Pasadena	Event Complete	\$332,000
CicLAvia Heart of LA 2019	Cycle Three	October 6, 2019	City of Los Angeles	Event Complete	\$300,000
CicLAvia South LA Watts	Cycle Three	February 23, 2020	City of Los Angeles	Event Complete	\$335,000
Beach Streets University Money Expended	Mini-cycle	Event cancelled	Long Beach	Event Cancelled	\$21,865
Event Completed :					\$1,288,865
Beach Streets University Slow Streets Scope Change	Mini-cycle	Ongoing	Long Beach	Slow Streets approved	\$194,135
Beach Streets Downtown	Mini-cycle	Ongoing	Long Beach	Slow Streets approved	\$216,000
Santa Monica Coast Open Streets	Mini-cycle	Ongoing	Santa Monica	Slow Streets approved	\$250,000
Total Slow Streets Scope Change Approved:					\$660,135
Heart of the Foothills	Cycle Three	Ongoing	SGV COG	In Slow Streets approval	\$350,000
CicLAvia: Northeast LA	Cycle Three	Ongoing	City of Los Angeles	In Slow Streets approval	\$300,000
CicLAvia to the Sea	Cycle Three	Ongoing	City of Los Angeles	In Slow Streets approval	\$300,000
Scope Change Anticipated :					\$950,000
San Fernando Street Festival - Nocturnal Ride	Cycle Three	Future	San Fernando	Inquired - no official submittal	\$144,000
626 Golden Streets ArroyoFest	Cycle Three	Future	South Pasadena	Inquired - no official submittal	\$420,000
Scope Change Anticipated :					\$564,000
Downey Ride and Stride	Mini-cycle	Future	Downey	Postponed (No interest in Slow Streets)	\$172,405
CicLAvia Glendale Meets Atwater Village	Mini-cycle	Future	Glendale	Postponed (No interest in Slow Streets)	\$241,136
South Gate Ride and Walk Open Street Event	Mini-cycle	Future	South Gate	Postponed (No interest in Slow Streets)	\$173,800
CicLAvia: Heart of LA 2020	Cycle Three	Future	City of Los Angeles	Postponed (No interest in Slow Streets)	\$300,000
CicLAvia: Space Shuttle Endeavour	Cycle Three	Future	City of Los Angeles	Postponed (No interest in Slow Streets)	\$335,000
Future Postponed Open Streets Expected :					\$1,222,341

Staff is extending Cycle Three through December 31, 2021 allowing ample time for awarded grantees to produce their events after the pandemic or consider reprogramming the awarded funding for the new Slow Street concept.

Staff will return to the Board in summer 2021 for authorization to release the Cycle Four Application and Guidelines, with the goal of the first Cycle Four event being held in spring 2022. It is anticipated that Cycle Four will allow for jurisdictions to apply for traditional Open Streets events as in Cycles One through Three, as well as allow for Slow Streets as directed by Board Motion 2020-0375.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to administratively approve scope change requests received from Cycle Three and Mini-Cycle grantees and allow for postponement of awarded Open Street events through December 2021. Further, staff will return to the Board for next steps on Cycle Four in summer 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Board Motion 2020-0375



Metro

Board Report

File #: 2020-0375, File Type: Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 40.

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MAY 28, 2020**

Motion by:

DIRECTORS GARCETTI, SOLIS, GARCIA, BONIN, AND FASANA

Open Streets Program Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 emergency has required limiting or closing traditional public spaces, depriving residents from safe ways of spending time outside. As an alternative, many cities are reconfiguring streets through temporary traffic calming to create spaces for residents to get outside and maintain their physical and mental health. As a transportation authority, Metro can help local jurisdictions in Los Angeles County implement these reconfigurations.

Through the Metro Open Streets Grant Program, the Board recently awarded over \$5 million for various open streets events in Los Angeles County. However, due to the Safer at Home order and widespread call for social distancing in public, several large-scale, single-day, open streets events such as CicLAvia, 626 Golden Streets, and Long Beach's Beach Streets have been postponed, and their feasibility in the immediate future remains unclear.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the May 13, 2020 Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Safer at Home Order permits local public entities to elect to temporarily close streets to through automobile traffic to allow more space for recreational activity in compliance with Social (Physical) Distancing requirements.

As such, residents of Los Angeles County may, in addition to traveling for essential trips, use the public right-of-way to walk and cycle for recreation or exercise close to home while maintaining safe physical distance. Many residents do not have easy access to open space and maintaining safe physical distances can be challenging on existing sidewalks, especially in densely populated neighborhoods. Easily accessible alternatives to beaches, trails and parks are needed throughout the county so that all residents can safely get outside. Allowing local entities to provide this additional space in streets through full or partial closure to motor vehicles, while avoiding impacts to transit operations where practicable, will relieve pressure on recreational facilities like beaches and trails, and reduce travel to them.

Temporary use of local streets to allow increased pedestrian and bicycle use at safe physical

distances has been deployed in several cities in the U.S. during the COVID-19 crisis and is variously known as Healthy, Safe, Family-Friendly, or “Slow Streets.”

Since some Open Streets Grant Program awardees are unable to use their grants as intended, this funding can be put to different and effective use in the COVID-19 crisis response.

SUBJECT: OPEN STREETS PROGRAM RESPONSE TO COVID-19

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Garcetti, Solis, Garcia, Bonin, and Fasana that the Board authorize the CEO to negotiate administrative scope changes to awarded events in the Open Streets Grant Program, at the written request of the grantee, such that funds may be used for COVID-19 response Slow Streets or similar programs, including but not limited to:

- Expanding one-day events to longer-term temporary traffic interventions;
- Replacing a large, single-corridor event intended for regional audiences with many smaller, neighborhood-scale interventions catering to local audiences;
- Creating spaces within the public right-of-way to support economic activity such as dining and vending; and
- Providing education, encouragement, and monitoring for safe physical distancing in accordance with the Safer at Home Order in partnership with and supporting community-based leadership.