

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL****AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: October 6, 2026**

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Oriana Hart, Public Works Director
Department: Public Works
Subject: Approval of Resolution Authorizing staff to prepare and submit a grant application to the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program

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RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the City Council: (1) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City of Sebastopol to submit an application to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program, Fiscal Year 2027-28, for the Sebastopol Southern Gateway Project, and (2) Authorize the Public Works Director, or designee, to submit the grant application and execute all application-related documents and certifications on behalf of the City.

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:

If the item remains on the Consent Calendar, no presentation is required, and the item will be approved as part of the Consent Calendar. If the item is removed from the Consent Calendar, it will be heard as a regular agenda item and will proceed as follows

- Presentation of Agenda item by the Requestor or Responsible Department
- Questions and Discussion from Councilmembers
- Public Comment Period
- Presentation Received

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Sebastopol is seeking funding through Caltrans' Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program to advance transportation planning following completion of the Reimagining the Core study. The proposed Southern Gateway Transportation Planning Project would extend this work from the Joe Rodota Trail/Fannen Avenue area to Southpoint/Hutchins, building on the preferred Walkable, Two-Way Downtown framework and evaluating connections to the southern gateway. The project would include circulation and design analysis, evaluation of extending the downtown concept southward, a parking study covering both areas, community engagement, and coordination with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority and Caltrans. It would also develop a funding and implementation strategy for identified improvements and outline next steps toward project development.

The grant would fund planning, analysis, community engagement, and project development, not construction. The application deadline is October 9, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Sebastopol recently completed the Reimagining the Core transportation planning effort. The study was funded through a previous Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant and examined opportunities to improve mobility, safety, accessibility, and downtown vitality. The study evaluated multiple transportation and circulation alternatives for downtown Sebastopol through technical analysis and extensive community engagement. The resulting preferred framework is referred to as the Walkable, Two-Way Downtown concept. The preferred concept combines improved pedestrian conditions and streetscape opportunities with a two-way circulation framework. It is intended to improve pedestrian safety and comfort, maintain access and circulation, support bicycle and multimodal connections, and contribute to downtown vitality. The Reimagining the Core study also identified the need for continued coordination, additional technical studies, funding development, and phased implementation of future improvements.

The next phase of work would extend this planning beyond the immediate downtown core and examine the Southern Gateway and its relationship to downtown. The Southern Gateway area is an important connection between downtown, surrounding neighborhoods, regional transportation facilities, and other destinations. Planning for this area provides



an opportunity to evaluate how transportation improvements can work together across the larger network rather than treating downtown and the southern portion of the City as separate systems.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed grant would provide funding for a focused planning effort for the Southern Gateway, generally extending from the Joe Rodota Trail/Fannen Avenue area to Southpoint/Hutchins. The project would build upon the preferred Walkable, Two-Way Downtown framework developed through Reimagining the Core and evaluate how the concept can connect to the transportation network south of downtown. The intent is not to predetermine a specific design for the Southern Gateway. Rather, the planning process would provide the technical analysis and community engagement necessary to evaluate alternatives and identify a practical path forward. This grant would analyze:

- **Southern Gateway Design and Circulation**
Evaluate the transportation network in the Southern Gateway, generally from the Joe Rodota Trail/Fannen Avenue area to Southpoint/Hutchins. The study would examine vehicle circulation, pedestrian and bicycle connections, safety, and opportunities to extend the preferred Walkable, Two-Way Downtown framework into the Southern Gateway.
- **Downtown and Southern Gateway Parking**
Conduct a parking study covering both the downtown and Southern Gateway areas to better understand existing parking supply and demand and how parking interacts with circulation and potential future transportation improvements.
- **Community and Business Engagement**
Develop a community engagement plan to involve residents, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders in evaluating transportation needs and potential improvements. The process would include consideration of a community and business advisory group.
- **Regional and State Transportation Coordination**
Coordinate with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and Caltrans to identify opportunities to incorporate the project into regional and State transportation planning efforts and determine the steps needed to advance future improvements into the project development process.
- **Funding and Implementation Strategy**
Develop a Funding and Implementation Plan that identifies potential funding sources, project phases, and implementation steps for improvements identified through Reimagining the Core and the Southern Gateway planning effort.
- **Future Project Development**
Identify the additional technical studies, design, environmental review, coordination, and other steps needed to move priority transportation improvements from planning into future project development and implementation.

Relationship to Reimagining the Core:

The Southern Gateway project is intended to build upon, but remain distinct from, the completed Reimagining the Core project. Reimagining the Core focused primarily on the downtown transportation network and resulted in the Walkable, Two-Way Downtown framework. The proposed Southern Gateway project would take the next step by examining how that framework connects to the City's transportation network outside the immediate downtown core. The proposed project therefore represents a transition from the City's initial visioning and alternatives analysis toward more detailed project development, regional coordination, funding strategy, and implementation planning. The project would not simply repeat the work already completed through Reimagining the Core. Instead, it would use the information and preferred framework developed through that effort as a foundation for the next phase of transportation planning. Staff will coordinate with Caltrans regarding the relationship between the prior grant-funded work and the proposed application.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

Staff recommends pursuing the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant to advance the next phase of work identified through the Reimagining the Core effort. While Reimagining the Core established a preferred transportation framework for downtown, there is additional planning and project development work needed before the concept can be advanced into a viable Caltrans project. Staff met with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) toward the end of the previous grant cycle to discuss how the City's transportation concepts could be advanced beyond the planning effort. Continued engagement with SCTA will be important to establishing the project within the regional transportation planning process, coordinating with Caltrans, identifying appropriate funding opportunities, and developing a project that can ultimately move into Caltrans' project development process.

There are also several planning gaps that need to be addressed before the City can move forward with a formal Project Initiation Document (PID). For a locally funded project on the State Highway System, the applicable PID would generally be a Project Study Report–Project Development Support (PSR-PDS). The PID process is where the project is more formally defined, including the transportation problem, purpose and need, project scope, alternatives, costs, schedule, and other information needed to establish the project as a viable candidate for future funding. The proposed grant would help the City complete the planning work necessary to get to that point. This includes further developing the Southern Gateway concept, evaluating circulation and parking, conducting additional community and business engagement, coordinating with SCTA and Caltrans, identifying potential project phases and funding sources, and determining the additional technical work needed to advance the project.

The goal of this effort is therefore not to construct the Southern Gateway improvements, or even to make a final determination on a specific design. Rather, the goal is to take the concept developed through Reimagining the Core and develop it sufficiently to determine what the project should be, why it is needed, how it could be implemented, what it may cost, and what steps are necessary to move it into the Caltrans project development process. Staff views this grant as an important bridge between the City's completed transportation planning work and a future Caltrans project. Continued coordination with SCTA and Caltrans, combined with filling the remaining planning and project development gaps, will be critical to positioning the Southern Gateway for future project development and implementation funding.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES/AND OR GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

- Goal 3 – Infrastructure. Maintaining high quality infrastructure, facilities and services includes repairing/replacing outdated city facilities, improving streets, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.

This agenda item represents the City Council General Plan Consistency (if applicable):

- Circulation CIR 1-11: Provide high quality regular maintenance for existing and future transportation facilities including streets, sidewalk, and paths.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the preparation of this staff report, no public comments have been received on this item. Any comments received after distribution of the report will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials. Public comment will also be accepted during the meeting.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date. As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment on this item. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of this item.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The City is seeking grant funding through the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program to fund the proposed Southern Gateway Transportation Planning Project. The grant would fund planning, technical analysis, community engagement, regional coordination, and project development activities. The anticipated grant request is \$250,000 with a required local match of approximately \$32,390, for a total project cost of \$282,390. The local match is anticipated to be provided through eligible City staff time and/or available local transportation funds.

Approval of this item does not commit the City to the project cost. If awarded, staff will return to the City Council as necessary to accept the grant and appropriate the grant funds and required local match. Submission of the grant application does not commit the City to construction of any future transportation improvements or to expenditures beyond the required local match. Any future project development, design, construction, or additional funding commitments would be brought forward for separate consideration and approval.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize staff to submit an application to the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program for the Southern Gateway Transportation Planning Project and authorize the Public Works Director, or designee, to finalize and submit the grant application and execute application-related documents.

CITY COUNCIL OPTION(S):

1. Provide Direction: Provide direction to staff regarding modifications to the proposed project scope and return to Council as appropriate.
2. Decline to Apply: Decline to authorize submission of the grant application.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1 – Resolution

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:	Approval Date: 9/29/26
CEQA Determination (Planning):	Approval Date: NA
Administrative Services (Financial)	Approval Date: 9/29/26
<u>Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:</u>	☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A
Account Code (If applicable)	<u>Funds 100</u>
City Attorney Approval:	Approval Date: 9/29/26
City Manager Approval:	Approval Date: 9/29/26

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
RESOLUTION NO. XXXX-2026

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL AUTHORIZING SUBMITTAL OF A CALTRANS
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE SOUTHERN GATEWAY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to advance transportation planning and project development for the Southern Gateway area following completion of the Reimagining the Core planning effort; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to submit an application to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program for the Southern Gateway Transportation Planning Project; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project would advance planning, technical analysis, community and business engagement, regional and State transportation coordination, funding and implementation planning, and other project development activities necessary to further develop the Southern Gateway concept; and

WHEREAS, the proposed planning effort would build upon the work completed through Reimagining the Core and support the City's efforts to coordinate with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority and Caltrans to advance the project through the transportation planning and project development process; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that submission of the grant application is in the best interest of the City and its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Sebastopol hereby authorizes the submission of an application to the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program for the Southern Gateway Transportation Planning Project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Works Director, or designee, is authorized to finalize and submit the grant application and execute documents necessary to complete the application process.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 6th day of October 2026.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the City of Sebastopol City Council by the following vote:

VOTE:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

APPROVED:

Mayor Jill McLewis

ATTEST: _____

Mary Gourley, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM: _____

Alex Mog, City Attorney