



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman
Council Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232
(310) 253-5851

Staff Report

File #: 16-531, **Version:** 1

Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector

Meeting Date: January 19, 2017

Contact Person/Dept: Eric Bruins/Public Works Department

Phone Number: 310-253-5616

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐

General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐

Public Hearing: ☐ **Action Item:** ☒ **Attachments:** ☒

Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas (01/17/17);

Department Approval: Charles Herbertson, Public Works Director/City Engineer (01/17/17)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) hear additional public input on the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector and make a motion recommending that the City Council:

1. Approve the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector in concept;
2. Direct staff to condition any future developments with a requirement to dedicate the right-of-way necessary to construct the currently approved conceptual project;
3. Direct staff to coordinate additional community outreach and analysis with the TOD Visioning Study;
4. Allocate funding for environmental and engineering in the fiscal year 2017/18 budget; and
5. Direct staff to pursue grant funding opportunities to secure funding for construction.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The City Council directed staff to evaluate the feasibility of connecting the Expo Station to Downtown Culver City with a high-quality bike facility. Project goals include: improving bicycle & pedestrian safety in the TOD District, promoting mobility options, increasing access to businesses and local destinations, and promoting community health and sustainability. The City retained TranspoGroup to develop project alternatives that would meet these goals.

TranspoGroup previously presented a concept proposal to the BPAC on September 8th, 2016. Based on feedback from the BPAC, TranspoGroup and City staff continued to develop the concept and engage with affected stakeholders. On January 7th, 2017, the BPAC hosted a public workshop to gather additional stakeholder input and gauge public support for the proposed project. Approximately 50 people attended the workshop. As of January 13th, 14 people have submitted comments via email.

The current proposal is described in the attached presentation and boards, which were displayed at the January 7th workshop.

DISCUSSION

At the January 7th workshop, several stakeholders requested more information about potential alternatives to the recommended alignment. City staff reviewed the following alternatives:

Venice-Culver Alternative

Venice and Culver Boulevards provide a relatively direct connection between the Metro Bike Hub at Venice/Robertson and Downtown Culver City. This alternative is not recommended for the following reasons:

- Venice is a very wide street that is not conducive to crossing. This alignment would require bike riders traveling from the Expo Station to Downtown to cross Venice twice, adding substantial time delay and discomfort to what would otherwise be a very short trip.
- The Expo Line bridge over Venice constrains the width of the westbound bike lane on Venice, likely making a protected bike lane infeasible between Robertson and Culver without the loss of a westbound traffic lane.
- A protected bike lane on Culver would require the loss of one traffic lane in each direction and substantial reconstruction of the entrance to the Ince parking garage.
- Extending the protected bike lane on Culver into Downtown Culver City would require the loss of on-street parking and/or a traffic lane in each direction.
- This alternative would not directly connect Culver City residents in the McManus Neighborhood/Arts District or future residents in the TOD District to Downtown Culver City. This alternative would not provide a strong connection to Linwood Howe for students living in eastern Culver City.
- The majority of the project would be in the City of Los Angeles, so the City would not have the authority to pursue this alignment.

Washington Blvd South Side Alternative

Several residents of the McManus Neighborhood/Arts District requested that the bike lane be on the south side of Washington Boulevard instead of switching to the north side at Robertson/Higuera. Staff agrees that this would provide a more direct connection to the neighborhood, though at the expense of providing a less direct connection to the Expo Station. Despite the apparent benefits of this alternative, it is not recommended for the following reasons:

- There is not adequate width for both the bike lane and a bus stop at the corner of Washington and Robertson/Higuera. (The recommended alternative avoids this conflict by changing sides of the street.) Keeping the bike lane on the south side of Washington would require the removal of the eastbound bus stop at Robertson/Higuera. This bus stop is the transfer point between Culver CityBus Line 1 and all of the buses that use the Robertson Transit Center. Requiring bus passengers to alight at Landmark and then walk back to Robertson would add considerable time to these transfers. Higuera is the main collector street for the neighborhood south of Washington, so this bus stop serves a substantial number of residents.
- There is not adequate right-of-way at the southwest corner of Washington and Robertson/Higuera to separate turning movements from bike movements. This would need to be addressed in one of three ways:
 - Right-of-way could be acquired from the adjacent property, which could potentially impact the building. (The additional right-of-way needed at the northeast corner for the recommended alternative is currently landscaping.)

- Bike movements could have a dedicated phase without concurrent vehicle movements. This would create additional vehicle delay on Washington compared to the recommended alternative. It would also cause additional delay for bike riders, which may discourage use of the bike lane.
 - Right turns could be restricted from eastbound Washington onto Higuera, limiting access to the neighborhood.
- This alternative would require a new signalized crossing between Landmark and National to reach the Expo Station, in close proximity to these existing signalized intersections.

Based on these factors, staff does not recommend either of these alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

1. January 7th Workshop Boards
2. January 7th Workshop Presentation
3. Public Comment Received via Email

MOTION

That the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector in concept;
2. Direct staff to condition any future developments with a requirement to dedicate the right-of-way necessary to construct the currently approved conceptual project;
3. Direct staff to coordinate additional community outreach and analysis with the TOD Visioning Study;
4. Allocate funding for environmental and engineering in the fiscal year 2017/18 budget; and
5. Direct staff to pursue grant funding opportunities to secure funding for construction.