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TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ARTHUR T. LEAHY *[Signature]*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: MARTHA WELBORNE, FAIA *[Signature]*
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COUNTYWIDE PLANNING

SUBJECT: FARMERS FIELD EVENT CENTER

ISSUE

The draft environmental impact report for the proposed Farmers Field Event Center ("Center") in Downtown Los Angeles is scheduled to be released later this month. The EIR analysis assumes a substantial dependence on public transportation to serve the center and thus mitigate certain environmental impacts. The EIR further assumes as mitigation measures substantial improvements to the Pico/Chick Hearn Blue Line/ Expo Line station at Pico and Flower Streets ("Pico Station").

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of the status of discussions between Metro Planning and Operations Staff and the Center proponents concerning transit service at the Pico Station. The proposed Center is anticipated to be the site for one or two professional football teams, and as many as 40 events annually including football and other sporting events, concerts, and as an additional venue for major conventions at the convention center. The Center will have a seating capacity of up to 75,000.

The objectives of these discussions are two-fold: to provide technical information to the proponents and the City of Los Angeles that could be considered in the preparation of the E.I.R. for the project and to determine the Center's demand for and impact on transit operations during event days at the Center. With respect to technical information, it appears the technical analysis shared with Metro staff is utilizing current information with respect to ridership, capacity, and proposed operational parameters for the Metro Rail System as well as the bus operations serving the area of the Center.

The impact on rail operations results primarily from the surge of transit riders and other pedestrians from the Center immediately following an event. The impact is twofold. Projected demand by transit riders from the Center exceeds the capacity of the Pico Station in its current configuration. The station was designed and constructed prior to the development of Staples Center and L.A. Live and did not anticipate ridership surges

associated with these venues and the proposed Center. This has been demonstrated in major events such as “Laker Championship Celebration Day” where the capacity of the station is overwhelmed.

Additionally, most of the parking being utilized by attendees of Center events will be located east of the Pico station. The result is that upwards of 15,000 pedestrians in the hour following a major event will cross the Blue/Expo tracks either to get to the Pico platform or east of the station to the parking areas. Unless mitigated, this will result in the potential for major pedestrian/auto/rail safety conflicts and degradation to rail service.

Pico Station Improvements

The proponents acknowledge the physical challenges posed at the Pico Station and will likely include the construction of an additional platform west of the tracks as a mitigation measure in the EIR. This will necessitate the closure of one lane of Flower Street, which is also to be studied in the EIR. Metro Operations and Planning staff have provided preliminary design parameters for the new platform as well as the relatively minor improvements to the existing platform to better serve the volume of riders anticipated. The new platform and improvements have an order of magnitude cost estimate of approximately \$10.5 million. The proponents of the Center have agreed that this cost will be a cost of the Center.

Auto/Pedestrian/Rail Conflicts and Extraordinary Operating Costs

Staff has worked with the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation and the project proponents to identify and mitigate potential auto/pedestrian/rail conflicts. The EIR will evaluate a set of temporary road closures during event hours to separate traffic from pedestrians, including closure and/or control of certain pedestrian crossings in vicinity of the Pico Station. Given the projected “surge” demand for service at the Pico Station post and possibly pre-event and the volume of rail service on the Expo and Blue lines, it is apparent that extraordinary service costs will be experienced to assist in pedestrian management, queuing, and platform boarding. Metro Operations has developed a preliminary management plan for Pico Station and the surrounding area as well as at the 7th/Metro Center and Union Station locations which also may be impacted. These extraordinary operating costs related to the unique demand conditions of the Center have also been acknowledged by the proponents to be a cost of the Event Center project.

NEXT STEPS

Metro staff will continue to monitor the preparation of the EIR for the Center and, once released, will provide comments as appropriate. Metro staff will work with the City to ensure the mitigations for the project are appropriately addressed in the EIR and the project entitlements. Additionally, Metro staff is working with County Counsel and outside counsel to develop a cost reimbursement agreement with the proponent to

detail how the one time funding of the Pico Station improvements and the ongoing extraordinary pedestrian and station management costs will be documented and reimbursed to Metro. This agreement will be brought to the Board for its consideration once finalized.

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