

DATE: November 19, 2020

TO: Transportation Committee

FROM: Marisa Creter, Executive Director

RE: **SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY**

RECOMMENDED ACTION

For information only.

SUMMARY

Measure R funding previously was included for the potential eastward extension of the Metro Gold Line (L Line) from its current terminus in East Los Angeles along the SR-60 freeway to South El Monte. Based on the outcome of the project environmental studies, it was determined by Metro that the SR-60 Gold Line alignment was not a feasible alternative. The Metro Board of Directors subsequently directed staff to provide funding and work with SGVCOG staff to undertake a study to identify alternative transit solutions to solve the mobility needs within the San Gabriel Valley (see Attachment A). Metro's recently approved FY 2021 budget includes \$1.5 million for this study.

BACKGROUND

As part of the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project, numerous transit alternatives had been evaluated within the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities. In 2007, the alternatives analysis identified various alternatives including Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Two LRT alternatives, SR 60 and Washington, were studied in the 2014 Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Draft Environmental Impact State/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR). Due in part to concerns regarding the SR-60 Alternative raised by the local community, stakeholders and cooperating agencies, the Metro Board of Directors deferred the selection of a locally preferred alternative and directed Metro staff to carry out additional technical work to address the issues.

In 2019, Metro initiated the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project, which included three LRT alternatives that would extend the Metro Gold Line further east from the existing terminus station at the Atlantic Station in the unincorporated area of East Los Angeles. The project alternatives included:

- SR 60 Alternative – approximately 6.9 miles, would extend the Metro Gold Line to South El Monte traveling along and parallel to the SR-60 freeway;
- Washington Alternative – approximately 8.9 miles, would extend the Metro Gold Line to Whittier via Washington Boulevard; and
- Combined Alternative – approximately 16 miles, proposes the build out of both the SR 60 Alternative and the Washington Alternative.

From the onset, the SR-60 Alternative posed environmental and engineering challenges associated with running along or parallel to the SR-60 freeway, adjacent to sensitive land uses and environmental resources. The concerns were analyzed and reevaluated through several studies beginning with the 2014 Draft EIS/EIR, the 2017 Post Draft EIS/EIR Technical Study, and additional focused technical analyses initiated in 2019.

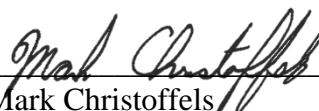
Due to design constraints, environmental impacts, outreach efforts, and consistency with updated Metro policies, the SR-60 Alternative and Combined Alternative were withdrawn from the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 environmental study. In May 2020, the Metro Board directed Metro staff to “prepare a feasibility study to evaluate high quality transit service options to serve the San Gabriel Valley.” This motion was amended by Metro Directors Solis, Fasana, and Barger to transfer funding for this study to the SGVCOG as part of the FY 2021 Metro budget.

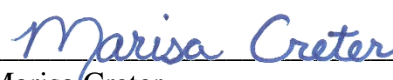
Recently, Metro approved the FY 2021 budget, which included \$1.5 million in funding for this study. Metro is currently drafting a funding agreement with the SGVCOG to undertake this study which is intended to identify alternative transit solutions to solve the mobility needs within the San Gabriel Valley and continue to work with key stakeholders and the communities in this area to identify alternative transit solutions.

The study will identify and analyze the mobility needs for the San Gabriel Valley that are not currently, nor will be served in the future, by the Gold Line (Eastside and Foothill) and Metrolink rail systems. The study will also identify all existing modes of travel and travel demand, determine where gaps currently exist, and develop transit solutions both near term and long term. The transit alternatives to be evaluated may include, but are not limited to, BRT, LRT, Diesel/Electric Motorized Units (DMU’s), or monorail, as well as the identification of opportunities to connect the transit alternatives to existing/planned transit networks of Metro, Metrolink, and/or Foothill Transit and other local transit agencies.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for this study will be issued later this month with proposal due in January. It is anticipated that a contract award will be made in March and the study will take 18 months to complete. The study will include an extensive outreach program that will include all impacted cities and affected agencies within the study area.

SGVCOG Chief Engineer, Mark Christoffels, will provide a presentation on this item.

Prepared by: 
Mark Christoffels
Chief Engineer

Approved by: 
Marisa Creter
Executive Director

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Metro Report on San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

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metro.net

JULY 1, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

FROM: JAMES DE LA LOZA
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

ISSUE

On May 28, 2020 the Board approved Item #5, San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study, including Motion #5.1 (Attachment A, Legistar File 2020-0368). The motion directed staff to partner with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) to deliver the feasibility study. The study will identify a short- and long-term replacement for the Eastside Transit Corridor Route 60 Alternative which was eliminated from further consideration at the February 2020 Board Meeting.

Staff has begun coordination with SGVCOG and is developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to create a partnership between Metro and the SGVCOG to procure and complete the study. Metro staff will outline the parameters for Measure M transit capital funding and is working to identify available funds as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget for the procurement and initiation of the feasibility study subject to budget approval.

BACKGROUND

In February 2020 the Board approved staff recommendations to withdraw the State Route (SR) 60 and Combined Alternatives from the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 (ESP2) project due to constraints. In addition, the Board approved Motion Item # 8.1 (Attachment B, Legistar File 2020-0172) which directed staff to commence with an independent feasibility study that evaluates

short-term and long-term transit options to serve the mobility needs of the San Gabriel Valley.

The Board Motion identified \$635.5 million of Measure M Cycle 2 funding during the "funding years" of the Measure R Expenditure Plan for a short-term transit solution and directed staff to return with a funding plan for the transit feasibility study. As a result, Metro Staff initiated the technical and outreach scope of services for the San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study and developed a funding plan which would require a Measure M ordinance amendment.

The Board approved Item # 5 (Attachment C, Legistar File 2020-0255) at the May 2020 Board Meeting which included an update on the San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study and the proposed funding plan identifying Measure R and Measure M funding.

Measure M encompasses Measure R funding and provides for two cycles of funding to allow two alignments to be constructed as part of ESP2, but at different points in time. One project to proceed earlier in the Measure M plan (\$3 billion in FY29-35) and a second to go forward later (\$3 billion in FY53-57) when future sales tax and State funding are projected to be available. The funding plan proposes that the funding commitment of \$635.5 million be funded from Cycle 2 Measure M funds for the short-term transit solution. The Measure M ordinance restriction on Cycle 2 construction spending would require an amendment to reallocate funding from Cycle 2 in a clear and transparent manner.

DISCUSSION

Staff has initiated coordination with SGVCOG on this partnership and will enter into an MOU that will allow the SGVCOG to procure professional services to support this effort and submit regular invoices to Metro for reimbursement of incurred expenses. Throughout this study, Metro staff will continue to coordinate with the SGVCOG and provide support as needed.

Community and stakeholder engagement is anticipated to be a key component of this effort to be led by the SGVCOG. Completion of the feasibility study is expected to be a multi-year effort that will be initiated in FY21.

NEXT STEPS

Metro staff will continue to work with the SGVCOG to develop the MOU consistent with Measure M parameters for transit capital funds and Metro procurement requirements including Metro's Diversity and Economic Opportunity goals.

As part of the FY21 budget update, staff is working to identify funds for the feasibility study. Authorization for this study to proceed without delay is subject to the approval of funding in the FY21 budget.

Upon completion of the San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study, staff will report back to the Board with the results of the feasibility study and proposed amendments to the Measure M ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Legistar File 2020-0368

Attachment B - Legistar File 2020-0172

Attachment C - Legistar File 2020-0255



Metro

Board Report

File #: 2020-0368, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 5.1.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
MAY 20, 2020**

Motion by:

DIRECTORS SOLIS AND FASANA

Related to Item 5: San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study

SUBJECT: SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Amending Motion by Directors Solis and Fasana

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the Board direct the CEO to report back in 30 days with recommendations to transfer funding to the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments as part of the FY21 budget for the procurement and completion of the Feasibility Study. Recommendations should include provisions typical of Metro procurements such as small, disadvantaged, and/or disabled veteran business enterprise goals.

Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA



Board Report

File #: 2020-0255, File Type: Informational Report

Agenda Number: 5.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
MAY 20, 2020**

SUBJECT: SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the response to Board Motion Item 8.1 (Attachment A, Legistar File 2020-0172) on the February 2020 Board report, Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 (Attachment B, Legistar File 2020-0027) directing staff to:

- 1) Prepare a feasibility study to evaluate high-quality transit service options to serve the San Gabriel Valley, and
- 2) Include recommendations for a Funding Plan for the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities subregions that encompasses Measure R and Measure M funding for Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 to demonstrate subregional equity.

ISSUE

In February 2020 the Board approved the staff recommendations to withdraw the SR 60 and Combined Alternatives from the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project (Attachment B) and directed staff to prepare an independent feasibility study that evaluates options to serve the mobility needs of the San Gabriel Valley. The Board approved a Motion (Attachment A) directing staff to return in May 2020 with a plan for the feasibility study and the development of a high-quality transit service option in the San Gabriel Valley subregion including a Funding Plan that encompasses Measure R and Measure M funding. The Board identified \$635.5 million of Measure R funding for improvements to be identified in the San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study and to be consistent with the funding years in the Measure R Expenditure Plan.

As a result, Metro staff has initiated the development of the technical and outreach scope of services for the San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study. The feasibility study is anticipated to commence in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, with an approximate 18-month schedule, and would identify short- and long-term solutions that serve the mobility needs in the San Gabriel Valley. In response to the Board motion, Metro staff has developed a Funding Plan within the parameters identified in the Board motion.

BACKGROUND

Numerous transit alternatives within the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities have been evaluated as part of the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project. In 2007, the alternatives analysis identified various alternatives including light rail transit (LRT) and bus rapid transit (BRT). Two LRT alternatives, SR 60 and Washington Boulevard, were studied in the 2014 Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/EIR). Due in part to concerns regarding the SR 60 Alternative raised by the community, stakeholders, and Cooperating Agencies, the Metro Board deferred the selection of a locally preferred alternative and directed staff to carry out additional technical work to address the issues.

Since that time, Metro conducted additional technical analysis and reinitiated the environmental process. The constraints along the SR 60 freeway became more evident with further technical analysis and in February 2020, the Metro Board approved the withdrawal of the SR 60 and Combined Alternatives from the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 environmental study.

Stakeholders and communities along the SR 60 corridor have shown a vested commitment and support for transit in the southern San Gabriel Valley. Metro recognizes the mobility challenges that exist within the San Gabriel Valley and the need to connect the communities in eastern Los Angeles County to the regional transit network. Metro will continue to work with key stakeholders and the communities in the San Gabriel Valley to evaluate and identify mobility solutions.

Funding

Measure M provides \$3.976 billion to the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2, to be expended in two cycles:

- Cycle 1 includes \$1.086 billion of Measure M and \$3 billion estimated project cost for one alignment with a 2029 groundbreaking date and an expected opening date from 2035-37
- Cycle 2 includes \$2.89 billion of Measure M and \$3 billion estimated project cost with a 2053 groundbreaking date and an opening date from 2057-59

Measure R and Measure M did not provide for splitting the corridor into two concurrent projects. Measure R provided for one corridor to be built with funds conceptually attributable to both sub-regions. Measure M provided additional funding to allow two projects to be constructed, but at different points in time. One project was to proceed earlier in the Measure M plan (\$3 billion in FY29-35) and a second to go forward later (\$3 billion in FY53-57), when future sales tax and State funding are projected to be available.

DISCUSSION

The February 2020 Board action directed staff to commence an independent feasibility study focused exclusively on a San Gabriel Valley transit project to replace the previous SR 60 Alternative. Metro staff has initiated the development of the scope of services for technical and outreach services and will procure professional services to assist with this effort. The anticipated duration of the study is approximately 18 months. The feasibility study will identify short- and long-term solutions that serve

the mobility needs in the San Gabriel Valley. The feasibility study will allow Metro to continue to work with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, the SR 60 corridor cities, key stakeholders, and the communities in this area to identify alternative transit solutions including but not limited to BRT, LRT, and monorail. These solutions will be developed in close coordination with stakeholders in the San Gabriel Valley.

The study will build upon the analysis and alternatives developed during early work on the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 planning process and will identify alternatives to serve the SR 60 corridor cities and potentially the communities near the Los Angeles County/San Bernardino County border. Additionally, the feasibility study will identify opportunities to potentially provide new connections to the Foothill section of Metro L (Gold) Line as well as Metrolink and/or Foothill Transit lines. The potential alternatives will be evaluated in order to identify the most promising transit solutions for the subregion. This effort will be supported by a complementary professional services contract for community and stakeholder engagement utilizing the Communications Bench.

In response to the Board Motion Item #8.1, Metro staff are recommending a funding plan to address the parameters included in the Board motion and provide \$635.5 million of funding for the San Gabriel Valley during the "funding years" of the Measure R Expenditure Plan.

Consistency with the Equity Platform

The project is consistent with Metro's Equity Platform and will work to provide a reliable and high-quality transit alternative to the communities of eastern Los Angeles County to help solve the mobility challenges in the San Gabriel Valley and meet the mobility needs of the area's residents and businesses. The feasibility study will incorporate Equity Focused Communities and other demographic data to identify and solve mobility challenges consistent with the Equity Platform. Additionally, the study will incorporate the principle of "listen and learn" and will include comprehensive and meaningful engagement opportunities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study- The FY20 budget does not include funding for the proposed San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study. Staff has identified initial funding sources from Cost Center 4310 (Mobility Corridors Team 1) and is currently working to identify available funds for inclusion in the proposed FY21 budget. Authorization for this study to proceed without delay is subject to the identification and approval of funding in the FY21 budget. Since this is a multi-year program, the Cost Center Manager and Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting in future years.

San Gabriel Valley Short- and Long-Term Transit Improvements- In response to the Board Motion, Metro staff is recommending a Funding Plan that addresses the following requirements of the motion:

- a) Honor the commitment of \$635.5 million made to the San Gabriel Valley subregion as part of Measure R documentation;
- b) The commitment will be consistent with the funding years in Measure R;

- c) Include recommendations for funding and cash flow that encompasses all Measure R and Measure M funding for the project; and,
- d) Ensure financial capacity to move the project forward as a Pillar Project.

These requirements are generally understood to require that \$635.5 million is made available to the satisfaction of the San Gabriel Valley subregion (i.e., for a transit project that is for the benefit of or is spent within the boundaries of the subregion) during FY22-35, considers funding for both cycles of the project, and does not inhibit the funding of cycle 1.

Given requirement c) above, the commitment could be funded from the cycle 2 Measure M funds, if the Board would support defunding cycle 2. The defunding may reduce the ultimate scope of the cycle 2 project. However, there are several restrictions and important considerations regarding the cycle 2 funds including:

- The Measure M cycle 2 funds (the "Gold Line Eastside Ext. Second Alignment" project funding in the Measure M Expenditure Plan) are not eligible for construction until FY53;
- The cycle 2 funding is programmed in the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) financial forecast during FY50-57;
- The cycle 1 funding plan is based on preliminary cost estimates from the Expenditure Plan and relies on assumed State grant funding that has yet to be pursued or awarded;
- Moving the Measure M cycle 2 funds from FY50-57 to FY22-35 (the Measure R funding years identified in the Expenditure Plan) will take away funding from both the cycle 2 project and other Board-approved Measure M projects and programs scheduled for FY22-35; and,
- Metro has a policy that the acceleration of Measure M funding cannot negatively impact other Measure M projects.

In order to overcome the ordinance restriction on cycle 2 construction spending, the ordinance can be amended. This would reallocate funding from cycle 2 to cycle 1 in a clear and transparent manner. Alternatively, Metro could consider the trading or swapping of funding as a workaround to the construction spending restriction; however, this creates an administrative need to account for the use of funds that increases the risk of noncompliance with the ordinance, and may not be entirely consistent with the ordinance provisions that specify the amount of Measure M funding by project.

The Funding Plan recommendations are as follows:

1. Retain all funding assigned to the cycle 1 project per the 2019 LRTP financial forecast;
2. Pursue an amendment to the Measure M ordinance that creates a new project or program

(e.g., "San Gabriel Valley Eastside Transit Commitment") with \$635.5 million of Measure M transit funding, exclude the funding for this new commitment from the Measure M inflation adjustments allowed by the ordinance, and reduce Measure M funding for the "Gold Line Eastside Ext. Second Alignment" by approximately \$700 to \$750 million (the precise amount to be determined at the time of the amendment);

3. Pursue a Board action that requires the approval of the San Gabriel Valley subregion of the use of Measure M funding for the commitment;
4. Pursue a Board finding that the addition of \$635.5 million for a new San Gabriel Valley Measure M transit commitment, and corresponding reduction of approximately \$700 to \$750 million from the cycle 2 project does not negatively impact other Measure M projects; and,
5. Defer any of the recommendations upon the completion of the San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study.

The amount of the reduction in cycle 2 Measure M funding is greater than the \$635.5 million commitment in order to mitigate the financial impact of the acceleration of Measure M funds. The acceleration of funding for the commitment comes at a cost - it will likely result in additional debt financing for Measure M projects and programs, with associated interest cost. The relatively larger reduction in cycle 2 funding in FY50-57 provides capacity to fund the expected additional interest cost.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This response to the Board Motion supports the Metro Vision 2028 Strategic Plan. Specifically, the project supports Goals #1 and #3 of the Strategic Plan: Goal #1. Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling and Goal #3. Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity.

By continuing efforts that provide high-quality mobility options, enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to transit, and addressing mobility challenges in San Gabriel Valley, Metro is continuing to work towards equitable and accessible transit services, reduce travel times and roadway congestion, and enhance connections to the regional transit network.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could decide to delay this action. This is not recommended as this would delay the initiation of the San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to develop the scope of services for technical and outreach services required to produce the San Gabriel Valley transit feasibility study. Metro staff will report back to the Board with a request for approval proceeding the procurement process and a budget amendment, if required.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Metro Board Motion Item 8.1 (Legistar File 2020-0172)

Attachment B - Metro Board Report Item 8 (Legistar file 2020-0027)

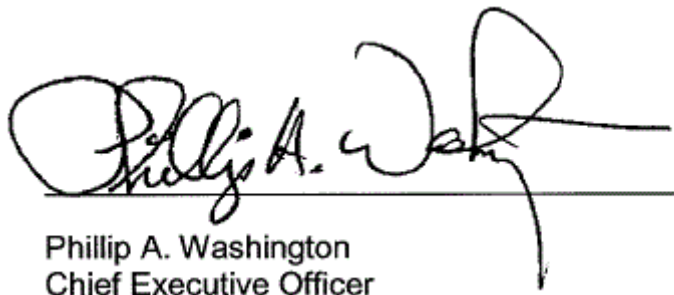
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