

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** January 22, 2025

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Through:** Jackie Bryant, City Manager

**Subject:** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of Grant Award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the FY2024 Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the purchase and installation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems.

**From:** Kurt Dietrich, Traffic Engineer

**Department:** Public Works

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**Summary:**

On August 28, 2024, the Congressional Grants Division (CGD) of the HUD Office of Economic Development granted official approval for the City of Reno's application for a \$1,000,000 grant for the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems project. This initiative aims to implement flashing beacon systems at multiple Washoe County Schools across the City.

As part of this initiative, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, Senator Jacky Rosen, and Congressman Mark Amodei have allocated \$1,000,000 for the installation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems. Staff recommends that the Council accept these funds to complete the installation of the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems and authorizes the Mayor to sign the grant agreement.

<b>Consent Review</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?		<b>X</b>
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		<b>X</b>
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?		<b>X</b>
<b>Other Considerations</b>		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?		<b>N/A</b>

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

Public Safety

Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability

Economic and Community Development

**Previous Council Action:**

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

**Background:**

Congress has approved funding for the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Community Project Funding (CPF) through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42). These grants are awarded to communities under the EDI to assist with a variety of projects, including housing, homelessness prevention, workforce training, public facilities, parks, resilience planning, and other essential infrastructure services. In 2024, Congress allocated “grants for the Economic Development Initiative intended for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending” within the Consolidated Appropriations Act. These funds support a diverse range of public projects, including essential infrastructure.

This grant was designated by Senators Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, and Congressman Mark Amodei as part of the FY2024 EDI CPF initiative and is managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD Office of Economic Development, Congressional Grants Division (CGD), has officially awarded the City of Reno \$1,000,000 for the implementation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems. The administration of these CPF awards falls under HUD's oversight, with funding governed by the regulations and spending categories defined in federal legislation and by HUD.

**Discussion:**

The goal of this initiative is to purchase and install solar-powered flashing beacons in multiple Washoe County school zones across the City. There are 70 Washoe County Schools in the City, and currently, there is a backlog of 115 out of 200 school zones in need of flashing beacons. With this grant funding, we can reduce this backlog by nearly 50%.

The school zone locations of greatest need have been identified using a predictive approach method outlined in the Highway Safety Manual (AASHTO HSM) by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. This method evaluates road conditions, historical accident records, and traffic volumes at each location to predict the risk of collisions in each school zone. The school zones that are projected to have the highest incidence of accidents are prioritized for the installation of the flashing beacon systems. These prioritized locations will be

confirmed in partnership and collaboration with Washoe County School District staff to ensure they align with the priorities and timelines in the School District Facility Modernization Plan and Washoe County's Safe Routes to School program.

The flashing beacons that will be purchased with this grant will look like the image in Figure 1.

Figure 1: School Zone Flashing Beacon



**Financial Implications:**

These funds are received outside the normal City budget process and generally are unable to offset other City expenses outside the intended use for this grant. Uses for these funds are restricted and must follow HUD rules and guidance.

**Legal Implications:**

The acceptance of the grant requires the City to accept and comply with all terms and conditions of the grant and further approve and sign a grant agreement.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Council accept the FY2024 Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding Grant Award in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems Installation, and authorize Mayor to sign the forthcoming grant agreement.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move to approve staff recommendations.

**Attachments:**

Award Letter