



Board Report

File #: 2024-0278, File Type: Program

Agenda Number: 7.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE JULY 17, 2024

SUBJECT: NEW SR-710 NORTH MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the list of new eligible SR-710 North Mobility Improvement Projects (MIP) recommended for Board approval in Attachment A;
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer or their designee to:
 1. REALLOCATE funds from MIPs withdrawn by Alhambra and Los Angeles (LA City) shown in Attachment B (Proposed Updated MIP List) to fund new eligible projects recommended for Board approval in Attachment A;
 2. TRANSFER the project sponsorship and implementation of the Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center Mobility Improvements (Valley Boulevard Multimodal Improvements) MIP to LA City; and
 3. ALLOCATE and program local funds to the new LA City MIP recommended for Board approval in Attachment A.

ISSUE

At the February 2022 meeting, the Board approved Motion 35 by Directors Solis, Sandoval, Barger, Bonin, Garcetti, and Butts, expanding the definition of mobility improvements eligible for MIP funds (Attachment C). The Motion allows recipients of MIP Measure R funds the opportunity to submit new or substitute projects for Board approval and to revise scopes of work in consideration of eligible uses for Measure R MIP funds as clarified by the motion.

MIP sponsors submitted three new projects for funding, two in LA City and one in Alhambra, to replace existing MIPs that the cities propose to modify or withdraw. Staff evaluated the three new projects and seek Board approval for two projects deemed eligible in Alhambra and LA City, as shown 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 by Directors Fasana, Barger, Solis, Garcetti, and Najarian 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 (Attachment D).

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 253 project proposals were submitted by local agencies for consideration, of which 106 were originally selected based on the eligibility requirements outlined in Motion 29.1. To date, \$4.8 million has been expended and no projects have been completed.

DISCUSSION

As described in Motion 35, the following three 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.

LA City and Alhambra have proposed withdrawing or modifying previously approved MIPs and reallocating those MIP funds to implement new projects. The new projects submitted by both cities were evaluated by staff, and two projects are recommended for approval based on initial project information (scope, descriptions, justifications, and preliminary cost estimates) and anticipated benefits. One project in LA City was found ineligible for MIP funds because it has already been constructed and is therefore not recommended for funding. The project modifications, withdrawals, and additions in Alhambra and LA City are referenced below, and the two new projects recommended for Board approval are described in greater detail in Attachment E.

ALHAMBRA

The Board approved a total of \$240,900,000 in Measure R MIP funds for 13 projects in Alhambra, of which \$24,100,000 was allocated to Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Projects and \$216,800,000 was allocated to Local Street/Road and Freeway Local Interchange Mobility and Operational Improvements Projects to address concerns about capacity, traffic flow, and congestion.

In response to community requests for more multimodal options, the City of Alhambra proposes to withdraw the Fremont Avenue Traffic Improvements (MIP ID# MR1.1.2.01) from Valley Boulevard to Mission Road and reallocate \$14,400,000 in previously approved MIP funds to a new project - Alhambra's Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements Project - to enhance safety for pedestrians and

bicyclists and provide better access and connectivity to key destinations (refer to Attachment F for the Alhambra MIP Request Letter). Alhambra's Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements Project is included in one of the City's eight pedestrian priority zones, which include important community destinations such as schools, retail, parks, and public facilities. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements include a mix of high-visibility crosswalks, curb extensions, protective landscaping, flashing beacons, and traffic circles. Class IV separated bikeways - on-street bicycle facilities that provide a physical separation between the bikeway and motor vehicles in travel lanes - are being proposed for the busiest corridors. The physical separation of Class IV bikeways can include vertical elements such as bollards, planters, and concrete curbs.

LA CITY

The Board approved a total of \$114,350,000 in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds for 11 projects in LA City, of which \$70,988,000 was allocated to transit improvement projects. The LA City MIPs provide multimodal mobility options, pedestrian access enhancements, bicycle facilities, transit infrastructure improvements, and safety improvements.

LA City has proposed to withdraw three previously approved MIPs and reallocate these MIP funds to two new projects. Staff recommends reallocating \$2,000,000 to the 6th Street Park, Arts, River, & Connectivity Improvements (PARC) and Transit Improvements Project, in accordance with Motion 29.1 and the 2023 Los Angeles City Council actions reported below. LA City is requesting local funds in lieu of the federal MIP funds because the project is entirely locally funded and introducing federal funds would introduce additional requirements, thereby putting the construction schedule at risk (refer to Attachment G for the LA City MIP Request Letter and Council Motion).

LA City has also proposed reallocating \$2,500,000 in MIP funding for the Colorado Boulevard Complete Streets Project in Eagle Rock. Staff found this project ineligible for MIP funds because it has already been constructed. Staff recommends that these MIP funds (\$2,500,000) be reallocated to another LA City MIP sometime in the future.

The following actions were approved as part of the December 1, 2023, LA City Council Motion:

- Deobligate \$2,000,000 allocated to LA.8.3.2.07 - Soto Streets & Marengo Street Traffic Signal Enhancements and cancel the project.
- Deobligate \$10,000,000 allocated to LA8.3.1.03 - ITS & Technology - Traffic Signal Upgrades in El Sereno and cancel the project.
- Deobligate \$9,147,854 allocated to LA8.1.1.07 Soto Widening - Multnomah Street to Mission Road.
- Allocate \$6,500,000 to LA8.5.2.03 - Northeast Los Angeles Active Transportation & Transit Connectivity Enhancements.
- Allocate \$8,500,000 to LA8.4.2.05 - Eastern Avenue Multi-modal Transportation Improvements.
- Allocate \$1,647,854 to LA8.4.2.07 - Valley Boulevard Multi-modal Transportation Improvements.
- Allocate \$2,500,000 to a new project entitled Complete Streets Project for Colorado Boulevard in Eagle Rock (Call for Project # F9123).
- Allocate \$2,000,000 to a new project entitled 6th Street PARC Street and Transit Improvements

(C.F. 23-0074).

LA County & LA City MIP Collaboration

LA County and LA City have been coordinating efforts to improve transit service and multimodal accessibility to the LAC-USC Medical Center and the broader USC Health Sciences Campus for the community. The Scope for the Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center Mobility Improvements (LA County Valley MIP) was modified to include funding (\$2,696,000) for the environmental phase of the proposed LA General Medical Center Infill Station Project, leaving the balance of funds (\$27,304,000 or \$30,000,000-\$2,696,000) for the multimodal transportation improvements.

As agreed to by both agencies, LA County would like to transfer the LA County MIP to LA City for project management, development, and construction. The Scope for the LA County MIP Segment 1 improvements includes constructing protected bicycle facilities and peak hour bus lanes on Mission Road between Cesar Chavez Avenue and Valley Boulevard to connect the surrounding neighborhoods that are currently separated by railroad tracks along Valley Boulevard to the campus.

Given LA City and LA County MIP fund sources include CMAQ and STBG, the Project Sponsors must adhere to the new Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) competitive federal funding process that is being administered by the county transportation commissions. The program guidelines adopted by SCAG to comply with a federal corrective action require that any new project or new project phase funded with CMAQ and/or STBG funds are subject to a competitive project selection process. Both agencies will have to consider this new requirement when developing the project schedule for this joint effort.

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. Both new projects recommended for MIP funding in Attachment A will provide safety improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists in Alhambra and LA City. Caltrans and local safety standards will be adhered to during the project development and implementation of the proposed new projects.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The updated MIP list reflecting the new and withdrawn projects for Board approval is reported in Attachment E. The MIP programmed funds will include fund sources and programmed years that are based on availability, Metro's overall funding strategy and programming capacity, project sponsor cashflow needs, input and requests made by MIP sponsors in response to Motion 35, local project priorities and concerns, and other factors; and the new SCAG competitive federal funding process, when applicable.

Should the Board approve the two new eligible projects set forth in Attachment A (and withdraw or replace the projects requested by both cities), the total number of projects eligible for MIP funds remains at 87, without exceeding the overall MIP program budget or individual MIP sponsor allocations.

Impact to Budget

The amount of \$4,150,000 is included in the FY25 adopted budget under Complete Streets & Highways Cost Centers 4730 and 0442, under SR-710 North Corridor Mobility Improvements (461315), Professional Services (502316), and Subsidies (54001) accounts.

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

Per prior Board Action, the new LA City project will be funded from STBG, CMAQ and RIP funds, subject to the availability and all requirements of those funds. No other funds were considered.

The source of funds for the new Alhambra project will be Measure R Highway Capital (20%) Funds. This fund source is not eligible for bus and rail operations or capital expenditures.

EQUITY PLATFORM

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, healthcare facilities, etc.) that may lead to more equitable outcomes.

All the MIPs are administered by local agencies, except for the City of San Gabriel, which 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 disadvantaged and Equity Focus Communities (EFC). 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.

ALHAMBRA---Specific community engagement and outreach efforts conducted for the Alhambra Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements Project included outreach meetings, community walks, walk and bike audits, popup events, community surveys, and the establishment of a project website featuring a public input map focused on user experiences and routes. Project information was provided in multiple languages (i.e., English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese).

Alhambra's bicycle and pedestrian recommendations were developed pursuant to data collection and feedback from the community. In October 2022, the City released a public input map, garnering over 300 comments concerning some of the busiest corridors (i.e., Fremont Avenue, Valley Boulevard, Main Street, and Mission Road).

Alhambra established pedestrian priority zones near EFCs throughout the city to facilitate safe active transportation. The new Alhambra project will be included in one of the City's pedestrian priority zones.

LA CITY--- The proposed PARC 6th Street viaduct will provide a transportation link between Boyle Heights and Downtown Los Angeles and provide better access to public transportation, bicycle

corridors, and other modes for residents of EFCs in Boyle Heights, El Sereno, and City Terrace.

Specific community engagement and outreach efforts conducted by LA City for the PARC and Transit Improvements Project included multiple public meetings and design workshops/focus meetings with youth and community leaders, both in-person and online, to provide updates and solicit feedback regarding project design, programming, and scope. Engagement was conducted in English and Spanish. Over 1000 survey responses were received after the first two community meetings.

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.

The recommendation also supports 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 systems 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.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to accept staff's recommendations. This alternative is not recommended as it would be inconsistent with the Board's directive for staff to work directly with the cities in identifying eligible projects per Motion 29.1 and could delay bringing needed multimodal transportation improvements 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 refine the project scopes of work, schedules, justifications, benefits, and cost estimates to ensure compliance with the intent and direction of the Board and to execute funding agreements for the newly approved MIPs. The cities may use Metro's Complete Streets and Highways On-Call Services Contract to issue contracts/task orders, if requested, to assist in expediting the completion of the environmental and design phases for each MIP.

In addition, staff will continue to assist in the delivery of all MIPs and provide biannual reports to the Board.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Recommended MIPs

Attachment B - Proposed Updated MIP List

Attachment C - Motion 35

Attachment D - Motion 29.1

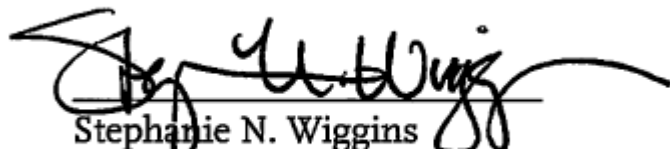
Attachment E - New MIP Descriptions by Sponsor

Attachment F - Alhambra MIP Request Letter

Attachment G - LA City MIP Request Letter and City Council Motion

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