



Monterey County

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: RES 22-119

June 14, 2022

Introduced: 6/2/2022

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: BoS Resolution

a. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Director of Housing and Community Development or designee to apply for, execute related agreements and accept grant funds received from the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program, via Caltrans, after review and approval as to form by County Counsel.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

a. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Director of Housing and Community Development or designee to apply for, execute related agreements and accept grant funds received from the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program, via Caltrans, after review and approval as to form by County Counsel.

SUMMARY

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. State Route 1 ("Highway 1") in Big Sur is a designated [American National Scenic Byway](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/2301) <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/2301>.

FHWA has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that allows states and federally recognized Tribes to apply for \$22 million in grants through FHWA's National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP). The program funds improvements, such as byway facilities, safety improvements, and interpretive information, along roads in the United States that merit recognition at the national level for their outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural recreational and archeological qualities. An eligible project also includes activities to the development and implementation of a scenic byway marketing program and tourist information.

Created in 1991, FHWA administers the NSBP to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 included \$16 million for the NSBP - the first Congressional appropriations for the program since 2012-- and directed FHWA to make new NSBP designations. The recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 provides an additional \$6 million for the NSBP.

In February 2021, [FHWA announced 49 new designations](#) [<https://highways.dot.gov/newsroom/usdot-announces-new-americas-bywaysr-designations>](https://highways.dot.gov/newsroom/usdot-announces-new-americas-bywaysr-designations) to the America's Byways® collection, including 15 All-American Roads and 34 National Scenic Byways in 28 states. This increased the total number of America's Byways® to 184 in 48 states. To date, FHWA has awarded more than \$505 million in NSBP grants.

The NOFO invites states and federally recognized tribes to apply for grants to implement eligible projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways®, state scenic byways, or Indian Tribe scenic byways; and plan, design, and develop a state or Indian Tribe scenic byway program. In calling for applications for discretionary grant funding under the NSBP, the NOFO integrates Biden-Harris Administration priorities, which include safety, equity and accessibility, economic strength, and climate and sustainability.

DISCUSSION:

On April 30, 2019, the Board of Supervisors established the Big Sur Byway Organization (BSBO) by resolution to promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare of County residents by implementing and fulfilling the purpose of the Big Sur Coast Highway Management Plan (BSCHMP) to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of the 75-mile segment of Highway 1 through Big Sur in a manner that preserves, protects, and restores the scenic, natural, and cultural character and qualities of the Highway corridor.

The BSBO consists of 5 Resident Representatives (1 each from Big Sur Highlands; Mid Coast; Big Sur Proper; South Coast; 1 at large), 1 Business Representative (1 from the Big Sur Chamber of Commerce) and 3 Public Agency Representatives (1 each from U.S. Forest Service; California Department of Parks and Recreation; California Department of Transportation). The BSBO has also established various subcommittees to work on a variety of tasks.

Since the BSBO is a newly established organization, BSBO and County staff are looking for opportunity(ies) to complete a comprehensive re-envisioning of the future of the Byway and of the Big Sur Byway Organization in its role of the management of the Byway and publish that information so that the public may become aware of the efforts to protect and promote the byway.

The BSBO has recently engaged the Maree Forbes Gaughan, PhD, of the National Travel Center (NTC) to assist in discovering grant opportunities that would promote the Byway since it is recognized that the Byway needs to be economically sustainable to make sure that it is appropriately managed and its values preserved for future generations. NTC brought the funding opportunity to the attention of the BSBO, staff and other key stakeholders like the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB). As such, staff's intent to submit an application, on behalf of the Byway, for \$65,000 dollars in funding to support an informational campaign that would acquaint more people with the many byways and help educate visitors about how they can help maintain them for everyone to enjoy.

Since the FHWA is looking more favorably on grant applications over \$500,000, five National Scenic Byways in California, including the Big Sur Coast Highway, will be grouping its requests, along with a project that will incorporate all Scenic Byways in California, into one application totaling \$500,000.

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The application is being submitted by Ore-Cal Resource Conservation and Development Council, which has regularly served as the grant conduit for a wide variety of organizations for the past 20 years. Should the Board of Supervisors adopted the draft Resolution, the Housing and Community Development Director, or designee, would be authorized to execute the grant agreements or associated subrecipient agreements.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Big Sur Byways Organization has received multiple reports on the funding opportunity and the County Counsel’s Office will review the future funding agreements substantially as to form.

FINANCING:

The NSBP funding request will total \$65,000. A 20% matching (\$13,000) is required and, at this time, staff is still waiting to hear back from Caltrans with the percentages of match allowable for in-kind, soft dollars and hard dollars. It is highly likely that the match will be provided in-kind from the BSBO’s and County time doing its quarterly meetings and subcommittee work. In-kind contributions would also include the support of MCCVB through its preparation of the BSBO meeting minutes. Additionally, MCCVB may be open to/willing to identify \$6,500 in activity that it is already doing or planning to do for Big Sur and the Coast Highway, for the additional matching dollars. Funding for staff time associated with this grant application is included in the FY21-22 Adopted Budget for HCD.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The NSBP supports the Board’s Economic Development, Health & Human Services, Infrastructure, and Public Safety initiatives by providing a source of funding that preserves, protects, and restores the scenic, natural, and cultural character and qualities of the Highway 1 corridor along the Big Sur Coast.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

Prepared and Approved by: Erik V. Lundquist, Director of Housing and Community Development,

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The following attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board:

Attachment A - Draft Resolution authorizing the Director of Housing and Community Development or designee to apply for, execute related agreements and accept grant funds received from the Federal Highway Administration’s National Scenic Byways Program, via Caltrans, after review and approval as to form by County Counsel

Attachment B - 2022 National Scenic Byways Program Notice of Funding Availability