



Meeting Date: 12/08/2009

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Info/Consent
<input type="checkbox"/> Ord. No(s). _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Res. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing (Info/consent)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Prepared By: Ken Ortega, Public Works Director

Agenda Item No. 0-3

Reviewed By: City Manager [Signature] City Attorney SMF Finance [Signature] Other (Specify) [Signature]

DATE: November 30, 2009

TO: City Council

FROM: Ken Ortega, Public Works Director
Public Works Department [Signature]

SUBJECT: Boulevard Rail Improvements and Transportation Enhancements (BRITE) Project and Application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery "TIGER Discretionary Grants" Program

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council:

1. Approve in concept the Boulevard Rail Improvements and Transportation Enhancements (BRITE) Project
2. Receive and file the application submitted by the Capital Projects Management Division for the United States Department of Transportation's (DOT) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants Program;
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute the required application (including certifications, and other pertinent documents and agreements necessary to implement the grant) for the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program and submit it to the DOT; and
4. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to appropriate grant funds upon award of the grant.

DISCUSSION

On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). ARRA is designed to infuse \$787 billion into State and local economies as part of a comprehensive national strategy to create jobs and stimulate spending. As part of ARRA, \$1.5 billion in grant funding was provided to the DOT to be awarded for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure under the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program. Projects that are eligible for TIGER Discretionary Grants include highway or bridge projects, public transportation projects, passenger and freight rail transportation projects, and port infrastructure investments.

Staff has acted expeditiously to meet application deadlines as most eligible projects must be obligated (i.e., construction contracts awarded) within 120 days from notice of award of the grants. On June 17, 2009, City staff received a notice of funding availability from the DOT for the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program.

On September 15, 2009, the Capital Projects Management Division staff submitted a grant application to the DOT for the City of Oxnard Boulevard Rail Improvements and Transportation Enhancement (BRITE) Project. The BRITE Project consists of two major components:

- 1) Implementation and effective operation of an intelligent transportation system to maximize the efficiency of existing City streets, improve public safety and improve air quality; and
- 2) Rail safety enhancement projects, consisting of planned improvements to seven (7) intersections and at-grade railroad crossings to provide for the safe, orderly movement of trains, pedestrians and vehicles through the City.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

In 2005, Traffic Engineering Division staff began the process of upgrading the City's traffic signal system. A crucial element of these planned upgrades is the strategic deployment of ITS strategies within the Oxnard region. The City hired a traffic management consulting firm in 2006 to complete the ITS Master Plan. After a series of stakeholder meetings and an inventory of the existing system, a draft master plan was completed. In the spring of 2008, after significant outreach and consensus building activities including various City departments, Caltrans, the County of Ventura, Gold Coast Transit, and the City of Port Hueneme, the final master plan was adopted.

ITS is intended to play a vital role in the creation of a more efficient multimodal transportation network by providing the ability to collect and process real-time traffic information for dissemination to, and reception from, public agency stakeholders. The objective is communication between all of the City's traffic signals to a centralized location where green time, the amount of time the light is green for a given direction, can be efficiently managed and existing traffic conditions communicated to drivers.

ITS deployment is estimated to cost \$10,150,000.

Rail Safety Enhancement

Rail safety enhancements will provide for the secure and systematic movement of trains and vehicles through the City along Fifth Street, Oxnard Boulevard, and Vineyard Avenue. The improvements will enable the City to provide improved traffic flow and pedestrian safety through the railroad corridor with the combination of safety enhancements, traffic signal operation, reduced congestion, improved air quality and minimization of the conflict between vehicular/pedestrian traffic and the railroad at seven crossings in the City. The following intersections and at-grade railroad crossings are included: Camino del Sol and Oxnard Boulevard, Victoria Avenue and Saint Mary's Drive, Gonzales Road and Oxnard Boulevard, Colonia Road and Oxnard Boulevard, Cooper Road and Oxnard Boulevard, Rose Avenue and Fifth Street, and Rice Avenue and Fifth Street.

Camino Del Sol and Oxnard Boulevard At-Grade Railroad Crossing

The Circulation Element of the 2020 General Plan specifies for the connection of Camino del Sol to Oxnard Boulevard. This connection will provide drivers with an alternate east-west corridor and relieve traffic congestion on Gonzales Road. The redistribution of traffic flow will improve access to destinations and vehicle travel throughout the residential and business communities of La Colonia and the Northeast Village. As planned, Camino del Sol is a four-lane (two in each direction) street with bike lanes and a planted median. Camino del Sol's traffic flow capacity makes it suitable to extend and connect to Oxnard Boulevard.

The connection necessitates the crossing of Camino del Sol over Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) railroad tracks. Crossing the railroad tracks requires approval from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The CPUC discourages the construction of new at-grade crossings and will only support a project if it yields significant public safety improvements. The UPRR support is vital for the City to receive approval from the CPUC. Initially, the UPRR wanted the closures of both Colonia Road and Cooper Road along Oxnard Boulevard at-grade crossings for the construction of the proposed at-grade crossing of Camino del Sol at Oxnard Boulevard. Staff conferred with the UPRR and the UPRR is now supportive of closing only Colonia Road at Oxnard Boulevard at-grade crossing and making safety improvements at Cooper Road at Oxnard Boulevard, Vineyard Avenue at Saint Mary's Drive, Gonzales Road at Oxnard Boulevard, Rose Avenue at Fifth Street and Rice Avenue at Fifth Street for the proposed crossing at Camino del Sol at Oxnard Boulevard.

The Camino del Sol at-grade crossing is an important element to the overall enhancement program of the Oxnard Boulevard Corridor. The Camino del Sol at Oxnard Boulevard at-grade crossing will include the latest technologies available for train detection and warning. This technology will provide for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety. The project will also install landscaping and protective fencing along the UPRR right-of-way to prevent potential accidents and to beautify the area along the railroad tracks. All designs and equipment will be to State and Federal railroad guidelines.

The CPUC is currently reviewing the City's proposed Rail Safety Enhancement project, which includes the Camino del Sol At-Grade crossing element. If our application is approved by the CPUC and supported by the UPRR, staff will commence negotiating a formal agreement between the City and the CPUC to authorize the project to proceed. Staff will return to City Council recommending approval of the: 1) agreement; 2) plans and specifications; and 3) authorization to solicit bids and commence with construction.

The rail safety enhancement projects are estimated to cost \$9,850,000.

The DOT expects to notify grant applicants of awards in February 2010. If awarded, construction of the BRITE Project is expected to commence within five months of receipt of funding.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

ARRA specifies that grants funded under the TIGER Grant Program may be no less than \$20 million and no greater than \$300 million. The application submitted by City staff to the DOT requests a total of \$20 million in TIGER Discretionary Grants funding. The total estimated cost of the BRITE Project is \$20 million. No matching funds are required.

Attachment #1 - DOT TIGER Discretionary Grants Program Application

Note: Attachment No. 1 has been provided to the City Council. Copies are available for review at the Help Desk in the Library after 6:00 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the Council meeting and at the City Clerk's Office after 8:00 a.m. on Friday.