



**August 31, 2023**

**To:** Regional Transportation Planning Committee  
**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer  
**Subject:** Grant Acceptance for the Next Safe Travels Education Program

**Overview**

On June 28, 2023, the Orange County Transportation Authority was awarded \$850,000 for the Next Safe Travels Education Program through the State 2023 Active Transportation Program. To utilize the grant, staff is seeking Board of Directors' approval to accept the award and enter into an agreement with the granting agency.

**Recommendations**

- A. Adopt Resolution No. 2023-048 to accept the Active Transportation Program Grant Award from the California Transportation Commission for \$850,000 for the Next Safe Travels Education Program and to negotiate and execute any grant-required agreements.
- B. Authorize staff to process all necessary amendments to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program to facilitate programming of the project.

**Background**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) was previously awarded \$500,000 in 2019 Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds to carry out the Safe Travels Education Program (STEP) Campaign. Since then, the STEP Campaign has been delivering education and encouragement activities to promote safe walking and bicycling practices to 25 schools serving disadvantaged communities. Based on the success of the program, staff sought out additional funding to continue and expand the reach of the existing program.

On March 16, 2022, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) issued the ATP Cycle 6 call for projects, which made approximately \$1.7 billion available in federal and state funding over fiscal years (FY) 2023-24 through FY 2026-27.

In response, OCTA submitted a project nomination requesting \$850,000 for the Next Safe Travels Education Program (Next STEP) to cover the total project cost. The project was not recommended for funding through the statewide competitive component of the 2023 ATP. However, the project was considered a second time through the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)-administered Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regional component of the 2023 ATP and ultimately was selected for funding.

### ***Discussion***

The SCAG Regional Council approved the Next STEP as part of the 2023 ATP MPO Regional Program at the April 6, 2023, meeting. Subsequently, the CTC adopted SCAG's MPO Regional Program, and the project was approved for \$850,000 in funding at the June 28, 2023, meeting.

Next STEP will build on the success of the 2019 STEP Campaign and will include safety education campaigns and infrastructure safety evaluations at public schools serving disadvantaged communities. OCTA will select ten public schools identified in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Action Plan to participate in the program. The program will provide SRTS activities at these ten schools such as walk-to-school-day, assemblies, SRTS committee development/facilitation, and curriculum. In addition, roadway safety audits will be conducted at all ten schools resulting in the identification of infrastructure improvements and recommendations.

### **Next Steps**

Following the execution of a grant agreement for the Next STEP ATP funds, staff will coordinate with the CTC and the California Department of Transportation for project implementation and delivery. Staff will also follow OCTA's procurement process to award a professional services contract by summer 2024.

### ***Summary***

OCTA was awarded \$850,000 to support the Next STEP Campaign. Board of Directors' approval is requested to accept the award from the CTC and negotiate and execute grant-related agreements and documents as appropriate.

**Attachment**

- A. Resolution No. 2023-048 of the Orange County Transportation Authority,  
Active Transportation Program Grant Authorization

**Prepared by:**



Denise Sifford  
Senior Transportation Funding Analyst  
(714) 560-5489

**Approved by:**



Kia Mortazavi  
Executive Director, Planning  
(714) 560-5741