



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Elizabeth Gibbs, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Nate Smith, Deputy Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Art Vela, Director of Public Works

MEETING DATE: August 25, 2026

SUBJECT: Consider Resolution No. 2026-121, Authorizing the City Manager or Her Designee to Execute the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) Agreement and All Related Grant Documents, for the Sustainable Communities Program-Active Transportation and Safety, Banning Two-Way Cycle Track Safety Project, With the Southern California Association Of Governments (SCAG) on Behalf of the City of Banning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution No. 2026-121

BACKGROUND:

SCAG Connect SoCal 2024 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) - Active Transportation and Safety Grant:

SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) – Active Transportation and Safety grant provides funding to projects that support active transportation modes (e.g., walking, biking, and transit), improve roadway safety, and achieve the mobility goals, planning policies, strategic investments, and implementation strategies of the Connect SoCal 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. In 2024, the SCP – Active Transportation and Safety grant funding round awarded \$8.2 million in the following project categories:

- Community/Areawide Plans: Active transportation-related plans that benefit disadvantaged communities, per the state's Active Transportation Program guidelines.
- Quick-Build Projects: Interim capital improvement projects that require minor construction activity and use durable, low- to medium-cost materials to pilot and iterate through active transportation and roadway safety project designs with community feedback.

Following the adoption of Connect SoCal every four years, SCAG calls for applications through the SCP to provide local technical assistance in support of Connect SoCal implementation. In July of 2024 a call for applications was announced soliciting applications for active transportation related plans and quick-build projects that was due on September 27, 2024. The SCP – Active Transportation and Safety Cycle 7 regional funds awards \$8.2 million in grants with \$900,000 being the maximum awarded for quick-build projects. SCAG, along with local and sub-regional partners, evaluated a total of 29 applications (12 for plans and 17 for quick-build projects) and selected 13 projects for funding.

Engineering Division staff and the former Grants Manager prepared the SCP Quick-Build grant application in house for an innovative pilot study project shown in Attachment 2, "Banning Two Way

Cycle Track Safety project” and submitted it on September 26, 2024. The Deputy Director of Public Works/City Engineer was notified on January 27, 2025 that the City of Banning’s application was competitively scored by a committee and was successful in being awarded the requested grant amount of \$895,000, with no City matching funds required. The SCAG Regional Council approved the 2024 SCP Active Transportation and Safety grant award recommended project list on December 5, 2024. This list of projects recommended for the SCP Grant by the SCAG Regional Council was brought before the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for approval in June of 2025.

Active Transportation Plan:

In 2021, the City of Banning obtained a SCP Active Transportation and Safety grant award to develop the City’s first Active Transportation Plan. This extensive plan was developed over the course of almost two years and was adopted by the City Council on June 25, 2024.

The final Plan includes a practical implementation strategy with preliminary design schematics and concepts, and data that can be used in grant applications for fifteen (15) priority projects, and six (6) safe routes to schools projects. Additionally, existing conditions, a summary of public outreach and grant funding opportunities are summarized in the Plan and Appendix.

One of the more novel and challenging recommended projects is a separated cycle track along San Geronio Ave. that was highlighted and discussed with the Stakeholders Advisory committee throughout the entire project, which included the Banning Unified School District (BUSD), at Open Houses, at Planning Commission, City Council meetings and at public meetings. Much feedback was received from the BUSD, library staff, parents, Banning PD, and residents about the unsafe conditions, due to congested pick up and drop off times, at Nicolet Middle School and Central Elementary School.

Separated Bikeways, also called cycle tracks, are on-street bicycle facilities with a physical separation between the bikeway and vehicle travel lanes, usually with flexible posts and buffer zones. The City’s ATP developed a state-of-the-art two-way cycle track to loop around Nicolet Middle School and run alongside Central Elementary School. Students will be able to safely bike to and from school in a protected area designated for bicyclists with physical separation from cars. This will narrow the existing vehicle travel lane, naturally slowing down traffic speeds which in turn, increases safety and comfort for people walking, bicycling, and even driving. Additional safety improvements include a one-way couplet around the school to reduce traffic speeds, designation of school drop off and pick up lanes, enhanced crosswalks, curb extensions and signage to improve safety for senior citizens, parents, young school children and residents.

The purpose of the ATP was to provide the City of Banning with a comprehensive document outlining the existing inventory of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and travel habits of the community. An analysis of the City’s current infrastructure highlights areas of opportunity to be prioritized for future improvements and recommendations are presented within this plan as fifteen (15) priority projects. The ATP guides the development and implementation of active transportation infrastructure programs and policies for the City. Conducting the demonstration/pilot project aligns with this policy.

Community Outreach during the ATP:

As part of the ATP, the consultant prepared a Community Engagement Plan in order to provide outreach activities that included participation from the public and from key stakeholders to ensure the Plan’s concepts reflect the community’s needs and wishes. The outreach activities engaged local and regional representatives to obtain feedback, provided presentations covering the project background, goals, scope, preliminary and draft concepts, and the final Plan, as the project progressed.

Banning Two Way Cycle Track Safety Project:

The one-way couplet with the cycle track around Nicolet Middle School is a distinctive feature of the adopted ATP. This design involves converting two parallel streets into a one-way couplet. This approach can significantly reduce traffic congestion around the school, enhance safety for students during peak hours, and improve traffic flow. By creating a more organized and predictable traffic pattern, the couplet reduces the likelihood of accidents and makes the area more navigable for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed project will include hiring a consultant for the following tasks:

- Project Management
- Data Collection of existing conditions in a Report;
- Public Participation/Community Outreach and developing a Public Outreach Plan detailing all of the outreach events and methods and preparing a Report on outreach events, numbers, survey results, and concerns;
- A Technical Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee that meets throughout the project;
- Developing project Plans with two design alternatives for one way and two way traffic along San Gorgonio Ave., Plans and Specs for Bidding, and an Implementation Plan
- Collecting Post Installation Data in a Report; and preparing Draft and Final Reports including data evaluations, recommendations, future grant fund opportunities, and final Presentations.

A contractor will be hired to perform the installation. As a quick build project, the work will include roadway striping and installation of plastic delineators. No permanent fixed objects will be constructed or installed as part of the pilot project. These safety improvements will create more opportunities to walk, bike and use transit.

A large part of the project will be Public Participation, whereby a consultant will be hired to perform community outreach before, during and after the demonstration. Surveys will be prepared and tallied to determine the community's reaction, experience and observations to the safety improvements, meetings held monthly with BUSD, Banning PD, EMS, FD and other stakeholders via technical advisory meetings, and a project website and social media posts will solicit comments from the public. Additionally, Town Halls/Open Houses will be held at City Hall, the library and school district (PTA meetings and interviews with students and parents will occur). Pop Ups at each school during drop off and pick up hours will also solicit feedback and provide data. The data of these outreach methods will be analyzed and summarized by the consultant on a monthly basis and shared with the community.

If after installation, the community feedback is against the reconfigured roadway, the pilot study can be removed easily and returned to existing conditions. The duration of the project is expected to be 2 years with the actual demonstration in place for about 6 months. Once the MOU with SCAG is executed, a RFP for a consultant will be developed by Engineering Division staff and SCAG, and solicited in late 2026. SCAG will award the consultant contract and manage the grant management and reimbursement from Caltrans, which is a time savings for City staff.

A demonstration and temporary pilot of the Banning Two Way Cycle Track Safety project is an opportunity to install the one-way couplet around San Gorgonio Ave. using temporary paint for lane markings and installing flexible posts for the separated bike lane and curb extensions, and to obtain community and BUSD feedback. No new ground disturbance or construction of new permanent fixed objects (like curbs or asphalt) is necessary, and all work will occur on the existing roadway between the existing curbs.

JUSTIFICATION:

A formal grant agreement is required between the City of Banning and SCAG in order to perform the tasks associated with this grant award.

FISCAL IMPACT:

SCAG will act as the lead agency in the procurement and payment of the design phase of the project, including the engineering consultant and the public outreach consultant. City staff is obligated to participate in design meetings, plan review, and public outreach assistance. The grant agreement assumes \$275,000 of the total project award to be utilized for this project phase.

The City will be required to procure a contractor for the installation of the project, including the bike lanes, flexible posts, revised roadway signage and striping. The City will be reimbursed up to \$620,000 of grant funds for the construction phase of the project. A future appropriation of funds will be necessary and brought to City Council at the time of the award of the construction contract.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution 2026-121 - MOU for SCAG Quick Build.docx](#)
2. [Resolution 2026-121 Exhibit A - MOU for SCAG Quick Build.pdf](#)
3. [2025.0408 CC Item - Update and Concurrence to Continue with Grant Application Process.pdf](#)