


**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: April 9, 2010

To: Honorable City Council  
C/o City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall  
Attention: Honorable Bill Rosendahl, Chair  
Transportation Committee

From:   
Rita L. Robinson, General Manager  
Department of Transportation

Subject: **WILSHIRE BOULEVARD BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT –  
COUNCIL FILE 08-2595**

In September 2009, the City Council directed the Department of Transportation (DOT) to work with Metro to prepare an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the Wilshire Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project, and to transfer \$210,000 in Proposition C Local Return funds as the City's share. The EIR/EA work is well underway and this is a status report of current progress.

**Recommendations**

That the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor,

1. Receive and file this status report.
2. DIRECT DOT to work with Metro, BOE and BSS to report back in 90 days on a detailed work plan, including staffing needs, for implementation of the project.

**Discussion**

At the start of environmental clearance work for this project, Metro and DOT began preparing an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) to satisfy both California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Extensive public outreach, transportation modeling, and impact analyses were conducted by the project team in late 2008 and 2009. A number of intersections along Wilshire Boulevard and parallel streets were projected to experience significant traffic impacts that could not be fully mitigated. In response to public comments showing both support for the project throughout the corridor as well as opposition in some Westside communities, it was determined that an Environmental Impact Report

(EIR) would be a more appropriate document for CEQA clearance in order to consider project alternatives. Because the traffic impacts were not considered "regional" in nature under NEPA guidelines, an Environmental Assessment (EA), which can result in a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI), the NEPA-equivalent of a Negative Declaration, was determined to be sufficient for NEPA clearance.

The proposed project and project alternatives were presented at a series of four community scoping meetings in October 2009. The traffic impact analysis for the EIR/EA has since been largely completed and shows that some intersections along Wilshire Boulevard and parallel streets will experience significant traffic impacts that cannot be fully mitigated. All other potentially-impacted intersections will be fully mitigated according to DOT standards. A list of mitigation measures will be presented in the EIR/EA.

The Administrative Draft EIR/EA is now being completed and will be submitted to FTA for review in April 2010. Once any comments from FTA have been addressed, the Draft EIR/EA is expected to be released in June 2010 for a 45-day public review period. The Final EIR/EA is expected to be completed in September 2010, followed by a 30-day public review period to satisfy NEPA requirements, and tentatively scheduled for the January 2011 meeting of the Metro Board of Directors, followed by City Council. The County Board of Supervisors will also need to approve the portion of the project between Federal Avenue and Veteran Avenue that falls within the County's jurisdiction.

Under this schedule, construction could possibly begin in Spring 2011 and take approximately two years to complete. However, the Bureau of Street Services (BSS), which will be responsible for the re-construction of the Wilshire Boulevard curb lanes in Mid-City, reports that current and expected staffing shortages and the anticipated major budget cuts in FY 10-11 would delay this timetable. LADOT will work with BSS and BOE to prepare a detailed work plan including staffing needs for this project after the City budget has been determined for FY10-11.

### **Fiscal Impact Statement**

There will be no impact to the General Fund.

### **Coordination**

DOT has coordinated closely with Metro, BSS and BOE. The Mayor's Office, affected Council offices and CLA's office have also been consulted. Metro has consulted with FTA on a regular basis.