



Legislation Text

File #: R-1718-24, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION R-1718-24: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, SUPPORTING A REQUEST FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS (ACOG) TO CONTRIBUTE \$2,355.50 TO THE LOCAL MATCH PORTION OF A CONSULTANT FEE FOR THE REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES USED IN THE SELECTION OF FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECTS IN THE OKLAHOMA CITY AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY (OCARTS) FROM THE CAPITAL FUND BALANCE TO BE USED FOR THE ACOG ALLOCATION STUDY.

BACKGROUND: The 2015 - Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) federal transportation funding bill allocates approximately \$21 million in Federal funds per year for the implementation of eligible transportation improvements in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. Ten percent of this appropriation is used to fund safety projects at 100% of their construction cost. This is a very important funding source for the City's transportation improvement program and Capital Budget. In recent years, the City of Norman has received over \$7 million per year from this program.

Federal law requires that the region's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) include regional priorities that implement the long range plan by reducing overall congestion, increasing safety and providing multimodal transportation options. Project priorities are established using the *Criteria and Process for Evaluation of Surface Transportation Program Urbanized Area (STP-UZA) Projects*, which rates and ranks projects submitted by any of the thirty one cities and five counties in the metropolitan area that are eligible for the funds.

Every year, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) coordinates the regional project evaluation process that identifies transportation improvements eligible for federal funding. Individual projects are rated and compared to one another using pre-established criteria. The process ends with the formulation of the region's transportation improvement program and the decision to use federal funds to pay for a significant portion of the cost of the higher priority projects.

In February of 2017, ACOG held a special meeting of its Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee (ITTC) to discuss the potential for a complete evaluation and possible overhaul of the regions STP-UZA scoring criteria and processes. Based on comments and questions from committee members, ACOG staff followed up with a peer review of the processes and criteria used by similar-sized metropolitan areas in the region. This review concluded that ACOG's scoring criteria does not align with the Long Range Multimodal Plan and Regional Goals. Furthermore, that the current criteria skews heavily toward capacity projects and does not equitably distribute funds to varied project types. Additionally, the criteria does not encourage projects that utilize congestion, safety and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) strategies such as those identified in the region's Congestion Management Process. Almost all other Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) ensure that their criteria align with and address the regional goals identified through the Multimodal Transportation Plan process. Most other MPOs also have criteria that encourage a wider range of projects.

DISCUSSION: In order to update and better align the *Criteria and Process for Evaluation of Surface Transportation Program Urbanized Area (STP-UZA) Projects*, as well as to address the concerns brought to ACOG staff by member entities, ACOG is proposing a restructuring of the criteria and project scoring methodology with the following goals and objectives in mind:

- Align the criteria to meet regional Multimodal Transportation Plan goals and objectives;
- Integrate performance management into the project selection process;
- Establish a project prioritization methodology that is results and efficiency-driven, to ensure that the region's transportation funding is being used most effectively;
- Simplified project scoring;
- More equitable scoring between types of projects to reflect the current needs of the region, while preserving an emphasis on bike/pedestrian, ITS, safety, transit, multimodal, connectivity and walkability improvements;
- Encourage projects that utilize cost effective, congestion mitigation, and safety enhancing strategies (from the

Congestion Management Plan toolbox)

The process to update the scoring criteria will involve the following steps:

- Use of a consultant to help create new scoring criteria that coincides with the region's goals and Federal requirements
- Formation of an ITTC subcommittee to coordinate with a consultant in the creation of new scoring criteria

This criteria update process is expected to take six months to complete. If adopted, it will be used during the Federal Fiscal Year 2018-2019 project selection process which will take place in January of 2019.

The first step is the hiring of the consultant to help create the new scoring criteria. The total fee for this service will be \$84,125. ACOG is proposing to use federal planning funds to cover 80% of the fee (\$67,300). Member entities are being asked to contribute the remaining 20%, or \$16,825, of which Norman is being specifically asked to fund \$2,355.50 (based upon a population distribution formula). At this time ACOG is requesting that City Council adopt a resolution supporting the update process and agreeing to fund Norman's portion of the local match.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of Resolution R-1718-24 supporting a request from the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) to contribute to the local match portion of a consultant fee for the review and update of the criteria and procedures used in the selection of federally funded projects in the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) area.

Staff also recommends an appropriation from the Capital Fund balance to fund Norman's share of the local match. If approved, the appropriation of \$2,355.50 from the Capital Fund Balance (account 050-0000-253.20-00) to ACOG Allocation Study, Design (050-9388-431.62-01; project TR0117) will be made to cover the City's share of the cost.