



## City Council Staff Report

**From: City Manager**

**Report Type: CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Lead Department: Transportation**

**Meeting Date: February 26, 2024**

Report #:2401-2548

### **TITLE**

Approve and Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Funding Agreement with the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to Accept a \$250,000 Grant as part of the 2010 Measure B Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) Countywide Program Cycle Four; CEQA status – Statutorily Exempt.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that Council approve and authorize the City Manager or their designee to enter a funding agreement with the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) on behalf of the City of Palo Alto to Accept \$250,000 as part of the 2010 Measure B Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) Countywide Program Cycle Four.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The VTA manages and allocates funds from Santa Clara County's VRF Program. Through a competitive application process, the City of Palo Alto's Traffic Signal and Intelligent Transportation Systems project (PL-05030) for Quarry Road was selected to receive a grant of \$250,000 toward completion of the project which would include replacement of aging traffic signal equipment to comply with current standards, and to implement signal timing optimization along the Quarry Road corridor.

### **BACKGROUND**

Senate Bill 83 (Hancock), signed into law in 2009, authorized countywide transportation agencies such as the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to implement a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) of up to \$10 on motor vehicles registered within the county to pay for transportation programs and projects.

The City of Palo Alto has a continuous need to maintain, operate, and optimize operations of traffic signals. Quarry Road, between Welch Road and El Camino Real, in particular has aging equipment such as traffic signal cabinets, detection systems and pedestrian push buttons. In

addition, signal timing has not been optimized on this corridor in many years. In recent years, substantial projects to improve the Stanford Medical Center, Stanford Shopping Center, and Quarry Road itself have occurred however the traffic signals at each of the intersections between El Camino Real and Vineyard Road have not been updated as part of these efforts. The signalized intersections along Quarry Road are in need of updates and are currently included with anticipated traffic signal improvements efforts over the next several years. This ITS project is not to be confused with the ongoing work with Stanford on Quarry Road improvements for Transit Center access, as this project does not include the Quarry Road and El Camino Real Intersection.

### **ANALYSIS**

The Quarry Road corridor project was selected as one of the top scoring projects among many applications from various jurisdictions throughout Santa Clara County. The award amount of \$250,000 would cover approximately 85% of the total anticipated project costs.

The improvements included with this funding were anticipated to occur sporadically over the next four years due to cost limitations and other needs throughout the city. The VRF funding allocation will allow a more complete upgrade in a timely manner and allow for anticipated CIP funding to be re-allocated toward other areas of the City.

### **FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT**

Funding from the VRF allocation would be incorporated into the Traffic Signal and Intelligent Transportation Systems project (PL-05030) through the City's FY 2025 Capital Improvement Plan budget process.

The City's capital improvement budget includes projections into the next five fiscal years for ITS and traffic signal related improvements throughout the City including the intersections identified in the project that would be receiving these VRF funds. The VRF funding allocation would allow a more complete upgrade in a timely manner and allow for anticipated CIP funding to be allocated toward other areas of the City.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The VRF funding allocation process is led by the VTA and discussed and approved by the various public meetings including the VTA's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and approved by the Board of Supervisors.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The Quarry Road ITS improvement project would qualify for CEQA statutory exemption under PRC section 21080.25(b)(3) (Transit prioritization project).

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: VRF Funding Agreement

**APPROVED BY:**

Philip Kamhi, Chief Transportation Official