



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Department of Mobility and Infrastructure

William Peduto, Mayor

Karina Ricks, Director

TO: Members of City Council of Pittsburgh

FROM: Karina Ricks

DATE: August 29, 2018

RE: WEST OHIO STREET BRIDGE AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION

SUMMARY

The West Ohio Street Bridge replacement project has been in process since 1999, predating this and several other administrations. The project is independent of the current Norfolk Southern Railway Corporation (NSRC) bridge clearance project (a.k.a. the double stacking plan) of which the City remains seriously concerned. If we do not act now to approve the advance of the West Ohio Street Bridge project, we will put the City at risk to repay over \$1.5 million in expended State and Federal bridge design funds and lose State and Federal funding assistance for this critical bridge and network connection.

The Department of Mobility and Infrastructure respectfully requests your approval of authorization for the West Ohio Bridge project.

SUMMARY AND TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The West Ohio Street Bridge has been in design since 1999. The bridge is currently closed to vehicle traffic and must be rebuilt in order to be reopened as a connection in the larger Pittsburgh network. Over the repeated objections of the City of Pittsburgh in numerous PUC and Court proceedings, the City was mandated to rebuild the bridge to achieve a clearance of 22 feet above the rail bed (3 feet above its current elevation).

State and Federal construction funding was allocated for this project in the 2017 fiscal budget. These funds must be obligated by the end of FY 2019 (September 30, 2018) or the obligation authority will expire, construction funding rescinded and, if not otherwise funded and constructed, the 95% share of design funding provided from State and Federal sources repaid. In total, over \$3 million is currently at risk if authorization is not approved.

The West Ohio Street Bridge is one of five city-owned bridges over Norfolk Southern Railroad Corporation's (NSRC) Northside rail corridor. NSRC is proposing to raise two bridges along this corridor – North Avenue/Brighton Road Bridge and Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge. The



2014 Preliminary engineering completed; Environmental clearance (NEPA and Section 2016) granted

2016 Railroad agreement approved

2018 Final engineering design completed. ROW clearance underway.

CONSIDERATIONS

West Ohio Street Bridge is closed to vehicle traffic due to structural deficiencies associated with maintenance needs. Ridge Avenue Bridge is closed to all traffic and planned for demolition as a component of the West Ohio Street Bridge project.

\$1.635 million has been expended for preliminary engineering (PE) and final engineering (FE) of West Ohio Street at a cost sharing of 80% federal, 15% state (PennDOT) and 5% local resources. Per State and Federal regulations, design must proceed to construction within 10 years of funding authorization (~2014) or the City must repay the state and federal shares.

\$4.2 million has been programmed for bridge construction (\$1.5 million in the PennDOT Fiscal Year 2017 budget). Programmed funds obligated within two years of the associated fiscal year or the obligation authority will expire. Funds must be obligated prior to September 27, 2018.

If no action is taken and the West Ohio Street Bridge and Ridge Avenue Bridge deteriorate further, the PUC could order their removal on the grounds that they present a risk to the railroad facilities below.

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure that the Council and Administration approve the proposed authorizing legislation to permit reconstruction of the West Ohio Street Bridge as designed and avoid forfeiture of construction funding and potential repayment of design funding.

The recommendation to proceed with the West Ohio Street Bridge as designed and implemented by the City of Pittsburgh should in no way to be misconstrued as a precedent for any other bridges over rail corridors in the City of Pittsburgh. It remains the City's contention that as facility owner, the City has final and singular authority to grant permission to any entity to alter or otherwise affect our assets and structures.

West Ohio Street Bridge – Project Summary

Location:





Importance:

West Ohio Street Bridge, also known as Ridge Ave, is located in the Northside and passes through Allegheny Commons Park West. The bridge serves as an important vehicle and pedestrian connection to the park, as well as the National Aviary. Additionally, the West Ohio Street Bridge crosses over Norfolk Southern Railways raising the concern for its structural integrity.

Project Management:

The project oversight is PennDOT, with their project manager being Rick Lambert. The City project manager will be Jeff Skalican. Michael Baker International is the designer for the bridge. The PennDOT Bridge Team Manager is Bob Turoczy, and CDR Maguire will have Steve Shadle as their project manager.

Funding:

West Ohio Street Bridge is primarily a federally funded project totaling \$6,256,328 to date, with the breakdown being, 80% federal, 15% state, and 5% local. Phase 3 of the TIP funded \$816,648 through 2015, and phase 4 funded \$735,004 through 2017. Phase 6 funded, \$65,000 in 2014, and phase 7 has funded \$4,639,676 through 2020. The percentage cost to the City will be 5% of the total \$6,256,328 which is \$312,816.40.

Action Items:

As of 6/14/18, Baker is completing their revision for the structural adequacy plans. A Traffic Control Plan is under review with the City. The Notification of Closure is also under revision and review by the City. PennDOT will be publishing the ad for CI/CA Contract. A draft of Reimbursement Agreements with various utilities is under review by CDR. In addition, PennDOT will be reviewing the supplemental requests submitted by Michael Baker. Additionally, Norfolk Southern is to review/approve the Fence Waiver Request.