



Information Item

Date: October 5, 2009
(Revised 10/6/09)

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Jennifer Phillips, Assistant City Manager
Subject: Council Approved RDA Funded Priority Projects

Introduction

This report provides City Council with an update on the 15 Council approved RDA funded priority projects.

Background

On June 10, 2009, the City Council approved prioritization of \$283 million in RDA funding for 15 projects. These projects are identified in the list below:

- Citywide preservation and production of affordable housing \$ 43.6 million
- Civic Center Parks and Public Facilities
 - Planning and Design \$ 2.5 million
 - Palisades Garden Walk and Town Square \$ 25 million
 - Civic Auditorium Renovation \$ 25 million
 - Civic Auditorium District Projects \$ 21 million
 - Early Childhood Education Center \$ 4.4 million
 - Freeway Capping \$ 2 million
 - Expo Green Streets and Pathways \$ 20.9 million
 - Santa Monica High School Joint Use \$ 57 million
 - Shared Parking \$ 25 million
- Downtown Parking Property Acquisition \$ 27 million
- Traffic Signal Phase IV \$ 4.4 million
- Memorial Park Expansion \$ 2.3 million
- Pico Neighborhood Branch Library \$12.8 million
- Exposition Light Rail Station Enhancements \$ 10 million

The City's goal is to complete the design phase for all 15 projects during the next three years and be adequately prepared to issue debt by 2012 to achieve optimal funding terms for financing the construction of all the projects.

Discussion

Since the City Council's approval of these priority projects, the State of California again raided city and county Redevelopment Agencies taking \$2 billion in RDA funding. This raid has resulted in a \$21 million loss in funding for the City of Santa Monica's Redevelopment Agency for FY 2009-10 and an additional \$4 million for FY 2010-11. As a result, staff is currently prioritizing minimum funding requirements for FY 2009-10 to accommodate the \$21 million loss in funds and still ensure progress is made this fiscal year.

Key City leadership staff has created the RDA Projects Steering Committee with the intent of providing continuous oversight over the 15 projects to: 1) ensure all projects remain on schedule by regularly reviewing progress; and 2) to quickly address and resolve any issues that may occur throughout the design phase of these projects to mitigate impacts on deadlines and reduce potential delays. The Steering Committee has a standing monthly meeting, with the first meeting having occurred on September 2, 2009. In addition, project managers have been assigned for each project to lead the design development phase and to ensure accountability for meeting critical deadlines. Detailed projects schedules have been established for each project and are being presented to the RDA Projects Steering Committee at the October 8, 2009 meeting.

Below is a brief summary of the progress achieved to date on each of the 15 projects:

Affordable Housing

- **Citywide Preservation and Production** – Staff is evaluating new projects and identifying financing options. Immediate needs are being met with the existing Bank of America line of credit. It is anticipated that additional debt will be incurred in late FY 2009-10 or FY 2010-11 when the current line of credit is exhausted and projects have been identified.

Civic Center Parks and Public Facilities

- **Palisades Garden Walk and Town Square** – Palisades Garden Walk and City Hall Town Square Projects are moving forward with the scheduled issuance of an RFQ in October/November 2009 seeking a design team. The design team will assist the City in engaging the community to develop the elements to be incorporated in the two sites, followed by the development of design concepts. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2012.
- **Civic Auditorium Renovation** – The Council has selected Nederlander as a development partner and staff is in process of negotiating a contract for the renovation and operation of the landmarked building.
- **Civic Auditorium District Projects** – Rounding out the rest of the Civic Auditorium block is a large park, a pedestrian/bike path along Michigan Avenue, and a new facility for cultural use. Early discussions with stakeholders are under way.
- **Early Childhood Education Center** – Initial site planning studies and a program have been completed in preparation for the design and construction of a new laboratory childcare center located on the Civic Auditorium District block. City staff is presently in negotiations with Santa Monica College on the development agreement and operational structure of the center.
- **Freeway Capping** – An RFP is being finalized for consultant services to conduct a feasibility study for capping the freeway from Ocean Avenue to 4th Street. The RFP is scheduled to be issued in October 2009. Another study will focus on creating a conceptual design for an extension of the McClure Tunnel to provide a more gracious entrance to the new Palisades Garden Walk.
- **Expo Green Streets and Pathways** – In anticipation of the Expo Light Rail, an RFQ is being finalized seeking consultant services to prepare a master plan for the Colorado Esplanade (from Ocean Avenue to 4th Street), Colorado Streetscape (from 4th Street to 7th Street), 4th Street Bridge and Fujinomiya Douri Streetscape. The RFQ is scheduled for issuance in October 2009. The Pier Bridge upgrade is also being discussed as a potential addition to this project and a recommendation to transform it into a largely pedestrian bridge will be brought to Council in December 2009 for their consideration.
- **Santa Monica High School Joint Use** – Early discussions with stakeholders are under way. SAMOHI staff has submitted a project schedule to City staff.

- **Shared Parking** – City consultant Nelson/Nygaard has prepared a preliminary parking study which is currently being reviewed by City staff. Final parking study recommendations are expected to be presented to Council in January 2010.

Downtown Parking Strategic Plan

- **Property Acquisition** – City staff continues to negotiate for property opportunities. City staff will seek direction from Council as negotiations progress.
- **Parking Structures 1 and 6** – Conceptual designs have been completed and staff will be presenting zoning and text amendment recommendations for Parking Structures 1 and 6 to Council in November 2009.

Traffic Signal Master Plan

- **Phase IV-Mid City/OP Blvd/Main Street** – Phase 4 of the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) is separated into three sub-phases. The first two sub-phases, Phases 4a and 4b (ATMS-4ab), are about to begin design. These phases include the Mid-City area, Office District, and Arizona Avenue in the Downtown. On June 11, 2009, an RFP was distributed to design the ATMS-4ab Project. The design of ATMS-4ab is expected to be completed by the end of FY2009-10, with construction completed in early 2011. Funding for Phase 4c, which includes Ocean Park Boulevard and Main Street, will be through Metro grants. The design of Phase 4c is currently anticipated to occur in FY2011-12, with construction to begin in FY2012-13.

Memorial Park Expansion

- **Planning and Design** – A broad design selection and community process to define the master plan will be initiated once impacts from the Light Rail Terminus (station and alignment) and Water Resources Division underground water storage reservoir have been identified. The process could start in spring 2010.

Infrastructure Improvements

- **Pico Branch Library** – An RFP for professional services for the design of a 7,500 square foot branch library at Virginia Avenue Park was issued on September 17, 2009, and responses are due on October 15, 2009. The scope of services will include community outreach, project programming and design. The project is scheduled to begin construction by mid-2011, with construction completed in fall 2012.
- **Exposition Light Rail Station Enhancements** – The Expo Light Rail is scheduled to arrive and be operational in Santa Monica by 2015. Construction of the Light Rail Plaza and two additional Light Rail Stations along the rail route are anticipated to begin by 2012.