



Memorandum

To: City Council Members

From: Joyce G. Braverman, Director, Planning
Laura Englehart, Director, Economic Development

cc: David E. Weiss, Mayor
Jeri E. Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer

Date: April 7, 2021

Re: Government Advocacy Opportunities

There are several Federal and State funding opportunities that are becoming available now and during the next few years. At the Federal level, the appropriations process is underway and the infrastructure and transportation bill recently announced by President Biden – The American Jobs Act – will be introduced in Congress soon. The State is expected to receive American Rescue Act funds and a State Capital budget will be drafted in 2022. Staff has researched opportunities, solicited and received consultant proposals and devised a strategy in order to take advantage of these opportunities.

Priority Projects

There are a number of large projects for which the City is seeking funding that will help us achieve our city goals. These projects are also ones that we believe can be funded, in part, with upcoming Federal and State funding:

1. Sanitary Sewer Overflow projects, including: Lomond/Lynnfield, Lee/South Park, and Ashby/Van Aken totaling over \$4M.
2. Lee Road Corridor road, signalization, streetscape, and multi-purpose path to reimagine and reconstruct Lee Road totaling over \$10M.
3. Other projects including: Horseshoe Lake Dam Reconstruction, City Hall HVAC and ventilation upgrade; Police/Court HVAC upgrade; Historic RTA station renovation and reuse; and the Forward Together joint facility plan and implementation.

Funding Opportunities

At the Federal level:

1. Appropriations bill – this process is underway with the House offering earmarks for the first time since 2010.
2. The American Jobs Act – the transportation and infrastructure bill will be introduced soon and is expected to be passed in 2021.
3. The American Rescue Plan Stimulus – opportunities are expected via federal agencies but are not yet defined.

At the State level:

1. 2023 Capital budget – the process will start in January 2022.
2. American Rescue Plan Stimulus – the timing is now for the first round of funds; however, programs have not been announced.

To assist the city with lobbying for the funds, proposals were solicited and received:

1. G₂G Consulting - \$5,000/month for either State or Federal work, both for \$7,000/month. Federal lobbying for Ohio entities; also lobbies in Columbus.
2. The CJR Group, Inc. - \$5,000/month for either State or Federal work, both for \$7,500/month. State lobbying; active at the Federal level in the past.
3. LNE Group - \$20,000 for 3 months April- June; and \$20,000 from June 30 until a federal budget is enacted. Proposal focused on federal lobbying.

Strategy / Recommendation

It is recommended to divide the Federal and State advocacy and to proceed with the Federal work now and engage in the State work in 2022 (when the State capital budget process begins). We recommend hiring CJR Group in 2022 to begin State lobbying. We recommend to negotiate fees with G₂G now to represent us for the Federal opportunities. We are engaging G₂G in an initial contract for 4 to 5 months for less than \$24,000. Depending on timing of the Federal infrastructure bill, we suspect we may need to come back to Council for approval to increase the contract amount up to an estimated maximum total amount of \$60,000 (through March 2022, or a full 12 month contract). The funds for the initial contract for federal advocacy work are available in the Economic Development Department's 2021 operating budget. We will request funds for the State lobbying effort as part of the 2022 budget process.