



## **WESTSIDE CITIES**

· BEVERLY HILLS  
· CULVER CITY  
· LOS ANGELES  
· SANTA MONICA  
· WEST HOLLYWOOD

Item 4A REVISED

**Date:** March 15, 2007

**To:** Westside Cities Council of Governments

**From:** Jody Hall Esser, Executive Director

**Re: Executive Director's Report**

### **1. CONVERSATIONS INITIATED RE INCLUDING THE COUNTY IN THE COG**

The subject of why the County of Los Angeles isn't a member of The Westside Cities COG and whether they should be asked to join has been raised at recent Board meetings and in questions posed to members of the Board. The County has recently agreed to join the Gateway and San Gabriel Valley COG's; mid-year budget funds for member dues have been appropriated. This is the first time the County of Los Angeles has joined one of the seven sub-regional COG's operating within its jurisdiction.

Having the County as a member of our COG would be important for planning purposes as there is significant unincorporated County territory on the Westside. The opportunity to build on the already close and supportive relationship between the Westside cities and the County is also noted.

Preliminary conversations have recently been initiated at the staff level and between Chair Bloom and Flora Gil Krisiloff, Field Deputy for Supervisor Yaroslavsky. It is anticipated that a conversation on this subject will take place between the Chair and Supervisor Yaroslavsky in the near future. We can look to Supervisor Yaroslavsky as to how/when to expand discussions to the other Supervisors whose Districts abut WSCCOG member cities.

### **2. ANNUAL ISSUES CONFERENCE**

At the January 18, 2007 COG meeting, Mayor John Heilman suggested the members consider hosting an annual issues conference. Unless the Board prefers otherwise, this item will be referred to the sub-committees, staff and the City Managers for consideration, and will be agendaized for discussion at the May 24<sup>th</sup> meeting (and included in the draft budget for consideration).

### **3. GRANT OR OTHER FUNDING FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS**

#### **SCAG Funded Workforce Housing Feasibility and Implementation Research Project:**

The Westside Cities recently applied to SCAG for a grant, "...to better understand the technical, legal and feasibility aspects of workforce housing in the Westside Cities subregion." The purpose of this grant would be to provide information to decision-makers and staff so they can identify opportunities to facilitate projects and/or make policy changes that encourage workforce housing in their jurisdiction.

The project is included in the draft SCAG Budget for 2007-08. As proposed the grant would cover \$140,000 for consultant services plus \$14,000 in city staff time as an in-kind match. This study relates to prior SCAG-funded studies done by the Westside Cities subregion regarding mixed-use housing feasibility and open space guidelines. The new study would also relate to the work done by the subregion on Livable Cities in 2006-07. These previous studies were administered by various members of the Westside Cities – one taking the lead and others providing staff support and collaboration. While the COG could now step forward and become the grant/contract recipient, I do not recommend it at this time – there is no value added at this stage or COG development. Unless the Board directs otherwise the Executive Director and City Managers recommend that member cities (rather than the COG) accept/administer this grant. In addition, the Executive Director proposed and the City Managers agreed that their (housing, planning and transportation) staff coordinate and propose specific project deliverables for review and approval so that the study will be the most useful for all.

**Westside Traffic Synchronization Project:** West Hollywood's Lobbyist, Helyne Meshar, has been speaking with the City of Los Angeles Lobbyist regarding state funding for a traffic light synchronization project for the Westside. (There may be DOT funds available through legislation or a budget appropriation.) Should support be requested between the March and May meetings of the COG, the Executive Director proposes to prepare a letter for the Chair's signature and to run it through the City Managers for review release. If the Board prefers otherwise, please advise at the March 15<sup>th</sup> COG meeting.

#### 4. PENDING LEGISLATION

**AB391 (LIEU):** which would increase municipal membership on the SCAQMD Board, has been introduced. Last year, the WSCCOG sent letters of support – legislation failed by a narrow margin. This year (January 18, 2007), the Board unanimously approved becoming a financial contributor to the legislative effort. (Bill passage is being spearheaded again by the South Bay Cities COG.) Unless the Board directs otherwise at the 3/15/07 Board meeting, a letter of support for the legislation will be prepared for the Chair's signature.

**Long Range Transportation Plan:** The Metrolink Expo Phase II and Westside Subway Extension Projects are included in the Long Range Transportation Plan. It is not expected that action on the Plan will take place between the March 15<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup> Westside Cities COG meetings. However, should the review process move faster than anticipated, and unless the Board directs otherwise at the March 15, 2007 meeting of the COG, letter(s) of support shall be prepared for the Chair's signature.

#### 5. COG ADMINISTRATIVE

**Roll Call versus Consensus Votes:** During the January 18, 2007 meeting discussion regarding improving the efficiency of future COG meetings, Mayor Heilman suggested (and the Board generally concurred) that motions be by consensus rather than roll call vote. I noted that I would confer with Counsel as to whether any items are required or recommended to be subject to roll call votes.

Counsel to the COG recommends that in the future, (only) approval of contracts, the COG budget and budget amendments and financial expenditures be subject to roll call votes. Unless a roll call vote is called for by a member of the Board, as provided in the By-laws, all other items may be acted upon by a consensus of the members. Unless Board members

have questions, or otherwise direct the Executive Director at the March 15, 2007 Board meeting, this is how we will proceed.

**Time Limits on Public Participation:** As a courtesy to the public, I have added the following sentence to the process explanation on agenda: "*A limit may be placed on the amount of time to be devoted to public participation.*"

Jhe:MH