

Meeting Date: 09/08/08

Item Number:

AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Initiating Proceedings for the Formation of Benefit Assessment District West Washington Boulevard No. 1, the Levy of Annual Assessments therein and Ordering the Preparation of an Assessment Engineer's Report.

ATTACHMENTS:

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Attachment 1

City of Culver City, California Redevelopment Agency Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 12/03/07		Item Number: <u>A-1</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of an Area Improvement Plan Along West Washington Boulevard.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Sol Blumenfeld		Phone Number: (310) 253-5702	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Master Notification List (11/28/07).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (11/26/07)		Agency General Counsel Approval: 	
Fiscal Impact Review: Marlee Chang (11/29/07)		Executive Director Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (11/29/07)	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Culver City Redevelopment Agency ("The Agency") consider and direct staff on the implementation of an Area Improvement Demonstration Project along West Washington Blvd.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

Staff has developed a West Washington Area Improvement Plan ("AIP") that focuses on a small area immediately adjacent to the Agency acquired property between Moore Street and Meir Street, ("Baldwin Site"). The AIP is intended to be a demonstration project that can be replicated in a phased approach to other segments of Washington Blvd. The location for the first phase was selected to enhance the immediate area of the catalytic project site currently in disposition negotiations and to illustrate the critical synergy of public and private improvements in revitalizing a larger area.

The Agency has acquired property in the West Washington Area, with the intent of eliminating blight and for the development of catalytic projects that will eventually stimulate private sector reinvestment in the area. To date, the Agency has invested more than \$14 million (Washington/Centinela and Baldwin sites) in property acquisition and land assembly in the West Washington Area. Though initial efforts at redeveloping these properties were delayed the "Baldwin Site" is moving forward now with a Disposition and Development Agreement and the reconstituted RFP process for the "Washington/Centinela Site" has concluded and the results will be presented for consideration by the Agency. The Baldwin

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project is particularly noteworthy because it combines green building with quality architecture and good urban design that immediately benefits the surrounding community with a public parking lot upon completion. It is important as these two catalytic projects move forward, to look beyond the project sites and focus upon area redevelopment and planning tools that will more quickly help turn West Washington around. These tools have been organized around the concept of an Area Improvement Plan that can quickly be developed and implemented. The Area Improvement Plan is proposed initially for the three blocks between Wade Street and Beethoven Street adjacent to the Baldwin property. Staff is proposing a collaborative effort using each of the Department's Divisions to implement this comprehensive redevelopment strategy that provides much more than a stand-alone catalytic project can in order to stimulate area improvement.

In 2001, significant planning work had been completed for the West Washington Area with the West Washington Revitalization Plan facilitated by the ULI. Five goal areas were established to include: 1.) Public Improvements, 2.) Private Improvements, 3.) Economy, 4.) Image and Identity, and 5.) Partnerships. This detailed plan also divided the 2.3 mile stretch of West Washington from Del Rey to the 405 into three segments to include a retail gateway, a main street area, and a health care section. The AIP recommendations are in line with this vision and focuses on the key elements of revitalization – parking, facade improvements, business attraction, public improvements and land planning within the targeted area abutting the Baldwin property.

Components of the Area Improvement Plan

1. Redevelopment & Code Enforcement Activities:

Code enforcement, owner participation and acquisition and disposition of under performing properties in the area will be used to encourage area improvement. This will be an on-going effort, initially involving the use of Planning and Code Enforcement staff to survey area conditions and identify businesses or properties that are under-performing or that have code violations. These properties or businesses will be brought into code compliance using the newly organized Enforcement Services Division.

2. Public Improvements:

Use strategic public improvements to achieve specific urban design objectives for the area. Staff is recommending that the improvements be used to "seed" the area for change with relatively low cost, but high visual impact medians initially. (Please see attached photos). These improvements may be expanded as funding with assessment and maintenance districts is initiated for the West Washington area. (See No. 7 below). It is proposed the capital improvements

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would encompass construction of a landscaped median and the potential for the installation of pedestrian-friendly street lights

3. Parking Improvements:

West Washington is generally comprised of older under-parked buildings and no public parking. The lack of public and private parking undermines opportunities for redevelopment and reinvestment. The Baldwin site presents a new prototype for area development by incorporating at-grade public parking integrated as part of the site development. Public parking signage along the Washington Boulevard and on building frontage will clearly identify this new public metered parking for area customers. Similar parking opportunities are available through the new "community benefits" measures proposed in the revised Mixed Use Ordinance and staff will work with developers on area mixed use projects to ensure that new or expanded area parking improvements are included whenever practical.

4. Commercial Rehabilitation:

Using budgeted Agency commercial rehabilitation program funds, staff is recommending that a program be targeted initially within the Area Improvement Plan. The program will be focused on building façade and signage improvements. (Please see Proposed Commercial Rehabilitation Program section below).

5. Business Attraction:

West Washington is comprised of underdeveloped properties, auto service uses and the lack of pedestrian serving retail business. A business attraction program should be targeted initially within the Area Improvement Plan. The Redevelopment Division's new Business Resource Center will act as a clearinghouse to help guide new businesses or encourage business relocations to the area. Working with the real estate industry, staff will help shepherd area project plans through the permit process and direct new businesses to the area.

6. Land Use Planning:

Through the Planning Division, over the next quarter (January – March '08), staff will review the West Washington Revitalization Plan and resurvey the area to identify any changes since 2001 and prepare a list of planning problems and opportunities that can be addressed potentially through code amendments, overlay zones or more broadly through the City's General Plan Update to achieve Area Improvement Plan objectives. A land use plan will be prepared documenting the area recommendations.

7. Assessment District (Lighting and Landscape):

The Agency may fund the costs for installing landscaped medians and improving lighting, however, the local businesses will need to form an assessment district to

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fund maintenance and operation of these improvements. Staff will prepare a detailed cost estimate using standard assessment district formulae (per foot of linear commercial frontage, etc.) and present it for Agency and Council approval at a subsequent meeting.

Current Business/Use Composition

Currently, the area is not a pedestrian destination or retail centered. The segment of West Washington Boulevard from Beethoven Street to Wade Street is comprised of primarily smaller, independent businesses with only a few larger, national retailers. Of the approximate 30 businesses in this area, two are dedicated to automotive uses, four are dedicated to retail uses, three are dedicated to dining and 14 are dedicated to small neighborhood and service uses such as shoe repair, vacuum/tv repair and hair salons, however, many of these require façade improvements. There are also a large number of independent healthcare providers (approximately 13), primarily in the chiropractic and dentistry fields. Many of these businesses would benefit with simple façade and sign improvements that can be offered in the proposed AIP. Per Agency direction, staff will begin public outreach efforts to these businesses and property owners regarding this improvement opportunity.

Additionally, with the migration of creative office infiltrating from the Glencoe/Marina Del Rey terminus, there may be opportunity to attract more upscale businesses and services to the area.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The AIP proposes will create synergy within Community Development Department operations, using intradepartmental resources and staffing to "encourage" business rehabilitation and property improvements to direct business and property owners to the proposed Commercial Rehabilitation Program. Proposed improvements will be limited to demonstration areas in order to "seed" change and expanded when there is enough interest to create an area assessment district for improvement and maintenance beyond the demonstration area.

1. Public improvements for the initial, conceptual median segment are estimated to cost \$300,000. This is based upon similar cost estimates developed in 2005 and updated to 2007 costs. It would take three to four months to prepare plans and implement them for the area.¹

Bond Funds (Fund 553) are available and could be utilized for this improvement. The initial investment by the Agency can be expanded through an assessment

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district organized among area property owners. The meter revenues generated by the Baldwin Site will generate up to \$68,000 per year, over a ten year period.

2. Parking improvements are proposed to be developed through private sector mixed use development projects utilizing the "community benefit" principle proposed in the revised ordinance.

3. Commercial Rehabilitation Program funding is proposed using budgeted Agency funds that totals \$150,000. The Commercial Rehabilitation Program will be directed at facade and signage improvements. With a maximum proposed grant per building or businesses of \$10,000, up to 15 projects can be assisted in the target area. Fifteen building or business improvements within the three block area would have a significant impact on the look of the area. These funds will be used only for Agency approved projects that are consistent with the goals for the area. This is expected to be a one-time cost for the Agency.

4. Staff is not proposing any property acquisitions within the Area Improvement Plan, but will encourage Owner Participation Agreements ("OPA") for new projects whenever possible. The costs associated with these OPA will vary depending upon the scope of work, but such costs are significantly less than property condemnation and land assembly when the Agency acquires property. ⁱ

5. Business Attraction Programming is proposed to operate through the newly organized Business Resources Center and will not require added staffing or additional project costs.

6. Land Planning activities will be conducted through the Planning Division with support from Redevelopment and GIS staff. The work will be programmed into the annual work plan and involve not more than three months of part-time work shared among the Planning and Redevelopment Division staff members. (See Attached Work Plan).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Map of Demonstration Area – Phase I and II
2. Photos of Existing Right of Way
3. Photos of Proposed Medians
4. Prototypical Parking Design
5. Planning Division Work Plan
6. Project Schedule (to be provided at Agency Meeting)

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MOTION:

That the Redevelopment Agency:

Consider and provide direction on the implementation of an Area Improvement Plan along West Washington Blvd.

Footnotes.

1. Assumes no subterranean structures, utilities or easements that may require relocation or accommodation.



Culver City

BASE MAP

WEST WASHINGTON
AREA IMPROVEMENT PLAN Phase 1

Phase 1 Boundary

CULVER CITY, CA
January 11, 2003



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1 **WHEREAS**, the City Council has determined that the property owners
2 will receive special benefit from the improvements within the proposed District; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the City Council has retained the consulting firm of NBS
4 for the purpose of assisting with the formation and annual levy of assessments and the
5 preparation of an Assessment Engineer's Report relating to the proposed formation of the
6 District and the levy and collection of assessments for the fiscal year commencing July 1,
7 2009 and ending June 30, 2010 (the "Engineer's Report"), to be filed with the City Clerk in
8 accordance with CCMC Section 15.01.055.
9

10 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Culver City, DOES
11 HEREBY RESOLVE as follows:

12 1. The City Council hereby proposes the formation of the District and the
13 levy and collection of assessments for said District.
14

15 2. The proposed improvements within the District may include, but are
16 not limited to: landscaping, planting, shrubbery, trees, turf, irrigation and drainage systems,
17 hardscapes, walls, lighting and appurtenant facilities including any other improvements and
18 services authorized by the CCMC within the boundaries of said District. Services provided
19 include all necessary service, operations, administration and maintenance required to keep
20 the improvements in a healthy, vigorous and satisfactory condition. The Engineer's Report
21 shall describe all improvements.
22

23 3. The proposed District is designated as: Benefit Assessment District
24 West Washington Boulevard No. 1.

25 4. The City Council hereby orders the preparation of the Engineer's
26 Report in accordance with the requirements of CCMC Section 15.01.055, to be filed with
27
28

1 the City Clerk for submission to the City Council. The Engineer's Report shall be prepared
2 by NBS and approved by the City Engineer prior to filing with the City Clerk.

3 APPROVED and ADOPTED this ____ day of _____ 2008.
4
5

6 _____
7 D. SCOTT MALSIN, MAYOR
8 City of Culver City, California

9 ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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11 _____
12 MARTIN COLE, City Clerk
A08-00368

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12 CAROL A. SCHWAB, City Attorney
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August 25, 2008

XXXXXX

NOTICE OF IMPORTANT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM:
RESOLUTION OF INITIATION FOR WEST WASHINGTON ASSESSMENT
DISTRICT, PHASE I

Dear XXXXXX,

Culver CITY

In December 2007, the Culver City City Council approved an Area Improvement Plan along West Washington Blvd. between Wade Street and Beethoven Street. This plan is the first in a multi-phase project that will enhance the Washington Boulevard corridor and stimulate private reinvestment to the area. A key component of this Area Improvement Plan involves the installation of streetscape medians funded by the Culver City Redevelopment Agency.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Culver City
Redevelopment Agency
Monday, September 8, 2008
7:00 PM
Mike Balkman Council Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Agenda Item:
Resolution of Initiation for
Assessment District Creation

Community Outreach Meeting
Tentative
Tuesday, October 14, 2008
Location TBD

Agenda Item:
Review Conceptual Plans for
Streetscape Medians

On May 1, 2008, Agency staff held a meeting for property owners who would be affected by this potential assessment district creation and provided information regarding this project. While the Agency has proposed to fund the improvements, it will only do so if the on-going median maintenance is carried out through a property based assessment district.

To this end, the City would like to initiate the creation of an assessment district and will be considering a Resolution of Initiation on Monday, September 8th. A Resolution of Initiation is the first step in creating an assessment district. It identifies the need and benefits for a prescribed area and affirms the Council's desire to further study the annual maintenance costs and assessments for potential improvements.

To determine these costs, the Agency is currently working with a landscape architect to develop conceptual plans for streetscape medians with drought tolerant and low maintenance planting to ensure that costs are held to a minimum. Staff will present these plans for your review at Community Meeting tentatively set for Tuesday, October 14, 2008.

Once these plans have been reviewed, A Resolution of Intent will be presented to the Council which will set the time and place for the Official Public Hearing to form the assessment district. Ballots will be sent out prior to this time for your pass/fail vote to establish an assessment district. It is anticipated that this process will take approximately four months from initiation to completion.

We hope that you will participate in these important meetings and share your comments and recommendations to guide the improvement of Washington Boulevard. If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please contact Elaine Gerety Warner at 310.253.5777.

Sincerely,

Sol Blumenfeld
Community Development Director