

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: MARCH 15, 2007 N56990

TO: AGENCY COMMISSIONERS

FROM: CECILIA V. ESTOLANO, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESPONSIBLE
PARTIES: RICARDO NOGUERA, REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
JENNIFER JONES BARRERA, ASSISTANT PROJECT MANAGER

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A CONDITIONAL GRANT AGREEMENT
WITH LOS ANGELES NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE (LANI) TO PROVIDE A
CONDITIONAL GRANT OF \$150,000 FOR LANI'S WEST ADAMS
STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
NORMANDIE 5 REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA
SOUTH LOS ANGELES REGION (CD8)

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Agency, subject to City Council approval:

1. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer or designee to execute a Conditional Grant Agreement with LANI to provide \$150,000 to that organization for streetscape improvements along a portion of Adams Boulevard, conditioned upon MTA's award to LANI of \$450,000 under its 2007 Call for Projects; and
2. That the Agency adopt a Resolution finding, and request that the City Council find and resolve, that: 1) the provision of the public improvements shown on LANI's West Adams Streetscape Enhancement Program plans is of benefit to the Normandie 5 Redevelopment Project Area because it will eliminate blighting conditions by improving the infrastructure in that Area and its immediate surroundings, and by increasing the use of the commercial establishments along the Adams Boulevard Corridor; 2) no other reasonable means of financing the public improvements is available to the City of Los Angeles; and 3) the provision of the public improvements is consistent with the Five-Year Implementation Plan for the Project Area.

SUMMARY

The Grant Recipient

LANI is a non-profit organization established in 1994 to restore a sense of community ownership and identity to blighted neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles. Through the sponsorship of former Mayor Richard Riordan and the Federal Transit Administration, LANI developed a ground-breaking program, now replicated across the City and nation, based on community decision-making and public-private financing partnerships. LANI crosses traditional public/private boundaries to build links between local stakeholders, community organizations, elected officials, and public agencies. An independent non-profit corporation, LANI has forged unprecedented partnerships with MTA, the City, Agency, as well as federal funding agencies. LANI has partnered with the Agency in its North Hollywood, Normandie 5 and Crenshaw Project Areas and with the City in its West Adams Targeted Neighborhood Initiative Area.

The Anticipated Grants

Staff recommends execution of a Conditional Grant Agreement with LANI to provide \$150,000 to be used (together with funds from three other public agencies) for the installation of streetscape improvements. The Grant Agreement is attached to this Memorandum as Attachment A. These public improvements consist of four illuminated community gateway markers, new lighting for six bus stops, planting of 86 street trees, and installation of 169 decorative tree well covers ("Improvements"). The Improvements will be installed on Adams Boulevard between Western and Vermont Avenues. The \$150,000 in Agency funds will only be used on that portion of Adams Boulevard (i.e., between Western and Normandie Avenues), which is within the boundaries of the Normandie 5 Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area"). The Improvements will significantly enhance the physical, aesthetic and circulation features of this portion of the Boulevard, which is located in a historic South Los Angeles neighborhood. The Resolution for the street improvements and a diagram of the location of the Improvements are attached to this Memorandum as Attachments B and C, respectively.

The total budget for the Improvements is \$1,000,000. Of this amount, \$450,000 is anticipated to be awarded to LANI through MTA's 2007 Call for Projects. \$200,000 is committed from Federal Earmark 3284 funds through Congressman Xavier Becerra's office. An additional \$200,000 will be funded by a conditional grant of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation ("LADOT"). LADOT has approved this grant subject to MTA's award to LANI of \$450,000. Similarly, Agency staff recommends commitment of the final \$150,000 for the Improvements subject to MTA's award to LANI of \$450,000.

LANI's application was rated No. 2 (among 26 applicants) in its funding category by LADOT upon submission to MTA. This high rating is due, in part, to LANI's anticipated "local funding overmatch" from LADOT and the Agency. The local funding from these two agencies is 35% of the \$1,000,000 budget for the Improvements (\$200,000 in LADOT funds + \$150,000 in Agency funds=\$350,000). MTA considers local funding which exceeds 20% of a Call for Projects application to be a "local funding overmatch" which makes the application more competitive.

The Sole Source Provider of the Improvements

MTA will not make its award decisions until July 2007. Once awarded, the MTA funds, LANI can be justified as an Agency sole source provider of the Improvements because it will hold \$850,000 of the total Improvements budget (\$450,000 from MTA, \$200,000 from Federal

Earmark funds, and \$200,000 in LADOT contingent funds). Additionally, upon receipt of the \$450,000 award, LANI will have completed the MTA's competitive selection process, thus making it illogical to go through an Agency competitive process for the remaining \$150,000 needed to build the Improvements. Accordingly, a Sole Source Memorandum of Justification for the \$150,000 in Agency funds will be prepared by staff following MTA's award to LANI of \$450,000.

Finally, LANI will utilize and comply with MTA public bidding rules in selecting the contractor(s) for the Improvements.

RE:

Initial Action.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

N5 Bond Proceeds
N5 General Revenue

PROGRAM AND BUDGET IMPACT

There is no impact to the City General Fund as a result of this action. The Agency Funds are currently budgeted in N5 Response to Development Opportunities.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project to build the Improvements is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Article VII, Sec. 1 a (3) of the Agency's CEQA Guidelines.

BACKGROUND

Coordination With Other Public Agencies

The installation of the Improvements complies with the City's General Plan and the Specific Plan for the West Adams area. The West Adams Historic Preservation Overlay Zone ("HPOZ") Design Review Board has approved the design of the Improvements. The Improvements further MTA-Metro's Long-Range Plan and Mid-City Restructuring Study by supporting system use and improvements as identified as a critical transportation corridor, intermodal hub, transit center and trip generator. A Council District Eight ("CD8") priority, the Improvements enjoy extraordinary community support, with a community stakeholder group selecting the designer and working closely with the architect throughout the design review process. The United States Department of Transportation ("USDOT") and Southern California Association of Governments ("SCAG") recognize LANI as a national model for community participation. The Normandie 5 Project Area Committee ("PAC") participated in the design review process of the Improvements and overwhelmingly supports their installation.

The Improvements' Multiple Benefits

The Improvements will consist of 28 street trees (type not yet determined) planted in clusters surrounding the gateway markers, and 58 magnolia trees planted along Adams Boulevard between Western and Vermont Avenues. To complement these trees, decorative metal well covers will be installed at the base of the gateway trees, while decorative concrete well covers are slated for the street trees along Adams Boulevard. Additionally, security lighting will be added to six existing bus stops to increase safety and further enhance the transit environment. Other enhancements include the installation of four dramatically illuminated gateway markers at two corners - Adams Boulevard and Western Avenue and Adams Boulevard and Vermont Avenue. Close-ups of the design of these markers and lighting are shown on Attachment D.

The Improvements will impact 12 bus stops of MTA's Metro Bus Line 37, which serves several thousand people per week. 121,957 people ride eight bus lines stopping at Adams/Normandie and traversing the busy Adams/Vermont and Adams/Western intersections where the gateway markers and plantings will be installed, including the Vermont Metro Rapid Bus, the Western Metro Rapid Bus, five regular Metro lines and the Midtown DASH line. These numerous transit routes serve over 4,000 people a day within the project area and are a daily necessity for more than 1,500 local transit-dependent people (without access to a vehicle) residing within a half mile of the Improvements. A diagram of the location of these transit service lines is on Attachment E.

The Improvements will increase intermodal transfers by the various types of users. Safe, community friendly rights-of-way encourage people embarking on short trips to walk instead of drive, and those on lengthier trips to walk to bus stops in order to utilize the various transit lines. Ultimately, it is expected that upgrading these corridors to an aesthetically pleasing appearance will also improve the community's perception of public transit, making it a more viable alternative to driving and resulting in less traffic and pollution.

The Improvements' Cost and Funding Sources

MTA	\$450,000
Federal Earmarked Funds	200,000
LADOT	200,000
Agency – Normandie 5	150,000
Total Cost of Improvements	<u>\$1,000,000</u>

The Improvements' Cost Effectiveness

- \$200,000 in planning, design and permitting of the Improvements has already been completed with non-transportation dollars.
- The area's dense population and high transit/arterial/pedestrian use ensures favorable dollars-spent per person-benefited ratio.
- The Improvements will leverage impacts of the adjacent Neighborhood Block Grant Façade Program.
- The Improvements will fill in very sparse landscaping for substantial impact with small investment.
- The Improvements have no acquisition costs and minimal design and permitting costs.

- Planting selections and graffiti-resistant materials will be used for the gateway markers, which will minimize future maintenance costs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The contractors for the Improvements will be bound by the Agency's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies and the Agency's Living Wage, Worker Retention, Equal Benefits and Contractor Responsibilities policies as applicable.

Cecilia V. Estolano
Chief Executive Officer

By

Glenn F. Wasserman
Chief Operating Officer

There is no conflict of interest known to me which exists with regard to any Agency officer or employee concerning this action.

Attachments: A - Grant Agreement
B - Resolution
C - Site Map
D - Design Elements
E - Transit Map