



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-218, Version: 1

Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, April 06, 2021

Consent

SUBJECT:

CONSIDER APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF EIGHT (8) TRANSIT BUS SHELTERS AND TEN (10) BUS BENCHES FROM TOLAR MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC. AT A DO-NOT-EXCEED TOTAL COST OF \$159,355 (CITY COUNCIL)

I. SUMMARY

On March 28, 2020, the City's fixed-route bus service, the Carson Circuit, was suspended due to safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic; specifically, the possibility of spreading the virus to passengers and bus operators. Prior to this declaration, with City Council authorization, staff had engaged Long Beach Transit (LBT) in discussions to be the principal operator of this service. Negotiations with LBT are progressing well and staff plans to return to the City Council in the next few months for approval to start new services.

In the interim, staff would like to replace select transit bus shelters and benches along the City's major corridors, most of which have aged due to weather and regular wear and tear. To maintain the cohesive appearance of the shelters and benches that was implemented with the Carson Street Master Plan, the City Council is asked to waive the bidding procedures and utilize sole source purchasing. Should the City Council approve the purchase, the bus shelters and benches will be installed at major intersections in Carson and at locations strategic to, and supportive of the upcoming partnership with Long Beach Transit. Although new routes are still in the planning phase, the proposed locations can easily be adjusted to meet the needs of the final routes. Additionally, staff can relocate existing shelters to better meet the needs of the new partnership.

The estimated total cost of the eight (8) transit bus shelters and ten (10) transit bus benches is \$151,767 (Exhibit No. 1). However, in an effort to account for any unanticipated charges associated with taxes, fees, shipping, handling, etc., staff is requesting an additional 5% contingency, for a do-not-exceed total cost of \$159,355.

II. RECOMMENDATION

1. WAIVE the written contract procedures for purchases of materials \$25,000 or greater over a fiscal year as defined by Carson Municipal Code - Section 2605;

2. WAIVE the bidding requirements in Chapter 6 (“Purchasing System”) of Title II of the Carson Municipal Code (CMC), pursuant to CMC Section 2611(e) (“Sole Source Purchasing”);
3. APPROVE the purchase of eight (8) transit bus shelters and ten (10) transit bus benches from Tolar Manufacturing Company, Inc. at a do-not-exceed total cost of \$159,355.

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE another action the City Council deems appropriate.

IV. BACKGROUND

As the City moves forward with plans to improve and enhance the transit experience for residents and the larger community, one important aspect of this endeavor is the replacement of old and weathered bus shelters and bus benches. This improvement was first initiated in 2010, as part of Project No. 1043: Carson Street Master Plan. In that effort, the contractor for the project conducted a competitive bidding process to select the specified shelter design for the Carson Street corridor. The successful bidder for these enhancements was Tolar Manufacturing Company, Inc. (Tolar). A total of 12 silver bus shelters and bus benches were installed as part of the streetscape upgrades within the 1.75 miles of roadway of the Carson Street corridor. In 2019, an additional 10 shelters and 25 benches were constructed adjacent to California State University Dominguez Hills and Avalon Blvd.

Based in Corona, California, Tolar has over 30 years of specialized industry experience, with public transit agencies nationwide utilizing the firm for their transit furniture needs. Notable customers include LA Metro, and the cities of Torrance, Riverside, San Diego and more. Staff has also reviewed pricing from other vendors to confirm that Tolar remains competitive in its pricing for current orders. The cities of Torrance and Riverside recently purchased Tolar shelters in the fiscal year (FY) 2019/20 through a competitive bidding process. Tolar was selected as the lowest responsible bidder in those cities’ procurements; albeit, with different product specifications than the City of Carson’s. The City of Torrance purchased similar shelters, however the size and design features were more substantial than Carson’s, making it difficult to consider a like-for-like comparison.

Tolar owns, as part of its intellectual property, the designs, custom metal and gasket extrusions that are unique to their products (Exhibit No. 2). To maintain the cohesive appearance of the existing “Carson-branded” shelters and benches, the City Council is asked to waive the bidding procedures as defined by Section 2611 (e) of the Carson Municipal Code, and utilize sole source purchasing for this acquisition. The estimated total cost of eight (8) transit bus shelters and ten (10) transit bus benches is \$151,767. However, in an effort to account for any unanticipated charges for fees, taxes, shipping, handling, etc., an additional 5% contingency is requested, for a do-not-exceed total cost of \$159,355.

It is important to note that although Tolar was chosen for the Carson Street Master Plan, and utilized again in 2019 for additional shelters, the City Council can elect to go with

another vendor through competitive bidding, for additional shelters. However, the specification and architecture provided by a prospective alternate vendor may differ slightly to the existing Tolar shelters, both in design and function.

Should the City Council approve the purchase, the bus shelters and benches will be installed at major intersections in Carson, and at locations strategic to, and supportive of the upcoming partnership with Long Beach Transit (Exhibit No. 3). Although new routes are still in the planning phase, the proposed locations can easily be adjusted to meet the needs of the final routes. Additionally, staff can relocate existing shelters to better meet the needs of the new partnership. Out of the City's 58 shelters, 26 are Tolar-branded shelters, with four additional shelters awaiting installation. The remaining 28 shelters are blue in color, aged and worn in appearance and in need of replacement.

From 2000 to 2010, the City partnered with Clear Channel (formerly "Eller Media") to facilitate advertising at various bus stops in the City. That contract has since expired, although some Clear Channel owned shelters are still used by the contractor for advertising. As such, the City currently does not have an active advertising program for bus shelters, but Tolar's shelters feature an advertising window, opening up the opportunity to re-establish such program (Exhibit No. 4). Future advertisements may be for commercial purposes, and/or to promote City-organized events. Funding for the shelters will come from Proposition C, but advertisement proceeds stemming from commercial purposes must be returned to the original funding source - Proposition C - per LA Metro guidelines. Many of the existing City owned shelters were purchased as part of the Carson Street master plan project and did not utilize Proposition C funding in their purchase. While others were secured with Transportation Development Act Article 3 (TDA3) funding. For Carson Street and TDA3 funded shelters, advertising revenue is unrestricted and can be deposited to general fund revenue accounts should the City re-establish this enterprise.

It should be noted that Proposition C funds must be expended within three years of distribution in a "use it or lose it" fashion. Consequently, staff intends to make this purchase by the end of the current Fiscal Year and expend reserve Proposition C funds from recent years. Based on staff's ability to install approximately 8-10 shelters per Fiscal Year, staff plans to purchase and replace the remaining blue shelters by FY 23-24 to achieve a modern and united look throughout the City.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact. Staff is requesting City Council approval to transfer \$159,355 budget appropriation between accounts within Proposition C Fund (Fund no. 219):

From:

| Account No. | Account Description | Amount |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 219-80-940-180-8009 | Infrastructure Roadways | (\$159,355) |

To:

| Account No. | Account Description | Amount |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 219-90-940-180-6009 | CS Circuit Supplies | \$7,358 |

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 219-90-940-180-8004 | CS Circuit Equipment | \$151,997 |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|

This budget transfer request does not alter the City's adopted budget in Proposition C fund.

VI. EXHIBITS

1. Tolar Quote (pages 4-9).
2. Tolar Sole Source Correspondence (page 10).
3. Shelter Sites (page 11).
4. Shelter and bus bench images (page 12-15).

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