



Board Report

File #: 2018-0429, File Type: Budget

Agenda Number: 39.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 6, 2018

SUBJECT: CESAR CHAVEZ BUS STOP IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

ACTION: AUTHORIZE INCREASE IN LIFE OF PROJECT BUDGET

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. AUTHORIZING an increase in the life of project (LOP) budget by \$1,430,000 for the Cesar Chavez Bus Stop Improvements Project from \$2,100,000 to \$3,530,000; and
- B. AMENDING the FY19 budget to increase Project 210041 funding by \$1,850,000.

ISSUE

In the fall of 2014, Metro secured a \$1,668,557 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Ladders of Opportunity Grant, with a \$431,443 Metro local match for the Cesar Chavez Bus Stop Improvement Project ("Project"). The Project will make improvements along Cesar Chavez Avenue a very active bus stop in the Union Station campus on the southeast corner of Cesar Chavez Avenue and Vignes Street. The Project will improve safety and the customer experience adjacent to Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) by replacing city bus shelters, building a new transit pavilion, and implementing innovative sustainability features that will showcase environmental stewardship.

Staff is recommending an increase of the LOP from \$2,100,000 to \$3,530,000 to fund costs that were not accounted for in the grant application. The increase in LOP will require amending Cost Center 8510 in the FY19 budget by \$1,850,000 to align funding with the anticipated fiscal year expenditures.

BACKGROUND

Metro purchased LAUS in 2011 and shortly thereafter initiated the preparation of a master plan to improve LAUS and its connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods. In October 2014, staff presented the final Master Plan to the Metro Board, and the Board adopted a series of short to long term recommendations for LAUS, including the Cesar Chavez Bus Stop Improvements Project. Additionally, concurrent with the LAUS master planning effort, Metro, in partnership with the City of Los Angeles, developed the Connect US Action Plan (Connect US). Connect US is a public improvement plan that prioritizes pedestrian and bicyclist connections to and from Union Station, the

1st/Central Regional Connector Station and the surrounding historic and culturally significant communities. The plan includes a cycletrack along Vignes Street, adjacent to the project site, which is currently unfunded. The Project aligns with the broader planned active transportation improvements in the area.

Scope

The Project includes replacing existing, deteriorating bus shelters on Cesar Chavez Avenue at Alameda and Vignes Streets and constructing a new transit pavilion on Metro-owned property on the southeast corner of Cesar Chavez Avenue and Vignes Street. The Project will connect low-income commuters to employment opportunities. It brings high quality design and functionality to heavily trafficked but less visible bus stops adjacent to Union Station, which, combined, accommodate even more Metro riders than Patsaouras Transit Plaza, nearly 6,000 boardings and alightings daily.

Funding

The Board approved an LOP of \$2,100,000 in September of 2014 (\$1,668,557 from a Federal Transit Authority (FTA) ladders of opportunity grant and \$431,443 in matching funds from Metro).

Outreach

On-site community engagement meetings were held with transit riders in November 2016 (Meeting #1) and in February 2018 (Meeting #2).

Meeting #1 sought feedback on transit-riders' current experience at the site and what would most improve the facility. Approximately 50 Riders were interviewed and weighed in on their preferences in multiple formats. Staff discovered that riders were interested in real time information, additional seating, innovative shelters, bike share, and enhanced lighting.

Meeting #2 was aimed at updating patrons on the results of the feedback collected at Meeting #1 and how the conceptual design incorporated the recommendations. Renderings were shared showing the real time signage placement, the bike share kiosk, innovative shelter design, additional seating and lighting, and proposed landscaping. Patrons were also polled on how the new transit pavilions should be named. The options "Union Station," "Union Station East," and "Chavez/Vignes," were suggested. The stakeholders polled preferred "Chavez/Vignes," which staff agreed would be the clearest moniker.

Design

The transit pavilion was designed by Gensler Architects between October 2016 and June 2018. The final design is included as Attachment A and includes solar panels on shade structures, kinetic powered paving, storm water catchment infrastructure, enhanced lighting, security cameras, increased seating for patrons, a ticket vending machine, real time signage display, drought-tolerant native landscaping, and a bike share kiosk.

The Project design is the result of careful, cross-departmental coordination that accommodates the needs of Metro Operations, General Services, Engineering, Third Party, Systemwide Design, Creative Services and Transit Oriented Communities. It was completed in concert with the authors of the award-winning Metro Transfers Design Guide.

Construction

Contingent on Board approval of the LOP increase, construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2019.

DISCUSSION

Additional Project Costs

The additional costs causing an increase in the LOP include projected City of Los Angeles third party costs, forecasted Metro administrative costs, archeological, paleontological, Native American monitoring costs, higher than estimated construction costs, and the cost of innovative sustainability features.

Metro's Environmental Compliance and Sustainability department administers a Sustainability Program by which they provide supplemental funding to active Metro projects that incorporate innovative sustainability features advancing Metro's broader sustainability goals. Planning and Engineering staff have partnered with Metro's Environmental Compliance and Sustainability staff to include solar panels built into shade structures, kinetic paving that generates energy when walked on, and the integration of native, drought-tolerant landscaping and stormwater capture infrastructure. The kinetic energy harvesting paving will pilot new technology and showcase Metro's leadership in innovation and sustainability.

To support the innovative sustainability project elements in this project, the Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Department have identified funds in the amount of \$688,000 to supplement the proposed budget (\$350,000 in FY19 and \$338,000 in FY20). The revised project budget and associated sources is included in Attachment B (Funding and Expenditure Plan).

Consistency with Metro's Equity Platform Framework

The Project is consistent with the recently-adopted Metro Equity Platform Framework and will provide new benefits of enhanced mobility and regional access to minority and low-income populations. The Ladders of Opportunity Grant was awarded to this project as an investment that will connect low income riders to employment and education opportunities. It makes a priority investment in bus riders and riders who transfer. The Project will expand economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for residents served by the Project.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

This Board action will increase patron safety by providing additional lighting, security cameras, and visibility to a highly active bus stop adjacent to Union Station.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If all actions are approved, the LOP for Project 210041, Cesar Chavez Bus Stop Improvements Project, would increase from \$2,100,000 to \$3,530,000. The FY19 budget, Cost Center 8510, will be

amended by \$1,850,000 to advance funds to align with anticipated expenditures within this fiscal year. Since this is a multi-year project, the Project Manager, Cost Center manager, and Executive Director, Program Management, will be responsible for budgeting the cost in future fiscal years.

Impact to Budget

Funding will be expended within the FY19 and FY20 fiscal years. In addition to the \$2,100,000 in FTA grant funding and corresponding Metro local match, additional LOP funding has been identified in the Proposition C 25% funds (\$742,000) that will be fully expended in FY19 and from the Green Fund (\$688,000) that will be expended within FY19 (\$350,000) and FY20 (\$338,000). None of the identified funds will impact the budgets of any other projects. These funds are eligible for operating and capital project use.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This recommendation supports the following goals of the Metro Strategic Plan.

Goal 2: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system.

The Project will vastly improve the rider experience for thousands of riders each day. The majority of these riders are low-income riders of color who are transferring at least once in their trip to work or school. It will also soften the edges of the Union Station campus, creating a more welcoming gateway into the Metro system and attracting new riders through increased visibility and attention.

Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and transit.

The Project will showcase innovative sustainability features which will educate riders and the community as a whole. The piloted features will be a showcase of technology and environmental stewardship.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could choose not to approve the increase in LOP. This is not recommended as there would then be insufficient funds to deliver the project. The project would have to be rescope to reduce the cost by approximately \$1.4M. This would cause a significant delay that would not fall within the FTA grant agreement and put the \$1,688,557 in FTA grant funding at risk. In addition, this is not recommended because this bus stop has significant ridership and was approved by the Board in the short term implementation plan for the Union Station Master Plan.

NEXT STEPS

Should the Board approve the LOP, staff anticipates that construction will start in spring 2019.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Project Design

Attachment B - Funding and Expenditure Plan

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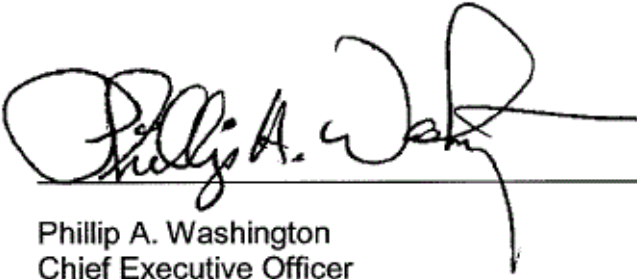
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