

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: September 7, 2010

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution No. 2010 authorizing an application for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds for a portion of the construction of the Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path.

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve Resolution No. 2010-45 authorizing the filing of an application for CMAQ funding to construct a portion of the Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path from San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan bridge overcrossing.

BACKGROUND

Over a two and a half year process, the City of Albany has finalized the 35% design for the Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path project. This was completed in March of 2010, via a \$266,000 Measure B grant from the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA), received in 2007.

The Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path is ranked top priority in the Alameda Countywide Bicycle Plan for its local and regional significance in closing the existing gap between the Ohlone Greenway and the Bay Trail. The complete project entails construction of a bicycle and pedestrian facility from Cornell Avenue to the Buchanan Bridge overcrossing. The project includes the following components:

1. From Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue, the project consists of extending the bike lanes along both sides of Marin Avenue.
2. From San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan overcrossing, a multi use trail will be built along the south side of Marin Avenue/Buchanan St.
3. From San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan overcrossing, the westbound bike lane will be extended along the north side of Marin Avenue/Buchanan Street to the overcrossing.
4. A new signal will be installed at the intersection of Buchanan St. and Pierce St. to provide for the path crossing to the north side of Buchanan St.
5. The project also includes several bulb outs and signal improvements at Marin/San Pablo Avenues intersection.

Council voted on a preferred alternative for this project at its July 19, 2009 meeting and environmental work under CEQA was developed and completed on the selected design in January, 2010.

In June, 2010 Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a contract agreement with AECOM for the development of 100% Plans, Specifications and Estimates for the total project. Currently, staff is working with the project stakeholders in preparing right of way agreements and easements for the construction of the path.

Staff has applied to several funding sources for the construction of this significant and complex project. The grant application under consideration at this time is for \$1,702,000 in federal funds from the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency Block Grant for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects (CMA Block Grant-RBP). The grant would cover construction of components # 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path.

The segment from Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue (numeral one on the list above) was not included in this grant application because this work will be need to be implemented in conjunction with the utility undergrounding project.

DISCUSSION

The project is recommended to receive the requested \$1.702 million from the CMA Block Grant-RBP. This is a federal grant through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) fund. These funds are administered through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and a resolution of local support is needed for the funds to be allocated to the project.

Staff has requested a Fiscal Year 2011/12 allocation, which translates into receiving an Authorization to build from Caltrans in February of 2012. Because these funds are federal, they require completion of NEPA (the federal environmental process) for the entire project. Staff will complete the NEPA requirement in coordination with Caltrans, which will begin after the project is added to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and a TIP number is assigned.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration has already been conducted through the state environmental process (CEQA) and was completed and filed at the State Clearinghouse in January, 2010.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Building bicycle facilities within the City of Albany achieves environmental benefits that support the goals of the Climate Action Plan and the City policy to decrease emissions 25% below 2004 levels by the year 2020. In particular, the project helps achieve Objective TL-1 – Facilitate Walking and Biking in the Community, and Objective TL-4: Reduce Vehicle Emissions and Trips within the City’s Climate Action Plan by facilitating a safe, accessible bicycle and pedestrian path that connects the City.

In addition, staff believes that providing adequate facilities that encourage alternative modes of transportation would entice more people to shift to more active modes of transportation, which in turn have potential health benefits.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

By filing this application, the City will be committing the necessary non-federal match, and stating assurance to complete the project. The estimated cost of the segment from San Pablo Avenue and the Buchanan Bridge overcrossing is estimated at \$2.23 million. The grant is for \$1.7 million, leaving a gap of \$521,000. (Note that the total project, including the segment from Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue was estimated at \$2.8 million.)

The CMAQ grant requires at least 11.47% match in non-federal funds, which would be \$256,000. At the current time, \$300,000 in Measure F funds have been set aside as a match for the construction of the Buchanan Path. Of this allocation, \$187,000 is being used for the development of 100% plans for this project, leaving \$113,000 to help fund the remaining construction costs.

Staff recently submitted an application to the Safe Routes to School program (SR2S) in the amount of \$425,000 to be used as part of the match for this grant. If this grant is successful, only \$96,000 in local funds would be necessary to cover the cost of this project. Applicants will be notified about the results of the SR2S grant in December, 2010.

If the SR2S grant is not awarded, the City may use a combination of Measure F and other pass through funds, such as FY11/12 Measure B and Gas Tax funds and possibly, Measure B competitive funds to meet the match requirements.

Attachments:

1. Resolution #2010-45