



Expo

Exposition Metro Line
Construction Authority

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DATE: MAY 7, 2007

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FROM: RICHARD D. THORPE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

ACTION: EXPO AUTHORITY FEDERAL LOBBYING OPTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize staff to work with Metro to add a lobbyist or lobbying firm to their federal team to focus on the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project. This lobbyist or lobbying firm would report directly to the Metro CEO and Expo CEO.

SUMMARY

At the April meeting, the Board asked staff to come back with options concerning the Authority's federal representation in Washington, DC. Currently, Metro government relations staff and the Metro federal lobbying firm, Van Scoyoc Associates, handle all lobbying efforts on behalf of the Authority. These costs are covered by Metro in order to present a unified message in Washington. Over the last several months, some Board Members have voiced support for increasing our presence and representation in D.C. in order to more effectively communicate our message and solicit funding for the Expo project. As a result, Expo staff considered various alternatives and is recommending that the Authority work with Metro to add a dedicated lobbyist to the Metro federal team to focus on the Expo Light Rail project. This lobbyist or lobbying firm would report directly to the Metro CEO and Expo CEO for guidance and direction.

DISCUSSION

When the Board asked staff to consider options concerning our representation in Washington, DC, staff considered hiring a lobbyist or lobbying firm that would report directly to the Authority. However, because most of the lobbying for the

Expo project will focus on Phase 2 of the project, funding would have to come through the Phase 2 budget. It has not yet been determined if the \$15 million currently programmed by Metro for Phase 2 is sufficient to cover all environmental and preliminary engineering activities. Lobbying activities and the hiring of a lobbying firm by the Authority was not included in the \$15 million programmed by Metro. As a result, it would be difficult for the Authority to hire a lobbyist directly, as it is unlikely that there are sufficient funds in the Phase 2 project budget to cover these costs.

Since Metro is considering Expo Phase 2 as the next federally funded project for the agency, hiring a lobbyist to focus specifically on this project would be a direct benefit to both the Authority and Metro. This approach would increase the focus and attention on the Expo project in Washington, DC, without impacting the Authority's budget for Phase 2.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Working with Metro to add a lobbyist to the federal team to focus on the Expo project would have no impact to the Authority budget for Phase 2. If the Authority hires a lobbying firm directly, there will be an impact to the Phase 2 FY08 and project budget.

NEXT STEPS

If the Board approves the staff recommendation, Authority staff will work with Metro to consider adding a dedicated lobbyist or lobbying firm to focus on the Expo project.

ATTACHMENT (S)

None