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Memorandum

TO: BATA Oversight Committee

DATE: December 3, 2014

FR: Executive Director

W. I. 1251

RE: Memorandum of Understanding between Illuminate the Arts, Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and BATA for the Bay Lights Project

Under this item, the Committee would authorize the Executive Director or his designee to negotiate and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) amongst Illuminate the Arts (ITA), the non-profit corporation sponsoring the Bay Lights Project, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and BATA make the Bay Lights Project a permanent display on the west span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (Bay Bridge).

Background

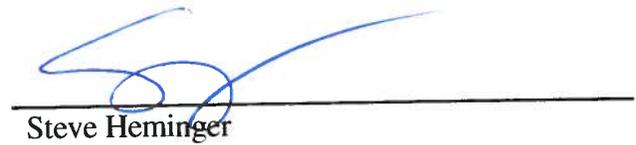
The Bay Lights Project, sponsored by ITA, was developed to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Bay Bridge. The privately funded project was originally planned to be a temporary fine art installation, operating for two years. The light sculpture is composed of 25,000 individual light emitting diodes (LEDs), programmed by artist Leo Villareal. Due to required bridge maintenance and expiring permits, the current installation will be removed in March 2015 with plans to reinstall a more robust network of LEDs by early 2016.

ITA raised \$8 million to finance the original Bay Lights installation through March 2015 and is working to raise an additional \$4 million, by the end of this year, to reinstall the lights. After the new installation is in place, ITA intends to donate the Bay Lights sculpture to Caltrans. Under this transfer, ITA would continue to maintain artistic control over the LED display, while operation and maintenance of the project would become the responsibility of Caltrans. Caltrans would assume ownership of the project infrastructure and receive financial support from BATA for its operation and maintenance costs. The annual cost to maintain the LED network is estimated to be \$250,000.

The proposed arrangement to transfer maintenance responsibility of an art installation to Caltrans has precedent. As part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the bridge, decorative “necklace” lighting was installed on the west span suspension cables. In 1989, the lighting was transferred to Caltrans. The project became a permanent feature and a responsibility of Caltrans due to the overwhelming support from the Bay Area community. Similar to the Bay Lights Project, fundraising for the “necklace” lighting was secured from private donations. BATA plans to replace the roadway and necklace lighting on the west span with LED lighting by 2018 as part of the Toll Bridge Rehabilitation Program.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that this Committee authorize the Executive Director or his designee to negotiate and enter into an MOU with Caltrans and ITA, setting out the roles and responsibilities of the parties, including requiring ITA to raise sufficient funds to replace the Bay Lights and successfully reinstall them before Caltrans assumes ownership of the project infrastructure.



Steve Heminger

SH:abf

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REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL
Summary of Proposed Memorandum of Understanding

Work Item No.: 1251

Parties: Illuminate the Arts, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and BATA

Work Project Title: Bay Lights Project

Brief Scope of Work: To explore the possibility of making the Bay Lights Project a permanent display on the west span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

Motion by Committee: That the Executive Director or his designee is authorized to negotiate and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Illuminate the Arts and Caltrans to set out potential roles and responsibilities for making the Bay Lights Project a permanent display on the west span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, as described above and in the Executive Director's memorandum dated December 3, 2014.

BATA Oversight Committee: _____
Tom Bates, Vice Chair

Approved: Date: December 10, 2014