



Legislation Text

File #: 16-088, **Version:** 1

Staff Report for a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Service Contract Agreement with the State of California Department of Transportation, and the Appropriation of Reimbursable Funds in the Amount of \$340,875.00 for the Section 130 Grade Crossing Improvement Program for the Washington/Chapman Railroad Crossing Improvement Project, Project No. 2016.0320

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Service Contract Agreement that accepts federal funding and obligates the City to perform the project work, and to appropriate reimbursable funds in the amount of \$340,875.00 for the Washington/Chapman Railroad Crossing Improvement Project, Project No. 2016.0320.

BACKGROUND

There is a four lane roadway at the project location (Washington Avenue) where two lanes run in opposite directions. A single track railway crosses Washington Avenue at a skewed angle. This rail line is the Niles Subdivision, which is the main north-south passenger train corridor in the Eastbay. Chapman Road intersects Washington Avenue in the middle of the crossing which forces drivers who are turning left onto Washington Avenue from Chapman Road, to immediately encounter the track crossing. Three incidents were reported at this crossing in recent years; a pedestrian fatality, a vehicular fatality and a vehicular non-fatal accident.

The City, along with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), wants to improve traffic safety at all railroad crossings within the City. The CPUC regularly prioritizes crossings to receive improvements based upon hazard potential. Section 130 Grade Crossing Improvement Program Grant funding is available for railroad and highway improvements at the Washington/Chapman crossing. Programmed highway and pedestrian improvements to be constructed by the city will consist of:

- Reconstructing the median islands to channel the Washington Avenue left turn traffic movements
- Realigning and constructing sidewalks to provide perpendicular pedestrian crossings at the railroad tracks
- Installing pedestrian fencing and detectable warning tiles
- Refreshing existing and adding new striping and signage

Railroad improvements will include new warning beacons that flash to signal an oncoming train and concrete panel extensions to provide accessible pedestrian crossing surfaces over the rails. The railroad improvements will be funded and contracted for separately between the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR).

The median modifications will prevent driving around the rail gates which was a factor in one of the earlier incidents. The pedestrian modifications will include a perpendicular crossing which will reduce the chance of a wheelchair, bicycle, stroller or other wheeled item from becoming stuck at the crossing. The fencing will be used to encourage pedestrians to use the provided crossing locations. Additional pedestrian active rail warning devices will provide specific warning for pedestrians particularly due to the pedestrian crossing area being a distance from the vehicular crossing due the highly skewed crossing.

Analysis

Title 23 of the United States Code, Section 130 was created by Congress in 1987 to provide funds for the "Elimination of Hazards" at public railway/highway crossings. The purpose of the Railway-Highway Crossing Program is to reduce the number and severity of highway accidents by eliminating hazards to vehicles and pedestrians at existing at-grade railroad crossings. The mitigation of hazards at this location is a cooperative effort between Caltrans, the CPUC, UPRR and the City of San Leandro. In May 2014, the CPUC evaluated the Washington/Chapman railroad/highway crossing, recommended safety enhancements, and submitted the recommended findings for funding through the Section 130 Program.

The federal program is administered locally by Caltrans. Caltrans will provide project oversight to ensure that the improvements are completed in compliance with the grant provisions and will also act as the conduit for the disbursement of federal grant funds for hazard elimination at railroad crossings. Therefore, the City is required to enter into a contract with Caltrans to design and construct the programmed improvements and to receive reimbursement of costs up to \$340,875, the total amount of the grant. The contract expiration date is December 18, 2018. The contract provisions are similar to those of previous federal grants, such that completion of the improvements should be accomplished quickly and efficiently.

Current Agency Policies

2015 City Council Goal: Maintain and enhance the City's infrastructure

Applicable General Plan Policies

This action is consistent with

- Goal No. 18 Traffic Safety - Policy 18.02
- Goal No. 20 Interagency Coordination - Policy 20.06

Permits

An Encroachment Permit issued by Union Pacific Railroad will be required for work within 25 feet of the railroad center line.

Environmental Review

Caltrans determined the project categorically excluded, under section 23 CFR 771.117(c), of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Staff will complete a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review for the project. This action does not anticipate any CEQA impacts because it is only to enter into an agreement to commit funds to the project.

Fiscal Impacts

The total project cost is \$340,875.00. The project will be reimbursed with federal grant monies.

Budget Authority

Funding allocation for the subject project is:

- 1) \$340,875.00 - Special Grants Fund, Washington/Chapman Railroad Crossing Improvement Project, Account Number 150-38-387, allocated by this action.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment to Resolution

- Service Contract for the Section 130 Grade Crossing Improvement Program- Washington Avenue

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