

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: February 13, 2024

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

From: Aaron King, Assistant City Manager
Jeff Fansler, Director of Transportation

Council Action Requested:
Resolution Authorizing a Letter of Support for the City of Winston-Salem and Winston-Salem Transit Authority’s Application for the FY24 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program and Low or No Emission Grant Program.

Strategic Focus Area: Quality Transportation
Strategic Objective: No
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

The City of Winston-Salem and Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA) plan to pursue competitive grant funding through the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) FY24 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program (49 U.S.C. 5339(b)) and Low or No Emission Grant Program (49 U.S.C. 5339(c)). This program makes federal funds available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. The Low or No Emission Grant Program provides funding specifically for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses and supporting facilities.

In FY23, the City of Winston-Salem pursued funding in the amount of \$4,000,000 toward a total project cost of \$5,000,000 for the purchase of five diesel-electric hybrid buses to replace buses reaching the end of their useful life. The 20% match would be provided through the WSTA Reserves Fund. The 2024-2029 Capital Plan includes \$5.8 million from WSTA reserves to provide the local match for federal transit capital funds. It is stated that the amount includes the use of reserves to match future grants for fixed route and Trans-Aid bus replacements.

Committee Action:

Committee	PW – 2/13/24	Action	Approval
For	Unanimous	Against	

Remarks:

Although the FY23 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program application was rated as highly recommended by the FTA, the application was not selected for funding in the highly competitive FY23 cycle. A debrief with FTA yielded multiple recommendations to improve the application's competitiveness in subsequent cycles. Recommendations included the addition of support letters, pursuit of funding through a single application to both the Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program and the Low or No Emission Grant Program, and enhanced narrative evidence of bus age, mileage, and condition.

The opening of the application period for FTA's FY24 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program and Low or No Emission Grant Program is anticipated in February 2024. The application period is forecasted to close in April 2024. This item requests Council to approve a resolution of support and authorize a support letter for the City of Winston-Salem and WSTA application for the purchase of five diesel-electric buses. Upon approval, the resolution of support will be submitted with the application. The enclosed support letter will be put on the appropriate letterhead for inclusion with the application.