



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

File #: 24-210, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-3.

CC - ACTION ITEM: (1) Ratification of Approval of Final Plans and Specifications for the Modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Pilot Project Western Segment and Authorization to Publish a Notice Inviting Bids; and (2) Adoption of a Resolution Granting California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemptions to the Modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Pilot Project and Certifying the Project Will Be Completed Using a Skilled and Trained Workforce.

Meeting Date: September 11, 2023

Contact Person/Dept: Diana Chang/Transportation Department

Phone Number: (310) 253-6566

Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Attachments:

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (09/06/2023)

Department Approval: Diana Chang, Chief Transportation Officer (08/22/2023)
Yanni Demitri, Public Works Director/City Engineer (08/22/2023)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) ratify the approval of the final plans and specifications for the modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Pilot Project (Project) Western Segment and authorize the publication of a Notice Inviting Bids; and (2) adopt a resolution granting CEQA Exemptions to the Modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Pilot Project and certifying the Project will be completed using a skilled and trained workforce.

BACKGROUND

On May 18, 2020, the City Council directed the Transportation Department to capitalize on reduced traffic as a result of the pandemic by transforming space on the street and installing dedicated bus lanes to improve mobility throughout the City. Subsequently, staff conducted preliminary planning work and returned to the Council on July 13, 2020, with a recommendation to implement mobility lanes on three major arterial corridors (Culver Blvd./Washington Blvd., Sepulveda Blvd., and Jefferson Blvd.) to bring positive and impactful changes to mobility throughout the City. The City Council directed staff to implement a bus and bike lane pilot using the quick-build model. Quick-build projects use low-cost, temporary materials that allow cities to test and implement changes to

roadway design in advance of making costlier, permanent improvements.

The main goal of the MOVE Culver City Pilot Project (MCC Project, also referred to as the MOVE Culver City- Tactical Mobility Lane Pilot Project) is to improve the infrastructure and services for the alternative modes and to offer the community equitable, convenient, and sustainable mobility options (walking, riding, and taking transit). This goal aligns with the City's draft General Plan 2045, Short Range Mobility Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Action Plan, City Council's Strategic Plan, and the Transit-Oriented Development Visioning Report in developing an integrated multi-modal transportation system to provide transportation options and access to all residents and visitors and leveraging mass transit and other alternative modes to accommodate the growth of and maintain the long-term vitality of the Culver City community. The MCC Project strives to prioritize efficient, safe, and sustainable modes of travel while minimizing the impact to vehicular traffic.

Project design took place from October 22, 2020 to January 1, 2021. On February 1, 2021, the City Council approved the project's Design Guidelines and the design plans, which included separate protected bus and bike lanes where space allowed and shared bus/bike lanes where space was constrained.

Project construction was originally scheduled for Spring 2021 but was delayed until Fall 2021 due to pandemic-related supply chain issues. On November 20, 2021, the MCC Project opened to the public following a six-week construction period. After minor adjustments based on public feedback, including redesigning the intersection at Washington Blvd./Ince Blvd., the Project's yearlong pilot data collection period began in January 2022. Throughout that period, the project team collected data on the project's impact to vehicle, bike, and pedestrian traffic, transit ridership, business revenues, and other metrics.

On April 24, 2023, the City Council received a presentation from staff on the results of the Downtown Corridor pilot. Following the presentation, the Council directed staff to continue with the MCC Project with a modified design for a maximum evaluation period of two years. This modified design will create shared bus and bike lanes throughout the project corridor and add a second general-purpose lane where it is feasible and needed to enhance capacity for vehicular traffic. The Project's boundary was also extended eastward by 0.6 miles along Washington Blvd. from La Cienega Ave. to Fairfax Ave. The Council also directed staff to create a protected bike lane on Adams Blvd. between Washington Blvd. and Fairfax Ave. to close the gap between existing bike lanes on Adams Blvd. in the City of Los Angeles and the Project.

On July 10, 2023, the City Council received a presentation from staff on the project design efforts and the conceptual design. Council directed staff to move forward with the design and provided feedback for potential incorporation into the design modification.

DISCUSSION

Construction Plans and Specifications

Since the July 10, 2023, council meeting, Staff have been developing construction plan documents in preparation of the bid to construct the Project. Staff have also evaluated the roadway conditions of the Project corridor and determined that there are certain segments of the corridor that are in need of resurfacing. As such, Staff determined that the design and the construction of the Project be split into two segments below.

1. The Western Segment (Culver Blvd. between Duquesne Ave. and Canfield Ave. and Washington Blvd. between Ince Blvd. and La Cienega Blvd.):

Staff is recommending the City Council ratify the approval of the final plans and specifications for the Western Segment (available at www.moveculvercity.com) and authorize the publication of a Notice Inviting Bids for the construction of the Western Segment. Concurrently, the Project will conduct procurements on certain required construction materials in preparation for the construction. Staff will return to the City Council in October 2023 for construction contract award. The construction of the Western Segment, which also includes resurfacing of Washington Blvd. between Ince Blvd. and Robertson Blvd., is anticipated to commence in October/November, with completion expected in December 2023.

2. The Eastern Segment (Washington Blvd. from La Cienega Blvd. to Fairfax Ave. and Adams Blvd. from Washington Blvd. to Fairfax Ave.):

Staff will return to the City Council in the future with the final plans and specifications for the Eastern Segment. In coordination with the Public Works Department resurfacing schedule, the construction of this segment will take place in mid-2024.

CEQA Resolution

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) granting a CEQA exemption for both segments of the Modified Project. As referenced in the Notice of Exemption document (Attachment 2), the Modified Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Class 1 - Existing Facilities Categorical Exemption (14 CCR § 15301) and statutorily exempt pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.25.

The Modified Project is consistent with a Class 1 Categorical Exemption, as it consists of improvements on existing highways and streets where there is negligible or no expansion of use and the addition of bicycle facilities, including bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossing, street trees and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes.

Notably, the Class 1 categorical exemption looks to the “existing or former use” for an evaluation of whether there has been an expansion of use. The project meets the criteria of the Class 1 categorical exemption as it includes transportation improvements along existing roadways involving the conversion of existing general-purpose lanes and on-street parking to shared bus-bike lanes and does not create additional automobile lanes beyond those that existed in the pre-pilot condition.

The Modified Project further qualifies for a statutory exemption under PRC Section 21080.25. Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.25(b)(8), exempt projects include those that consist of a combination of any of the components of a project identified in paragraphs (1) to (7) of Section 21080.25(b). The Modified Project converts automobile lanes and on-street parking into includes new bicycle facilities (meaning a marked lane shared between bicycles and vehicles) and transit facilities that will improve access and mobility within public rights-of way, which are components of paragraphs (1) to (7) of Section 21080.25(b). Also, PRC Section 21080.25(b)(3) exempts “transit prioritization projects.” The

Project's conversion of general-purpose lanes to shared bus-bike lanes qualifies it as a transit prioritization project.

The Project meets the criteria under PRC Section 21080.25 (c):

PRC Section 21080.25(c)(2) requires that a project eligible for CEQA categorical exemption under Section 21080.25 meet the following criterion:

“The project does not induce single-occupancy vehicle trips, add additional highway lanes, widen highways, or add physical infrastructure or striping to highways except for minor modifications needed for the efficient and safe movement of transit vehicles, bicycles, or high-occupancy vehicles, such as extended merging lanes, shoulder improvements, or improvements to the roadway within the existing right of way. The project shall not include the addition of any auxiliary lanes.”

Neither the temporary Original Project nor the Modified Project add additional highway lanes beyond the pre-pilot permanent condition and the physical infrastructure and striping that is added is for the efficient and safe movement of transit vehicles and bicycles.

The Project also meets the additional criteria required to assert the exemption under PRC Section 21080.25 (c)(1) and (c)(3), as a local agency (the City of Culver City) is carrying out the Project and is the lead agency for the Project, and the Project does not require demolition of affordable housing units.

Based on the above, the Project has been examined in the context of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c) and PRC Section 21080.25 and has been found consistent with the criteria for a categorical exemption. The proposed resolution certifies that the project will be completed by a skilled and trained workforce in compliance with PRC Section 21080.25(f)(1).

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for the MOVE Culver City-Downtown Corridor Project was included in the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. All activities are being financed through Capital Projects PS017 (Tactical Mobility Lane) and PS005 (Annual Street Pavement Rehabilitation Project). The ratification of approval of final plans and specifications in this report have no effect on previously established budget and contract authorities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution on CEQA Exemption and Workforce Certification
2. MOVE Culver City Tactical Mobility Project - Notice of Exemption

MOTIONS

That the City Council:

1. Ratify the approval of the final plans and specifications for the modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Modified Pilot Project Western Segment and authorize the publication of a Notice Inviting Bids; and
2. Adopt a resolution granting CEQA Exemption to the Modified MOVE Culver City - Downtown Corridor Pilot Project and certifying that the project will be completed by a skilled and trained workforce.