



## Staff Report

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**Item #:** A-4.

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**CC - Consideration of the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector Feasibility Study and Direction to Staff to Take Specific Actions to Further the Development of this Concept and Advance the Project to the Environmental and Engineering Phases.**

**Meeting Date:** August 28, 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:**

**Commission Action Required:** Yes  No  **Date:** 01/19/17

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (08/23/17);

**Department Approval:** Charles D. Herbertson, Public Works Director/City Engineer (08/17/17)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Consider directing staff to continue developing the project through environmental and engineering phases; and
2. Consider directing staff to pursue grant funding opportunities to secure funding for construction.

### **BACKGROUND**

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. In June 2016, the City retained TranspoGroup to develop project alternatives that would meet these goals.

TranspoGroup presented an initial concept proposal to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) on September 8, 2016. Based on feedback from the BPAC, TranspoGroup and City staff

continued to develop the concept and engage with affected stakeholders. On January 7, 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 and an additional 19 people submitted comments via email. Additional information about community engagement is included in the attached report.

The recommended project would install a two-way protected bike lane on Washington Boulevard connecting to the Expo Bike Path at Wesley Street, the Expo Line station, and Town Plaza in Downtown Culver City. The project would also install a two-way protected bike lane on Robertson Boulevard from Washington to Venice Boulevard in order to connect the Washington facility to the Expo Phase II Bike Path north of Venice.

On January 19, 2017, the BPAC voted unanimously to support the recommended project concept after additional consultation with affected stakeholders between Ince and Robertson regarding turn lane and access issues. In February and March, staff completed additional outreach with both car dealerships and Sony Pictures. As a result of this supplemental outreach, staff has included a variation of the recommended project that maintains a center turn lane in front of the Sony Imageworks campus and the dealerships.

Additionally, if Council wishes to proceed, staff recommends further evaluation of two alternatives during preliminary engineering. These alternatives respond to concerns raised by stakeholders during the outreach process and merit additional study. One alternative would continue the protected bike lane on the south side of Washington through the entire project area, providing more direct access to the Arts District neighborhood on the south side of Washington. Another alternative would route the bikeway behind the Sony Imageworks campus via Higuera, Lindblade, and Ince, rather than across their front driveway on Washington. Additional analysis is needed to assess the tradeoffs associated with these alternatives. Staff would return to City Council with a recommendation for a final alignment at a future date.

For additional information about the recommended project, alternatives analysis, and community outreach process, please refer to the attached Expo-Downtown Bicycle Connector Feasibility Study report, published on May 17, 2017.

## **DISCUSSION**

At its meeting on June 12, 2017, the Council received and filed the Connector Study report and directed staff to condition any future developments with a requirement to dedicate the right-of-way necessary to construct the project recommended in the report. The Council further directed staff to return upon the completion of the TOD Visioning Study so that the Council could consider that effort's recommendations for the corridor and discuss their compatibility with the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector.

Although the TOD Visioning Study is not yet complete, their analysis has advanced to the point where they have determined that the vision they will likely be recommending is compatible with the Expo to Downtown Bicycle Connector, though the Council will need to decide to what degree it wants to incorporate the long-term vision, once it is determined, when making near-term infrastructure decisions.

## **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

If the Council wishes to proceed, staff recommends completing the environmental and engineering phases of this project to make it “shovel-ready” during the current fiscal year. Concurrently, staff would create a funding plan that evaluates federal, state, and regional grant opportunities as well as City-controlled funding sources, such as the Capital Improvement Program, Measure R Local Return, and Measure M Local Return.

The adopted FY 2017/18 budget includes \$350,000 for environmental and engineering, which is anticipated to be sufficient for bikeway design.

The currently recommended project has a preliminary cost estimate of between \$2.7 and \$3.75 million. A more comprehensive project would likely increase this cost, but could likely be offset by pursuing additional capital grant funds. Staff will return to Council with a more detailed analysis of these costs along with the alternatives analysis.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Expo-Downtown Bicycle Connector Feasibility Study
2. January 7<sup>th</sup> Public Workshop Boards
3. June 12<sup>th</sup> City Council Presentation
4. Public Comments

## **MOTION**

That the City Council:

1. Direct staff to continue developing the project through environmental and engineering phases;
2. Direct staff to pursue grant funding opportunities to secure funding for construction; and/or
3. Provide other direction as deemed appropriate.