



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT



DEPARTMENT: Administration

MEETING DATE: July 17, 2007

PREPARED BY: Tito Haes, Deputy City Manager

AGENDA LOCATION: CC-10

TITLE: Consideration of a Federal Lobbying Strategy

OBJECTIVE: This report will provide the City Council with an overview of a proposed federal lobbying strategy.

BACKGROUND: At their regular meeting of July 3, 2007, the City Council requested staff prepare a comprehensive federal lobbying strategy. In past years, the City of Monrovia has been very successful in our federal lobbying efforts. Since fiscal year 2001, the City has received the following dedicated appropriations:

Train Youth and Information Technologies (FY2001)	\$ 276,000
Electric Shuttles (FY2001)	\$ 580,000
Renovation and Upgrade of Teen Center (FY2001)	\$ 430,000
Old Town Revitalization Project (FY2002)	\$ 490,000
Site Preparation of 5 th /Huntington (FY2004)	\$ 450,000
Peck Road Wash NPDES Project (FY2005)	\$ 400,000
Myrtle Avenue Streetscape Project (FY2006)	\$ 100,000
Transit Village/Station Square Project (FY2005-06)	\$3,778,000

ANALYSIS: In past years, the City has submitted a list of projects to our federal lobbyist in December for their review. The lobbyist looks over the list to find possible appropriations bills where they could be funded, determines which projects are more viable for funding, and possible "tweaks" to the projects to improve their viability for funding. The projects are then fine-tuned, ranked, and submitted to Congressman Dreier's and Senators Feinstein and Boxer's offices for consideration. Typically, the elected officials request the project list in February or March.

In March or April both houses of Congress begin meeting in their respective appropriations subcommittees to consider the appropriations bills. Normally, this is where Members of Congress submit their constituents' project requests for consideration to be inserted in the appropriations bills. In addition, this is the ideal time for the City to personally lobby our federal elected officials to discuss the merits of our projects. The opportunity to meet with our federal elected officials and/or their senior staff in person and answer their specific questions about our projects can go a long way

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in determining whether the Members will submit our project over the numerous other requests they receive.

In past years, the City's project list has consisted of four or five projects to improve Monrovia, with the understanding that not all, if any, will be inserted in any appropriations bill. In FY 2007, the City submitted the following projects:

- \$3,255,000 in additional funding for Monrovia Transit Village
- \$1,000,000 for Monrovia City Hall ADA Improvements
- \$550,000 in additional funding for Peck Road Wash NPDES Project
- \$769,000 in additional funding for Myrtle Avenue Streetscape

Congressman David Dreier successfully secured funding for Monrovia's Transit Village in the House Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. However, because action was not concluded on the measure prior to the conclusion of the 109th Congress, all unresolved appropriations bills were placed into an omnibus continuing resolution. Final action on these appropriations bill was thus delayed to the 110th Congress, which convened in January. Because of a combination of issues, the cost to support the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and some ethics issues both the Senate and the House have had to deal with in recent years, all dedicated appropriations, including Monrovia's, were eliminated from this year's appropriations bills by the new majority which assumed leadership at the beginning of this Congress.

Both the House and Senate have been working on new appropriations rules and guidelines, which include more visibility to earmarks and the Members requesting them. In addition, Appropriations Committee leaders in both Houses have indicated they intend to significantly reduce – by 50 percent -- the number and dollar level of earmarks in this year's bills. Disagreement on how the new earmark guidelines will be implemented has slowed deliberations on appropriations measures for Fiscal Year 2008, and it remains uncertain how many earmarks will be included in the bills. What is clear is that Congress will again have a very difficult time completing action on all bills prior to the end of the Fiscal Year on September 30, meaning either a continuing resolution or omnibus appropriations measure again this year.

However, on Wednesday, July 11, we received word from our lobbyist that Congressman Dreier successfully secured \$500,000 for Monrovia's Transit Village in the Transportation/Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill. Considering both the number and dollar value of dedicated appropriations requests has been cut in half this year, this is very good news. Keep in mind that we still have Senate action and the Conference Committee to go, of course, but this is a great start in a tough year.

In anticipation for next year's appropriations cycle, staff agrees with our federal lobbyist's recommendation that Monrovia continue the same procedure as in past years, with the one modification. We reduce the number of requested projects to two, Monrovia Transit Village and City Hall ADA Improvements. Staff will also coordinate

with our federal lobbyist regarding dates for a City Council lobbying trip to Washington, DC in April 2008 to personally advocate for our projects.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the City Council receive and file this informational report.

COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED: Should the Council concur with staff's recommendation, the appropriate action would be a motion to:

“Receive and file this informational report”

Respectfully,

Tito Haes
Deputy City Manager