



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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October 7, 2016

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON *PAW*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: THERESE W. MCMILLAN *TW*
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

SUBJECT: NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION FOR A FEDERAL GRANT
AWARD FOR THE WEST SANTA ANA BRANCH TRANSIT
CORRIDOR

ISSUE

In June 2016, Metro, in partnership with the City of South Gate and the Eco-Rapid Transit Joint Powers Authority (JPA), submitted a grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requesting \$2 million from the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Pilot Program for the West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Transit Corridor. The grant will be used to develop a TOD Strategic Implementation Plan (Plan) that will provide a holistic strategy for the 13 cities within and adjacent to the WSAB Transit Corridor. This report notifies the Board that FTA has selected Metro to receive a \$2 million TOD grant to develop the Plan for the WSAB Transit Corridor.

BACKGROUND

On February 25, 2016, the Board directed staff to allocate a budget (not to exceed \$18 million) to pursue Sustainable Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) pre-development and planning activities for the WSAB Transit Corridor (Attachment A). The WSAB Transit Corridor extends 20 miles from the City of Artesia to Union Station. It consists of low levels of existing development, disadvantaged populations, and some of California's most impacted environmental justice census tracts. The WSAB Transit Corridor would be well served by a unified TOD strategy to leverage the investment of future rail infrastructure and provide economic development opportunities for transit-dependent communities.

On April 14, 2016, FTA released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) informing of the availability of about \$20.5 million from the TOD Planning Pilot Program to be awarded following a nationwide competitive process. FTA anticipated making grant awards ranging from \$250,000 to \$2 million. FTA's deadline to submit applications was June 13, 2016.

On April 21, 2016, we informed the Metro Board of the TOD funding opportunity and requested input from all Metro departments to identify projects that could be eligible and competitive for the grant opportunity. The WSAB Transit Corridor was the only project that was identified. It was determined to meet the requirements of the NOFO and to be highly competitive in addressing FTA's selection criteria. Metro in the grant application committed to providing \$500,000 in Measure R funds to meet FTA's local match requirement. The total cost to develop the Plan for the WSAB Transit Corridor is \$2.5 million.

Metro, in partnership with the City of South Gate and the Eco-Rapid Transit JPA, will prepare the TOD Strategic Implementation Plan. The Plan will: 1) engage communities in a unified strategy for the WSAB Transit Corridor, 2) perform an economic development feasibility analysis to understand the Corridor's demographics and market conditions; 3) update land-use and planning documents and provide station areas plans and visualizations to support future TOD; 4) identify priorities for the Corridor as a whole, as well as targeted improvements for station areas; and 5) make recommendations on phasing development and project implementation, as well as on funding opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

Metro staff will work with FTA to execute the grant agreement and will release a Request for Proposals for planning services to complete the scope of work. Throughout the process, staff will work in close coordination with our partners.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - February 25, 2016 Board Motion, Item# 32.1

REVISED

Motion by Directors Knabe, DuBois, Garcetti and Solis

West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor (Eco-Rapid Transit Project)

Creating Sustainable Transit Oriented Communities

Measure R includes the West Santa Ana Branch (Eco-Rapid Transit) Transit Corridor. This project runs 20 miles from the City of Artesia in Southeast Los Angeles County and continues through the cities of Artesia, Bell, Bellflower, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Los Angeles, Maywood, Paramount, South Gate, and Vernon.

The cities along this alignment are committed to supporting the implementation of this corridor and have come together in the Eco-Rapid Transit Joint Powers Authority whose mission is to pursue the development of an environmentally friendly energy efficient addition to the Los Angeles County transit system.

This addition to the LA County transit system will enhance and increase transportation options for the residents of the member cities, provide access to employment in other parts of the County and improve the quality of life for all area residents including those cities that have been designated "Disadvantaged Communities by the CalEPA EnviroScreen (SB 535 – De Leon Chapter 830, Statue of 2012).

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is undertaking environmental studies in preparation for their development of the West Santa Ana Branch transit corridor.

Eco-Rapid Transit JPA, building on the Los Angeles County Economic Development Strategy and the Eco-Rapid Design Guidelines, is desirous of working directly with the communities along the corridor to develop a consistent set of development standards, practices, and sustainability objectives to encourage and incentivize new transit oriented developments throughout the West Santa Ana Branch transit corridor. This work will improve the ability of corridor jurisdictions to attract other funding to carry out identified public infrastructure improvements.

Eco-Rapid Transit will manage the preparation of local development plans and policies to incorporate specific Sustainable Development targets including an evaluation of existing systems—electric, water, storm water, sewage, fiber (data) to identify opportunities to modify existing facilities to create state-of-the art infrastructure that addressed the needs of these Environmental Justice areas. Additionally, the project will identify opportunities in existing transport facilities to identify changes within the corridor that could support increased mode share shifts from vehicles to transit, enhance active transportation opportunities, improve first and last mile connections and related design changes in housing, economic development, parking that better supports achieving the sustainability targets.

In order to achieve these transit oriented communities goals, we hereby request that:

- A) Direct the CEO to return to the Board of Directors within 60 days with a budget (not to exceed \$18 million), scope of work, potential funding sources and community engagement strategy Measure R funds in the amount of \$18 million be allocated for the purpose of pursuing Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) predevelopment and planning activities, in coordination with the City and County of Los Angeles as well as the Eco-Rapid Transit and Gateway Cities Council of Governments, for the West Santa Ana Branch Project alignment and communities.
- B) ~~Metro Staff work with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments or the Eco-Rapid Transit JPA to implement this program.~~