



Information Item

Date: June 1, 2010

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Lee E. Swain, Director of Public Works
Subject: California Incline Bridge Replacement Project Status

Introduction

This report updates Council on the status of the California Incline Bridge Replacement Project.

Background

On [June 13, 1995](#), Council approved two contracts with Wallace, Roberts & Todd, Inc. to perform design of the Beach Improvement Group Project. The Beach Improvement Group Project consolidates five approved capital improvement projects along the beachfront: Palisades Park Improvements from Arizona Avenue to the northern City limits, the South Beach Improvements from the Pier to Bay Street, the Pier Bridge Widening, the Gateway Coastal Corridor Project, and the California Incline Bridge Replacement.

The California Incline Bridge Replacement Project replaces an existing 750-foot side-hill viaduct roadway on California Avenue from Ocean Avenue to Pacific Coast Highway (PCH). It involves the complete removal of the existing structure and construction of a full-width pile supported bridge, which unlike the existing structure does not rely on the bluffs for structural stability. The bridge is proposed to be widened from 46 feet to 52 feet with a six-foot sidewalk and bike lanes on the west side of the bridge. Funding for this project is provided by the Federal Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRR) that is administered by Caltrans.

The non-federally funded portions of the Beach Improvement Group Project (Palisades Park Improvements and South Beach Improvements) took priority over the federally funded projects (Pier Bridge, Coastal Gateway, and California Incline). A draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the California Incline Project was circulated in 2007. During circulation, Caltrans commented that additional slope stability measures would be required for the bluffs surrounding the Incline, which lead to revisions of the draft EIR.

Discussion

Staff is currently finalizing the draft EIR and anticipates circulating the EIR in early summer 2010 for the legally required 45-day public comment period. After the public comment period, staff will provide responses to all EIR comments received, which may take approximately two to three months. A final EIR will be presented to Council for certification in early 2011.

The EIR is a joint City and Caltrans report that will have to satisfy both California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) & National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements due to the proposed funding sources. Caltrans has jurisdiction over the processing of the NEPA report, but it is anticipated that both reports will be reviewed simultaneously.

After EIR certification by Council and NEPA certification by Caltrans, staff will obtain approval from Caltrans to begin the final design phase, which will take six months to complete. Wallace, Roberts & Todd will complete the final design under their existing contract. Once the design phase is completed, the process of obtaining authorization from Caltrans for construction will take approximately two months. Advertising, bidding, and presenting construction bids for Council approval will add an additional four months to the process.

Staff anticipates that construction may begin in fall 2011 at the earliest, but it is more likely that construction will begin in early 2012. The construction period is expected to last from 12 to 18 months. The exact schedule is subject to change due to the complexities of the project and the required approvals from authorizing agencies. Nonetheless, staff is working diligently with Caltrans to make the project a reality as quickly as possible and will be working extensively with the community to minimize impacts. As part of construction mitigation, a Traffic Management Plan will be implemented during construction. Staff anticipates the southbound traffic on PCH will be redirected to Moomat Ahiko Way near the Santa Monica Pier. Northbound traffic from downtown will be redirected to Moomat Ahiko Way or the 7th Street onramp to Interstate 10.

The estimated construction cost is approximately \$10 million with 88.53% (\$8.8 million) funded by HBRR and 11.47% (\$1.1 million) funded by local funds.

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