

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

Agenda Date: 9/19/11
Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Update on upcoming BART seismic retrofit construction

FROM: Tony Wolcott, Urban Forester
Greg Jacobs, Field Engineer
Rich Cunningham, Public Works Manager

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive information regarding the BART construction project.

BACKGROUND

BART is beginning its construction project to retrofit its trackway support pillars for earthquake safety in the Richmond-Oakland corridor. Albany has 75 of the pillars (Pillar No. 84, from the south end at the Berkeley border, all the way to No.160, north end at the El Cerrito border), located on the Ohlone Greenway that runs along Masonic Avenue.

Albany has been informed that BART's contractor will begin working in Albany on October 3, 2011. Albany staff has been attending construction meetings with the affected parties. Tony Wolcott, Urban Forester, is representing the City on issues regarding trees, landscaping, and irrigation; Greg Jacobs, contract Field Engineer, is handling hardscape issues such as asphalt, concrete, drainage, electrical, and traffic. Both of Albany's representatives are interacting with BART's public communications and notification personnel.

The work in Albany will involve closing down the Ohlone Greenway in sections at a time. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be rerouted into a protected walkway along the east side of Masonic Avenue, a plan that was developed in concert with the Traffic & Safety Commission. Per City Council direction, the hours of construction must comply with City code.

In addition to more seismically safe tracks, there will be renovations to the Ohlone Greenway per the plans developed primarily by the Parks & Recreation Commission with the Tree Task Force, and approved by the City Council. Among the renovations are expansion of the width of the bike path, removal of certain trees, landscaping, and the par course equipment, and planting of new trees, drought tolerant landscaping, and demonstration garden areas.

Also, BART is installing the “purple pipe” to allow use of reclaimed water for irrigation of the Greenway upon EBMUD’s eventual extension of recycled water to Masonic and Marin Avenues.

DISCUSSION

The following is information gathered from construction meetings:

Timeline

October 3rd: Start of construction on two segments – Dartmouth to Solano (pillars 93 to 119), and Portland to Brighton (pillars 139 to 154).

October 5th: Tentative start on tree removals

There are 450 calendar days to finish the Albany portion of project; this is a segmented approach so that only portions of the Ohlone Trail will be closed at one particular time. During that time, pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be routed on to the parking lane along the east side of Masonic, protected from motor vehicles by a line of concrete barriers.

Communications

Notification by BART will be handled by the Allen Group, which has been contracted by BART to handle public information needs. They will be doing community outreach including mailings to residents within 300 feet of the project. Staff has invited them to attend the September 19 Council meeting to be available to provide additional requested information.

Albany staff will also be notifying adjacent property owners of upcoming activities as work progresses. These notices will include contact information for both City representatives so that Albany residents and businesses have an independent resource to turn to if/when questions or issues arise.

There will be ample signage along the Ohlone Trail to notify users of closures, including directions for pedestrians and bicyclist as well as general information about the project.

SUSTAINABILITY

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

BART is supporting the labor cost of the two city representatives as well as the non-labor cost of traffic barriers and signage. Restoration and replacement improvements to the Ohlone Greenway have already been negotiated into the overall project at a no net cost to the City.