



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: September 10, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Aaron Kunz, Deputy Director of Transportation
Martha Eros, Transportation Planner

Subject: Public Outreach Options and Recommendations for the North Santa Monica Boulevard Reconstruction Project

Attachments:

1. Descriptions of Phase 1 and 2 of Project
2. Psomas

INTRODUCTION

The City Council approved an agreement with Psomas for design services for the North Santa Monica Boulevard (NSMB) reconstruction project on June 4, 2013. This report describes a proposed public outreach program for Phase 1 (Conceptual Design) of the project.

DISCUSSION

In 2005, the State of California relinquished ownership of NSMB to the City of Beverly Hills, including approximately 20-feet beyond the existing northern curb face. The pavement quality, drainage system and other physical elements have deteriorated to the extent that the roadway needs extensive reconstruction. The City retained Psomas, a Civil Engineering firm, to manage a project team to provide all design services needed for the project, including the conceptual design/public outreach process; preparing detailed plans, specifications and construction cost estimates; and providing support services for the construction and bidding phases. The design of the project includes two phases as described in Attachment 1—*Scope of Work*.

The agreement with Psomas includes a schedule with the City Council selecting a conceptual design for NSMB in early 2014. Upon City Council approval, Psomas will then proceed with Phase 2 (Project Design), with the goal of beginning construction in Spring 2015.

The primary goals of the public outreach program are to achieve the following:

- Obtain community input on any enhancements to be included along with the core reconstruction project, including consideration of bicycle lanes, landscaped medians, transit stop amenities and street lighting.
- Provide the community with information about the upcoming project and obtain input on construction mitigation and scheduling options.

Staff anticipates that initial community comments will involve the concepts for bicycle lanes and/or landscaped medians. Attachment 2–*Psomas Analysis* provides conceptual alternatives for options that staff and the consultant team propose presenting at the community outreach meetings.

Psomas' contract requires that the public outreach program be approved by the City Council at the outset of the project. Staff and the consultant team have identified the following public outreach approaches to help facilitate the City Council's selection of a conceptual design alternative in early 2014 as described below.

Commission or Committee

Staff recommends that a Commission or Committee be designated or appointed to receive public input at community outreach meetings, review public input received by mail and through the City's website, evaluate and assess the recommendations prepared by staff and the consultant team, and provide recommendations to the City Council.

Staff identified the proposed Commission or Committee structures listed below in order of staff's recommended priority. Considerations (potential advantages/disadvantages) are described relative to the recommended approach.

1. Traffic & Parking Commission (staff recommendation): The Commission has experience working together on public processes with their regular duties and for special projects, including the Sunset Boulevard intersection improvements and the pilot bicycle lane projects. As a standing Commission, public outreach meetings could begin in late September/early October, with recommendations developed for City Council consideration by January 2014. A disadvantage would be the possible oversight of projects from other Commissions or departments. The Traffic & Parking Commission Chair will provide a status report on the public outreach process and receive input from each Commission representative at the monthly Mayor's Cabinet meeting.
2. City Council/Traffic & Parking Commission Liaison Committee: As this Committee is already established, this Committee could develop a recommendation for City Council consideration within the same time frame as the Traffic & Parking Commission. Advantages include City Council members involved throughout the public outreach process. Disadvantages include increasing demands on City Council members serving on this Committee, need to coordinate schedules and calendars of attendees which will likely delay the process and fewer Commissioners and/or Community members involved than the other options evaluated. Project status can be shared at the monthly Mayor's Cabinet meeting and Commissioners input can be received.

3. **Multi-Commission Committee:** This Committee could be comprised of one member from the Traffic & Parking Commission, Public Works Commission, Recreation & Parking Commission, Planning Commission and the Cultural Heritage Commission. Two Council members could also serve on this Committee. The advantage of this structure is a wide range of input that would be provided in the recommendations. Disadvantages include a Committee that has not had prior experience working together and approximately a 1-month delay in developing recommendations for City Council due to the amount of time needed to appoint members to the Committee. The need to coordinate schedules and calendars of attendees will also likely delay the process
4. **Public Steering Committee:** With this approach, each Councilmember could appoint 2-3 members to serve on the Committee. Other communities have used this approach to have a broad representation of community members/stake holders serving on the Committee. These are typically projects with a wider variety of options than being considered for NSMB. The most recent example of the City using this approach was the Mass Transit Committee in 2007. The disadvantages of this approach are the Committee members may not have the same public process experience as trained Commissioners and it would likely take longer to develop recommendations for City Council consideration due to the time it would take to appoint and organize the Committee.

Public Outreach

Community Development/Transportation staff in coordination with the Communications and Marketing Office will encourage public input by e-mail, standard mail and through the City's web page. Options of how to provide input will be included in expanded noticing radius of the public meetings, including:

- residences between Santa Monica and Sunset Boulevards,
- residences within 500 feet south of NSMB, and
- property owners and businesses between Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards west of Maple Drive on the east and west sides of the City

Notices will also be provided through postings on the City's web page and social media accounts, and advertisements in the local newspapers. Additionally, updates will be provided to the City's Commissions, Mayor's Cabinet, and Homeowner group meetings. Input will also be requested as part of the City Survey planned to be conducted by the City's Communications and Marketing Office.

Community Outreach Meetings

Staff and the consultant team specifically propose the following meetings as part of the public outreach process:

1. Initial public outreach meeting (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Explain the project to the public and lay out the anticipated timeline for the study and the reconstruction effort; receive initial public comment/input.

2. Public outreach meeting – presentation of conceptual alternatives (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Present alternatives with drawings to illustrate the cross sections by segment in detail, including lane widths, sidewalk issues, median islands; receive public comment/input.
3. Walking tours (two separate tours will be offered, one on a Saturday morning, the other on a weekday late afternoon)
4. Preliminary evaluation of conceptual alternatives (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Present preliminary analysis of the alternatives, identified project impacts, preliminary costs, and the mitigation plan to reduce construction impacts; receive public comment/input.
5. Status update to City Council at a regularly scheduled study session
6. Staff/consultant team preliminary recommendations to Traffic & Parking Commission (or designated Committee)
 - Proposed recommendations for Traffic & Parking and City Council consideration, including the preferred project description, mitigation measures and type of environmental document appropriate to clear the project.

The consultant team will facilitate the community outreach meetings and provide the necessary resource materials. City staff will coordinate meeting spaces, Public Noticing and advertising of the meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT

The agreement with Psomas includes funding to provide the necessary resource materials for the meetings. The cost of printing and mailing notices, and newspaper advertisements will cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council designate the Traffic & Parking Commission as the advisory body for the North Santa Monica Boulevard reconstruction project and to proceed with the public outreach program described in this report.

Susan Healy Keene

Approved By

