

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE October 2, 2020

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Joppa Neighborhood Service Plan**

The October 13, 2020 City Council agenda has two resolutions covering: (1) authorization of an agreement between the City of Dallas and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) for the closure of the at-grade vehicular crossing at Linfield Road and the receipt and deposit of funds in the Linfield Road project fund in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for the purpose of UPRR's contributions to address the impact of the pedestrian at-grade crossing, and (2) the authorization of an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Dallas and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 to provide "on-demand" transportation services for the residents of the Joppa neighborhood for the period covering the design and construction of a new pedestrian bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks that parallels the existing Linfield vehicular bridge.

BACKGROUND

Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) housed an intermodal operation known as Miller Yard located on the west side of Linfield Road near the Joppa neighborhood in Dallas, Texas. In 2005, UPRR relocated its multimodal operation away from Miller Yard but maintained its status as a multi-use operation. On September 27, 2000, the City Council approved the construction of a vehicular bridge to minimize traffic interruptions to the Joppa neighborhood considering that Linfield Road functioned as its main access. As the economy grew, the demand for Miller Yard's operations grew with it resulting in the need to add a bypass track through Miller Yard at Linfield Road. The addition of faster moving trains, along with slower moving trains within the Miller Yard, would pose an increased safety risk to pedestrians and vehicular traffic which necessitated the consideration of the permanent closure of the at-grade railroad crossing. However, since the existing vehicular bridge has steeper grades that do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), the need for an alternate solution for pedestrian crossings was necessary.

Since 2015, UPRR in collaboration with the City of Dallas, the North Central Council of Governments (NCTCOG), and the Joppa community engaged in numerous community meetings that culminated in the community's agreement to permanently close the at-grade crossing with the following provisions:

- Construction of a pedestrian bridge parallel to the existing vehicular bridge that meets current ADAAG guidelines
- Access improvements to the Carbondale Street ramping arrangements at Loop 12 in coordination between NCTCOG and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- UPRR's contribution of \$500,000.00 to fund the landscape beautification in the vicinity of this crossing along Carbondale Street

As a result of the above agreement with the community, on June 13, 2019, NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved a total of \$8,000,000 of funds towards the design and construction of the pedestrian bridge which will be processed through a separate City Council resolution upon inclusion into the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)/Statewide TIP and the ensuing receipt of State and Federal approval.

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This Action

Since UPRR's train operation at Miller Yard require stoppage of some trains on the tracks for an extended period of time, access to the temporary pedestrian crossing will be blocked which heightens the safety risks of the pedestrians trying to cross at this location. To address this concern, NCTCOG led discussions with UPRR, the City, and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to provide "on-demand" service to the residents whose address is in the Joppa neighborhood while the new pedestrian bridge is being constructed. UPRR's initial contribution of funds for landscape beautification in the vicinity of this crossing along Carbondale Street will be used to fund the proposed "on-demand" service that DART will provide. In return, NCTCOG will add the landscape beautification funds to the currently funded bridge project that was initially approved by RTC on June 13, 2019. On September 25, 2020, NCTCOG's Surface Transportation Technical Committee approved the addition of the landscape funds to the project's initial funds in advance of Regional Transportation Council action.

Next Step

Following approval of these items, the next step in the process will be the preparation of a City Council resolution for authorization of an Advanced Funding Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to continue project implementation. Staff expects for City Council to consider that resolution in early 2021.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ghassan Khankarli, Assistant Director of the Department of Transportation, at Ghassan.khankarli@dallascityhall.com.



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