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East Bay Greenway (EBGW) Multimodal Project Update

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Alameda CTC Staff will present to the Committee updates to the East Bay Greenway Phase I.

This item is for information only.

BACKGROUND

The Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) is the project sponsor and implementing agency for the EBGW Multimodal Project Phase 1 (the Project), a near-term phase of the EBGW Multimodal project approved by the Alameda CTC Commission in December 2021. The Project advances elements of the EBGW project and incorporates near-term implementation strategies developed as part of the E14th St. Mission Blvd Multimodal Project. Taken together the Project would deliver high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as targeted transit improvements and placemaking from Oakland through the central part of Alameda County.

Alameda CTC staff previously presented an update at the March 2nd Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting describing the Project need, Project delivery updates, public outreach opportunities in San Leandro, and implementation schedule. This item is an update regarding feedback on public outreach and how feedback is being considered in the design.

The EBGW Phase I Project is a 16-mile corridor between the Lake Merritt BART station in Oakland and the South Hayward BART station in Hayward, traversing the cities of San Leandro, Hayward and unincorporated Alameda County areas of Ashland and Cherryland. The Project would implement Class I and Class IV bicycle facilities to the extent feasible and multimodal improvements along the main E14th St/Mission Blvd. corridor as well as on connecting roadways to BART stations, including San Leandro Blvd., Fairmont Drive, A Street and Tennyson Road. The near-term implementation

would provide a continuous, high quality bicycle facility suitable for all ages and abilities, and incorporates multimodal safety, transit, and placemaking elements. The Project will be constructed in 3-5 years, depending on securing funding for the construction phase.

The goals of the Project are to:

- Provide safe, high-quality (Class I, buffered Class II 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

The new Project implementation strategy includes the following elements:

- High-quality pedestrian facilities and bicycle facilities for all ages and abilities: The Project proposes implementation of Class I, buffered Class II and Class IV bicycle facilities along major streets. In San Leandro, improvements are proposed along San Leandro Boulevard and East 14th Street, as well as on the streets connecting to the BART stations such as Fairmont Drive. Intersection crossings will also be improved with shorter and safer crosswalks. Whenever feasible on major intersections, the design includes protected intersection or dedicated intersection elements for bicyclists consistent with National Association City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design guidance.
- Transit reliability and access: The Project evaluates targeted rapid bus infrastructure that will improve access to transit, reliability, and reduce delays at bus stops. These potentially include transit islands, installation of Transit Signal Priority (TSP), and queue jumps where buses enter/leave the corridor to access BART stations.
- Placemaking to support economic development: The Project proposes to support economic development opportunities and enhance existing neighborhoods through complementary design elements that would expand pedestrian space, support urban greening elements, increase public use of the street, increase visual identity, and create opportunities for activating adjacent properties, such as surface parking and vacant lots. The Project also evaluates available parking and curb management to support multimodal treatments and business activity. The placemaking element goal is to create a cohesive, visual identity for the corridor while also highlighting the unique character of specific districts.

Design Elements Considered for the Project

The multimodal elements included in the Project vary from a Class I separated trail/multiuse path, Class II buffered bicycle lanes, and/or Class IV protected bicycle lane, pedestrian improvements, and transit improvements in Oakland, San Leandro, Alameda County, and Hayward.

Specifically, in San Leandro the Alameda CTC project team has evaluated several design options for the implementation of a Class IV bike facility, based on factors such as:

- availability of street parking spaces
- predictability for all roadway users
- more direct and better access for cyclists
- desire to have minimum number of conflict points.

Based on those factors, a cross section with a one-way Class IV facility on each side of the street is the option that offers the most accessibility to businesses.

While the Project is expected to improve safety and accommodate all users of the street along San Leandro Blvd and E14th Street, there will be tradeoffs that will impact street parking on the E14th St. corridor. To understand the parking impacts of the Project, the Project team conducted a parking utilization and parking inventory survey. The survey was conducted in November 2021 on two weekdays (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and two Saturdays for three different time frames during the day (morning, midday, and evening). Results of the parking inventory and utilization survey vary by block, but in general, parking in most areas has not reached the critical demand (indicated by an occupancy of 85% or higher). Street parking is shown on the east side of the street in the cross sections (see Attachment A), as the parking study revealed that there are more parking spots on the east side of the street and preserving parking on that side allows the Project to keep the most street parking spaces (See Parking Maps in Attachment B). The results of the parking inventory and utilization survey paired with public outreach completed this month, will identify the parking impacts and aid in refining the Project's cross section, (including the determination of which side of the street would maintain street parking) and resulting layout, which will be presented to the San Leandro City Council in June.

In order to maximize safety, minimize parking impacts, and add bicycle facilities, the cross section under development reduces the width of the travel lanes to 11 feet for inside lanes and 12 feet for the outside lanes along E14th Street; elsewhere, travel lane width is reduced to 11 feet. The Project also includes high-visibility pedestrian crosswalks and protected intersections that separate users of each mode of transportation (i.e. pedestrians, bicycles, buses and automobiles) to increase safety. In addition, the Project includes bus boarding islands, and will evaluate transit signal priority and queue jumps at key intersections to improve transit operations and reliability.

The Project team also conducted a speed survey along the corridor (see Attachment C). The results of the survey show that current speeds increase as the roadway widens. Faster automobile speeds increase the severity of pedestrian and bike injuries. The Project design features including decreased lane widths, visual separations such as intersection bulb outs, and signal coordination along the corridor should reduce average speeds overall. The Project team is working closely with AC Transit to ensure that these safety countermeasures do not negatively impact transit operations along the corridor.

Lastly, the Project team is working with City of San Leandro Staff on the implementation of innovative placemaking elements, such as pedestrian plazas, parklets, and public art that have the potential to support local businesses. Some of these improvements could be implemented with the proposed transportation projects, while others are improvements that could be implemented as redevelopment occurs along the corridor. The Project team has developed an integrated economic development strategy to identify potential for implementing placemaking and other economic development infrastructure with private projects.

Public Outreach

Since the March 2nd update to the Facilities and Transportation Committee, Alameda CTC staff has been working to develop a bike facility concept to advance into subsequent environmental and design phases that carries forward previous planning and project development efforts.

During the months of February through April, Alameda CTC conducted direct business and community outreach, and coordinated public outreach events with City staff for its Bancroft and Williams Bikeway projects. The coordinated outreach effort helped unify the message to the community that regional and local planning efforts share the same goals of improving safety through multimodal projects, closing gaps in the bicycle network and complementing east-west and north-south connections across the city. Outreach included five popup events (in coordination with City of San Leandro Crosstown Corridors) that were held at the following locations:

- Bay Fair Farmers Market on February 26
- San Leandro BART station on March 3
- John Muir Middle School on March 12
- Downtown Farmer's Market Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on April 6
- San Leandro High School on April 16

Outreach efforts included an in person, Door-to-Door Business survey along E14th St. in San Leandro from San Leandro Blvd to Bay Fair Drive that was conducted between April 4th and April 15th. The in-person outreach aimed to receive feedback on how businesses use street parking and their loading/unloading needs.

Interested individuals from the pop-up events and door-to-door outreach were encouraged to participate in two San Leandro focus groups in April; one for Bike/Pedestrians/Transit users on April 18 and the other for Business Owners on April 21. Another component of outreach in San Leandro includes a mailer to adjacent residential areas to invite them to submit comments through a comment form available on the Alameda CTC's project website.

The community outreach conducted over the last few months found strong support for the Project in general, particularly for:

- consideration of the inclusion of urban landscape and maintenance,
- inclusion of bike and pedestrian safety features for traffic signals, and
- decreasing of vehicular speeds on E14th Street.

The business survey also indicated the need for additional considerations related to parking needs along E14th St. Please see Attachment D: Summary of Public outreach.

Next Steps

Further opportunities for engagement outside of San Leandro include an information item to Alameda CTC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee in late April, and the Paratransit Advisory and Planning Committee (PAPCO) in June. Final refinements to the concept plan with typical cross sections and layouts will be presented to the San Leandro City Council on June 21 for Project concept approval.

The goal is to develop a conceptually-approved alignment that can be presented in the supporting environmental clearances through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), anticipated to be completed in the summer and fall of 2022, respectively. Obtaining environmental clearance is essential in demonstrating project readiness for state funding opportunities coming later in 2022.

Attachment to Staff Report

- Alameda CTC Presentation
- Attachment A - Project Cross Sections
- Attachment B - Parking Occupancy
- Attachment C - Speed Survey
- Attachment D - Outreach Feedback

PREPARED BY: Sheila Marqueses, Director, Engineering and Transportation Department