



Agenda Item Summary

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Submitted By

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Reviewed By

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Agenda Item Title

A Resolution Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to Provide Technical Assistance Services for an Economic Development Study of the North Avenue Commercial Corridor and Authorizing its Execution

Overview

The Village of Oak Park, the City of Chicago and The North Avenue District (T-NAD) - an Oak Park and Chicago citizen and business-based community organization, will participate in the creation of a year long economic development study for the North Avenue commercial corridor through CMAP's Local Technical Assistance Program.

Staff Recommendation

Staff supports the Resolution.

Fiscal Impact

CMAP is requesting a local financial contribution of 15% of the project total cost in the range of \$6,000 to \$9,000 to the Local Technical Assistance Fund. This request is only to the Village of Oak Park. This contribution would be expended through the General Fund account 1001 46202 101 530667 approved for a North Avenue plan.

Background

Early in 2017, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) announced their Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program application process for the following year 2018. The program involves providing assistance to communities across the Chicago metropolitan region to undertake planning projects that advance the principles of their GO TO 2040 regional comprehensive plan. The North Avenue District (T-NAD) organization's submitted for this grant. Their application was to support the creation of an economic development plan for the North Avenue business corridor between Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard. T-NAD and the Village had previously been involved with IDOT and CDOT's transportation funding efforts along this corridor (see background on this below) when the CMAP application process was announced. T-NAD was attempting to have CDOT include an economic development component to their transportation planning effort to no avail. In support of the CMAP application, T-NAD representatives approached Alderman Taliaferro with the City of Chicago and Mayor Abu-Taleb with the Village of Oak Park, both of whom wrote letters of support in June 2017. In October 2017, CMAP announced the recipients of the assistance program grant - T-NAD being

one of them. At the end of 2017, Village representatives, T-NAD and others were invited to introductory meetings with CMAP and CDOT regarding their respective projects, both of which will begin in earnest first quarter of this year. Both CMAP and CDOT are coordinating their efforts with each other as well as the Village of Oak Park, T-NAD and the City of Chicago.

CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program is funding from a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), CMAP initiated the Local Technical Assistance program in 2010. It is currently funded by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, HUD, Economic Development Administration, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Attorney General, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Chicago Community Trust. In October 2017, the CMAP board approved 34 new LTA projects to help local governments, nonprofits, and intergovernmental collaborators address issues regarding transportation, land use, and quality of life. CMAP staff recommended proposals that align with GO TO 2040 plan and ongoing work toward ON TO 2050, the region's next comprehensive plan that is scheduled for adoption in October 2018. The agency also selected projects that focus on implementing previous LTA plans, collaborating across multiple jurisdictions, and/or planning in communities with the highest need for assistance.

Background on IDOT and CDOT efforts: In April 2014 discussions regarding the completion of streetscape enhancements from Austin Boulevard to Oak Park Avenue and the creation of a business and development plan began between former Chicago Alderman Graham, Senator Don Harmon, Representative Camille Lilly and Eileen Lynch (Senator Harmon's chief of staff) and representatives of the former North Avenue Zoning and Development Advisory Committee or NAZDAC (now The North Avenue District or T-NAD). Later in June 2014, former Alderman Graham met with Representative Lilly, Ms. Lynch, former Trustee Adam Salzman, and representatives from Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to discuss the North Avenue study. After that meeting CDOT applied to IDOT for a grant to fund the North Avenue study. This was to be a federal pass-through grant under the State Planning and Research (SPR) program. Unfortunately the grant was unable to be used for a true corridor study. The following year, in January 2015, Senator Harmon, Representative Lilly and former Alderman Graham announce an award of an \$225,000 planning grant for North Avenue. Shortly after, CDOT prepared to issue an RFP for the North Avenue study for traffic safety and mobility. Then it was learned that funding for the project was on hold due to the new gubernatorial administration and that the State had frozen this grant money. In February 2016, CDOT announced that the grant is available and now \$200,000 of SPR funds with an additional 20% local match to be provided by CDOT. Other planning initiatives begin with a PACE-funded study of North Avenue from Harlem Avenue west to York Street which focused on transit, pedestrian-friendliness, etc. Later, in June 2016, the Village of Oak Park Board approved a development study to be conducted by Ehlers, Inc. for North Avenue to determine how best to fund revitalization efforts. Mid-year 2016 Senator Harmon, Representative Lilly, former Trustee Salzman and Alderman Taliaferro sent separate letters to Commissioners of CDOT and Chicago's Department of Planning asking for a meeting to discuss expanding the study to include a detailed land use plan which occurred in late February 2017. Unfortunately, the addition of a land use study was not included. Thus the need for incorporation of CMAP's program.

Alternatives

The Village could decide to not fund the initiative and use the budgeted funds for a plan for the Village side of North Avenue. Staff do not recommend this alternative because we believe that a better plan would be accomplished by looking at the entire corridor.

Previous Board Action

N/A.

Citizen Advisory Commission Action

N/A.

Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments

Review of the CMAP plan and consideration for additional North Avenue planning efforts.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

Land use matters are unique to Village government within the corporate limits of Oak Park and therefore, intergovernmental cooperation opportunities generally do not exist. However, in this instance, the Village of Oak Park is working in cooperation with our Regional Planning Organization CMAP and the City of Chicago.

Performance Management (MAP) Alignment

A Governance Priority established for the Development Customer Services Department is Land Use Regulations.