



## Board Report

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Agenda Number: 5.

### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 15, 2023

**SUBJECT: NEW SR-710 NORTH MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the list of new eligible SR-710 North Mobility Improvement Projects (MIPs) recommended for Board approval (Attachment A),
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer or their designee to:
  - 1. APPROVE changes in the number, scope, program schedule (allocations and cashflows) and cost estimate for each project within the overall MIP program budget and individual MIP Sponsor allocation;
  - 2. AMEND the MIP Funding Agreements to modify scopes of work consistent with the MIP eligibility requirements; and
  - 3. EXTEND lapse dates for the MIP Funding Agreements when subject to expire to meet environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction time frames.

#### **ISSUE**

At the February 2022 meeting, the Board approved Motion 35 (Attachment B) expanding the definition of mobility improvements eligible for MIP funds, thereby giving recipients of MIP Measure R funds (i.e., San Gabriel Valley MIP Sponsors) the opportunity to submit new or substitute projects for Board approval, and to revise scopes of work in consideration of the eligible uses for Measure R MIP funds clarified by the motion. Board Motion 35 was introduced by Directors Solis, Sandoval, Barger, Bonin, Garcetti, and Butts. Staff reviewed and evaluated 13 new projects (Attachment C) and is seeking Board approval for the 10 projects listed in Attachment A.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Upon completion of the SR-710 Gap Closure Project environmental process and adoption of the Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) as the Preferred Alternative, at its May 2017 meeting, the Board approved Motion 29.1 (Attachment D

<<https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2017-0097/>)%20>) identifying the next steps and guiding the implementation of the local mobility improvement projects to bring immediate relief to the SR-710 corridor cities in the San Gabriel Valley, the Central subregion (City of Los Angeles) and the Los Angeles County unincorporated area of East Los Angeles affected by the SR-710 freeway gap. Motion 29.1 was introduced by Directors Fasana, Barger, Solis, Garcetti, and Najarian.

As a result of this action, more than \$1 billion in Measure R, state and federal funds were allocated to the San Gabriel Valley cities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, and South Pasadena; and to the City and County of Los Angeles for eligible MIPs, starting in FY2020 and subject to the availability of funds.

More than 250 project proposals were submitted by local agencies for consideration, of which 104 were selected based on the eligibility requirements outlined in Motion 29.1. Should the Board approve the new projects set forth in Attachment A, the total number of projects eligible for MIP funds would increase to 114, without exceeding the overall MIP program budget or individual MIP Sponsor allocations.

The 10 new MIPs recommended for Board approval also support Metro's Objectives for Multimodal Highway Investment to:

- (1) Advance the mobility needs of people and goods within LA County by developing projects and programs that support traffic mobility and enhanced safety, economic vitality, equitable impacts, access to opportunity, regional sustainability, and resiliency for affected local communities and the region.
- (2) Work with local communities to reduce disparities caused by existing highway system and develop holistic, positive approaches to maintain and improve the integrity and quality of life.
- (3) Ensure local and regional investment in LA County's highway system is considered within the context of a countywide multimodal, integrated planning vision that reflects a holistic approach to meeting the needs of local communities, reducing disparities, creating a safer and well-maintained transportation system, and fostering greater regional mobility and access to opportunity.

Executing funding agreements with MIP Sponsors or issuing contracts/task orders for each MIP is the first step in the project development process. Utilizing Metro's Complete Streets and Highways On-Call Services Contract remains an option for the cities, if requested, to assist in expediting the completion of the environmental and design phases for each MIP.

## **DISCUSSION**

As described in Motion 35, the following three (3) categories of improvements are consistent with the purpose and need of the SR-710 North Project, support the Board's adoption of the SR-710 North Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) Alternative, and are therefore eligible for MIP Measure R funds: (1) Bus Infrastructure Improvements, (2) Bikeway Improvements and (3) Pedestrian Improvements.

The cities of Monterey Park and Pasadena have proposed new and substitute (replacement)

projects, respectively. Both cities are requesting the reallocation of previously approved MIP funds to implement the new projects, therefore no additional funding is needed.

The current MIP programmed funds reported in Attachment E are based on the availability of funds; Metro's overall funding strategy and programming capacity; and previous input and requests made by MIP Sponsors in response to Motion 35 and local project priorities and concerns.

The new projects submitted by the cities of Monterey Park and Pasadena were evaluated and recommended for approval based on initial project information (scope, descriptions, justifications, and preliminary cost estimates) and anticipated benefits that were provided. Staff will further evaluate and validate the scope, schedule, justification, benefits, and cost estimate for each project before executing funding agreements to ensure compliance with the intent and direction of the Board.

As shown in Attachment C, the Project Type categories previously established for submittals were used to group the new projects. In addition, a new Project Type 9 (Multimodal Mobility Improvements) category was established to group new submittals that represent more than one project type.

Brief descriptions of the new projects recommended for Board approval are referenced below and described further in Attachment F. Also, a recent proposal from the City of Monterey Park to rescope and refine conceptual plans for a previously approved MIP, to address community concerns and to reallocate the savings to a new project, is discussed below and described in Attachment F for Board approval.

### MONTEREY PARK

The Board approved a total of \$100,300,000 in Measure R MIP funds for six projects in Monterey Park, of which \$60,000,000 was allocated to the Three Parking Structures on Garvey Project (Parking Structure MIP). Approval of the Parking Structure MIP was contingent upon converting the on-street parking lane to a mixed-flow traffic lane on Garvey Avenue (from Atlantic Boulevard to New Avenue) to improve mobility. To address concerns about losing on-street parking, the City is proposing to revise the Parking Structure MIP scope by providing a multimodal mobility hub in conjunction with at least one off-site parking structure to improve mobility.

Also, in response to community requests for more multimodal options, the City proposes to allocate a portion of the Parking Structure MIP funds (\$20,840,000) to a new project - Monterey Pass Road Improvements (Floral Drive to the Garvey Avenue/Fremont Avenue Intersection) - to relieve congestion and improve mobility on a route that is reportedly used to bypass traffic bottlenecks generated by the I-10/710 interchange. As described in Attachment F, the new project will provide bus transit improvements, pedestrian enhancements, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) infrastructure upgrades to support multimodal mobility.

### PASADENA

The Board approved a total of \$241,850,000 in Measure R MIP funds for five projects in Pasadena, of which \$230,500,000 was allocated to the Gold Line Grade Separation at California Boulevard

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Project (Grade Separation Project). After conferring with Metro and reassessing the Grade Separation Project, the City concluded the costs, impacts and changes to existing and proposed land uses adjacent to the rail crossing outweigh the benefits of grade separating the light rail tracks. In addition, the change in ownership of the transportation infrastructure resulting from the relinquishment of the SR-710 northern stub to the City (from Union Street to Columbia Street) has given cause for the City to update its previous project list submittal and develop near-term projects for the stub area, based on community feedback, to meet the north-south travel demand, enhance safety, and provide complete streets concepts, traffic signal upgrades, and transit systems expansions that will provide equitable multimodal mobility options, as described in Attachment F.

Therefore, instead of advancing the Grade Separation Project, the City proposed a dozen replacement projects to Metro for consideration. Also, the City would like to reallocate the funding approved and programmed for the Grade Separation Project (\$230,500,000) to the replacement projects that are approved by the Board to improve mobility, provide multimodal options, and enhance safety.

Based on staff's recommendation (described in Attachment A), there will be a balance of \$49,100,000 in Measure R MIP funds available for the City from the previously approved Grade Separation Project allocation. It is anticipated, upon further development of the projects (or project elements) not recommended by staff, that the City will return to the Board with additional project information or new replacement projects for consideration until all funds have been allocated.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Approval of staff's recommendations has no known adverse impact on the safety of Metro's patrons and employees or users of the facility. Caltrans and local safety standards will be adhered to during the project development and implementation of the proposed new projects.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The amount of \$9,440,934 is included in the FY23 adopted budget under Complete Streets & Highways Cost Centers 4730 and 0442, under SR-710 North Corridor Mobility Improvement Project (461315), Professional Services (50316) and Subsidies (54001) Accounts.

Staff will reassess the approved FY23 budget and make the necessary adjustments for new projects requiring funds beyond the current fiscal year budget. Staff will also refine future cashflow needs based on the recommendations and programming requests and the agency's overall funding strategy.

Since this is a multi-year program of mobility improvements, the Chief Planning Officer will continue to be responsible budgeting any remaining costs in future fiscal years.

### **Impact to Budget**

The source of funds for the new projects will be Measure R Highway Capital (20%) Funds. This fund source is not eligible for Bus and Rail Operations or Capital Expenditures.

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## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

The Board-approved Highway Subsidy grants for the SR-710 North MIPs are aligned with the Measure R Board-approved guidelines; and consistent with Board Motions 29.1 and 35, Metro's Strategic Plan Goal, and Metro's Objectives for Multimodal Highway Investments. This subsidy program affords local agencies the opportunity to develop and implement transportation projects that improve mobility, address local concerns, and provide better and safer access to key destinations (jobs, employment centers, markets, commercial centers, recreational centers, healthcare facilities, etc.) that may lead to more equitable outcomes.

All the MIPs are being administered by local agencies, except for one city that elected to utilize Metro's Complete Streets & Highways On-Call Services Contract to expedite the project development process. Over the years, various community outreach efforts have been conducted by MIP Sponsors to inform the project development process and address transportation disparities in or near equity-focus and disadvantaged communities. Each MIP Sponsor is responsible for engaging the public, key stakeholders, and community-based organizations, as necessary, depending on the proposed improvements and potential impacts.

Specific community engagement and outreach efforts conducted by the City for the new Monterey Park project (Monterey Park Pass Road Improvements) and other projects included convening two public/city council meetings (on March 17, 2021 and January 13, 2022); posting project information on the City's website via Google Translation; and disseminating multilingual (English, Chinese and Spanish) project information (mailers/postcards, notices) to residents, adjacent business owner associations, the Chamber of Commerce, and senior centers. During the first meeting, the City received comments from 23 speakers in attendance and approximately 150 written comments (mail). The second meeting was held to address the community feedback obtained during the first meeting held in March 2021.

Specific community engagement and outreach efforts conducted by the City for the Pasadena replacement projects included sending direct mailings to over 1000 residents within the City's disadvantaged census tract area; and convening a public open house meeting on August 9, 2022 (with bilingual staff in attendance to answer questions in Spanish and English) that was attended by approximately 100 people, followed by another public meeting held on September 2, 2022, and subsequent city council and committee meetings. In addition, eight targeted outreach meetings were held with key stakeholders and sensitive receptors along the 710 corridor (four schools, homeowner associations and Huntington Hospital) to address local specialized concerns.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The recommendation supports Metro's Strategic Plan Goals to:

- (1) Provide high quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling.
- (2) Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity.
- (3) Transform LA County through regional collaboration.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board may choose not to accept staff's recommendations. This alternative is not recommended as this would not be consistent with the Board's directive for staff to work directly with the cities in identifying eligible projects and could possibly delay bringing relief to affected local jurisdictions.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Board approval, the MIP Sponsors will be notified of the Board's decision. Staff will work with the MIP Sponsors to help refine the project scopes of work and cost estimates that are needed to execute the Funding Agreements for the newly approved MIPs. In addition, staff will continue to assist in the delivery of all the MIPs and provide biannual reports to the Board.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - NEW Mobility Improvement Projects Recommended

Attachment B - Motion 35: Clarifying Eligible Uses for SR-710 North MIPs (File ID# 2022-0115)

Attachment C - NEW Project Sponsor Submittals

Attachment D - Motion 29.1: SR-710 North (Related to Item 29: File ID# 2017-0097)

Attachment E - MIP Programmed Funds

Attachment F - New & Rescoped MIP Descriptions by Sponsor

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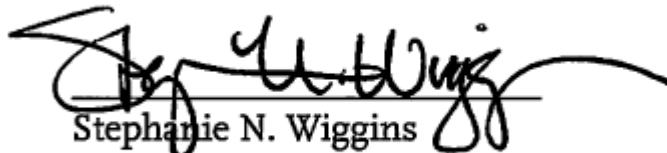
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