



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 33.

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 18, 2021

SUBJECT: WEST SANTA ANA BRANCH - MASTER COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

ACTION: APPROVAL OF MASTER COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

- A. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his designee to negotiate and execute Master Cooperative Agreements (MCAs) with WSAB Project Corridor Cities of Bell, Downey and Paramount and
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his designee to negotiate and execute remaining MCAs with other corridor cities.

ISSUE

This is a milestone update to the Board on the status and direction of the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor (WSAB) Project. The execution of the MCA is one of the key steps in the accelerated delivery of the project, consistent with the Twenty-Eight by '28 Initiative, and preview of a forthcoming coordination with the Cities.

The execution of MCA by the Board will facilitate the development and implementation of the WSAB Project in the respective City's portion. Completion of the Project will require extensive design reviews, coordination, and approval as well as permitting for construction through each of the respective jurisdictions. The process begins with the Cities and their consultants providing comments on design documents and attending meetings with Metro staff as part of the ongoing developmental phase of the project. Once the project is approved for construction, the Cities will continue to support the project by providing inspectors in the field to monitor and provide final acceptance of the contractor's work through their respective jurisdictions.

Execution of the MCA acknowledges commitment for Metro and the Cities to continue to work together to progress and complete the WSAB Project.

BACKGROUND

The West Santa Ana Branch Corridor Transit Project is a 19-mile Light Rail Transit (LRT) serving the

cities and communities of downtown Los Angeles, unincorporated Florence-Graham community of LA County, Vernon, Huntington Park, Bell, Cudahy, South Gate, Downey, Paramount, Bellflower, Cerritos and Artesia. It would traverse a highly populated area, with high numbers of low-income and heavily transit-dependent residents. In addition, the project is expected to provide a direct connection to the Metro Green Line, Metro Blue Line and the LA County regional transit network.

The WSAB Project is identified as a Pillar Project by the Metro Board.

DISCUSSION

The WSAB City Managers Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed within the Gateway Cities County of Government (COG) to serve as an effective forum for generating consensus on a range of technical, financial, and policy challenges confronting the corridor cities. The members include city managers or key staff for the Cities and LA County staff. The ten Gateway Cities include: Huntington Park, Vernon, Cudahy, Bell, South Gateway, Downey, Paramount, Bellflower, Cerritos, and Artesia. The monthly meetings are also attended by key Metro Board deputies from Supervisor Hahn, Supervisor Solis, and Mayor Garcia offices as well as Eco-Rapid and the Gateway Cities COG staff.

Metro has worked with the TAC members to establish a collaborative approach to advance the Project including the terms and provisions of the MCA. By signing the MCA both Metro and the Cities acknowledge the WSAB Project as a high priority public works project to provide Metro with expedited review and approval procedures in connection with design, design reviews, permitting, property acquisition, and other authority to be exercised by the Cities. The MCA defines procedures, identify roles and responsibilities, and allocate costs between Metro and the Cities for the Cities' portion of the WSAB Project as it relates to design, construction, operation and maintenance of the line. Metro held various working sessions at the TAC to discuss terms of the MCA and provide responses to Cities' comments. These were followed by various individual sessions with the Cities to further address specific comments. Metro staff also presented to the respective Cities' Councils before the Council approving the MCA.

The MCA also establishes the following:

- Reimbursement of costs to the Cities for project-related work
- Duration of the agreement
- Cities and Metro representatives,
- Basis and agreement on scope through Cities' jurisdiction,
- Process and agreement on design review procedures and time periods for review and approval,
- Basis of Design for Enabling Works and P3 LRT, and
- Maintenance responsibilities of elements within Cities' jurisdiction

With the approval of the MCA, all costs incurred by Cities' staff and their consultants for design review and permit coordination among others would be reimbursed by Metro through an annual work plan authorization process specified in the MCA. In doing so cities agree to waive all permit fees.

The MCA does not relieve Metro or its contractor(s) from the requirements of submitting all plans, documents, and reports for review and comment before obtaining the Cities' approval prior to the

start of any construction activity within the public right-of-way.

As the MCAs are approved by remaining individual City Councils, the CEO or his designee will then approve any necessary revisions and/or updates and execute the MCAs. This report also authorizes the CEO or his designee to approve an initial budget for reimbursement to cities until the annual work plan for fiscal year 2022 is established.

Equity Platform Consistency

The Project is consistent with the Equity Platform and will provide new benefits of enhanced mobility and regional access to minority and low-income populations within the Project Area. Approximately 60% of the corridor has been identified as having environmental justice communities. Minority residents are 66% of the total Project area population and 25% of Project area residents live below poverty, which is higher than the LA County average of 17%. Most of the transit service in the Project area is local with limited express buses operating on the congested roadway network. These communities have been historically underserved in terms of transit investments.

The Project will also significantly reduce travel times and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in the Project area, which could lead to air quality, safety, and livability improvements for the Project area's most vulnerable communities. All the aforementioned Project benefits will collectively expand economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for residents of the Project area by greatly improving access to opportunity. Staff will ensure that Metro's Equity Platform will guide the process for evaluating the project in the Draft EIS/EIR.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This Project is funded on a fiscal year basis under Project number 460201 West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor, cost center 8510, under various accounts including Third Party Approvals is included in the FY21 Adopted Budget. This is a multi-year project requiring expenditure authorizations in fiscal year increments until a Board Authorized Life of Project Budget is adopted. It is the responsibility of the Cost Center Manager, Project Manager and Chief Program Management Officer to budget for this project in the future fiscal years and within the cumulative budget limit for the affected fiscal year.

Impact to Budget

Sources of funds for the recommended actions are part of the project budget i.e., Measure R, Measure M and State Grants. There is no impact to Operations eligible funding. No other funds were considered.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The Project supports Strategic Plan Goal 1: Provide high quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling. WSAB is anticipated to provide an one-seat ride from the proposed Pioneer Station in the southern terminus to either WSAB northern terminus. The WSAB corridor traverses some of LA County's most densely developed, historically underserved and environmental justice communities. Many of the Project area communities are characterized by heavily transit-dependent populations who currently lack access to a reliable transit network. The Project area is served by buses that operate primarily along a heavily congested freeway and arterial network with

limited connections to the Metro Rail system. A high-capacity and reliable transit investment between the Metro Rail system and the Gateway Cities would provide mobility and travel choices within the WSAB corridor and reduce dependence on auto travel. The Project aims to increase mobility, reduce travel times on local and regional transportation networks and accommodate future population and employment growth in southeastern LA County.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Metro Board could decide not to approve the requested action. Staff does not recommend this alternative because non-approval could delay design advancement of key high-risk elements for Enabling Works which could delay the delivery of this Project.

NEXT STEPS

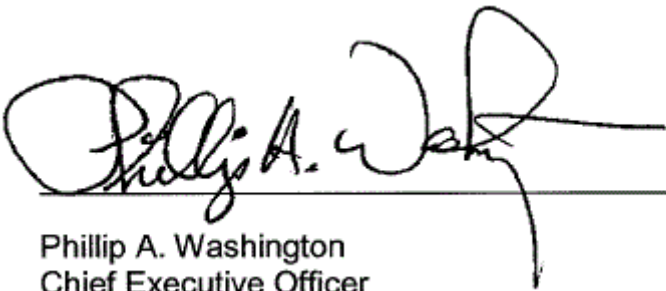
Upon Metro Board approval, staff will work with each individual city to develop an annual work plan (establishing scope and Cities' review and support time) and then create a work order for payment. This report also authorizes the CEO or his designee to approve an initial budget for reimbursement to cities until the annual work plan for fiscal year 2022 is established.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: City of Bell Council approved MCA
- Attachment B: City of Downey Council approved MCA
- Attachment C: City of Paramount Council approved MCA

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