



# CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

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February 5, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Linda Lowry, City Manager

Submitted by: Meg McWade, Public Works Director

Subject: **Staff Request for City Council to Provide Direction Regarding Aesthetics of Gold Line Bridges/Structures**

## OVERVIEW

**Recommendation** – That the City Council provide direction regarding aesthetics for Gold Line bridge/structures, to be submitted to the Metro Gold Line Foothill Construction Authority (GLFCA), with recommendation to include anti-graffiti and anti-vandalism measures.\*

**Fiscal Impact** – There is no fiscal impact resulting from this action.

**Previous Related Action** – On December 18, 2017, the City Council approved the use of V-Notch aesthetic design for retaining and sound walls, designated bridge abutments for public art, and directed staff to pursue a potential Claremont Design with integration of Arcadia Design features.

In October 2017, the City Council authorized filing litigation against the GLFCA for failing to adequately analyze modifications to the location of the bridge after the FEIR was circulated and approved in 2013. The action requested tonight regarding Council's request for aesthetic preferences is unrelated to the current litigation.

**Environmental Impact** – None with this action as such request is only for the aesthetic preferences. GLFCA will be required to evaluate the environmental impacts (i.e. traffic, noise, etc.) of any changes to the project, at the time it approves additional changes to the project.

\* The City Council should note that aesthetics requests by the City to the GLFCA may be rejected; GLFCA took action in January 2018 to revert the design to the structure and aesthetic design agreed to in the 2013 settlement agreement from the City's first CEQA suit against GLFCA.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The GLFCA is continuing to move rapidly toward the design-build portion of the Foothill Gold Line Extension Phase 2B Project (the “Project”). In order for the City to provide valuable input to the GLFCA, Staff requests the City Council provide direction regarding the City’s preferences (subject to environmental impact study and mitigation – after which further comments may need to be addressed, including Metro’s provision of policing for homeless encampments within the railway corridor, and anti-graffiti and etching measures), for the design and of aesthetics for the bridges/structures that will be located in the City. The City Council’s direction on this point will allow Staff to provide timely information to GLFCA.

The City Council should note, however, that aesthetics requests by the City to the GLFCA may be rejected (in which case Staff understands that GLFCA intends to build bridge structures consistent with the design approved by the City via the 2013 settlement agreement).

## **DISCUSSION**

The Foothill Gold Line Extension (also known as the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension) is an extension of the Metro Gold Line light rail corridor, from its former terminus in Pasadena, east through the “Foothill Cities” into San Bernardino County. The plan is being implemented as two separate mass-transit projects, known as Phase 2A (Pasadena to Azusa) and Phase 2B (Azusa to Montclair). Phase 2A was completed in March 2016, while Phase 2B, which involves a station in Pomona, is in the initial stages. The corridor extension will be a part of the Los Angeles County Metro Rail System and, when completed, will be served by the Metro Gold Line. The Foothill Gold Line is being planned and implemented by the GLFCA.

GLFCA plans on starting the design-build procurement process in spring 2018. GLFCA is requesting final input from cities regarding project features such as aesthetics for bridges/structures and walls, as well as areas designated for art, in order to finalize the design-build procurement process.

### Aesthetic Design for Bridges/Structures

In December 2013, the City executed a settlement agreement with GLFCA regarding issues with the CEQA process and aesthetic impacts of the project. The settlement agreement stipulated the aesthetic design of the bridges over Garey Avenue and Towne Avenue would be similar to the existing bridge over Santa Anita Avenue in the City of Arcadia (“Arcadia Bridge Aesthetic”, larger version shown in Attachment 1). Such design in 2013 was for a single bridge at Garey Avenue and a single bridge at Towne Avenue. (The term “bridge” is used to identify a rail line overcrossing a roadway, and “fly over structure” is used to identify a rail line overcrossing a rail line).

On July 27, 2017, GLFCA adopted a modified version (“refinement”) of the Towne Avenue bridge structure, which moved the western portion of the structure further to the west, and incorporated a

second “flyover structure” to the west of Towne Avenue to accommodate the relocation of the freight rail line within the existing corridor. This proposed change did not modify the aesthetic design but did move the western portion of such structure further to the west and incorporated a second bridge span flyover, to the west of Towne Avenue, to accommodate freight line rail traffic. As part of the review of SEIR #4, the City commented that GLFCA had not adequately evaluated these changes to the Towne Avenue crossing, and the failure to analyze the environmental impacts of these changes was the primary concern behind the City’s filing of a lawsuit against GLFCA.

On January 11, 2018, the GLFCA rescinded their approval of the Towne Avenue bridge that included a separate flyover, and has returned to a bridge structure approved in 2013 that incorporates both the bridge and flyover into a single bridge span. This eliminates the unevaluated environmental impacts of placing the flyover closer to residential uses on the north side of the railroad right of way. As noted earlier, regardless of changes to the structure type, the agreed upon aesthetic design for Pomona has been the Arcadia design.

While the Arcadia design was agreed upon in 2013 for Pomona, more recently GLFCA provided two alternative designs for other locations along the Phase 2B segment. These alternate designs are called the “Claremont Aesthetic” and the “Gold Line Aesthetic”. In order to obtain City Council direction on its desire to request a change to the aesthetic design, Staff presented these designs at the December 18, 2017 meeting where City Council requested Staff return with additional options, as shown in Attachments 3 and 4.

Attributes to consider for the aesthetics of the bridge/structure choices are as follows:

- **Alternative 1: Arcadia Aesthetic Design (Attachment 1)**
  - Included in prior settlement agreement
  - Extends some Downtown Pomona aesthetics to North Pomona area
  - Provides a more historic feel
  - More visual surface area than Alternative Designs 2 and 5, now being proposed by GLFCA



Alternative 1 – N/B Garey Avenue with Arcadia Aesthetic Design



Alternative 1 – N/B Towne Avenue with Arcadia Aesthetic Design

▪ **Alternative 2: Claremont Aesthetic Design (Attachment 2)**

- Requested by Claremont to provide an open design
- Provides a more modern feel
- Updated to include tapered (poured in-place abutments) with cantilever deck instead of pre-cast abutment walls with no tapered abutments and no cantilevered deck
- Rounded upper abutment extensions for deck/girder support (required with tapered abutments)
- More space open to public at ground level
- Less visual surface area to appreciate view beyond the bridge/structure
- Not originally reviewed for Pomona and any potential environmental impacts would need to be evaluated and potentially mitigated





Alternative 2 – N/B Garey Avenue with Claremont Aesthetic Design



Alternative 2 – N/B Towne Avenue with Claremont Aesthetic Design

• **Alternative 3: Arcadia & Claremont (Combination) Aesthetic Design (Attachment 3)**

- Upper/turret portion similar to Arcadia aesthetics included in prior settlement agreement, though altered at Towne Avenue due to current flyover design
- Lower girder portion similar to Claremont aesthetics
- Extends some Downtown Pomona aesthetics to North Pomona area
- Provides a more historic feel
- Modified to increase openness; increased open space at ground level
- Less visual surface area than Arcadia only aesthetics, now being proposed by GLFCA

New  
Design



Alternative 3 – N/B Garey Avenue with Arcadia & Claremont (Combination) Aesthetic Design



Alternative 3 – N/B Towne Avenue with Arcadia & Claremont (Combination) Aesthetic Design

Note: Shot is narrow and does not show the cable railings on either side of the street

New  
Design

- **Alternative 4: Claremont-Colonnade (Modification) Aesthetic Design (Attachment 4)**

- Upper portion similar to Claremont aesthetics with cable railings
- Cable railings on top provide a more modern feel
- Lower Colonnade portion provides a more historic base that is updated with clean lines for columns and arches
- Abutment has rounded end caps at top just below bridge deck that connect visually with the arches
- Rounded end caps are also needed to allow in-set (relief) of ramp walls that add depth/shadow, manage scale of structure, and add visual interest (rail deck is cantilevered/extends out over the ramp walls).
- Arches inset into the abutment walls under the bridge behind the sidewalk:
  - + help make scale of structure more human,
  - + provide showcase for art, and
  - + connect visually with the colonnade arches
- Yellow-ball/globe light fixtures connect visually with curves of arches, add human scale, provide updated touch to historic columns/arches, are fun, and incorporate citrus history of area into the structure (lemons/oranges)
- Arches/columns increase open space at ground level and help bridge deck ‘float’



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Alternative 4 – N/B Garey Avenue with Claremont-Colonnade (Modification) Aesthetic Design

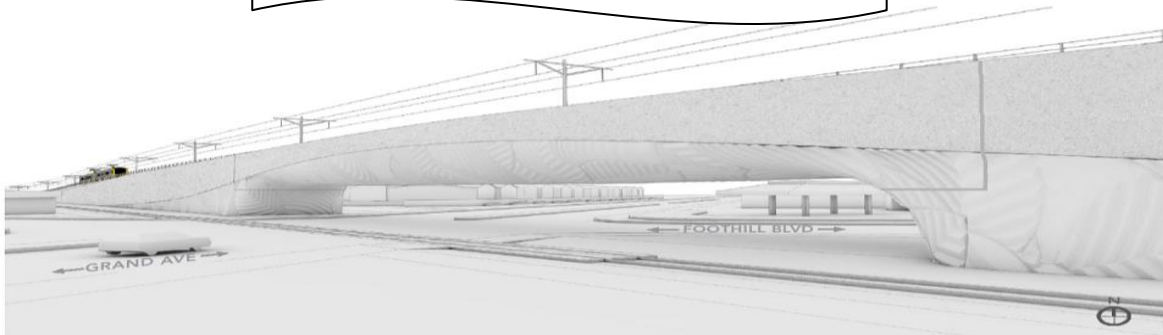


Alternative 4 – N/B Towne Avenue with Claremont-Colonnade (Modification) Aesthetic Design

Note: Further modifies the Claremont open design with the addition of more columns to form a colonnade

- **Alternative 5: Gold Line Aesthetic Design (Attachment 5)**
  - Originally designed to create uniformity with neighboring community along Gold Line route
  - Provides a more modern feel
  - Less visual surface area to appreciate view beyond the bridge/structure
  - Not originally reviewed for Pomona and any potential environmental impacts would need to be evaluated and potentially mitigated

Considered at 12/18/2017 City Council Meeting



Alternative 5 –Gold Line Aesthetic Design

• **Other Aesthetic Elements**

- Potential pigments in cast in-place abutment concrete for color
- Attachment of mosaic tiles
- Lighting from easily maintained and cost effective locations
- Center Pier at Garey to reduce thickness of girders from ~9ft. to ~5ft.
- Angled abutment may be possible for flyover especially east side of Towne

Due to the anticipated challenges in policing open spaces at the ground level (increased area at the ground level will encourage people to occupy such space), Staff recommends limiting the area accessible at ground level under the various bridge designs.

City Council recommendations on the bridge/structure aesthetic will be sent by the City Manager as comments to GLFCA. The request by GLFCA for City input on the design is advisory, and City Council should be aware that GLFCA may reject such recommendation. It should be noted that since these alternative designs were not recommended for use in Pomona, any potential environmental impacts of either have not been evaluated by GLFCA and therefore any potential impacts of the aesthetic design are not presented here. Staff recommends that regardless of selected design, the recommendations to GLFCA include comments that all bridge structures should be provided with anti-graffiti measures and should be policed by Metro for encampments.

Please see the two diagrams for the Gold Line bridge areas over Garey and Towne Avenues (Attachment 6). These diagrams are representations of how the Gold Line Phase 2B project may be assembled to include various enhanced elements and features to improve the overall aesthetics as well as the fit and interaction of this project with the surrounding community. It should be noted that although recreation space may seem out of place in rail-road right-of-way, some of the architect's creative ideas for this space would be for passive open areas, and/or sculpture gardens to be looked at and not for play/visiting. These diagrams are also provided to help visualize how other components of this proposed built environment (such as fences, railings, lighting, other structures, patterns, and pedestrian ways) may be enhanced and brought together with the planned bridge/flyover to produce a project that benefits Pomona in multiple ways. Similar improvements are intended to be recommended by Staff to the GLFCA for inclusion with this project. However, these improvements



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may be determined to be “betterments,” in which case the City would likely be requested to pay for them and sources of sufficient appropriate funding will need to be identified in order to construct them.

Attachments: 1. Arcadia Aesthetic Design  
2. Claremont Aesthetic Design  
3. Arcadia and Claremont (Combination) Aesthetic Design  
4. Claremont-Colonnade (Modification) Aesthetic Design  
5. Gold Line Aesthetic Design  
6. Garey & Towne Avenue Bridge Diagrams

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