



DATE: July 24, 2017
TO: Council Infrastructure Committee
FROM: Director of Public Works
SUBJECT: East Bay Greenway (Rail to Trail)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee reviews and provides feedback on the East Bay Greenway Design Options and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to operation and maintenance of the proposed East Bay Greenway project, and authorizes the City Manager to execute the MOU with Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC).

BACKGROUND

The East Bay Greenway (EBGW) project proposes to construct a bicycle and pedestrian trail facility that will generally follow the BART alignment for 16 miles and traverse the cities of Oakland, San Leandro, and Hayward as well as the unincorporated communities of Ashland and Cherryland as shown in Attachment II. The project connects seven BART stations as well as downtown areas, schools, and other major destinations.

The project seeks to achieve the following goals:

- Improve bicycle and pedestrian network connectivity
- Improve access to regional transit, schools, downtown area, and other destinations
- Create a facility that is accessible and comfortable to bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities
- Improve safety by providing a facility that is physically separated from vehicle traffic and minimizes potential conflicts between trail users
- Promote a multimodal transportation system and reduce greenhouse gas emissions

The Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) is leading the project development and implementation with the expectation that local jurisdictions along the project corridor will be the eventual facility owners. As facility owners, local jurisdictions will be responsible for operations and maintenance of the EBGW.

DISCUSSION

The segment of EBGW in Hayward is about 3.4 miles and spans from Sunset Boulevard to Tennyson Road (South Hayward BART station) along the UPRR right-of-way. The project is currently in the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis phase and it is expected to have a Draft Environmental Document prepared before the end of 2017.

For environmental analysis purposes, two design options are under consideration. The design options are differentiated by the degree to which they encroach into UPRR right-of-way, and both require some railroad right-of-way. The final trail placement and design will fit within the framework of one of the following two design options:

- Option One: A Rail-with-Trail option would construct a trail adjacent to the rail line while preserving rail operations. The trail would comply with minimum setback requirements and fencing would be provided to separate users from the active rail line.
- Option Two: A Rail-to-Trail option would involve abandonment of the rail line and conversion to a trail facility.

Attachment II shows an illustrative cross section for the two options described above. The recommendation of a preferred design option will be based on many considerations including right-of-way availability, cost, schedule, engineering feasibility, quality of facility, and ability to generate larger regional benefits. The right-of-way discussions with UPRR are pending and are scheduled in fall 2017.

ACTC would like to enter into an overarching agreement in principle with all the partner jurisdictions, including the City of Hayward, pertaining to the East Bay Greenway project before initiating a discussion with UPRR. The purpose of the MOU is to establish a consensus regarding agency roles and responsibilities related to ownership, operation, and maintenance of the proposed facility. The MOU will facilitate the development of formal and binding agreements with more specific terms and commitments during subsequent design and right-of-way-phases. Council will be presented with the final agreement that will be developed when the preferred project design and extent of any third-party property agreements are determined.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

The fiscal impact of EBGW project will vary based on the amount of right-of-way that will be available from UPRR and design decisions such as material selection (e.g., asphalt vs. concrete pavement), level of landscaping, amenities, and placemaking features included in the trail. The implementation of this project will help transform the City into a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly community, thus creating positive economic and health benefits for the Hayward community.

Actual costs for annual operations and maintenance are highly dependent on design decisions outlined above that will be made at later stages of project development. Alameda CTC will work with local jurisdictions to design the facility in a manner commensurate with local preferences and maintenance capabilities.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

EBGW is a regional trail facility that increases pedestrian and bicycle transportation options which in turn will lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions related to vehicle use and will address green infrastructure and storm water treatment technology through street design.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Community outreach strategies will be set up once negotiations with UPRR have been completed and there is more certainty on the feasible alternative for the project.

NEXT STEPS

Specific upcoming milestones include:

- November 2017 – Release CEQA document; begin 30-day comment period
- January 2018 – Update to City Council
- March 2018 – Approval of Final California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document by Alameda CTC Commission as required for federally funded projects
- April 2018 – Certification of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document by Caltrans as required for federally funded projects

Following certification of the environmental document, design and construction may proceed on a phased, segment-by-segment basis, subject to funding and right-of-way availability. This approach will allow for localized benefits to be realized more quickly.

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Approved by:



Kelly McAdoo, City Manager