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**August 20, 2018**

**TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

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

**SUBJECT: LITTLE TOKYO/ARTS DISTRICT STATION**  
**JOINT DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUE**

On August 27, 2018, Metro Joint Development staff will release a Request for Interest/Qualifications (RFI/Q) for project submittals on the Metro-owned Regional Connector Little Tokyo/Arts District Station (Site). To inform the RFI/Q, staff and a consultant team prepared a development feasibility analysis ("Opportunity Overview") of the Site, which may be downloaded at: [http://media.metro.net/projects\\_studies/joint\\_development/images/LTAD\\_Opportunity\\_Overview\\_2018-0712.pdf](http://media.metro.net/projects_studies/joint_development/images/LTAD_Opportunity_Overview_2018-0712.pdf).

**BACKGROUND**

In anticipation of the Regional Connector's planned completion in 2021 and as a required mitigation measure for its construction, Metro is pursuing joint development of the Site located at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue. The Site is ideally situated to build upon the resurgence of downtown Los Angeles and will be both a regional transportation hub and gateway to the culturally rich surrounding communities. However, being smaller than typical development sites and constrained by transit infrastructure, the Site requires innovative solutions to create a compelling project.

**Process**

Metro's Joint Development process typically begins with creating community-driven Development Guidelines which accompany a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a site. Given the Site's unique opportunities and challenges, as well as the extensive planning and visioning documents already completed in the Little

Tokyo and Arts District communities, staff decided to slightly modify the standard Joint Development process in this case. Rather than prepare Development Guidelines, staff built upon existing community-driven visioning documents and planning efforts to create an “Opportunity Overview” of the Site.

To assist with this approach, staff hired a consultant team in November 2017 consisting of Studio One Eleven (urban design), Nabih Youssef Associates (engineering), and Here LA (community outreach). The consultant team analyzed relevant regulatory plans and policies, identified the real estate development opportunities and developable areas around Metro’s transit infrastructure, and conducted additional outreach to better understand community priorities. These findings have been summarized in the Opportunity Overview.

To confirm community priorities were accurately captured, a draft of the Opportunity Overview was available on the project website and public comments were accepted from July 30 to August 20, 2018.

#### Community Outreach

Metro and the consultant team held two roundtables with Little Tokyo and Arts District community leaders in January and February 2018, circulated a public survey resulting in over 600 responses, and hosted an interactive activity at the Regional Connector Halfway There! Celebration in May 2018. From this engagement process, the following community goals for the Site emerged:

- Create a safe, vibrant, transit-supportive project
- Provide community-oriented uses and programming
- Integrate community preferences for design and character
- Support existing local businesses and draw new visitors to the area
- Incorporate strategies for environmental and financial sustainability

To promote the RFI/Q, Metro also hosted a “Building Partnerships” networking event on June 20, 2018, which aimed to introduce potential project proposers to one another and encourage local partnerships and small business participation that will result in innovative proposals. The event attracted over 100 participants representing real estate developers, architecture/design firms, service providers, community-based organizations, general and subcontractors, cultural/arts organizations and small businesses. Metro partnered with the Asian Pacific Islander Small Business Program, Little Tokyo Business Improvement District, and the Regional Connector Community Leadership Council Little Tokyo/Arts District Station Area Committee to promote the event.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

Once released, the RFI/Q will be available for a 90-day period. An evaluation panel will review project submittals and complete its evaluation in spring 2019.

Due to the unique nature of this solicitation and depending on the submittals received, potential outcomes of the RFI/Q may include issuing a full RFP to shortlisted proposal teams, or entering into an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement and Planning Document with the highest scoring team. Metro staff will update the Board of Directors on the next steps following review of the submittals.

For additional questions or clarifications, please contact Nicole Velasquez, Manager Transportation Planning at (213) 922-7439 or [velasquezn@metro.net](mailto:velasquezn@metro.net).