

Date: March 29, 2024

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **FY 24 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests Update**

In spring 2023, the City of Long Beach (City) had an opportunity to submit congressionally directed spending requests, commonly known as earmarks, to our federal delegation for consideration in the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 24) federal budget. In preparation for the applications, City staff developed a list of projects citywide that could be competitive for direct funding as outlined in a [memorandum](#) on March 15, 2023. The list was sent to the entire delegation, and City staff briefed the delegation offices on the City projects to identify strategic alignment with member priorities.

On March 9, 2024, President Biden signed a \$460 billion package of six spending bills to avoid a shutdown of many key federal agencies, which codified our projects into law. On March 23, 2024, President Biden signed a \$1.2 trillion spending package that completes the funding of federal agencies through the fiscal year, which ends September 30, 2024. Congress will now turn its attention to determining spending levels for Fiscal Year 2025.

Of the list of priority projects submitted by the City, Congressman Robert Garcia secured \$3.2 million for four City priority projects through the FY 24 budget:

- **Studebaker Road Corridor Improvements: \$1 million**
 - Congressman Garcia secured \$1 million to support the Studebaker Road Corridor. The project will improve Studebaker and Loynes Drive for all modes of transportation, rehabilitating the pavement, constructing a transit boarding island, separating existing bike lanes from traffic with curbs, shortening pedestrian crossing distances, adding high-visibility crosswalks, upgrading traffic signals, and connecting the entire corridor with fiber-optic communications.
- **Bixby Park Improvements: \$850,000**
 - Congressman Garcia secured \$850,000 to complete work already planned for Bixby Park. The City secured initial funding of more than \$1 million through another grant, but the need exceeds available funding. Areas of need include the community center, bandshell, lighting, dog park, ADA access, and more.
- **Heartwell Park Improvements: \$850,000**
 - Congressman Garcia secured \$850,000 to support park improvements at Heartwell Park. This is a Council-approved Measure A project to build an artificial turf field. Funding will support the project and add a separated running/walking path, with high activity levels at the park.

- **Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Park Vision Plan Implementation: \$500,000**
 - Congressman Garcia secured \$500,000 to support the MLK Jr. Park Vision Plan that is currently underway. While the improvements have not yet been finalized, funding allocated to the project will support site improvements and implementation of the Plan.

The City originally applied for significantly more funding for each of these projects, but the amounts were reduced through Congressional negotiations in the budget process. Staff included the higher amounts for these projects in the City's infrastructure plan last year, but the final amounts outlined above are reflected in the current Elevate '28 plan. Given the decrease in expected amounts for these projects, the team will also work to adjust project scopes to align with available funding. We are grateful for the funds that are being provided, and these projects will have a lasting impact on the Long Beach community.

Staff will continue to keep Mayor and Council informed as we draw down for these projects. Furthermore, staff is in the process of submitting Fiscal Year 2025 congressionally directed spending requests. While these funding opportunities are extremely competitive—and legislators may pursue other projects that have an opportunity to be funded—the City benefits greatly from the strong support of our delegation offices.

If you have any questions, please contact Tyler Bonanno-Curley, Deputy City Manager, at (562) 570-5715 or Tyler.Curley@longbeach.gov.

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