

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

Agenda Date: March 7, 2011

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Buchanan Bikeway Project -
Amendment to the Albany Bicycle Master Plan (BMP), and 10% match
commitment for a Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) grant

REPORT BY: Aleida Andrino-Chavez, Transportation Planner

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That City Council approve:

1. Resolution 2011-11, which recommends that the City Council amend the Albany Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) to include Buchanan Street as a Class I bicycle facility and modify relevant text (see Exhibit A); and

2. Resolution 2011-12, which authorizes the City Manager to submit an application to the Bicycle Transportation Account program (BTA) for \$600,000 in grant funding, and commit to providing the required 10% local match for the Buchanan Bikeway project.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany has secured federal funds in the amount of \$1.7 million for the construction of the Buchanan Bikeway. The total cost for the construction of this project is estimated at \$2.3 million dollars, leaving a funding gap of approximately \$600,000 for its completion. To close this gap and decrease the amount of local dollars for the match, the City has been actively seeking grant funds and has identified a funding opportunity through the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) for \$600,000 to supplement the federal grant. BTA is a state funding program that requires that projects be described in the currently adopted Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) in order to be eligible. The Albany BMP lists the Buchanan Bicycle project as a Class II facility, between San Pablo Avenue and the Buchanan Bridge overcrossing, which no longer describes the project as approved by Council in July 2009.

In 2005, the City conducted a study to evaluate the possibility of implementing the Buchanan bicycle facility proposal described in the BMP (Class II) and found that a Class I multiuse path was feasible along the south side of Buchanan Street. Since the BMP also dictates that whenever feasible, the City should pursue implementation of Class I facilities because of their superior safety features, the City, through a public process, selected two Class I alternatives for further evaluation for the Buchanan path project. In 2007 the City obtained a grant to develop 35% Plans and environmental work of the project, which was approved by Council in July, 2009. The approved project would: extend the bicycle lanes along both sides of Marin Avenue from Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue; add a bicycle head on the signal at the intersection of Marin/San Pablo Avenues; and implements at Class I bikeway along the south side and a Class II facility along the north side of Marin Avenue and

Buchanan Street from San Pablo Avenue to the Buchanan overcrossing. The project also includes a new traffic signal at the Pierce St./Buchanan St. intersection, and closes Buchanan Avenue to traffic in order to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists along the path.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The BMP is an important instrument to secure local, state, and federal funding to make sure the projects and programs included in the plan get implemented. Currently, the BMP is being updated and its adoption date is expected in September, 2011. However, this would be too late for the BTA grant application as the deadline is March 18, 2011.

The BMP was initially adopted in February 2003, and amended once in 2004 to include the changes to the Pierce Street project. Therefore, in order to make the Buchanan project eligible for the BTA grant, it is necessary to amend the plan again by changing all references to the project when described as “Buchanan Class II facility” to “Class I and Class II facility”. Similar changes will need to be made to the map. These changes will include adding a Class I bikeway along the south side of Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street, and the Class II facility along the north side of Marin Avenue and Buchanan Street. This amendment will enable the City to apply for the BTA funds in the amount of \$600,000.

Another requirement for receiving BTA funds is the adoption of a resolution to commit to a 10% local match for the grant, or \$60,000. As stated earlier, the City secured \$1.7 million in federal funds last year for the construction of this project for an estimated total project cost of \$2.3 million. If the grant is successful, the City would need to provide \$60,000 in local funds. These funds could include Measure F and Measure B pass-through revenues.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Implementation of bicycle facilities in the City encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation for commuting, recreation, shopping, and school trips, which in turn helps achieve the carbon reduction goal established by Council in 2007 and spelled out in the Climate Action Plan adopted in 2010.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If the City is successful with the grant application, the City would be able to build this project mostly through grants and the amount of the local funding would be significantly reduced. According to current estimates, the City would have to provide \$60,000 to fill the construction gap. To accomplish this, the City could use a combination of Measure F and Measure B pass through funds.

Attachments

1. Exhibit A: Albany Bicycle Master Plan – strike through version and Appendix
2. Exhibit B: Updated version of the Albany Bicycle Master Plan Map
3. Resolution 2011-11 – Bicycle Master Plan Amendment
4. Resolution 2011-12 – BTA Grant Authorization