

# Agenda Report

February 2, 2015

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Finance Committee

**FROM:** Department of Public Works

**SUBJECT: INCREASE TOTAL ESTIMATED COST OF TRAFFIC MITIGATION IMPROVEMENTS - PHASE I CIP PROJECT TO \$683,000 AND APPROVE JOURNAL VOUCHER APPROPRIATING \$183,000 FROM GENERAL FUND, FUND BALANCE TO TRAFFIC MITIGATION IMPROVEMENTS - PHASE I CIP PROJECT**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Increase the total estimated cost of the Traffic Mitigation Improvements - Phase I CIP project (budget account 75711) by \$183,000 to \$683,000; and
2. Approve a journal voucher appropriating \$183,000 from the General Fund, Fund Balance (fund 101) to the Traffic Mitigation Improvements - Phase I CIP project (budget account 75711).

## **BACKGROUND:**

On November 26, 2009, the City Council approved an Adjustment Permit and certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a five-story commercial office development and subterranean parking garage at 680 East Colorado Boulevard, the Playhouse Plaza Commercial Development. On December 21, 2009, Pasadenans for a Livable City and Pasadena Heritage filed a petition in the Los Angeles Superior Court (Court), alleging that approval of the project violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and City codes. In October 2010, the Court issued an Order granting the Petition in part. In March 2011, the Petitioners, the City of Pasadena, and Pasadena Office, LLC (the Applicant) resolved the disputes in a Settlement Agreement.

In accordance with the Settlement Agreement, the Applicant submitted an application for a Major Change to an Approved Project that includes the Revised Project. The Revised Project meets all requirements of the Settlement Agreement concerning floor

area, height and setbacks, and open space and was designed to respect the scale, massing and articulation of the historic Pasadena Playhouse. In addition, the project includes a raised pedestrian speed table agreed to by the Petitioners and the Applicant to address pedestrian safety. As a result of negotiations with the developer, staff proposed that the cost of constructing the speed table be shared equally between the developer and the City.

On November 14, 2011, the City Council approved the Major Change to the Approved Project and adopted a resolution adopting an Addendum to the Final EIR for the 680 East Colorado Boulevard project. As part of this action, the City Council also agreed in concept to fund fifty percent of the cost of the proposed speed table on El Molino Avenue, for which staff would return to City Council at a later date to request authorization to appropriate and expense the City's portion.

The proposed appropriation of \$183,000 to the Traffic Mitigation Improvements – Phase I CIP project is for the City's share of the cost to construct the raised pedestrian speed table on El Molino Avenue between Colorado Boulevard and Green Street to mitigate pedestrian safety concerns resulting from the Playhouse Plaza Commercial Development.

The speed table on El Molino Avenue involves raising the pedestrian walkway south of Playhouse Alley with a pavement treatment to differentiate it from the roadway and includes, per Department of Transportation Traffic Engineering Report findings, signage enhancements and an In-Pavement Warning Lighting (IPWL) system that incorporates flashing lights across the roadway on both sides of the raised crossing and overhead detection to activate the IPWL when pedestrians are present in the raised crossing. Roadway reconstruction would also be required to address grade changes and roadway drainage. The speed table was determined by the *Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report 680 East Colorado Boulevard Commercial Project* (certified on November 14, 2011) to be "an appropriate measure to slow down vehicles and accommodate the anticipated high volumes of mid-block crossings by pedestrians" during events at the adjacent Pasadena Playhouse or other attractions in this area.

The speed table project was defined in the November 14, 2011 Addendum to the FEIR as the following:

*"Construction of the speed table along El Molino Avenue involves establishing a pedestrian walkway, south of Playhouse Alley. Safety enhancements such as in-pavement lighting and appropriate signage would also be considered if warranted. Roadway reconstruction would also be required to address grade changes and roadway drainage. Some issues that may be encountered in the execution of the speed table alternative include: (1) introduction of significant costs and engineering considerations during design and construction; (2) removal of some on-street parking along El Molino Avenue; and (3) aesthetic impacts of signage, if installed, on the nature of the Playhouse District."*

The developer is initially paying for all construction costs and will be responsible for installation of the speed table as part of their project. The City's share of the construction cost will be paid to the developer from the Traffic Mitigation Improvements-Phase I CIP project (budget account 75711) through this action.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

This project is consistent with City Council's goal to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure. It is also consistent with the Seismic and Safety Element of the General Plan by helping to achieve and maintain an environment in which Pasadena residents can enjoy personal safety and security. The implementation of the speed table falls within the objectives stated in the Mobility Element and the 2006 Pedestrian Plan.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

On November 26, 2009 the City Council certified the EIR for the Playhouse Plaza Commercial Development at 680 E. Colorado Boulevard. On November 14, 2011, the City Council adopted a resolution adopting an Addendum to the Final EIR for the revised project, which includes implementation of the pedestrian speed table on El Molino Avenue. There are no changes to the project, changed circumstances or new information that would warrant further environmental review.


**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The result of this action will increase the Traffic Mitigation Improvements-Phase I CIP project (budget account 75711) by \$183,000 to \$683,000. The funding source for this action is the existing fund balance in the General Fund (fund 101).


Respectfully submitted,

  
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