MAYOR
REX RICHARDSON

September 9, 2024

Stephanie Wiggins
CEO, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Support for the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project and the Shoreline Drive Gateway: Corridor Realignment and Community Connections Project

Dear Stephanie Wiggins,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I would like to thank the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) for its continued support of the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project and the Shoreline Drive Gateway: Corridor Realignment and Community Connections Project. The City remains a strong proponent of Measure R and Measure M, acknowledging the valuable support these funds have provided for these two projects, which have been instrumental in our progress so far. To ensure the two projects continue to move forward, and as requested by Metro, I am formally requesting the Metro Board of Directors to allocate the $9 million from the Long Beach-East LA Corridor Mobility Investment Plan (LB-ELA CMIP) to continue to fund the design for the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project. Additionally, we are seeking an additional $24 million for the Shoreline Drive Gateway: Corridor Realignment and Community Connections Project to support both design and construction phases.

Metro's $9 million allocation from the LB-ELA CMIP will provide the funds needed to continue the design phase for the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project, which will replace several inadequate mid-20th Century bridges with one bridge designed to modern standard; create new multimodal infrastructure for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and restore connections between communities severed by the existing roadway infrastructures. This funding is critical to continue to move this project forward as the City actively seeks federal funding for the construction phase of the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project. The City has submitted grant applications and is still waiting for award decisions from USDOT for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant and the Large Bridge Investment Program.

Additionally, I am requesting the Metro Board of Directors to allocate $24 million for the Shoreline Drive Gateway: Corridor Realignment and Community Connections Project. Thanks to Metro's previous support for this project, the City leveraged City and Metro funds to successfully secure $30 million dollars in federal grant funding from the Fiscal Year 2022 USDOT Reconnecting Communities Program. This accomplishment has allowed the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project to move one step closer to completion, which will greatly improve the safety, quality, and reliability of mobility within Downtown Long Beach by realigning Shoreline Drive, reconnecting a fragmented street network, and upgrading technology systems with new fiber optic networks and traffic signals. These improvements will advance active transportation use and mobility options for residents with new multi-use paths, protected cycle tracks, sidewalks, and LED lighting throughout the Project area.

Furthermore, by removing an existing highway barrier to open space for residents and creating a 22-acre contiguous space for park development, the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project will create opportunities for recreation and healthy living that are currently limited by the freeway design. The Shoreline Drive Realignment Project will also create a more resilient and sustainable stormwater management system by adding new catch basins and bio-swales that capture excess stormwater runoff for reuse.

The Shoreline Drive Realignment Project is part of a broader set of community investments the City of Long Beach is making in the Downtown neighborhood and will support job creation in areas of persistent poverty. This includes the expansion of the adjacent Cesar Chavez Park, the realization of the Drake-Chavez Park Master Plan, and the replacement of the Shoemaker Bridge on Route 710. The projects benefits are complemented by these other efforts to improve the quality of life and safe travel for Long Beach residents and visitors. The realignment of Shoreline Drive will restore access to 5.5 acres of open space in an underserved neighborhood that lacks large parks and is cut off by the existing Shoreline Drive ramps.

As we continue to move forward, we acknowledge that transformational projects require coordination and partnership between multiple funding partners. With the City's $10 million match commitment and USDOT's $30 million grant, the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project is still in need of an additional $24 million. To ensure the successful completion of all project phases for the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project, the City is seeking an additional $24 million from Metro to finalize the design ($4 million) and construction ($20 million). With Metro's additional support, the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project will transform the quality of life, traffic operations and safety, multimodal infrastructure, and park equity in a historically disadvantage area of Long Beach. Additionally, Metro's support will allow for the Shoreline Drive Realignment Project to be on track to finalize design by the end of 2024 and begin construction in 2025, with completion in 2027 before the City hosts the 2028 Summer Olympics Games.

The City respectfully requests the Board's consideration in allocating $9 million from the LB-ELA CMIP for the design phase of the Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project and Metro's support in allocating an additional $24 million for the design and construction phase of the Shoreline Drive Gateway: Corridor Realignment and Community Connections Project. These projects are vital to enhancing connectivity and infrastructure, and we look forward to strengthening our partnership to complete this transformational project. We will follow up with a formal meeting request to discuss further details. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Patterson, Manager of Strategic Partnerships and Government Affairs, at Sarah.Patterson@longbeach.gov.

Sincerely,

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager, City of Long Beach
April Walker, Assistant City Manager, City of Long Beach
Eric Lopez, Director of Public Works, City of Long Beach
Ray Sosa, Chief Planning Officer, LA Metro
Michael Cano, Executive Officer, LA Metro