



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 16.

Agenda Date: 4/16/2015

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Department of Planning and Community Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John M. Dugan, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 2 and District 10

SUBJECT:

Northeast Corridor Enhancement Grant Program

SUMMARY:

An Ordinance for the Northeast Corridor Enhancement Grant program approved in the FY 2015 General Fund Budget, authorizing City staff to execute contracts administered as part of the program.

BACKGROUND:

On June 6, 2014, City Council passed an Ordinance adopting a Revitalization Plan for the Northeast Corridor (NEC). In order to secure a dedicated source of revenue to implement the strategies identified in the NEC Revitalization Plan, City Council passed an Ordinance creating Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Thirty-Three (also known as "NEC TIRZ") on December 4, 2014.

As the NEC TIRZ generates revenue, it will provide the primary source of funding for NEC revitalization projects. However, a gap in funding exists between the adoption of the NEC TIRZ and receipt of its first revenue. Interim funds were set aside in the FY 2015 General Fund Budget to bridge the funding gap and support the projects identified in the NEC Revitalization Plan for FY 2015. The NEC Enhancement Matching Grant Program is one such project. The NEC Enhancement Matching Grant Program is critical to the achievement of the following NEC Revitalization Plan Goals: #2 Improve Corridor Design, #3 Increase Corridor Marketability, and #4 Business Development.

ISSUE:

An Ordinance for the Northeast Corridor Enhancement Grant program approved in the FY 2015 General Fund Budget, authorizing City staff to execute contracts administered as part of the program.

The NEC Enhancement Matching Grant Program is a mechanism for assisting commercial property owners and/ or tenants with the cost of making façade, landscape, and signage improvements to their businesses. Cumulative improvements to the commercial streetscape enhance the NEC's overall appearance and function, which, in turn, attracts customer traffic and private investment.

The NEC Enhancement Matching Grant Program will be administered on a competitive, matching reimbursement basis. Maximum award amounts for each category of improvement, façade, landscape, and signage, will be set at \$20,000.00, \$5,000.00, and \$2,000.00, respectively. The total award to a single applicant may not exceed \$27,000.00. Proposed projects will be evaluated based on their proximity to NEC Gateways, compliance with NEC Design Guidelines, consistency with NEC Revitalization Plan goals, and potential for creating visually significant impacts on the streetscape in both the short- and long-term. This program has the capacity to fund three or four large projects or multiple smaller projects. Exact numbers will depend on the number of applications received and the scope of proposed projects.

ALTERNATIVES:

Another alternative to this request to establish and allocate \$100,000.00 to the NEC Enhancement Matching Grant Program would be to allocate the funds for NEC right-of-way enhancements. However, this alternative does not allow the City to maximize its expenditure with matching grantee funds. This alternative also diminishes the capacity to create multiple points of significant visual impact on the NEC streetscape.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) is authorized to execute documents and contracts necessary to administer the \$100,000.00 grant program already approved in the FY2015 General Fund Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends Council approves an Ordinance for the Northeast Corridor Enhancement Grant program approved in the FY 2015 General Fund Budget, authorizing City staff to execute contracts administered as part of the program.