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MICHAEL WOODMAN, Executive Director
AARON HOYT, Deputy Executive Director


Grass Valley • Nevada City

Nevada County • Truckee

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Michael Woodman, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and Carbon Reduction Program Project Funding Recommendations for Federal Fiscal Years 2023/24 and 2024/25, Resolution 24-02

DATE: January 24, 2024

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution 24-02 approving the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding recommendations for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2023/24 and 2024/25 and authorize the NCTC Executive Director to execute a CMAQ Loan with the Tehama County Transportation Commission for \$411,569.

BACKGROUND: The federal CMAQ funding program was created in 1991 for the purpose of funding transportation projects that will assist regions to reach attainment of the national ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter. Western Nevada County was designated non-attainment for the federal ozone standard in June 2004 and began receiving an annual formula apportionment of CMAQ funds, based on population and air quality severity. The cities of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Nevada County are located within the non-attainment boundary and are eligible to apply for CMAQ funding.

The CRP funding program was signed into law in November 2021 through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The CRP federal funding is available to projects that decrease transportation emissions, which are defined as the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions that result from on-road, highway sources. CRP funds are available to all jurisdictions within Nevada County.

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is responsible for managing the CMAQ and CRP programs and utilizes a multi-year programming approach to deliver projects that assist in meeting the air quality standard and carbon dioxide emissions.

On November 17, 2023, NCTC staff issued a joint call for CMAQ and CRP eligible projects for FFY 2023/24 and 2025/26. NCTC established a goal of programming a total of \$366,139 of CRP funding available for FY 2023/24 and a total of \$2,480,256 of CMAQ funds covering FFY 2023/24 (\$622,705)

and FFY 2025/26 (\$1,857,551) to fund projects that can demonstrate emission reductions and improve air quality. Following the release of the call for projects, NCTC was notified by Caltrans that CMAQ funding assumptions had changed due to the CMAQ Loan for \$2,249,254 to another metropolitan planning organization not being utilized. As a result, this modified the funding years and available funding to \$2,678,827 in FFY 2023/24 and \$2,556,478 in FFY 2024/25. There were no changes to the CRP funding levels.

CMAQ Project Funding Recommendations

NCTC staff received and reviewed seven CMAQ applications, six of which have received CMAQ funding in prior funding rounds for various phases of project development. The seven CMAQ project applications totaled \$7,142,102, with \$3,090,396 requested in FFY 2023/24, \$1,891,706 requested in FFY 2024/25, and \$2,160,000 in funding requested in FFY 2025/26. The requested funding in FFY 2023/24 exceeds the capacity by \$411,569. Projects requesting funding in FFY 2025/26 will be considered in the next CMAQ call for projects anticipated in two years.

The following three project applications were approved for construction funding during prior call for project cycles, but did not receive the funding due to scheduling delays. Due to the prior approval, these projects would be considered first priority for funding this cycle.

- McCourtney Road Active Transportation Connection Project (City of Grass Valley): \$685,046
- Boulder Street Sidewalk Project (City of Nevada City): \$443,133
- Combie Road Multi-Purpose Trail (Nevada County): \$1,004,746

The CMAQ project funding recommendations shown in Table 1 were presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on January 11, 2024 and refined through follow up phone calls and emails. In order to deliver all the projects requesting funding in FFY 2023/24, a loan of CMAQ funding from another Regional Transportation Planning Agency for \$411,569 would be necessary. Without the loan, some projects would be delayed and likely incur higher construction costs due to inflation and rising material costs. NCTC staff has tentatively reached an agreement with the Tehama County Transportation Commission for a no interest loan of \$411,569 to be repaid in FFY 2028/29. The Tehama County Transportation Commission staff is scheduled to present a loan agreement to their commission for consideration on January 29, 2024.

Sufficient funding capacity in FFY 2024/25 exists to meet the project funding requests and will leave a balance of \$664,772. NCTC staff will seek out another regional transportation planning agency who may want to borrow this amount with a repayment term of FFY 2026/27. Federal CMAQ rules do not allow funds to rollover into a subsequent fiscal year; making loaning out the funds the preferred method of managing the CMAQ funding.

NCTC staff recommends approval of the CMAQ projects contained in Table 1 contingent upon approval of a \$411,569 loan agreement in FFY 2023/24 with the Tehama County Transportation Commission. Attachment 1 contains detailed project descriptions.

Table 1 Recommended CMAQ Funding for FFY 2023/24 and 2024/25			
Project	Agency	FFY 2023/24	FFY 2024/25
McCourtney Road Active Transportation Connection Project – Construction Phase ¹	City of Grass Valley	\$ 1,242,517	\$0
Ridge Road Active Transportation Project – Preliminary Engineering Phase	City of Grass Valley	\$0	\$111,104
Boulder Street Sidewalk Project – Construction Phase	City of Nevada City	\$443,133	\$0
Railroad Avenue Sidewalk Project – Construction Phase	City of Nevada City	\$0	\$628,595
Searles Avenue Sidewalk Project – Construction Phase	City of Nevada City	\$0	\$632,742
Combie Road Multi-Purpose Trail – Construction Phase ²	Nevada County	\$1,004,746	\$0
Rough and Ready Highway Roundabout & Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities on Ridge Road and Adam Avenue – Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way Phase	Nevada County	\$100,000	\$519,265
Total		\$3,090,396	\$1,891,706
Note: 1. The McCourtney Road Active Transportation Connection project is requesting an additional \$557,471 to match the updated engineering cost estimate. 2. The Combie Road Multi-Purpose Trail project is requesting an additional \$300,000 to match the updated engineering cost estimate.			

CRP Project Funding Recommendations

NCTC staff received one CRP application from the Town of Truckee for a Vanpool Pilot Program requesting \$366,139. The Vanpool Pilot Program is a proposed three-year collaboration with the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada to subsidize the costs of vanpools for Washoe County residents who work in the Town of Truckee. Attachment 1 contains a detailed description of the project.

NCTC staff recommends approval of the CRP funding levels contained in Table 2 for the Truckee Vanpool Pilot Program. The funding recommendation in Table 2 does not fully allocate the available CRP funding. NCTC staff is recommending funding the first two-years of the pilot program to test the program viability and defer the remaining CRP balance of \$191,419 until the next call for projects.

Table 2 Recommended CRP Funding for FFY 2023/24 and 2024/25			
Project	Agency	FFY 2023/24	FFY2024/25
Truckee Vanpool Pilot Program	Town of Truckee	\$67,200	\$107,250
Total		\$174,720	\$67,200

attachment

Attachment 1
Federal Fiscal Years 2023/24 and 2024/25
CMAQ and CRP Project Description

CMAQ Projects

McCourtney Road Active Transportation Connection Project

The City of Grass Valley's McCourtney Road Active Transportation Connection project will include installation of concrete sidewalk on the north side of McCourtney Road, beginning at the terminus of the existing sidewalk on Mill Street and continuing west through the intersection of the freeway ramps to connect with the existing sidewalk in front of the Brighton Greens property. Additionally, the project proposes the construction of a shared use, eight-to-ten-foot-wide paved path on the south side of McCourtney Road, from Allison Ranch Road west to the Brighton Street intersection, where it will join existing paths and sidewalk fronting the fairgrounds property. The proposed path will provide an important connection with the Wolf Creek Trail shared used path currently under construction at the City's Mining Museum property on Allison Ranch Road and the existing trails at the fairgrounds, as well as planned facilities along Brighton Street and to the north.

Ridge Road Active Transportation Project

The City of Grass Valley's Ridge Road Active Transportation Project will improve the mobility, accessibility and safety of non-motorized/ active transportation users through the construction of new sidewalks, curb ramps, a shared use path and bike lane along a highly used section of Ridge Road.

Specifically, the Ridge Road Active Transportation Project will include the installation of a Class 1 shared use path (ten-foot concrete sidewalk) on the south side of Ridge Road, beginning at the City Limits near Lynwood Lane and continuing east to connect with the terminus of existing sidewalk near Hughes Road. Additionally, the project proposes the construction of a Class 2 bike lane on the north side of Ridge Road, beginning at City Limits near Lynwood Lane and continuing east to the terminus of existing bike lane near Hughes Road. The proposed shared use path and bike lane will provide important connections from residential subdivisions to Nevada Union High School, the Litton Trail and the Sierra College Campus and Business District.

Boulder Street Sidewalk Project

The City of Nevada City's Boulder Street Sidewalk project consists of new sidewalks on Boulder Street and Red Dog Road with connections to adjacent sidewalks. No sidewalk presently exists for 90% of this area. The project will provide safe, convenient, pedestrian access between residential areas in both Nevada City and the county to downtown Nevada City.

Railroad Avenue Sidewalk Project

The City of Nevada City's Railroad Avenue Sidewalk Project will consist of new sidewalk on Railroad Avenue, a new soft surface trail connecting the existing Northern Queen and Trail, and curb ramp improvements and crosswalks to connect the proposed sidewalk on the east side of the road to the existing sidewalk on the west side of the road. The project will complete a gap between the existing trail system connecting downtown Nevada City and properties southeast of the City including Inn Town Campground, Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum and properties at New Mohawk Road and Gold Flat Road.

Searles Avenue Sidewalk Project

The City of Nevada City's Seales Avenue Sidewalk project will consist of new sidewalk on Searls Avenue from Valley Street to Sacramento Street, new sidewalks on Sacramento Street between Searls Avenue and the SR 49/20 Overpass and ADA curb ramp improvements and crosswalks at the intersections of Searls Avenue/Valley Street and Sacramento Street/Clark Street. The project provides safe, convenient, and efficient pedestrian access between the Seven Hills Business District and Downtown.

Combie Road Multi-Purpose Trail Project

Nevada County's Combie Road Multi-Purpose Trail project proposes to construct a Class 1 pathway for non-motorized users on the north side of Combie Road from the intersection of Higgins Drive to W. Hacienda Road near Lake of the Pines in Nevada County, CA. Currently disjointed segments of sidewalk and pathway on the route do not allow pedestrians and bicyclists to safely traverse the Combie Road corridor, which contains a number of essential uses and services such as grocery stores, a drug store/pharmacy, banks, hardware stores, schools, churches and residences. The separated pathway will link the pedestrian crossing at Higgins Road where there is a large commercial center with planned high density residential uses; to a segment of pathway at Cascade Crossing, a residential development; to an existing sidewalk and separated pathway at West Hacienda Drive, which access three schools (K-12), a commercial center and the Lake of the Pines residential community.

Rough and Ready Highway Roundabout & Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities on Ridge Road and Adam Avenue Project

Nevada County's Rough and Ready Highway Roundabout & Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities on Ridge Road and Adam Avenue Project is a realignment of two three-legged, angled intersections, the Rough and Ready Highway/Ridge Road intersection and the Rough and Ready Highway/Adam Avenue intersection, to one four-legged intersection. The proposed roundabout would convert the side street stop controls at both existing intersections to an intersection with roundabout. In addition, Class I multi-use path and Class II bike lanes will be established along Ridge Road between the intersection of Rough and Ready Highway and east of Lynnwood Lane, a distance of approximately 1.1 miles, connecting with the bicycle facilities in the City of Grass Valley. Class I multi-use path will also be constructed along Adam Avenue to connect the new bicycle and pedestrian improvements with the Yuba River Charter School for a distance of about 700 feet. Other design considerations include enhancements to expected crossing locations with the addition of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, as well as consideration of access, parking, and traffic circulation for the newly constructed Yuba River Charter School at the Rough and Ready Highway/Adam Avenue intersection.

CRP Projects

Truckee Vanpool Pilot Program

The Town of Truckee's Vanpool Pilot Program is a partnership with the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada. The project will increase the vanpool subsidy available to commuters through the existing RTC Washoe Smart Trips program for up to 27 vanpools into the Town of Truckee for 12 months each. The program would serve up to 189 daily commuters and reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by an estimated 3,262,896 miles over the project's life. The proposed program would encourage increased participation in the existing Smart Trips program by significantly reducing costs for riders or employers and increasing program awareness.