

Agenda Report

September 23, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Finance Committee

FROM: Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY IDENTIFYING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE NORTH HOLLYWOOD TO PASADENA BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT AND RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT OF UP TO \$925,000

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed action is not a project that is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378, and, as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required;
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority to identify the design and construction roles and responsibilities related to the North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Project and receive reimbursement of up to \$925,000 through the life of the project; and
3. Amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Department of Transportation Budget by increasing revenue and expenses to the General Fund Project Fund (105) by \$348,000 for the Metro North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Project.

BACKGROUND:

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is currently in the design phase of the North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor Project. The proposed Cooperative Agreement between Metro and the City identifies

the roles and responsibilities during design and construction between the two entities including identifying reimbursable costs for Pasadena related to the design and construction of the project.

The BRT is an 18-mile public transportation project between the North Hollywood B Line / G Line station and the A Line in Pasadena, passing through the cities of Los Angeles, Burbank, Glendale and Pasadena. The BRT is high-capacity bus transit that offers fewer stops and speed improvements over a traditional bus route. In Pasadena, the BRT will use traffic signal technology to reduce travel time. Outside of Pasadena, the project will reduce travel time and increase capacities by operating in a dedicated bus lane on city streets and freeways.

During the development of this project, Metro collaborated with City staff. On March 26, 2019, Metro presented to the Municipal Service Committee an update on the development of the project including feedback from the various community outreach meetings. In addition, the City provided feedback in 2019 following the Notice of Preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report that included limiting the corridor alternatives to mixed-flow only options on the entire Pasadena street network. In 2020, following the publishing of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, the City provided additional feedback. Metro approved the project in 2022 that incorporated Pasadena's concerns limiting the BRT to operating in mixed-flow lanes in Pasadena.

The proposed Cooperative Agreement allows for the City to seek reimbursement for costs related to the design and construction of the project. Metro anticipates design to continue through calendar year 2026 and construction to start in calendar year 2025, concurrently during the design through 2027. It also defines procedures for the review and approval of plans, establishes various City standards and guidelines that the project will be subject to, and sets up a dispute resolution process. The proposed Cooperative Agreement has been negotiated between City and Metro staff. Staff reviewed the preliminary timeline of activities to develop the estimated City involvement from design and construction.

Certain aspects of the project's operation and maintenance are unknown until after the project's final design has commenced. As a result, Metro has requested that discussion of operations and maintenance be deferred. The Cooperative Agreement includes provisions for the City and Metro to meet in good faith to identify operations and maintenance costs for the project that derive from each agency as part of a separate negotiation.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The Cooperative Agreement is consistent with the City Council's strategic goals to maintain fiscal responsibility and stability by reimbursing costs related to the design and construction of the project and recovering costs incurred to assist Metro in the project. The Cooperative Agreement will also improve mobility and accessibility throughout the City of Pasadena by providing higher-capacity bus transit that offers fewer stops and speed improvements over a traditional bus route to improve mobility and accessibility through the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

CEQA excludes, from environmental review, actions that are not "projects" as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of Section 15378(b). Sections 21065 and 15378(b) define a project as an action which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Section 15378 excludes from the definition of "project" organizational or administrative activities, such as those being considered in this case between Metro and the City. This agreement will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment but is an administrative agreement between Metro and the City. The Metro North Hollywood to Pasadena BRT project had an extensive environmental review process. The City provided feedback during this process and the project was approved by Metro, the lead agency, on April 28, 2022. The actions proposed herein, authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with Metro that identifies the roles and responsibilities between the two entities and organizational or administrative governmental activities do not result in physical changes to the environment, therefore, is not a "project" as defined by CEQA. Since the action is not a project subject to CEQA, no environmental document is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

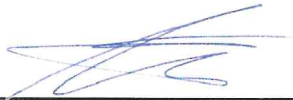
The Cooperative Agreement will enable the City to be reimbursed by Metro for the costs related to the design and construction of the Metro North Hollywood to Pasadena BRT project for up to \$925,000 over the next four years. The recommended budget action will amend the Department of Transportation's FY 2025 Operating Budget by increasing the budgeted revenue estimate and departmental appropriations by \$348,000 in the General Fund Project Fund (105) for the Metro North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Project and the remaining amount to come in future years through the completion of the project. Future contract revenue and appropriations will be budgeted as part of the annual operating budget cycle. There is no impact to the General Fund (101) resulting from approval of the recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,



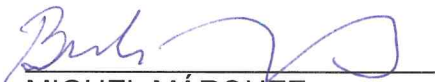
JOAQUIN T. SIQUES
Director, Department of Transportation

Prepared by:



Sebastián Andrés Hernández
Principal Planner

Approved by:



MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ
City Manager