

ITEM 7A

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Transportation Committee

April 2, 2018



Staff Report

Subject: “Adopt a Link” Program for CV Link

Contact: Erica Felci, Governmental Projects Manager (efelci@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Authorize the Executive Director to establish the “Adopt a Link” program for CV Link and enter into a cooperative agreement with Renova Energy and any other parties to cover the first segment’s operations and maintenance costs for three years.

Background: In February 2016, the CVAG Executive Committee unanimously received and filed the CV Link Conceptual Master Plan, which is the guiding document for the project’s development. The plan was developed over several years, during which time CVAG staff gave presentations to CVAG’s committees on operations and maintenance cost projections. At the direction of the Executive Committee, two workshops were held in the summer of 2015 to review the operations and maintenance cost projections. CVAG staff also conducted a survey on park and trail security issues and developed high and low projections for operational costs. The projections, as well as the results of the operations and maintenance workshops and the security issues survey, were provided in the Conceptual Master Plan.

The Conceptual Master Plan also identified 22 ways to fund the operations and maintenance costs, which included public and private funding sources. One of those options outlined a concept for a donation program where an individual or private organization could “adopt” a section of CV Link and where “adopters would commit private funds and/or volunteer hours in exchange for recognition.”

The first 2.3 miles of CV Link – spanning from Vista Chino Road in Palm Springs to Ramon Road in Cathedral City – officially opened on February 23, 2018. The segment was built under a 2015 cooperative agreement between CVAG and the City of Cathedral City, where the City had agreed to cover the operational costs of the first segment until the project was accepted by CVAG and incorporated into the rest of CV Link. As construction neared completion, Vincent Battaglia, founder and CEO of Renova Energy, presented CVAG and the City with an offer to “adopt” the first segment of CV Link and cover operational costs for the next three years. The Palm Desert-based corporation is the largest full-service solar and battery power company in the Coachella Valley, and employs more than 150 people. In addition to having their own employees volunteer their time along CV Link, Renova has expressed interest in partnering with DesertArc – which provides vocational training and employment to adults with developmental disabilities – to ensure CV Link is maintained to world-class standards.

CVAG staff has had conversations with the City of Cathedral City, Renova and DesertArc about establishing a three-year partnership. Details of the agreement are being finalized. It is anticipated that Renova would cover the costs of routine upkeep, such as trash removal and maintaining the minimal landscaping at the access points. The City would continue to be responsible for removing graffiti and similar issues, and CV Link will be patrolled in a similar fashion to other trails across the Coachella Valley. CVAG will include

“Adopt a Link” signs along the segment, located roughly one per mile, to recognize the investment Renova is making into CV Link.

CVAG anticipates that the cooperative agreement with Renova could be replicated as future segments of CV Link are constructed. In June 2015, the CVAG Executive Committee was presented with a letter from Goldenvoice – the concert promoter that turned Coachella and Stagecoach into world-renowned music festivals – expressing interest in partnering with CVAG to cover operational costs. And CVAG has received multiple inquiries about the “Adopt a Link” program since Renova’s intent was announced at the February 23 grand opening celebration for the first segment.

Fiscal Analysis: The costs of operating and maintaining a pathway like CV Link are far less than operating large parks or public facilities like a library, which come with significant staff costs. Still, to have companies step up with financial support speaks volumes not just about their commitment to CV Link but to giving back to the Coachella Valley.

Renova’s adoption of the first segment will have a direct impact for the City of Cathedral City, which had agreements with CVAG and the City of Palm Springs to cover the operational costs of the first segment until the project was accepted by CVAG and incorporated into the rest of CV Link. The CVAG Conceptual Master Plan outlined a high and a low budget for the entire stretch of CV Link, from which per-mile costs can be estimated. However, a segment-specific budget was not developed.