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March 15, 2021

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield
Chair, Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee
Los Angeles City Council

c/o Holly L. Wolcott
City Clerk
City Hall Room 360

COUNCIL FILE NO. 19-0988 - TONOPAH STREET PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL CLOSURE

On September 18, 2019, Council adopted a motion, Council File 19-0988, instructing the City Engineer, with the assistance of the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and any other appropriate City departments, to report with recommendations to temporarily close the pedestrian tunnel at Tonopah Street under the Interstate 5 and Interstate I-170 freeways to abate the public safety issues occurring at the site.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that \$ 180,000 be identified for the Tonopah St. Pedestrian Tunnel Closure project including the installation of a lockable gate and perimeter fencing at each of the tunnel entrances to limit access to the tunnel, and other items as required by Caltrans.

DISCUSSION

This pedestrian tunnel was originally intended to provide safe access to the local high school and now has become a site for illegal activity and poses a public safety issue for the community. As a result, closure of this tunnel was requested by Council District 6 and is supported by the Los Angeles Police Department. Photos of the existing tunnel are shown in Figure 1. After research and investigation, it is recommended that a lockable gate and perimeter fencing be installed at each of the tunnel entrances, which will allow for DWP access to an existing water line within the tunnel and approach path.





Figure 1. - Entrance and inside of the Tonopah St. pedestrian tunnel

This tunnel is under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and will require an encroachment permit for any work performed on the tunnel by the City. Requirements for the encroachment permit include documentation that public outreach has occurred and that the community and Council District are supportive of the closure. Additionally, the tunnel closure design plans will require Caltrans review and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT and SCHEDULE

The preliminary project cost estimate is \$180,000, subject to final design review by Caltrans. Funds have not been identified or allocated for this project. The estimated project duration for design and construction is approximately eight months after funding is secured.

For questions, please contact Steve Chen of my staff at (213) 485-4516 or at Steven.Chen@lacity.org.

Sincerely,


Electronically signed by 21866

Gary Lee Moore, PE, ENV SP
City Engineer

GLM/JS/sc;eg

Q:\GLM\City Engineer\GLM Signed Documents\2021 Documents\CouncilFile_19-0988_Reportback_TonopahTunnel-R1.pdf

cc: Barbara Romero, Mayor's Office
Anna Hovasapian, Council District 6
Karla Maqueda, Council District 6
Tony Royster, General Services Department
Julie Sauter, Bureau of Engineering
Steve Chen, Bureau of Engineering