



DATE: October 25, 2023

TO: Council Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: East Bay Greenway Multimodal Project – Discussion and Recommendation to Council

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC) reviews and comments on the recommended alignment for the East Bay Greenway Multimodal (EBGWMM) Project and provides recommendation to present to Council for approval.

SUMMARY

The Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) is the project sponsor and implementing agency for the East Bay Greenway Multimodal (EBGWMM) Urban Trail Project (Urban Trail) from the Lake Merritt Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in Oakland to South Hayward BART station in Hayward. Due to the projected timeline and potential expense of acquiring the required UPRR's right of way, Alameda CTC approved a near-term project implementation in December 2021 which focused on providing multimodal improvements along arterials that could be constructed within a 3-5-year timeframe as the Phase 1 project (Project). The December 2021 action moved the Urban Trail project along the Union Pacific Railroad corridor as long term, the Phase 2 project.

The goals of the Phase 1 Project are to:

- Provide safe, high-quality (Class I, buffered Class II, Class III, or Class IV) options for biking for all ages and abilities
- Improve safety by physically separating bicyclists from high-speed, high volume vehicular traffic to the extent feasible
- Create a continuous north/south bike facility connecting seven BART stations
- Improve access to regional transit, schools, downtown areas, and major activity centers
- Improve multimodal access to BART stations
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Alameda CTC coordinated with City staff for their planning and public outreach strategies for this project which included developing outreach materials that describe the Project need, Project delivery updates, public outreach opportunities in Hayward, and implementation schedule. This culminated in a presentation to the Council Infrastructure

(CIC) Committee on October 26, 2022¹.

In subsequent discussions regarding concerns over the proposed improvements, both agencies agreed to re-evaluate the alignment of the project while still meeting the intended goals of Phase 1 project.

This item requests CIC review and recommendation to the City Council of the revised alignment in Hayward for the Scoping and Environmental phase of project development. If recommended by the CIC at this meeting and approved by Council in November 2023, Alameda CTC will seek their Commission approval in December 2023 to provide the necessary resources to further develop, define, and refine the project features in Hayward.

BACKGROUND

The overall East Bay Greenway is envisioned as a 37-mile regional trail connecting the northern cities of Alameda County to the southern East Bay Area cities. The project originated with a non-profit group, Urban Ecology, which envisioned a trail in the BART/Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Oakland Subdivision corridor from Oakland to Hayward. Upon passage of 2014 Measure BB, East Bay Greenway was included as one of three major trails in the Transportation Expenditure Plan, and in 2015, Alameda CTC led efforts for the portion from Lake Merritt BART to South Hayward BART, referred to as the Urban Trail.

The Alameda CTC led the work relative to the Urban Trail which concluded in 2018 resulting in Alameda CTC adopting a CEQA IS/MND and Caltrans certifying a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Categorical Exemption. Alameda CTC also advanced efforts to appraise UPRR land in 2019. During the project development of the Urban Trail through the right-of-way phase, several key risks were identified related to costs for land acquisition, timing of negotiations, removal of likely hazardous material, and ownership. In December 2021, the Commission provided staff with direction to identify a new alignment for the East Bay Greenway between Lake Merritt BART and South Hayward BART that avoids UPRR right-of-way and utilizes parallel streets, where necessary, that can be delivered in the near-term, 3-5 years. This resulted in the Multimodal project becoming Phase 1 of East Bay Greenway to develop and deliver the near-term improvements, and the Urban Trail becoming Phase 2.

The EBGWMM Project seeks to provide an all-ages-and-abilities inter-jurisdictional active transportation facility generally following the BART tracks. The proposed project alignment runs on-street, including utilizing nearby parallel streets when necessary and incorporating local active transportation projects to make needed connections. The Project will generally consist of Class I shared-use paths, buffered Class II, Class IV protected bike lanes, Class III neighborhood bikeways with traffic calming, pedestrian crossing enhancements, pedestrian accessibility improvements, traffic signal modifications, lighting upgrades, bus boarding islands, transit signal priority, and placemaking elements, landscaping, and/or urban design features.

¹ <https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5895119&GUID=F5FC4C19-8E2A-478F-88B4-DEC70D49A225&Options=&Search=>

In June 2023, Alameda CTC was awarded approximately \$58.9 Million in funding for EBGWMM for the segments in Oakland and San Leandro as both city councils approved the concept plans in their jurisdictions that timed with the grant application cycles. Funding was awarded for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, which will result in construction anticipated to begin in Fall 2025.

DISCUSSION

After the October 26, 2022 CIC meeting, Alameda CTC and City staff worked toward addressing the concerns for the potential loss of one travel lane and/or parking in the Downtown area and along Mission Boulevard. The City proposed exploring the feasibility of a raised cycle track along Mission Boulevard similar to the design configuration of the Mission Boulevard Phase 3 Project but that option was not further evaluated due to high costs for relocating the street furniture, streetlights, traffic signals, signs, fire hydrants, and drainage as well as the inconvenience of more construction along Mission Blvd which was only completed in 2014.

Recognizing the challenges for determining an alignment to connect the Hayward BART station to the South Hayward BART station through Downtown both Alameda CTC and City staff agreed to evaluate alternative alignments on the west side of the BART and Union Pacific tracks. Alternative alignments were explored to provide first- and last-mile connectivity to BART stations, address the High Injury Network, and result in minimal impact to the existing curb lines to install all-ages-and-abilities bicycle facilities.

Alameda CTC's Commission approved an all-ages-and-abilities facility policy in December 2022, which contextualizes the appropriateness of a bicycle facility based on traffic volume and speed of a road for Alameda CTC's newly adopted Bike Network. EBGWMM is identified in the Bike Network and therefore must adhere to the all-ages-and-abilities policy. In most cases, the west side alignments that were explored centered on heavily traveled, high-speed roadways such as D Street, Winton Avenue, and Santa Clara Street. The curb lines on these roadways may need to be reconstructed to provide a safe facility and the alignment involving these roadways is too far away to promote first- and last-mile connections to the BART stations.

Ultimately, both Alameda CTC and City staff recommend the alignment on the following streets:

- A Street – Mission Boulevard to Grand Street
- Grand Street - A Street to Meek Avenue
- Meek Avenue - Grand Street to Silva Avenue at Jackson Street
- Silva Avenue – Jackson Street to Sycamore Avenue
- Sycamore Avenue – Silva Avenue to Whitman Street
- Whitman Street – Sycamore Avenue to Tennyson Road
- Tennyson Road – Whitman Street to Dixon Street

The streets on this alignment are consistent with Hayward's current Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2020). Alameda CTC will further evaluate to ensure that the all-ages-and-ability facility includes project features that will reduce speeds. The study will also assess the feasibility of parallel streets as potential EBGWMM alignments and its compliance with the all-ages-and-abilities policy. Example streets are Meek Avenue, Silva Avenue, and Sycamore Avenue, which are too narrow to accommodate both bicycle and on-street parking so parallel streets may be utilized to provide a contextually appropriate bicycle facility. Further, Grand Avenue and Whitman Street have stretches where residential driveways require balancing parking and bicycle facilities. On Grand Avenue removal of one travel lane will be evaluated and coordinated with the community for providing an appropriate bikeway facility. Whitman Street approaching Tennyson Road has schools directly along Whitman Street which need to consider how a bicycle facility will fit within the context of pick-up and drop-off situations.

Further coordination with other stakeholder agencies such as BART and AC Transit is needed to ensure the connection to BART stations and these improvements complement AC Transit's services.

Additionally, to address the Pedestrian High Injury network in Hayward, Alameda CTC will evaluate and design pedestrian scale improvements along Mission Boulevard between Fletcher Lane and Tennyson Road, such as bulb-outs, mid-block crossing additions and pedestrian refuge islands.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Studies have shown that high quality bike lanes and pedestrian infrastructure will increase the value of homes in the vicinity. In addition, studies also show that bike lanes benefits businesses with increased sales, translating to increased sales tax revenue. Providing bicycle infrastructure encourages active transportation use, lowering the overall transportation costs for users while also leading to healthier outcomes from increased physical activity.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item supports Invest in Infrastructure and specifically relates to the implementation of the following:

Invest in Multi-Modal Transportation

Project N1: Continue to implement major corridor traffic calming initiatives.

Project N6: Continue to add approximate 10 miles of bike lanes annually, with a focus on protected bike lanes and intersections that have high traffic/incidents.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

The Project will provide high-quality bicycle and pedestrian improvements that will encourage road users to adopt more active forms of transportation. Mode shift towards

active transportation provides environmental benefits by reducing traffic congestion and lowering the rate of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, active transportation will lead to improved physical and mental health in individuals.

FISCAL IMPACT

Agency staff time is required to manage and oversee the transportation impact study, design, community outreach, and the implementation of EBGWMM project. Staff time will be funded from transportation-related funds, such as Measure BB - Bike and Pedestrian.

NEXT STEPS

Approval of the recommended alignment is only a starting point for project development efforts of EBGWMM, which connects the Hayward BART Station to the South Hayward BART station. Future anticipated interaction points with the CIC are as follows:

- Alameda CTC and City staff would return to the CIC to present on the recommended bicycle facilities types (i.e. Class I Bike Path, buffered Class II Bike Lanes, neighborhood Class III bike routes, or Class IV cycle tracks) based on supporting traffic volume, travel speeds and parking data to develop alternative concepts.
- Alameda CTC would seek approval for one of the alternative concepts to move into the Environmental phase for study in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.
- Approval of the final concept plan to move forward into the Final Design and to be documented in an environmental document for CEQA.

Project development will include focus group meetings with neighborhood and/or business stakeholders; community in-person workshops/meetings, walk and bike audits with community members, door-to-door outreach; pop-up events at existing community events and gatherings; project flyer leave-behinds in English and Spanish; an online survey; virtual public meetings; and mailers to direct people to comment about project material that will be available on Alameda CTC's website.

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Approved by:



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