

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: June 14, 2021

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Damon Dequenne, Assistant City Manager
Toneq' McCullough, Director of Transportation

Council Action Requested:

Resolution Authorizing an Application with the United States Department of Transportation for Funding through the RAISE Grant Program and an Agreement with HDR Engineering of the Carolinas for Grant Writing Services

Strategic Focus Area: Quality Transportation
Strategic Objective: Expand Bike/Sidewalk/Greenway Network
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

The United States Department of Transportation has made available funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program to assist communities with transportation projects that also create high-quality jobs, improve safety, protect the environment and generate equitable economic opportunity for all Americans. The program, formerly known as Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), will provide grants on a competitive basis, based on criteria including safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, innovation and partnership. RAISE grants for infrastructure projects will range in size from \$5,000,000 to \$25,000,000. All awards require a 20% local match.

Committee Action:

Committee	Finance 6/14/21	Action	Approval
For	Unanimous	Against	

Remarks:

The City intends to pursue a RAISE grant to fund the construction of the Long Branch Trail from Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive to 25th Street. The existing Long Branch Trail extends through the Innovation Quarter and connects with the Salem Creek Greenway, providing a multimodal transportation option that is part of a 25-mile network of trails. The Long Branch Trail Extension project would expand access to this trail network into neighborhoods with a high percentage of minority and low-income residents. The project would also further expand the urban trail network and provide residents and visitors safe and convenient bicycling and walking transportation options to numerous key destinations. The project also connects to existing transportation improvements throughout the city such as the Salem Creek Greenway Pedestrian Sidepath, the First and Second Street Two-Way Conversion and the Liberty and Main Street Two-Way Conversion which may be used to show approximately \$6,000,000 in funding commitments the city has already made. Additionally, matching funds of approximately \$1,500,000 may be drawn from existing Capital Project Funds and Grant Fund holding account balances.

HDR Engineering of the Carolinas (HDR) would be retained for a fee not to exceed \$60,000 to develop a competitive grant proposal that meets the July deadline for RAISE grant applications. This project would be paid for using bicycle and pedestrian 2018 bond funds. HDR is completing a feasibility study for the Long Branch Trail between Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and 25th Street and is developing a Transit Oriented Development plan for the same corridor, so their knowledge of the corridor is well suited to developing a successful grant application.