

Council Meeting of
January 13, 2009

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Transit – Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Concept Paper between the City of Redondo Beach and the City of Torrance for the South Bay Regional Transit Centers Capital Project

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Manager and the Transit Director that the City Council approve the MOU and concept paper between the City of Redondo Beach and the City of Torrance for the South Bay Regional Transit Centers Capital Project.

Funding

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND

On November 4, 2008, City Council approved staff to develop a joint Torrance and Redondo Beach South Bay Regional Transit Centers Capital Project (Project) with a transit center in each city for submission as a federal grant application. The City of Redondo Beach authorized its staff to develop a joint application with the City of Torrance for federal funding on November 18, 2008. Since that time, staff has been working with the City of Redondo Beach to develop a MOU and concept paper for the Project. Based on discussions with the City's federal representatives, projects with regional significance are a high priority for the upcoming transportation authorization bill. This is due to the benefit of the federal funds being extended to a broader population base. The combining of the centers into one funding project regionalizes these two important hubs to provide greater connectivity and multi-modal opportunities throughout the greater South Bay and Los Angeles County.

The funding request for the grant application is \$14.2 million to complete Phase I of the regional Project. The objective is to request a minimum of \$3.2 million of funding to complete construction of Phase I of the Redondo Beach Transit Center, which is currently in design, and \$11 million for Phase I of the Torrance Transit Center, which includes land purchase, design and construction. Additional funds will be needed to complete Phase II and Phase III of this joint project in future years, particularly to accommodate a sought-after expansion of the Green Line to the South Bay.

The appropriations request is being submitted for funding consideration from both the F/Y 2010 annual appropriations bill and the F/Y 2009 multi-year funded reauthorization of the transportation bill entitled the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act –

A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), or its equivalent (Reauthorization Funding). To the extent the project receives funding from the annual appropriations bill, the request from the multi-year Reauthorization Funding will be correspondingly reduced.

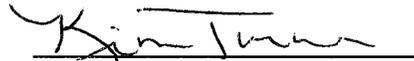
Both centers are supported by the South Bay Cities Council of Governments as complementary focal points for service in and through the South Bay and as key connection points for increased passengers along the planned Harbor Subdivision Transit Corridor.

ANALYSIS

In a joint effort, the City of Redondo Beach and the City of Torrance staff have been working to develop a MOU and a concept paper for the South Bay Regional Transit Centers Project. Both the MOU and the concept paper are needed to submit a federal grant application. The MOU outlines the benefits of this project, the term of the agreement and the use and distribution of funds. The concept paper provides an overview on the need for this project and the benefits of a regional transit center and serves as the basis of discussion with key federal legislators.

The MOU and concept paper are jointly prepared documents that outline the scope and funding of the project that require Council's approval in order to submit a joint federal grant application.

Respectfully submitted,



Kim Turner
Transit Director



Mary K. Giordano
Assistant City Manager

CONCUR:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

- Attachments: A) Memorandum of Understanding between City of Redondo Beach and the City of Torrance
B) Concept Paper for the South Bay Regional Transit Centers Project
C) Sample Letters of Support

MATERIALS AVAILABLE MONDAY

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South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Centers Project

Reauthorization of the
Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act:
A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)
(or its equivalent Reauthorization funding)

Funding Request: \$14.2 Million*

A Project of National and Regional Significance and/or a High Priority Project



*The Cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance

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South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Centers Program**South Bay Region Overview**

The South Bay Region is comprised of 15 cities, portions of the City of Los Angeles, and numerous unincorporated communities which encompass approximately 160 acres in the southwest portion of Los Angeles County. The region is served by four freeways: I-105, I-110, SR-91 and I-405. Two key cities in the South Bay Region have stepped up to provide much needed regional transit centers to serve the region – Redondo Beach and Torrance.

Redondo Beach is a full-service city located along the choice coastal edge of Los Angeles County, just 20 miles from downtown Los Angeles and seven miles south of Los Angeles International Airport. The City's population has been steadily growing in the past few years. Current residential population as of January 2008 is estimated at 67,488 with a daytime population reaching as high as 120,000. Significant concentrations of employment and retail activity include the Northrop Grumman Corporation campus; an adjacent industrial complex in the north; the Galleria at South Bay—a regional mall anchoring the east end of the City; unique shops, dining and hotels along Pacific Coast Highway and the City's waterfront to the west; and an eclectic mix of specialty shops, restaurants and services in the “Riviera Village” area in the south end of the City.

The City of Torrance is located in the heart of the South Bay area in Southern California. Torrance is located halfway between Los Angeles and Orange Counties and bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west. The city is near downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach, and conveniently accessible by the 405 and 110 freeways and from State Route 91. Its neighboring cities include Gardena, Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach, Palos Verdes Estates, Rolling Hills and Carson. Torrance has a population of about 147,405 with a peak daytime population of 203,111. Torrance is the fourth largest city in Los Angeles County and the 12th largest city in California. Torrance is strongly diverse in the industrial, commercial and retail markets and is the headquarters for such major employers as Toyota and Honda.

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Project Summary

The South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Centers Project brings together two very important transit hubs in the cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance. The site of the new Redondo Beach transit center will be located immediately adjacent to the Harbor Subdivision rail line. It is also a short distance from one of the region's busiest intersections: Hawthorne Boulevard at Redondo Beach Boulevard and Artesia Boulevard. The preferred site for the Torrance transit center will be located at Crenshaw Boulevard between Del Amo Boulevard and Maricopa Avenue. This center is also adjacent to the Harbor Subdivision rail line and provides direct access to the 405 freeway.

These two centers are complementary and will provide for additional connectivity and promote the use of public transportation in the South Bay region. These projects provide regional benefit to the South Bay area by encouraging alternative modes of transportation thereby reducing congestion and emissions. The requested funds will be combined with existing sources of funding (Federal, regional and local) to complete these transit centers which are critical to mobility in the South Bay region.

Project Details

The Project includes the following components:

Regional Transit Center – Redondo Beach Hub

The City of Redondo Beach is proceeding with the development of a new Transit Center to replace the existing inadequate South Bay Galleria Transit Center located adjacent to the South Bay Galleria Regional Mall. The existing Transit Center currently serves transit patrons of Beach Cities Transit (BCT), Torrance Transit, Gardena Municipal Transit, Lawndale Transit and the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). The pending development of the Redondo Beach South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Center will be located on a 5.7 acre City-owned site on Kingsdale Avenue just south of the existing transit center. The City has already acquired this site at a cost of \$4.7 million, with the site recently valued at nearly \$9 million. The dedication of this property for the development of a new Transit Center by the Redondo Beach City Council represents a significant commitment by the City to its role as a regional transit operator. The new Redondo Beach South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Center will facilitate the City's growing role as a regional transit operator and will provide an opportunity to link into any future transit system developed on the adjacent Metro-controlled Harbor Subdivision rail line. Several local and regional transit lines currently utilize the South Bay Transit Center including; Metro Rapid Bus (Lines 740 and 710), Metro Local (Lines 130, 210 and 444), Torrance Transit (Line 2), Palos Verdes MX2, Lawndale's Beat and Beach Cities Transit Line 102. BCT experienced a 21 percent increase in ridership from calendar year 2007 to 2008. In 2008, the monthly ridership ranged from a low of 29,000 to a high of approximately 40,000. Ridership for the year was nearly 407,000.

The funding for the initial phases of the new Transit Center has been secured in the form of approved Federal Appropriations totaling \$2.24 million thanks to the efforts of Congresswoman Jane Harman, together with a local match of \$560,000 appropriated by the Redondo Beach City Council. The new Transit Center will also be developed with the cooperation of Forest City Development which owns an adjacent parcel and the neighboring South Bay Galleria.

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Regional Transit Center – Torrance Hub

The requested program will also provide for the creation of a much needed Regional Transit Center in the City of Torrance. This new center will replace the former transit center which was located at the Del Amo Fashion Center as well as replace the existing on-street bus transfer location at the intersection of Carson Street and Madrona Avenue. The new Center is ideally located adjacent to the Harbor Subdivision rail line near Crenshaw Boulevard between Del Amo Boulevard and Maricopa Avenue, easily accessible from the 405 Freeway with possible direct access to the 405 Freeway High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes. This is a unique opportunity to secure the property for an important regional facility necessary for public use. This five-acre regional transit center will serve as a hub for Torrance Transit, allow for regional connectivity with Metro Rapid Bus, and allows for the expansion of the Metro Green Line to Torrance.

The right of way adjacent to the Regional Transit Center location is owned by Metro and currently being studied for future transportation uses. The placement of the transit center at the junction allows for future expansion of the Metro Green Line and connectivity to other forms of transit.

Torrance Transit operates fixed route bus service within the City of Torrance and also provides regional connections to Los Angeles, Long Beach, Metro Blue Line Artesia Station, and Los Angeles International Airport. Service is also provided to Gardena, Redondo Beach, Carson, Lomita and numerous other areas within the South Bay. Torrance Transit alone had ridership of 4.7 million passengers in FY 08. This Regional Transit Center will also be able to accommodate services from not only Torrance Transit but also Metro, Beach Cities Transit, Gardena Bus Lines, Municipal Area Express (MAX) and other regional rapid routes.

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Needs and Benefits

Property Values – The Centers will make adjacent properties more accessible and more marketable.

Existing Regional Transportation Programs – The Project will improve infrastructure to enhance functionality of existing regional transportation programs.

Safety – It will enhance transportation and pedestrian safety by allowing safe transfers to other buses and other modes of transportation.

Quality of Life – The Centers will significantly improve the overall quality of life for local residents and the traveling public.

Connectivity – The regional transit centers in Redondo Beach and Torrance are hubs for local and regional connectivity for all agencies in the South Bay and Los Angeles County. They will also provide access to regional rapid service and existing light rail. The development of these two complementary transit centers will provide focal points for service in and through the South Bay, building ridership for the Harbor Subdivision rail line that is currently being considered.

Congestion – The South Bay Regional Transit Centers will enhance the efficiency of public transportation thereby encouraging more people to make use of the transportation options available in the region resulting in decreased traffic congestion. They will also provide parking for Rideshare Van/Carpool participants, reducing congestion.

Air Quality - Improvements in air quality can be expected in proportion to the reduction in congestion. Less idling in stopped/slowng traffic will result in fewer emissions. Increased use of alternate forms of public transportation will also contribute to improvements in air quality by reducing gasoline and fuel consumption. Torrance Transit will also be operating a new fleet of Hybrid Gasoline-Electric Buses and Hybrid Relief Vehicles which all reduce overall emissions even further.

Economic Benefits - In a region that is so dependent on transportation for movement of goods and people, any improvement to the circulation system will result in proportional gains in the economy, such as reduced demands on employee parking, increased intermodal access to employment centers, decreased dependency on single occupancy vehicles and decreased reliance the automobiles will also enhance access to jobs. Riders can also benefit from easy access to Rapid Transit Services such as the Municipal Area Express (MAX) which provides direct commuter service, to and from the Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach and El Segundo employment centers.

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Funding Chart:Regional Transit Center – Redondo Beach Hub

Site Acquisition Phase Completed

\$4,700,000 (est. value: \$9,000,000) – City of Redondo Beach Local Funds

Phase I

Design – In Process

Construction – Scheduled for December 2009

A – Bus Bays, Temporary Kiss & Ride Facility,
Interim Parking and Maintenance Facility

\$4,800,000

B – Transit Center Building

\$1,200,000

Construction Total

\$6,000,000

Available Funding

City of Redondo Beach Local Funds

\$560,000

Annual Federal Transportation Appropriations - \$2,240,000 (FY 2002/03-
\$491,839, FY 2003/04-\$776,699 and FY 2004/05-\$971,779)

Available Funding Total

\$2,800,000

Funding Shortfall (Need)**\$3,200,000**Regional Transit Center – Torrance Hub

Design – The design phase and EIR process would begin June 2009

\$500,000

Purchase of Property and Right of Way Acquisition - Pending escrow February 2009

\$7,000,000

Construction – Tentatively scheduled to begin in February 2010 for the construction of
bus bays, public restrooms, driver's lounge, fare media office, fare media vending
machines, passenger information kiosks and a parking lot.\$6,000,000

Total \$13,500,000

Available Funding – City of Torrance Local Funds

\$2,500,000

Funding Shortfall (Need)**\$11,000,000**

Supporting Entities

DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT

January 6, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jane Harman
U.S. House of Representatives
2400 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the [insert organization/entity name], I am writing to respectfully request that you include \$14.2 million within the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU for the South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Centers Project

The much needed Regional Transit Centers located in the cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance will make public transportation more efficient and convenient thereby encouraging more people to make use of the transportation options available in the region. The benefits to the region are many including increasing mobility options, easing traffic congestion, enhancing job access, reducing gasoline consumption, and improving overall air quality.

We would be happy to answer any questions and further discuss the details and benefits of this project of regional significance. Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

DRAFT SUPPORT LETTER REQUEST

January 6, 2009

The Cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance have worked together to develop a joint request for funding for the South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Centers Project in the Reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU.

The much needed Regional Transit Centers located in the cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance will make public transportation more efficient and convenient thereby encouraging more people to make use of the transportation options available in the region. The benefits to the region are many including increasing mobility options, easing traffic congestion, enhancing job access, reducing gasoline consumption, and improving overall air quality.

We are gathering letters from various cities, businesses, and residents who support this important regional project to be sent to the Congressional delegation for the region. We have attached a draft support letter for your reference.

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like any additional information on the project.

Sincerely,