

Bay Area Toll Authority
Oversight Committee

January 11, 2023

Agenda Item 6a

The Bay Lights Project Update

Subject:

Update of the Bay Lights Project on the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge.

Background:

The Bay Lights is an art display sponsored by the non-profit organization Illuminate (formerly Illuminate the Arts) and was developed to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (Bay Bridge). The existing light sculpture by artist Leo Villareal is composed of 24,000 individual light-emitting diodes (LEDs) installed on the north suspension cables of the west span. The Bay Lights was first commissioned as a two-year temporary installation on March 5, 2013. The Bay Lights was replaced in-kind in the Fall of 2015 and re-commissioned in February 2016 as a permanent installation gifted to Caltrans with maintenance supported by the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA).

Due to an aging system, Illuminate proposes to replace the Bay Lights in 2023, around the 10th anniversary of the original Bay Lights going live. The removal of the existing LEDs is anticipated to begin March 5, 2023, with the installation of a new The Bay Lights 360 (TBL360) Project scheduled to be illuminated on September 3, 2023, in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Bay Bridge East Span.

The new TBL360 Project will install forty-eight thousand (48,000) new energy-efficient LEDs, replacing the existing LEDs on the north side and adding new LEDs on the driver's (south-facing) side of the same suspender cables on the west span of the bridge for a 360-degree view of the lights. TBL360 will include updated and more robust components while keeping the same technical details and intensity of the lights as the current installation. The new TBL360 will be visible from all directions (360-degree view) for increased aesthetic equity and will be lit from dusk to dawn. The lights on the San Francisco and the East Bay sides will have separate control systems so they can be turned off independently if necessary. The light display will continue to appear to be moving in a wave-like and alternating flickering non-repeatable but abstract pattern, consistent with the existing lighting and will be programmed by artist Leo Villareal.

Illuminate is working on raising \$11 million in private funding for the replacement of the Bay Lights. BATA would continue to support the maintenance of the installation at \$400,000 per year (not included in the \$11 million capital cost). With approval by the BATA Oversight Committee in December 2014, Illuminate, Caltrans, and BATA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to document their intentions to keep the lights on indefinitely. In the MOU, Caltrans agreed to assume ownership of the Bay Lights contingent upon reimbursement by BATA for any operations and maintenance costs borne by Caltrans. An amendment to the existing MOU between Caltrans, Illuminate, and BATA to extend the previous MOU arrangement is currently under discussion.

BATA intends to enter into a new ten-year fixed price maintenance contract with Illuminate's TBL360 contractor to ensure consistency and quality in the appearance of the Bay Lights.

Next Steps:

Staff will be returning for Committee in mid-2023 with a recommendation for the approval of the maintenance services contract for The Bay Lights 360.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: PowerPoint


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