



## Legislation Text

File #: 2024-0073, Version: 1

### Report to Mayor and City Council

Wednesday, March 06, 2024

Consent

#### **SUBJECT:**

**RECEIVE AND FILE AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS) REGARDING ALAMEDA STREET (SR-47) AND ITS APPLICATION TO ACCEPT ALAMEDA INTO THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM (CITY COUNCIL)**

#### **I. SUMMARY**

Over the past several years, the City made several requests for Caltrans to include Alameda Street in the state highway system, which would require the California Transportation Commission (“CTC”) to approve an application. The street currently is marked as State Route 47 (“SR-47”) and is on the state route alignment but was constructed prior to the state highway as a local street and not to state highway standards and excluded from the state highway system.

In 2021, Caltrans expressed a willingness to apply to the CTC for the designation of Alameda as SR-47 but expected the process to be a 12- to 24-month process. Preparation of the application was begun by Caltrans (“Exhibit 1”). In furtherance of those efforts, the City and Caltrans negotiated an interim MOU to cover maintenance and repairs during the application period, which was approved by the City Council on October 18, 2022, and executed by all parties as of July 31, 2023 (“Exhibit 2”).

Caltrans applied for federal funding to cover the cost of the Project Application and Environmental Documents to take the street into the State highway system in 2023 but was unsuccessful and does not have the estimated \$5 million needed to move the application forward, especially given the State’s current budget deficit. As a result, the project stalled last Fall, but Caltrans is still working with City staff on a repaving project on Alameda which would fulfill some of its obligations under the MOU.

In terms of moving forward on the project application, on January 26, 2024, Caltrans sent a letter to City staff laying out new conditions for the project to go forward (“Exhibit 3”), which are significantly different from the already-executed MOU. The new conditions make achieving the City’s goal of having the street enter the state highway system much more

difficult. This item is to present the status of the State Highway project to the City Council.

## II. RECOMMENDATION

1. **RECEIVE AND FILE** update on the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Carson and the California Department of Transportation regarding Alameda Street/SR-47.

1.

## III. ALTERNATIVES

**TAKE** another action the City Council deems appropriate.

## IV. BACKGROUND

The City has requested numerous times that Caltrans include the section of Alameda Street in Carson in the state highway system. In 2021 there was some movement in that direction, with the supply chain crisis creating interest in the route from officials from The White House, the Governor's Office, and Caltrans.

Prior to 1982, SR-47 (Alameda Street) was not a state highway, but it was added to the State statutes with AB 3375. However, AB 3375 did not require that the street be adopted into the State Highway system by the CTC. However, the bill also stated that SR-47 shall *not include* that portion of the adopted route from Route 1 to Willow Street (Sepulveda, in Carson) and that portion of the adopted alignment from Willow Street to Route 405.

The legislation originally intended that all of Alameda Street in Carson that was ever going to be part of the State Highway system was between the 405 and Del Amo Boulevard. (Alameda north of Del Amo is in unincorporated Los Angeles County.) The 1982 version of the statute provided that even the part of Alameda between the 405 Freeway and Del Amo would be included in the State Highway system only if a plan for financing improvements was completed by the end of 1984. That plan was never completed.

Caltrans has determined that SR-47 from Lomita Boulevard to SR-91 is a Traversable Highway Category 4, approved as a future state route but not yet adopted by the CTC. It has been almost 40 years since the adoption of AB 3375, and until now the State had not moved forward on incorporating SR-47 into the State Highway system. Given that this highway is maintained by the City of Carson the highway has become burdensome on the local community.

The City has always held that the realignment of SR-47 onto Alameda Street was a matter of regional and statewide priority, and was done as part of the Alameda Corridor project, combining the street and adjacent rail line into a relatively high-speed corridor to streamline truck and container traffic from the port complex to east-west rail facilities and other

logistics operations near Downtown Los Angeles. As a result, SR-47 traffic is dominated by freight-carrying trucks, at great maintenance expense to the City.

Per the MOU between Caltrans and the City, Caltrans intended to pursue the official adoption of Alameda Street into the State Highway System. Adoptions of roadways into the State Highway System require the approval by the CTC, which is a separate agency from Caltrans and will make the final determination on the approval of all adoptions. Caltrans hired a Specialist to lead the effort on the Adoption process.

Concurrently to pursuing the adoption of Alameda Street, Caltrans also agreed to make significant repairs to Alameda Street, which will reduce the City's maintenance obligations during the pre-Adoption process.

In 2023, Caltrans applied for federal funding to cover the cost of the Project Application and Environmental Documents ("PA/ED") to take the street into the State highway system but was unsuccessful. The estimated cost of that phase of the project is \$5 million, and there is no other funding source at Caltrans, especially given the State's current budget deficit. The Caltrans project manager has reached out to the four local jurisdictions affected by the effort (City of Los Angeles, City of Carson, County of Los Angeles, and City of Compton) to gauge interest in local funding of the PA/ED on a pro rata basis but there is little appetite at the local level to pay for even a portion of the process, which for Carson would be nearly \$2 million.

Compounding the problem is the CTC has reaffirmed its position that prior to acceptance into the state highway system, Alameda would need to be brought up to a state of good repair and designed and constructed up to state highway standards by the local jurisdictions at their cost. This latter requirement is at least an order of magnitude larger than the \$5 million application cost and contradicts the reason why the cities would be interested in having the state take over the street in the first place - excessive maintenance cost due to heavy truck traffic.

Staff will prepare a response to Caltrans on their revised requests for pro rata funding and develop some communications that the City can undertake with Caltrans in Sacramento, the Governor's office, and the CTC to have our voice heard once again on this issue. In the meantime, though the project stalled last Fall, Caltrans is still working with City staff on a repaving project on Alameda which would fulfill some of its obligations under the MOU.

## **V. FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no request for funding from the City to be used toward the state highway application process. The City currently pays for maintenance on Alameda Street, as it is a local street. Additional repairs and reconstruction of Alameda will be undertaken by Caltrans, and will reduce the City's maintenance costs.

## **VI. EXHIBITS**

1. Letter from Tony Tavares regarding Adoption application. (pg. 5)
2. MOU between the City of Carson and Caltrans regarding Alameda Street.(pg. 6-11)
3. Letter from Ryan Snyder stating new conditions to the project moving forward.(pg. 12)

Prepared by: John S. Raymond/Assistant City Manager