



August 14, 2023

To: Executive Committee

From: Brenda Wilson

Subject: PROTECT Grant

Action Recommended: Approve Submission

BACKGROUND:

On August 14 2023, the Lane Economic Committee will be considering a request for recommendation of a letter of support to the Lane Council of Governments Board of Directors for the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) grant being prepared by the MPO in partnership with Lane County. The PROTECT program was created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to provide funding for resilience planning and construction projects. The IIJA includes \$1.4 billion for the new PROTECT discretionary grant program.

There are four types of competitive grants:

1. Planning Grants—Enable communities to assess vulnerabilities to current and future weather events, natural disasters, and changing conditions and plan transportation improvements and emergency response strategies to address those vulnerabilities.
2. Resilience Improvement Grants—Fund construction activities to improve the ability of existing surface transportation assets, communities, coastal infrastructure, and natural infrastructure to withstand one or more elements of a weather event or natural disaster.

3. Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grants—Strengthen and protect evacuation routes that are essential for providing and supporting evacuations caused by emergency events.

4. At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants—to strengthen, stabilize, harden, elevate, relocate, or otherwise enhance the resilience of highway and non-rail infrastructure at risk from coastal flooding, coastal erosion, wave action, storm surge, or sea level rise.

Lane County and the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (CLMPO) are planning for transportation system resilience planning grant. Following recommendations from Lane County’s Climate Action Plan and CLMPO’s 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Lane County and CLMPO intend to work with regional partners to improve the region’s capacity to respond to and recover from hazards such as a Cascadia Subduction Zone seismic event and climate change. Planned project work includes:

- conducting a vulnerability assessment of the transportation system,
- establishing a regional network of Emergency Transportation Routes, and
- developing a nature-based solutions strategy.

The budget is still under development, but partners are estimating a request of approximately \$5 million for a three (3) year performance period. No match is required. One anticipated product is 30% design for at least one and up to three (3) capital projects in order to be poised for a PROTECT capital project grant(s) in future rounds.

Cascades West Economic Development District’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDDS) has Identified Infrastructure Resilience as a priority. The work encompassed in the grant request takes a systematic approach to planning for and design of a resilient surface transportation network. While the MPO is required to be the applicant based on the grant’s eligibility criteria, the proposal has been crafted with Lane County staff from several departments and will be a joint effort given the shared need, geography, and opportunity to leverage critical, high-quality work.

Suggested Motion: Direct LCOG to submit PROTECT grant application.

Attachments: A: Letter of Support