



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Mike Land, City Manager

From: Traci E. Leach, Deputy City Manager

Date: February 26, 2019

Reference: **DART Cotton Belt Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Application Resolution for CBT 6**

2030: Goal 5 states “Easy access to Dallas-Fort Worth Region” with the following objectives; Objective 1 – Participate in regional rail service to Dallas-Fort Worth, Objective 2- Maintain and enhance accessibility to DFW Airport, and Objective 5 – Develop regional connections for Coppell residents and employees of Coppell businesses

Introduction:

This is a companion item for the resolution for CBT 3 that was considered earlier on tonight’s agenda. During discussions with both City Council and the Park Board, there was significantly more discussion regarding CBT 6, as it is a more complicated segment to construct and fund. CBT 6 begins at Mockingbird and runs east to the Coppell city limit line.

At the February 12, 2019 Council meeting, four alignment options were discussed and neither Council nor the Park Board preferred the full CBT 6 segment, given the uncertainty related to cost, safety concerns related to the crossing at MacArthur, and benefit to the community for the trail east of Fairway. Council provided direction to move forward with a supplemental funding application for a portion of CBT 6 from Mockingbird to the Oncor utility easement, just west of MacArthur Blvd. This alignment supports the Park Board preferred route, which is outlined in the Parks Trail Masterplan, and avoids the crossing at E. Belt Line Road and MacArthur.

The resolution is a required component for the application process for the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program, a federal program to provide funding reimbursement for transportation alternatives like trails. This program is administered locally through the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC).

Background:

There are segments of the proposed trail for the Cotton Belt project that are not funded for construction. NCTCOG identified several segments as “critical segments,” defined as those segments that, if not constructed with the rail, would not be feasible to construct later. These critical segments, in addition to the design for the trail for the entire corridor, is funded via the RTC. This brought tremendous value to the table. Unfortunately, the funding available through RTC was not enough to fund construction of the entire trail system through the Cotton Belt corridor. Coppell has two segments that are unfunded. The NCTCOG construction estimate (based on 10% plan set) for CBT 3 is \$2,298,768 and \$6,705,636 for CBT 6.

The City has some funding options available to help offset the construction cost of the unfunded segments. The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program provides reimbursement assistance to local entities to construct transportation alternatives to on-street travel. This is an extremely competitive program, as there are limited funds available for this program year and more projects, many of which will be Cotton Belt related, will be submitted than can be awarded. In addition, the City was awarded Transportation Development Credits last year and still has one credit remaining that can be used in lieu of a local cash match for federally funded projects.

For CBT 6, staff utilized NCTCOG linear foot pricing from CBT 3 to develop an estimated budget for the partial leg of CBT 6 from Mockingbird to the Oncor easement. The total estimated construction cost for this segment is \$560,000. The project application will request an 80-20 funding split and will propose utilizing the City’s remaining TDC for the local match.

As noted earlier in this memo, a resolution is required as part of the project application process. One caveat that was included in this resolution is a “not to exceed out of pocket cash” maximum of \$100,000, as the local entity (ie- the City) is responsible for all costs that are greater than the final construction estimates. This is intended to provide some measure of cost certainty for the City.

Analysis: This partial leg of CBT 6 provides future connectivity to trails that will ultimately allow users to cross MacArthur without having to navigate the intersection of E. Belt Line and MacArthur by either traveling north up through the Oncor easement to cross MacArthur at Bethel School Road or traveling south on the Campion at Mockingbird and going underneath the MacArthur bridge.

Legal: The City Attorney has reviewed this resolution.

Fiscal Impact: This is a reimbursement-based program. The City will enter into a funding agreement with DART if the project is awarded and is within the budget parameters outlined in the resolution. Funding will be advanced by the 2014 Sales Tax Revenue Bonds and all but the potential overage amount will be reimbursed through the program. Timing of payments and amounts will be determined by the Interlocal Funding Agreement with DART.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the resolution.