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metro.netPLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 18, 2010MEASURE R PROJECT DELIVERY COMMITTEE
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SUBJECT: REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Approve one additional "Build Alternative" for study in the Regional Connector Draft Environmental Impact Study/Report (DEIS/DEIR).

The additional "Build Alternative" is a Fully Underground LRT Alternative (Little Tokyo Variations 1 and 2)-underground alternative via Second Street and under First and Alameda Streets (Attachment A). This alternative would be in addition to the Metro Board's previous approval to include: the "No Build", TSM, and two build alternatives.

RATIONALE

Staff has developed an additional build alternative in response to comments received during the environmental scoping process. This alternative was developed in cooperation with the Little Tokyo stakeholders and provides a reasonable alternative to issues raised during the ongoing working group meetings.

The proposed additional "Build Alternative" is identified in the environmental document as the "Fully Underground LRT (Little Tokyo Variation 1 and 2)". This alternative would extend the LRT tracks at 7th Street/Metro Center to the Metro Gold Line tracks near First and Alameda Streets. The alternative would include an additional Little Tokyo/Arts District Station as well as the three stations already identified in the Underground Emphasis-Broadway option. The alignment is identical to the Underground Emphasis-Broadway option included in the DEIS/DEIR with the exception of a complete undergrounding of the crossing at 1st and Alameda Streets. This allows LRT trains to continue to travel underground from under 2nd and Central through the intersection of First and Alameda Streets, keeping the LRT fully grade separated. Portals would be

constructed on both First and Alameda Streets to allow trains to surface and connect to both the Metro Eastside Extension and the Metro Gold Line to Pasadena. Little Tokyo Variation 1 locates a portal on First Street between Alameda and Garey Streets. Little Tokyo Variation 2 locates two narrower portals on First Street between Alameda and Vignes Streets. The ongoing discussions with the community stakeholders and continuing refinement of the designs may result in one of the variations being dropped from further consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding of \$6,700,800 for the Regional Connector project is included in the FY10 budget in cost center 4320 (Central Area Team) in project 460228 (Regional Connector) account 50316 (Services Professional/Technical). However, funding for the inclusion of the additional alternative in the DEIS/DEIR including Advanced Conceptual Engineering was not part of the FY10 budget. Staff has determined that if additional funds are required they will be absorbed within the FY10 budget. Since this is a multi-year project it will be the responsibility of the cost center manager and the Chief Planning Officer for budgeting expenditures in future years.

Impact to Bus and Rail Operating and Capital Budget

The funding for this project is State repayment of capital project loans. Although these are eligible for bus and rail operating and capital expenditures these funds have been programmed in the LRTP for this project due to the proposed tunneling element of the project. Therefore, no other source of funds were considered.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board has several options it could consider including:

1. Choosing not to include the alternative in the DEIS/DEIR;
2. Selecting additional alternatives for analysis and review in the DEIS/DEIR.

These options are not recommended because the technical analysis conducted to date reflects that the additional build alternative is worthy of further environmental analysis and has overwhelming public support. Including the additional build alternative in the DEIS/DEIR will allow staff to conduct the technical studies necessary to determine costs, impacts, and benefits. Deferral of further study would delay the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative and would preclude further efforts to qualify the project for state and federal funding grants.

