

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: October 23, 2025

PREPARED BY: Michelle Nance, Acting Assistant City Clerk

SUBJECT: RATIFICATION OF LETTER SUPPORTING RIVERSIDE COUNTY APPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL FUNDING THROUGH SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT'S 2025 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT/CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY CALL FOR PROJECTS

RECOMMENDATION:

Ratify the issuance of the letter supporting Riverside County's 17 applications submitted to Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for the Federal Fiscal Years 2026/27 and 2027/28 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program Call for Projects.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), along with several local agencies, submitted 17 regionally significant multimodal project applications to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) under its Federal Fiscal Years 2026/27 and 2027/28 STBG/CMAQ Call for Projects. Collectively, these projects total approximately \$327 million and represent a comprehensive investment in regional mobility, congestion relief, and air quality improvements throughout Riverside County.

On September 25, 2025, the City expressed formal support for the County's applications through a letter issued. The letter emphasizes the balanced and multimodal nature of the proposals, highlighting several key areas of impact:

- **Regional Connectivity:** Expansion of the express lanes network from Corona to Lake Elsinore to provide reliable travel options.
- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Reconstruction and widening of major freeway interchanges and regional arterials to serve growing populations in multiple cities, including Indio, Menifee, and Murrieta.
- **Active Transportation:** Creation of safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle corridors in Coachella Valley and western Riverside County cities.
- **Mobility Optimization:** Deployment of synchronized traffic signals and upgraded traffic management systems in Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert to enhance travel efficiency.
- **Sustainability:** Inclusion of environmentally focused projects such as rail grade separations, solar-covered parking, EV chargers, and zero-emission buses serving an estimated 2,500-square-mile service area.

The Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs, comprised of Mayor Harnik and Mayor Pro Tem Trubee, reviewed and approved the letter in advance of formal ratification by the City Council.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the issuance of this letter.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025-09-25 Letter of Support SCAG STBG