



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 36.

**REVISED
CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 16, 2017**

**SUBJECT: UNION STATION RESTROOM EXPANSION AND
RENOVATION PROGRAM**

**ACTION: APPROVE A LIFE OF PROJECT BUDGET OF \$7.95 MILLION FOR UNION STATION
RESTROOM EXPANSION AND RENOVATION PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE a Life of Project (LOP) budget for Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) New and Existing Public Restroom Facilities Program improvements of \$7.95 million for the following:

- A. construction of new public restroom facilities for \$5.35 million; and
- B. renovation of existing public restroom facilities for \$2.6 million.

ISSUE

The existing Union Station restroom facilities are severely deficient. The current restrooms are not code compliant per Metro’s standards, not to mention the standards set by the City of Los Angeles, the State of California’s Title 24, Building Code (CBC), California Amendments and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as noted in the Blackseth Union Station Site Inspection Disabled Access Report dated November 2013. The existing 30-year-old plumbing infrastructure was not designed to handle the number of patrons who pass through Union Station on a daily basis, and is well beyond its expected life-span resulting in the condition of the restrooms being Union Station’s primary source of complaints from the public.

The station experiences an average of 100 full restroom closures annually due to improper use of the plumbing system by the public. The restroom closures can range in duration from 45 minutes to 4 hours, depending upon the extent of the repair. The closure of the west restrooms forces patrons, including elderly and disabled, to travel nearly 1,000 feet down the passageway to the east restroom facilities. Responding to emergency work orders generated by restroom issues is the single largest engineering staff demand. Restroom maintenance calls disrupt regular preventative maintenance and repair schedules which negatively impact the efficient and safe operation of the station. Security officers and janitorial crews responding to restroom closures cause regular shift coverage to be

disrupted.

The above recommendations are supported by Metro's risk managers, facility managers, ADA and security professionals as necessary to bring Union Station into regulatory compliance and risk mitigation to a significant degree. The approval of these improvements for this Metro-owned facility supports Metro's commitment to providing a safe, operational, accessible and beneficial facility for the public's use and comfort.

DISCUSSION

The existing Los Angeles Union Station building is over seventy-seven (77) years old. The current set of passenger concourse public restroom facilities were not properly maintained and renovated by the previous owner. The original public restroom design had 55 toilets, 17 urinals, and 46 lavatories. The prior owners' decisions resulted in many non-compliant modifications. Today there are only 17 45 toilets, 5 urinals, 10 lavatories, and 2 baby-changing areas. These restroom facility reductions occurred despite an increase from a 1939 daily average of 33 trains in and out (serving approximately 7,000 people) to a present daily average of 511 trains in and out, and 900 buses in and out (serving approximately 75,000 people). In short, although the LAUS foot traffic has increased by 11 times its original (low volume), the former compliant minimum fixture quantity or capacity has declined to less than one-third (1/3) of the original city-approved design.

Previously, to protect and preserve Union Station, the Board approved a variety of capital projects including exterior paint, wood and metal restorations, passageway restoration, way-finding signage, roof renovation and installation of HVAC, all of which have been completed. The Board also authorized the current fire, life, and safety/ADA multi-year capital project as a significant step toward the safety of Union Station as a transit facility and attractive public destination.

However, there remain outstanding deferred maintenance and modernization steps to make Union Station's public restroom facilities consistent with Metro's current standards and compliant with CBC and ADA regulations. Due to heavy use, the restrooms are at the end of their useful life span. They will require a major infrastructure renovation within the next 12 to 18 months. We have consulted with our historic preservation architect on making Union Station compliant with CBC and ADA codes without sacrificing the station's historic character in the process.

Findings

The proposed renovation of the existing restrooms and construction of two new set of restrooms behind the AMTRAK ticket counter and a concrete wall toward the train yard (See Attachment A) will create a newer, more efficient, usable space inside historic structure without downsizing of public common areas or tenant square footage. A series of investigations by structural engineers, shoring engineers and soils experts have resulted in positive constructability studies of a new location within the existing passenger concourse area. Renovation and construction of the new facilities will have minimal impact to building occupants or the public.

Considerations

The two new sets of restrooms will operate independently of the existing set of restrooms, which will allow one set to be closed periodically for maintenance and repair, while the other set will remain open and operational. This will alleviate all future full restroom closures and negative impacts to the public. Additionally, the selection of an alternative vacuum plumbing system could reduce water consumption by sixty percent (60%) and prevent main line blockages, allowing engineering to address any fixture clogs locally without closing the entire facility. Additionally, the selection of this plumbing system will allow for future expansion or integration, if necessary, to facilitate new tenants or additional restroom facilities. The selected location for these new facilities has been coordinated with LinkUS to ensure future projects will not be adversely impacted by these facilities.

The primary benefits are customer satisfaction, code compliance, operational improvements and increased energy efficiency, while reducing water consumption and maintenance costs. The project will be scheduled in two phases in an effort to minimize the impacts to the public. The new restrooms will be constructed first, so that they are completely operational prior to renovation of the existing restrooms. This approach will allow Union Station to maintain an operational set of restrooms at all times.

This proposed new capital project has been cleared through the CEQA Categorical Exemption process as documented in the memorandum dated June 9, 2017 prepared by ICF for Metro. (See Attachment B). This capital project is part of a Ten-Year Capital Plan summarized in Attachment C.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approval of this item will improve the integrity of the historic building by providing Union Station with energy-efficient, water-saving, code-compliant public restroom facilities, including accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this action will establish a \$7.95 million Life of Project budget for the Union Station New and Existing Public Restroom Improvement Project. Funds will be allocated to Cost Center 4520 - Union Station Operations and Management, Account 50316 - Professional and Technical Services.

Funding for this project will come from Proposition C 40% Discretionary Cash and Debt, which is consistent with the funding source for the existing Union Station capital projects. These funds are eligible for Metro Planning, Construction and Bus/Rail Operations. An additional \$150,000 will be allocated to this project by utilizing the previously-approved Project 210145 funding for the ADA improvements that are required for the restrooms.

Impact to Budget

Cash flow is critical for funding this new project. The required cash flow for the project are forecasted as follows:

Union Station Capital Program Improvements for construction of new public restroom facilities and renovation of existing public restroom facilities.

1. FY19 funding for Construction of new public restroom facilities for \$5.35 million
2. FY19 funding for Renovation of existing public restroom facilities for \$2.6 million

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

An alternative would be to continue operations without the aforementioned project. This is not recommended because this would compromise Metro's commitment to public safety and expose the agency to liabilities for CBC and ADA deficiencies. Continuing operations without upgrading the restroom facilities and infrastructure will increase annual repairs, maintenance and operating costs as well as increase the number of complaints by patrons and tenants, all of which do not support Metro's initiative to transform Union Station into a premier destination within the City of Los Angeles.

Another alternative is to limit the renovation to the existing restroom facility for \$2.6 million. This alternative is not recommended. It would require the complete shutdown of the existing facilities during construction. It will neither provide the additional plumbing fixtures required to become compliant with California Building Codes and ADA requirements, nor would it eliminate complaints or public impacts due to full closures of the facilities for repairs and maintenance.

NEXT STEPS

Upon the Board's approval and authorization, the bid packaging will be completed for Morlin Asset Management to proceed with the project.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A - Maps of Existing and New Union Station Passenger Concourse Restrooms
- Attachment B - ICF Memo: CEQA Categorical Exemption for L.A. Union Station Renovations Projects, June 9, 2017
- Attachment C - Summary Ten-Year Capital Plan

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