Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

Metro

Board Report

File #: 2018-0359, **File Type:** Informational Report **Agenda Number:** 45.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
JULY 19, 2018

SUBJECT: REGIONAL ADVANCE MITIGATION PROGRAM FEASIBILITY

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE report on Regional Advance Mitigation Program Feasibility (Attachment A).

ISSUE

At its January 2017 meeting, the Metro Board approved Motion #52 by Director Kuehl directing consideration of a Regional Advance Mitigation Program (RAMP) (Attachment B). As a result, staff has met with environmental stakeholders and representatives of regional and State agencies to discuss the interest in a multijurisdictional RAMP approach, and convened a working group to develop an early screening process.

Metro staff has spent the past year assessing its future mitigation needs and the wider feasibility of an advance mitigation program in Los Angeles County. This Receive and File presents the results of the Needs and Feasibility Assessment for Advanced Mitigation. The conclusion of the Needs and Feasibility Assessment recognizes the benefits from a multiagency partnership in developing an advance mitigation program.

DISCUSSION

The Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Department prepared a Needs and Feasibility Assessment for Advance Mitigation (Attachment A) to understand previous advance mitigation efforts, the baseline conditions in Los Angeles County, costs, timing, and the tangible and intangible benefits of a County-wide consolidated advance mitigation program.

Between February 2018 and April 2018, comments were solicited on the report from stakeholders identified in the original motion (i.e., Caltrans District 7, the County of Los Angeles, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, State and federal fish and wildlife agencies), as well as participants in Metro's Sustainability Council. The Sustainability Council includes members from non-governmental organizations, public agencies, and subject matter experts related to the Council's mission.

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NEXT STEPS

Staff will proceed with a continuation of work on two paths: (1) developing a more robust screening process to be used by agencies to evaluate level of effort and costs for participation; and (2) to additionally assess the feasibility of integrating greenhouse gas mitigation through habitat restoration in urban areas.

Staff will continue the Metro Internal RAMP Working Group meetings that consist of the Planning, Highways, Regional Rail, Program Management, Real Estate, and Environmental Compliance and Sustainability staff. Outreach to regional partners will commence including those that were originally engaged in the development of the RAMP approach. Staff will periodically report back to the Board on the progress of these efforts.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Metro Regional Advance Mitigation Needs and Feasibility Assessment, ICF, June 2018.
Attachment B - January 2017 Motion #52 (Kuehl)

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Attachment A

http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/07032018_attachment_a_regional_advance_mitigation.pdf

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File #:2017-0030, **File Type:**Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number:52

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 19, 2017

Motion by:

Director Kuehl

January 19, 2017

Consideration of Regional Advance Mitigation Programs

WHEREAS transportation projects in Los Angeles County may result in biological impacts to plant and/or animal habitat, or biological systems;

WHEREAS some counties and transportation agencies have seen benefit and cost savings in developing a Regional Advance Mitigation Program (RAMP) to effectively and efficiently deliver comprehensive mitigations for a combination of projects whose biological impacts have been evaluated programmatically;

WHEREAS some counties and transportation agencies have seen the benefit of community engagement in the RAMP process, which has led to greater understanding and public support for transportation projects;

WHEREAS Metro's capital program now and into the future includes projects that may be located in sensitive habitat areas or within wildlife movement corridors and may require mitigation that might best be undertaken as part of a Los Angeles County RAMP;

WHEREAS Metro's future and proposed expanded pipeline of highway, transit and active transportation capital projects include infrastructure to be developed over an extended period of time that will have an impact on plant and/or animal species, habitats, or biological systems. However, these projects may be so far in the future as to lack sufficient detail to allow evaluation and determination of potential conditions and mitigations which may be found as well as the specific mitigations and costs thereof;

WHEREAS it is important that the applicability of a RAMP approach be determined at the earliest practicable time so as to allow a coordinated effort with other Los Angeles County agencies or neighboring counties that may pursue or may already have a RAMP program.

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CONSIDER **Motion by Director Kuehl** that the Board direct the CEO to:

A. Meet with environmental stakeholders and representatives of Caltrans District 7, the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, and other potentially interested parties to discuss any interest in a RAMP approach for multijurisdictional cooperation in biological mitigations, and explore the development of a conservation greenprint that identifies and helps prioritize areas of high ecological value, water resources, and wildlife movement corridors;

B. Convene a working group of environmental stakeholders and Metro/Caltrans project managers for Transit, Highway and Active Transportation projects to develop an early screening process for biological evaluation to be applied to the review of projects scheduled for planning and/or construction over the next thirty years. Screening shall not only include any likelihood of direct and indirect impacts to plant and/or animal species, habitats, biological systems, and wildlife corridors, but also an evaluation of multiple Metro projects with regard to commonalities in ecosystems, animal and plant type, habitat, watershed, and scheduled timing of implementation. Project evaluation should also determine whether current review and implementation status renders the project inappropriate for inclusion in a RAMP; and

C. Prepare a report back to the Board within 120 days on the preliminary results of the consultations and a proposed early screening process to be considered for all major Metro transportation projects, as well as an approach to identifying high value conservation lands, water resources, and wildlife movement corridors.

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