



## CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Honorable City Council

**Item No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Approval and Adoption of a Resolution Approving Washington Boulevard Coalition Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

**MEETING DATE:** October 15, 2019

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval and adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign the Washington Boulevard Coalition Memorandum of Understanding in a form acceptable to the City Attorney, in substantial conformance to the attached Memorandum of Understanding.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Eastside Gold Line Phase II light rail project will extend Gold Line light rail service east from the current terminus at Pomona and Atlantic Boulevards towards the City of Whittier.

A broad stakeholder coalition, which includes employers, educators, community members, health care providers and local governments, has coalesced to advocate for the Washington Boulevard alignment in the upcoming eastside extension of the Metro Gold Line light rail segment.

Over the last several years, there have been four cities that have advocated in partnership for the Washington Blvd alignment: Commerce, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs and Whittier. Recently, Montebello also took a support position for the Washington alignment. The various cities have dedicated countless hours studying, meeting, advocating, and engaging stakeholders. The cities support the Washington Boulevard alignment for the following reasons:

- It best supports regional land use objectives;
- It is projected to have the highest number of riders;
- It provides access to transit to the highest number of low income households and seniors;
- It provides services to the most transit-dependent populations;
- It allows the greatest overall user benefit hours, accessibility and connectivity;
- It connects communities by linking regional employment, education, shopping, healthcare and homes; and

- It provides an environmentally-friendly alternative to the detrimental impacts of freeway commuting and congestion and is an investment in a traditionally underserved region

In May 2017, Metro completed the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Technical Study, at which time the Metro Board directed the re-initiation of the environmental review process to assess the benefits and impacts of a State Route (SR) 60 Freeway alternative, the Washington Boulevard alternative, and a combined alternative.

At their January 2018 meeting, the Metro Board adopted the Twenty-Eight by '28 plan to complete twenty-eight major projects in advance of the 2028 Los Angeles Summer Olympics and Paralympics. Eight of the twenty-eight projects have been deemed “aspirational” and are not fully funded before the accelerated project completion date. In May 2019, the Metro Board reiterated their commitment to the four pillar projects on the Twenty-Eight by '28 plan, including the Gold Line Eastside Extension Phase II.

## **ANALYSIS**

The City of Commerce, within its jurisdictional boundaries, will be included in a portion of the Washington Boulevard alternative for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project. This alternative proposes below grade and aerial alignment and a light rail station at the Citadel Outlets. As part of the Washington Boulevard alignment, Metro is proposing to designate a maintenance and storage facility in an industrial area near Washington Boulevard and Garfield Avenue within the city boundaries, a site has not yet been identified. This will be a secured maintenance facility serving the light rail line consisting of tracks, equipment, supporting systems, and related site development.

The Citadel station can potentially have positive impacts such as:

- Economic Development opportunities
- First/Last mile improvements
- Transit Orientated Development opportunities
- Job creation
- Mobility for transit dependent riders
- Decrease in traffic congestion

As the activities of the Coalition have progressed, a need for closely coordinated responses, advocacy and monitoring has arisen. With the anticipated completion of the Environmental Study, it is imperative that the City of Commerce begin assessing the impacts and benefits the Washington Boulevard alternative can bring to the City. On February 19, 2019 City Council approved a resolution supporting the Washington Boulevard alternative for the Eastside Transit Corridor and it is pivotal that we formally adopt the attached Memorandum of Understanding which memorializes the key principles that unite the cities in the Washington Boulevard Coalition. As the lead land use agencies along the alignment, the cities will play a key role in ensuring the alternative is constructed. Among the activities that will be possible following adoption of the MOU are:

- Close monitoring, analysis and feedback of Metro Board reports regarding the Twenty Eight by '28 feasibility and constructability studies

- Implementation of a financial benefits analysis of the corridor
- Feasibility study and initiation of a potential Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District (EIFD) for the corridor

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve staff recommendation
2. Decline staff recommendation
3. Provide further direction

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Approval of the MOU has no immediate fiscal impact. Financial obligations arising from the MOU will be presented to the City Council for review and consideration at a future date.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:**

The issue before the City Council is consistent with the 2016 Strategic Plan – Goal #6: “Enhance Quality of Life Goal” and “Maintain and prioritize improvements to City facilities and infrastructures in accordance with adopted master planning documents including the Green Zone Action Plan to accommodate annual and long term goals.”

Approved as to form:	Noel Tapia, City Attorney
Recommended by:	Daniel Hernandez, Director of Public Works/Development Services
Respectfully submitted:	Edgar P. Cisneros, City Manager

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Memorandum of Understanding