

**McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)**

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**From:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, April 25, 2022 8:29 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** FW: Arroyo Seco CIP for tonight's Council meeting. Please read at the meeting

-----Original Message-----

From: John Favre  
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 7:38 AM  
To: Jomsky, Mark <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>  
Subject: Arroyo Seco CIP for tonight's Council meeting. Please read at the meeting

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Dear Councilmembers

The proposed CIP for the Arroyo includes over \$4 million after 2027 for One Arroyo projects.

I have supported Arroyo projects for many years. But I have been unable to learn from One Arroyo or the City the basis or plan or any meaningful information about the basis for this allocation.

Would you please help obtain information for the public about this figure?

Thank you for your consideration.

John Favre

Sent from my iPhone

RECEIVED

2022 APR 25 AM 8:38

SONJA K. BERNDT  
Pasadena, CA 91107

April 25, 2022

Mayor Victor Gordo & Members of the  
Pasadena City Council  
By Email

Re: Concerns about, and Objections to, Funding for Three Projects in the Proposed 2023-2027 Capital Improvements Program Budget

Dear Members of the City Council:

A. Introduction

Today, the Interim City Manager will introduce the proposed 2023-2027 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budget. My concerns and objections relate to the following three projects in the proposed budget:

1. \$2 million of American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funds for renovations and improvements related to three fire stations (without a detailed cost analysis and explanation of why this funding is necessary now and must be paid for with ARPA funds);
2. \$200,000 of ARPA funds toward the \$6.8 million remodel of the Police Department Building;
3. \$9.990 million from “RBOC Unrestricted Reserve Funds” to fund Rose Bowl improvements.

B. The Use of ARPA Funds for the Police Department Building Remodel & Fire Station Improvements is Unsupported

Our City received a lifeline from the federal government in extraordinary funds pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) -- \$26 million last year and \$26 million likely next month. The Interim Final Rule (“IFR”) is the Treasury Department’s guidance for allocating the ARPA funding provided to state and local governments. It discusses numerous eligible uses for the ARPA funds, many of which would provide critical programs that our most vulnerable and marginalized residents need to move forward from the pandemic. The ARPA

funds must be spent within the four eligible uses identified in the statute—"(1) to respond to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts, (2) to provide premium pay to essential workers, (3) to provide government services to the extent of eligible governments' revenue losses, and (4) to make necessary water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure investments." Significantly, at the outset, the IFR states that "[t]he ARPA provides a substantial infusion of resources to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild a stronger, **more equitable economy** as the country recovers."

Last August, the City Council's approved spending plan for the first ARPA funding included the following four very substantial appropriations:

- \$9.8 Million: to the City's General Fund to backfill the City's revenue losses due to the pandemic;
- over \$8.5 million: for sidewalk improvements, traffic signals, bridge enhancements and other capital improvements;
- \$2 million: to remodel Fire Station 38; and
- \$925,000: for COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated employees.

Significantly, the large chunk of ARPA money to the General Fund did little to help departments like the Housing and Public Health Departments because they receive very little funding from the General Fund.

In contrast, the City Council's ARPA appropriations for our poor, low-income and marginalized residents were minimal:

- \$400,000 for bridge housing, but only for PCC students;
- A mere \$150,000 for eviction prevention legal services;
- Just \$200,000 for community violence prevention/intervention efforts; and
- \$550,000 for the second Pasadena Outreach Response Team (PORT) to fund fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

The City Council appropriated more funding for **each** of the traffic signals at Orange Grove and Craig and Orange Grove and Sunnyslope than for bridge housing for our nearly 300 unsheltered residents.

Residents pushed back on the City staff's recommendations for ARPA funding last year. There were numerous letters in opposition to the recommendations and

people spoke at City Council meetings advocating for more ARPA dollars for community services, especially for our poor and marginalized residents. Ultimately, of the total ARPA funds our city received last year, the City Council directed just approximately 8% for programs for our poor, low-income and marginalized residents. This was unacceptable given that the federal guidance for spending ARPA specifically states that the funds are to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild a stronger **more equitable** economy.

This year, the City needs to prioritize people with its ARPA appropriations, not buildings, sidewalks, traffic signals, etc., like it did last year.

Regarding the proposed \$2 million of ARPA funding for renovations and improvements to fire stations, according to the Project Schedule “Tenant improvements at Fire Station 31 and construction of a new storage building at Fire Station 33 will be completed in FY 2023. Design of renovations at Fire Station 37 will begin.” Without a detailed cost analysis and a detailed explanation of why all of these improvements are necessary **now** and must be paid for with ARPA funding, it is impossible to determine whether using \$2 million of ARPA funds is justified and reasonable. Accordingly, it should be rejected.

Regarding the \$200,000 in ARPA funding for the Police Department building, according to the Project Description, this is a \$6.8 million remodel, \$6.6 million of which is unfunded. What is the immediate necessity justifying using \$200,000 of our invaluable ARPA funding for a very expensive project, the vast majority of which is unfunded? For this reason, the ARPA funding of this project should be rejected.

#### C. Rose Bowl Major Improvements Project FY2020-2024

The proposed CIP 2023-2027 budget has the “RBOC Unrestricted Reserve Funds” paying for \$9.990 million in Rose Bowl improvements in fiscal year 2023. The question is: can these Unrestricted Reserve Funds be used, instead, to offset RBOC/Rose Bowl debt?

The City paid \$11.5 million of debt related to the Rose Bowl in fiscal year 2021; \$10 million in fiscal year 2022. What amount of Rose Bowl debt will the City have to cover this year? Thus far, these very substantial debt payments have been paid from the City’s General Fund and/or General Fund reserves. But last year, former City Manager Steve Mermell advised the City Council that paying the Rose Bowl debt has exhausted much of the City’s General Fund Operating Reserve.

Further, the fiscal year 2022 General Fund 5-Year Financial Forecast showed Pasadenans continuing to pay the Rose Bowl debt, resulting in **deficits for our critical General Fund** absent a solution.

The proposed work to be performed in 2023 does not appear to be safety related for the most part.<sup>1</sup> While there has been discussion that more improvements will be necessary for the Rose Bowl to remain competitive, as of May 2021, the stadium had collected a whopping **\$197.72 million** in outstanding debt. Why would the City agree to even more non-safety-related improvements, especially since according to Mr. Mermell's budget transmittal letter last year, over the next five-years, the City's debt payments will CONTINUE due to Rose Bowl revenue gaps of \$5.4-7.7 million PER YEAR?

If the RBOC Unrestricted Reserve Fund can be used to help pay the debt obligation on the Rose Bowl this year, that needs to happen instead of using the City's reserve funds or, even worse, the General Fund to cover the debt obligation this year. For these reasons, the proposed use of the RBOC Unrestricted Reserve Fund to pay for nearly \$10 million in Rose Bowl improvements this year should be rejected.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

/s/

Sonja K. Berndt  
Pasadena

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<sup>1</sup> "SCHEDULE: In FY 2023, the following projects will take place: broadcast & audio/visual control room upgrades, back of house WiFi, campus fiber upgrades, field sideline bench replacement, concession stand upgrades, perimeter pedestrian flow safety improvements, stadium seating replacement, speaker system replacement, Pavilion club upgrades, Loge Lounge outdoor TV replacement and future project studies & assessments."

RECEIVED

DATE: APRIL 25, 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

2022 APR 25 PM 3:19

TO: CITY OF PASADENA CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARSHA V. ROOD, FAICP; VICE PRESIDENT, DOWNTOWN PASADENA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PASADENA, CA 91101

**SUBJECT: ITEM # 16: PUBLIC HEARING: INTERIM CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2023 - 2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BUDGET**

No serious effort to program capital improvements for the city for the next five years would leave out pedestrian improvements for the Central District. But the proposed 2023 – 2027 CIP Budget does *exactly* that. Simply having buildings adjacent to one another does not ensure walkability. The significant concentration of residents, employees, and businesses, offices, public buildings services, parks and transportation *require* walkability to make the Central District work - as intended in City's planning documents for the last 30 years. For the two decades, City has only given lip service to improving walkability in the Central District.

The City of Pasadena's "*Pasadena Walks!* Pedestrian Plan (Plan) dated January 2022 names the Central District as the ***densest residential and employment area in Pasadena*** and as having the "Highest Potential" for walkability. *This fact makes it even more stunning that the proposed CIP for 2023 – 2027 recommends only very minor pedestrian improvements for the Central District. Even more stunning is that the Plan itself has only minimal recommendations for the Central District;* almost all the funding is recommended for improving major traffic corridors in the City.

The absence of proposed pedestrian improvements in the CIP for the Central District is alarming. ***If not now, when will the city fund and implement needed pedestrian improvements for the Central District?*** The area is growing by leaps and bounds because of the housing market boom with the resulting concentration of residential density in the Central District. The City's Planning Department data shows, as of June 2021, there were 2,791 housing units under construction or in the pipeline in the CD. That number is expected to be higher in 2022. It may surprise some to learn that, according to the 2020 U. S. Census, the Central District has over 25,000 residents. Added to the upwards of 5,000 on the way within the next 3 – 5 years, the population for the CD is estimated to total 30,000. This number is nearly three times the population of the City of Sierra Madre.

It goes without saying that Pasadena is considerably behind the "8 Ball" in planning and funding for pedestrians improvements in urban areas and has been for over 20 years. Merely having buildings adjacent to one another is not sufficient. Pasadena's transportation studies and need for funding are viewed almost entirely through the lens of the car. The last significant pedestrian improvements for the Central District were made in the late 1990s in Old Pasadena and the Playhouse District, all completed prior to Central District's population boom.

#### **RECOMMENDEDED PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT**

Real attention should be given to the need for pedestrian improvements for the Central District. The many obstacles and dangers pedestrians face when walking in the Central District include: (a) speeding cars; (b) long

stretches with no speed limit signs; (c) few marked pedestrian crosswalks; (d) very few pedestrian signs; (e) almost no blinking signals/imbedded LED lights in crosswalks; (f) faded pedestrian and traffic markings; (g) high curbs; (h) no pedestrian priority for traffic lights (e.g., 20 seconds to cross Colorado Blvd.); (i) limited pedestrian lighting along residential streets; (j) no pedestrian diagonal pedestrian crosswalks (with the exception of those installed in 1994 in Old Pasadena) at intersections along Colorado Blvd. from Marengo to Lake Avenue, south on South Lake Avenue to California, etc. The City has not addressed these basic problems in the past 20 years other than in words and written plans.

Well-recognized pedestrian-focused improvements or “Pedestrian Tool Kit” elements that are necessary for the Central District and should be funded in the 2023 – 2017 CIP include: (a) clearly and heavily marked crosswalks; (b) pedestrian “scrambles”; (c) signs alerting drivers that people may be crossing; imbedded lighting (“LEDs”) in crosswalks; (d) flashing yellow lights on poles when cars are approaching pedestrian crossings; (e) wider sidewalks; (f) curb extenders; (g) synchronized traffic signals timed to slow traffic down; (h) speed tables; (i) pedestrian priority for traffic signals; (j) longer pedestrian times to cross intersections; (k) wider and leveler sidewalks; (l) road diets; (m) pedestrian lighting, signage and benches; (n) pedestrian signs showing how much time on foot to various destinations; (o) many more vehicle speed limit signs; (p) electric signs showing the speed of cars; (q) traffic calming; ( r) pedestrian signs to the Gold Line stations; (s) more canopy street trees and trash receptacles, etc.

#### **FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS**

There are City funds to address pedestrian issues in the Central District and have been since 2017. The City’s Traffic Reduction and Transportation Improvements (TR/TI) impact fee ordinance was amended in July 2017 to make funding available for pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Since the amendment was passed, \$5.5 million or 85% of the \$6.5 million generated in TR/TI impact were from developments in the Central District. But most of these fees have been directed to the suburban areas for traffic-related improvements. The CD has been and is left in the lurch.

#### **IN CONCLUSION**

My experience is that the City staff and the City Council do not view the Central District include as residential community because it has very few single family homes. By its actions, the City views the Central District as primarily a commercial district. Those of us who live here are treated as “Ghost Residents” of the City. What the City ignores in terms of policy and the allocation of funding is that the CD is more than a collection of three commercial district; it is also a collection of neighborhoods. We walk *now* - it is more than a “High Potential”. Walking is a risky business for pedestrians because of the lack of safe streets and pedestrian friendly sidewalks and crosswalks. The car always wins – and is allowed to win. Pedestrians do not own the “public room,” cars do. Drivers who cause pedestrian accidents rarely suffer the physical consequences; pedestrians always do.