



City of Arts & Innovation

Mobility & Infrastructure Committee Memorandum

TO: MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE **DATE: JULY 8, 2021**

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **WARD: 2**

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN METROLINK STATION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

ISSUE:

The issue for consideration is to receive an update and presentation from the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) on the Riverside Downtown Metrolink Station Improvements Project.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Mobility & Infrastructure Committee:

1. Receive an update on the Riverside Downtown Metrolink Station Improvements Project

BACKGROUND:

The Riverside Downtown Metrolink Station is one of several transportation hubs within the City of Riverside and services Riverside residents along with neighboring communities. It is one of the key stops along the proposed Coachella Valley-San Geronimo Pass Rail Corridor Service Project and provides links between several surface transportation modes including: Rail, local Riverside Transit Agency Service, Rideshare, Long-Range Bus Service, and bicycle storage. The station currently serves the Inland Empire – Orange County, Riverside, and 91/Perris Valley Metrolink lines. The Downtown Station houses over 1,000 free parking stalls for Metrolink riders.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration and Metrolink, proposes to build an additional passenger loading platform and tracks to improve Metrolink services and extend the existing pedestrian bridge to have additional elevator and stair access. The proposed track would connect to the existing station layover tracks on the south side. The project will provide additional parking for the Metrolink station on the east side of the station.

The project sits within the Eastside Neighborhood and close to the proposed Riverside Unified School District Eastside Neighborhood School, which would be bounded by Howard Avenue, 13th Street, Victoria Avenue, and 14th Street. The Eastside Neighborhood School would be a TK-6 grade elementary school with 31 classrooms. The project is also adjacent to several proposed improvements funded through the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities and Transformative Climate Communities grant programs.

On December 16, 2020, RCTC presented the project to the City's Cultural Heritage Board (CHB). David Lewis, Capital Projects Manager, RCTC, updated the Board on the timeline and process for the cultural resource studies, and environmental review process. The CHB members raised no issues or concerns at the time.

DISCUSSION:

Project Area, Objectives and Components

As shown in Figure 1, the project area is generally to the east of existing Metrolink amenities and is bounded by 12th Street, Howard Avenue, and 9th Street.

Objectives of the project include:

- Expand platform capacity to meet passenger train storage needs
- Allow for train meets off the BNSF mainline
- Facilitate more efficient passenger flow
- Enhance safety and access for station users
- Accommodate projected future demand

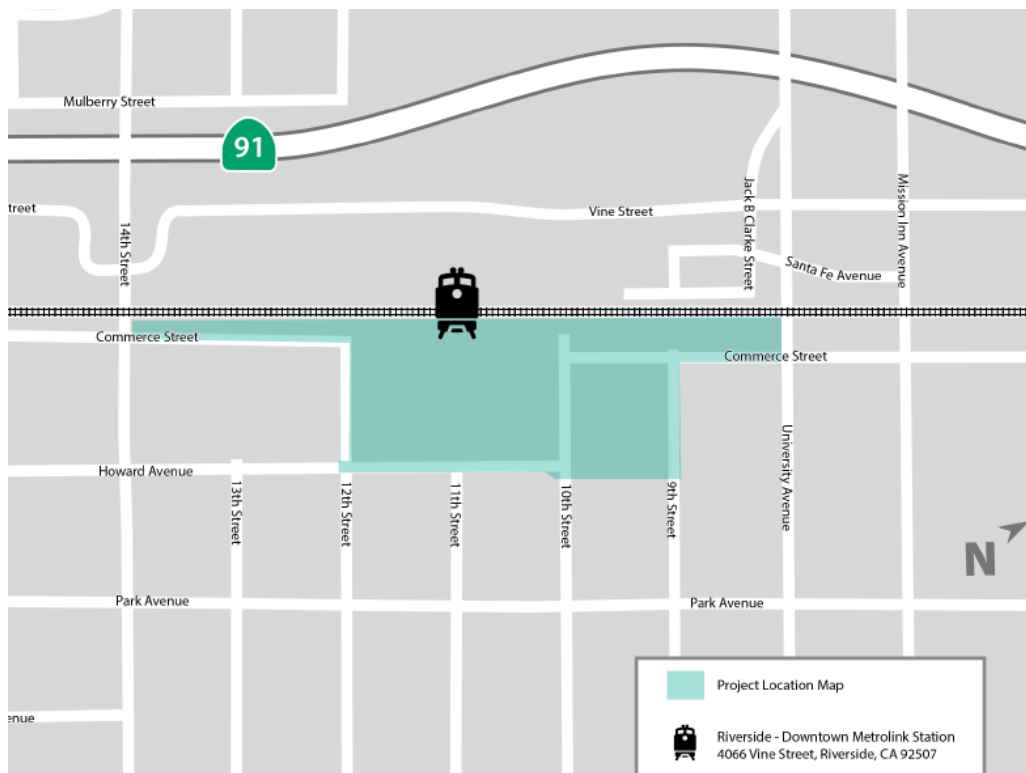


Figure 1: Project Location Map

Completion of the proposed Downtown Metrolink Station Improvements project includes several components:

- Building a new center platform
- Constructing new tracks and making other track improvements

- Modifying the railroad signal system
- Extending the pedestrian bridge, including elevator and ADA access
- Relocating existing ADA parking and adding parking to the south side of the station
- Modifying the bus drop-off area
- Adding sidewalks

These project components will require expanding the station easterly towards Howard Avenue and potentially the vacation of segments of the City roadway. The project also includes the proposed demolition of structures within the project footprint to facilitate new track & platform segments and completion of adjacent amenities.

Project Approvals

Because RCTC acts as the lead jurisdiction in processing improvements on their property, it is not required to follow the RMC, including Title 19. Like developments managed by School Districts, State Universities, and other public entities, projects such as the Downtown Metrolink Station Improvements would not go before the Riverside City Council for final approval. Discretionary review by the City would typically only be required for street and alley vacations associated with projects of this nature. Ministerial City review is still required for some service and safety-related project elements. A general list of these items is shown below and will be refined as the project progresses:

- Street Improvements (Curb, gutter, sidewalk, street trees, driveway locations, paving matchups, and potential rehab of existing pavement) and Grading
- Street/Alley Vacations**, a Lot Merger / Consolidation, additional dedications of the right of way along existing streets. (**Street/ Alley Vacations are a discretionary action)
- Water and Fire Services, Hydrants, and any necessary relocation of existing facilities.
- Sewer service and any potential relocations of existing facilities.
- New storm drain connections and any potential relocations or new storm drain lines.
- Emergency vehicle access, including fire truck circulation through the site.
- Trash enclosure locations and access
- Water Quality and Drainage
- New Street lights, potential power pole relocations, new electrical services.
- Building and safety review for parking lot improvements, lighting, structures, etc.

Project Timeline

RCTC is currently in the process of preparing technical studies for the project, with an anticipated circulation of the draft environmental impact document in October of 2021. The project is anticipated to have a public hearing in November of 2021, followed by a response to comments period and the potential approval of the final environmental document in September of 2022. During the environmental circulation period, City residents are encouraged to review and comment on the project so that their needs and thoughts are reflected in the final project document; City Staff will also review and comment on the environmental document.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

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availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation