

September 5, 2025

TransNet Active Transportation Grant Program Project Amendment

Overview

The SANDAG Active Transportation Grant Program (ATGP) provides funding for local jurisdictions to plan and build facilities that promote multiple travel choices; increase connectivity to transit, schools, retail centers, parks, work, and other community gathering places; provide bike parking and education; and establish awareness programs that support pedestrian and bike infrastructure. The ATGP is funded by TransNet and the Transportation Development Act. Four cycles of the ATGP have been held, and over \$28 million in funding has been awarded to 88 projects throughout the region.

Key Considerations

There is only one active ATGP project, the City of Carlsbad's (City) Carlsbad Boulevard and Tamarack Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Project (Project). The City was awarded \$1,054,000 in ATGP funding on October 23, 2015 to conduct design, environmental clearance, and construction of pedestrian and bicycle improvements at the Carlsbad Boulevard and Tamarack Avenue intersection. The three-year grant agreement began in 2016, has been granted two 36-month time extensions, and expired on May 8, 2025. The City has been reimbursed \$601,357.33 and a balance of \$452,642.60 remains.

The City realized it could not complete the entire scope of the Project by the grant termination date, so in December 2024, the City requested a 24-month schedule amendment and a scope of work change that would eliminate project construction tasks and allow the City to complete the Project's design and environmental clearance by May 2027. Staff brought this request to the TransNet Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee (ITOC) on [February 12, 2025 \(Item 11\)](#), and the ITOC recommended that the Board of Directors reject the City's request. ITOC members expressed concern that the City's request was unrealistic due to numerous uncertainties, including the lack of a Coastal Commission permit and environmental compliance for the Project, and that it was unlikely the Project could be completed within the timeframe the City had requested. At its meeting on [March 21, 2025 \(Item 5\)](#), the Transportation Committee (TC) recommended that the Board reject the City's request. TC members expressed support for the Project and noted it has region-wide benefits; however, they had concerns about the progress to date, the absence of funding to construct the Project, and the Carlsbad City Council's decision to wait to approve the final design until another roundabout project is completed and studied, which leaves the Project's design and construction timeline uncertain. This item was provided to the Board at its meeting on [March 28, 2025 \(Item 4\)](#). Ultimately, the item was pulled from the agenda for further review and analysis and deferred to a future meeting.

Action: Discussion/Possible Action

The Transportation Committee is asked to consider a three-year time extension, scope of work, and budget amendment for the City of Carlsbad's Active Transportation Grant Program-funded Carlsbad Boulevard and Tamarack Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Project.

Fiscal Impact:

If rejected by the Board of Directors, any unexpended funds would be returned to the program (Overall Work Program Project No. 300100: TransNet Smart Growth Incentive and Active Transportation Grant Programs) and used in a future call for projects.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

If approved by the Board, the City commits to completing the improvements by May 8, 2028.

City staff then brought the expiring grant to their City Council on April 29, 2025, where the Council voted to proceed with the design and construction of a smaller-scale project with limited improvements. The City subsequently submitted a revised amendment request to SANDAG staff for consideration (Attachment 1). The revised request includes a three-year time extension and modified scope of work and budget to include new project limits, design, environmental clearance, right-of-way, permitting, and construction. The revised budget proposes to use the grant balance for construction only. Per the City's revised scope of work, the improvements would be completed in 2028.

SANDAG staff brought this request to the ITOC on [July 9, 2025 \(Item 9\)](#), and the ITOC recommended that the Board approve the request. Additionally, the ITOC recommended that an additional stipulation be placed on the grant that all expended grant funds must be returned if the Project is not completed by the new grant termination date. This condition is intended to add additional accountability for the City that could be used to ensure timely project delivery. Although there were concerns about the lack of progress on the Project, it was agreed that the benefits of the new scope of work are in line with TransNet Ordinance goals of improving safety and reducing congestion. The ITOC also recognized that the revised request was similar in scope and intent to the original project proposal. The ITOC received assurances from the City that the timeline for obtaining environmental clearance would be reduced due to the smaller scale of the Project. In addition, the ITOC looked favorably upon the use of the grant funds solely toward the construction phase.

Next Steps

Pending a recommendation from the Transportation Committee, SANDAG and the City will bring the item to the Board this fall. If the Board rejects the request, the grant will be closed, and the unexpended funds will be returned to the ATGP for use in a future call for projects. If the Board approves the request, SANDAG grants staff will execute a new grant agreement with the City for the modified Project, the remaining grant balance of \$452,642.67, and a three-year term, in accordance with Board direction.

Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning

Attachment: 1. Revised City of Carlsbad Amendment Request Letter