

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**AGENDA DATE:** March 28, 2023  
**PUBLIC HEARING DATE:** Not Applicable

**CONTACT PERSON(S) NAME AND PHONE NUMBER:** Ellen A. Smyth, P.E. (915) 212-6000

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** All

**STRATEGIC GOAL:** No. 7 – Enhance and Sustain El Paso's Infrastructure Network

**SUBGOAL:** 7.3 – Enhance regional comprehensive transportation system.

**SUBJECT:**

That the City Manager or his designee is authorized to sign the documents related to the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program which offers funding in the amount of \$13,487,721.60 and requires a 20% cash match of \$3,371,930.40 for a total amount of \$16,859,652; and that the City Manager or his designee is authorized to sign any agreements or verifications required to submit an application for the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program; and that the City shall provide all matching funds, in the amount of \$3,371,930.40, for said grant.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

Sun Metro seeks letters of support and commitment from the Mayor and City Manager to include in grant application. Sun Metro seeks grant funding for the purchase of forty zero emission micro transit passenger vehicles, twenty electric charging stations, and workforce development. Requested grant funding is in the amount of \$13,487,721.60 with a 20% match of \$3,371,930.40 for a total project cost of \$16,859,652.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

Low or No Emission Grant application was previously approved by City Council 5/10/22.

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

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Funding Source: FTA Low-No Emissions Funding ; Match: Sun Metro Operational Funds

**HAVE ALL AFFECTED DEPARTMENTS BEEN NOTIFIED?  YES  NO**

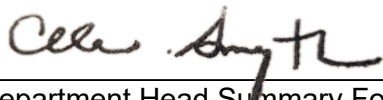
**PRIMARY DEPARTMENT:** Mass Transit (Sun Metro)

**SECONDARY DEPARTMENT:** N/A

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\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**



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(If Department Head Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Federal Transit Administration ("FTA") is currently accepting applications for the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of El Paso, Texas ("City") wishes to submit a grant application for the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program ("Grant"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Grant funding is in the amount of \$13,487,721.60 and requires a 20% cash match of \$3,371,930.40; and

**WHEREAS**, if awarded, the funds received under the Grant would be utilized for improving public transit, funding the acquisition of zero emission vehicles and provide opportunities for workforce development; and

**WHEREAS**, the project will improve City's Transit system, support the City's workforce development, further the City's goal to improve air quality throughout the City and therefore support a high quality of life for the El Paso community.

### **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MASS TRANSIT DEPARTMENT BOARD OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

1. That the City Manager or his designee is authorized to sign the documents related to the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program which offers funding in the amount of \$13,487,721.60 and requires a 20% cash match of \$3,371,930.40 for a total amount of \$16,859,652; and
2. That the City Manager or his designee is authorized to sign any agreements or verifications required to submit an application for the FY2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program; and
3. That the City shall provide all matching funds, in the amount of \$3,371,930.40, for said grant.

*(Signatures begin on following page)*

**APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.


**MASS TRANSIT BOARD:**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Oscar Leeser, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura D. Prine, Secretary

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joyce Garcia  
Assistant City Attorney

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ellen Smyth  
Chief Transit and Field Operations Officer

The **\*\*Please submit on your official letterhead\*\***

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Nuria Fernandez  
Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: City of El Paso Mass Transit Department, Sun Metro Application for FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Low or No Emission/Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program**

Dear Ms. Fernandez:

The City of El Paso Mass Transit Department (Sun Metro) respectfully seeks your support for the FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Low or No Emission/Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program for the amount of \$16,859,652. The requested funding will expand Sun Metro's service and resolve the first and last mile problem by creating an on-demand service with zero emission vehicles.

Our application complements the City of El Paso's mission by providing exceptional service and extending it to the underserved communities who do not have access to public transportation through the new affordable on-demand service. The project service will also support the city's vision by helping maintain a healthier, safer, and beautiful community, through reduced pollution from Sun Metro's zero-emission micro-transit. Additionally, the acquisition of zero emission vehicles will provide Sun Metro an opportunity to re-invest in its workforce by providing training for existing employees to operate and maintain these vehicles. This reinforces the efforts the City of El Paso has made to recognize that its employees are the foundation of its mission and vision for the city.

Our plans to modernize Sun Metro into a green and sustainable public transit system align and support federal green initiatives and with the city of El Paso's Strategic Plan to deliver exceptional services to support a high quality of life and place for our community. Our application specifically supports Goal 6.1 to recruit and retain a skilled and diverse workforce and Goal 8.5 to improve air quality throughout El Paso by reducing emissions in the use of zero emission vehicles. The application award will be matched with \$3,371,930.40 (20% match) for a total project funding of \$16,859,652 amount.

Sun Metro's request for federal support would provide funding to acquire forty zero emission transit passenger vehicles, twenty electric charging stations, and workforce development to train existing employees to operate and maintain the requested vehicles and charging stations. The funding will ultimately help address the first and last mile problem, which is the distance a commuter needs to travel from a transit stop to their destination, or vice versa. Currently, transit stops often only provide transportation to high traffic locations, burdening many commuters to

walk the first leg or last leg of their trip. With federal funding and your support, the project will address this pressing matter.

Improving public transit is essential to meeting the needs of our El Paso community. As the largest public transit provider in West Texas along the U.S.-Mexico border, a substantial proportion of our residents, workers, and visitors rely on Sun Metro. Our success in providing transit accessibility serves as a lifeline for underserved communities. Better public transit would improve our community's livability, air quality, and economic development.

Our municipality has a record of success in performance improvement through diversity, social policies, innovation, process improvements, and implementation of technology. Federal funding support will fulfill our vision for a greener public transit system, offer a better trained workforce, and achieve cleaner air throughout the City.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I am confident that this project will achieve the objectives of the Low or No Emission/Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program to improve air quality throughout the city and empower our community with workforce development, through the implementation of an on-demand service with zero emission vehicles.

Sincerely,

Tomas Gonzalez  
City Manager

cc: Tracey Jerome, Senior Deputy City Manager  
Ellen A. Smyth, Chief Transit and Field Operations Officer

**\*\*Please submit on your official letterhead\*\***

March 2, 2023

Ms. Margaretta Veltri  
Low-No Emission Vehicles Program Manager  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: City of El Paso Mass Transit Department, Sun Metro Application for FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Low or No Emission/Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program**

Dear Ms. Veltri:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the City of El Paso, Sun Metro application for the FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Low or No Emission and Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program.

El Paso is located in a tri-state, binational region that connects Texas, New Mexico, and the Mexican state of Chihuahua. Based on recent U.S. Census data, our region is home to over 2.6 million. Sun Metro's well-researched application envisions a community with reduced greenhouse gas emissions and less energy consumption from its mass transit department, while connecting our residents with on-demand zero emissions micro transit passenger service from their location to fixed route stops that is usually difficult to access. This application will transform our current mobility by addressing the first and last mile problem, which is the distance a commuter needs to travel from a transit stop to their destination, or vice versa. Currently, transit stops often only provide transportation to high traffic locations, burdening many commuters to walk the first leg or last leg of their trip, however, with federal funding and your support the project will address this pressing matter.

The City of El Paso respectfully requests \$16,859,652, a much-needed investment to help modernize El Paso. Federal funding will expand Sun Metro's public transportation services through the purchase and operation of mass transit, specifically, forty zero emission micro transit passenger vehicles, twenty electric charging stations, and workforce development. This application will provide the City of El Paso the federal funding to support the transit focused investments and significantly transform our region's mobility to accommodate our community's largely dependent transit population. The accommodations will entail addressing the first and last mile problem, and remove the commuter's inconvenience of walking the first or last leg of their trip.

A grant award for El Paso would be transformative for our community. It would position Sun Metro as a public transit system that makes a positive impact with every dollar of transportation

funding to support federal goals of greener transit, stronger economic recovery, and healthier livable communities.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to helping the El Paso community develop infrastructure investments that clean our air and help modernize our community's transportation. We thank you for your consideration and hope this letter of support will aid in the application process of our request for support for the Low or No Emission and Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program. I look forward to working with you in the near future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Oscar Leaser  
Mayor of El Paso