



**THE PORT
OF LOS ANGELES**
Executive Director's
Report to the
Board of Harbor Commissioners

DATE: FEBRUARY 9, 2015

FROM: GOODS MOVEMENT

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - APPROVAL OF FUNDING AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES HARBOR DEPARTMENT AND THE
SOUTH BAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

SUMMARY:

The City of Los Angeles Harbor Department (Harbor Department) has been awarded \$1 million in Measure R transportation funds from the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) for the preliminary engineering and environmental documentation (PE/ED) phase of the proposed State Route (SR) 47/Vincent Thomas Bridge (VTB) and Front Street/Harbor Boulevard Interchange Reconfiguration project. This traffic safety and operational improvement entails: 1) replacement of the existing westbound (WB) loop off-ramp from the VTB (located south of the VTB), with a new WB loop off-ramp located north of the VTB; and 2) realignment of both existing WB and eastbound (EB) on-ramps to the VTB. To receive the Measure R funds, a Funding Agreement (FA) with the SBCCOG is required.

This proposed project, which is located on the State Highway System (SHS), was initially identified in a Harbor Department study prepared in 2007, and as being needed sometime between the years 2020 and 2025, contingent upon the level of traffic growth over time. This interchange is an important transportation facility serving: the entire San Pedro Waterfront, including the World Cruise Center and Ports O'Call Village; the communities of San Pedro and Wilmington; and cargo terminals in the West Basin area of the Harbor District. Although these improvements are proposed on the SHS, the State of California (State) Department of Transportation (Caltrans) does not have funds, nor plans to implement any improvements to this important interchange. Hence, the Harbor Department is taking this opportunity to use available Measure R funds for this necessary first phase of project development. The project, which is currently estimated to cost about \$25 million, is not presently contained in the Harbor Department's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) or Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-2015 budget. The Measure R funds will be used to pay for all consultant costs that will be incurred to assist staff in this phase of the project, which will be done in collaboration with Caltrans. Harbor Department funds are not required as a match to the Measure R funds. The acceptance of these outside agency funds does not commit the Harbor Department at this time to construct the project nor complete the final design phase. Additionally, by completing this phase, the Harbor Department will be eligible to seek more transportation funds in the future to construct the project, contingent upon approval by the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board).

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners:

1. Approve the Funding Agreement with the South Bay Cities Council of Governments for the State Route 47/Vincent Thomas Bridge and Front Street/Harbor Boulevard Interchange Reconfiguration substantially as to form;
2. Authorize the Executive Director to execute, and the Board Secretary to attest to, this Funding Agreement, for and on behalf of the Board;
3. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

DISCUSSION:

The SBCCOG, in which Councilman Buscaino is a member of their Board of Directors, has awarded \$1 million in Measure R funds to the Harbor Department for the PE/ED phase of the proposed SR 47/VTB Interchange Reconfiguration project (see Transmittal 1 for project layout). To receive the Measure R funds, a FA with the SBCCOG is required. Administered by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO), Measure R is an existing 0.5% sales tax in Los Angeles County that is used for transportation improvement projects. In cooperation with METRO and Caltrans, the SBCCOG programs Measure R funds for transportation projects in the South Bay area.

This proposed SHS project was initially identified in a Harbor Department study prepared in 2007, and as being needed sometime between the years 2020 and 2025, contingent upon the level of traffic growth over time. Traffic operating conditions on the interchange will degrade over time due to projected increases in traffic attributable to: the planned redevelopment of the San Pedro Waterfront (including the proposed AltaSea project), the expected increase in cruise facility business; and projected increase in cargo volumes at West Basin area terminals. It is important to note that this interchange reconfiguration project was not determined to be needed as a project-specific mitigation measure in any of the environmental documents that were approved for the aforementioned developments over the last several years. Although these improvements are proposed on the SHS, Caltrans does not have funds, nor plans to implement any improvements to this interchange. Hence, the Harbor Department is taking this opportunity to use available Measure R funds for this initial phase of project development.

The project, which is currently estimated to cost about \$25 million, is not presently contained in the Harbor Department's CIP or FY14-15 budget. The acceptance of these outside agency funds does not commit the Harbor Department at this time to construct the project or complete the final design phase. The PE/ED phase is required by the State to advance such a project on the State Highway System. Additionally, by completing this phase, the Harbor Department will be eligible to seek more transportation funds in the future from federal, State, and regional sources (e.g., METRO Call for Projects in 2017) to eventually construct the project. The project will be advanced to the final design and possibly construction phases in the future only when additional outside funds have been obtained to cover costs to the greatest extent possible, and the remaining needed Harbor Department funds are also available. Hence, staff will need to seek subsequent Board approval to advance this project to the final design and

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construction phases, which are estimated to cost about \$2.5 million and \$22.5 million, respectively. Additionally, in the first or second quarter of 2015, the Engineering Division will be seeking Board approval of a contract with a consultant to assist staff and Caltrans in preparing the various work elements, as well as a cooperative agreement with Caltrans for their participation and reimbursement of costs (to be paid by the Measure R funds).

Project Description - The proposed project, as illustrated in Transmittal 1, entails the following:

- Removal of the existing WB SR 47/VTB loop off-ramp (south of VTB) with Harbor Blvd.
- Construction of a new WB SR 47/VTB loop off-ramp (north of VTB) with Front St., including new signal at Front St. (directly opposite West Basin Container Terminal gate)
- Realignment of the existing WB on-ramp from Front St. to accommodate the new off-ramp
- Realignment of Knoll Dr. (south) at intersection with Front St.
- Realignment of existing EB SR 47/VTB on-ramp (south of VTB) from Harbor Blvd. further to the west to increase the EB merge length on the bridge approach

Project Purpose/Benefits

- Eliminates the non-standard weave on the existing WB off-ramp (weave with the abutting EB SR 47 off-ramp), which has a significant truck proportion and causes: significant delay, upstream ramp queues onto I-110 and SR 47, and accident potential
- Improves existing ramp terminal intersection operating conditions on Harbor Blvd., and is needed to accommodate projected increases in traffic
- Eliminates the non-standard EB on-ramp merge to VTB, which reduces accident potential

The Harbor Department will manage the project in collaboration with Caltrans. The Measure R funds will be used to pay for all consultant costs that will be incurred to assist staff in preparing the following required work elements: *Caltrans Project Study Report*; *Caltrans Project Report*; environmental documentation; and preliminary engineering. Harbor Department staff time costs, which are not reimbursable, are considered an in-kind match.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The proposed action is limited to approval of the funding agreement and does not constitute approval of the project. An environmental assessment for construction and operation of the proposed project will be conducted separately (and as part of this initial phase of work), in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Caltrans will be the lead agency for the NEPA and CEQA assessments, with the Harbor Department acting as a responsible agency pursuant to CEQA. Therefore, as an administrative activity, the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines.

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ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

Approval of the FA will have no employment impact.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The \$25 million project is not presently contained in the Harbor Department's CIP or FY14-15 budget. The \$1 million in Measure R grant funds will cover all outside direct costs (consultant and required Caltrans costs). Harbor Department funds are not required as a match. The Measure R funds are paid on a monthly reimbursement basis, so the Harbor Department must front-fund these direct costs, which are estimated to be on average about \$42,000/month, over approximately two years. Staff will need to seek subsequent Board approval to advance this project to the final design and construction phases, which are estimated to cost about \$2.5 million and \$22.5 million, respectively.

CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the Funding Agreement as to form and legality.

TRANSMITTALS:

- 1. Preliminary Project Layout
- 2. Draft Funding Agreement

FIS Approval: MB (initials)

CA Approval: [Signature] (initials)



KERRY CARTWRIGHT, P.E.
Director of Goods Movement



ANTONIO V. GIOIELLO, P.E.
Development

APPROVED:



EUGENE D. SEROKA
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