

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

Agenda Date: December 19, 2011
Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Design work for safety improvements to the Marin Avenue-Santa Fe intersection at Marin Elementary School

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager to execute Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement for Consultant Services with AECOM for the design of Safety Improvements at the intersection of Marin and Santa Fe project (Contract No. C09-30) in the amount of \$49,500.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany Traffic Management Plan (TMP), adopted by the City Council on May 15, 2000, identified the need to improve the safety of the intersection of Marin Avenue with Santa Fe Avenue as the number one priority traffic and safety project out of 61 projects identified throughout the City.

In 2002, the citizens of Albany approved Measure F 2002, which provided funding for traffic calming projects. Using these funds, in 2004, the City constructed traffic islands at the southwest corner of the intersection in order to slow vehicles turning right from eastbound Marin onto southbound Santa Fe. The traffic islands also provided a refuge for pedestrians and shortened the crossing length across Santa Fe. The 2004 improvements were intended as interim improvements until funding for full intersection improvements could be obtained.

In 2005, Marin Avenue was reconfigured between The Alameda and Cornell Avenue. The two lanes in each direction were replaced with a single lane in each direction plus a two way left turn lane and bike lanes in each direction. An evaluation conducted one year after the lane reconfiguration on Marin Ave. recommended that in order to improve pedestrian safety and operations on Marin, it was necessary to implement new vehicle detection system at the Marin/Santa Fe intersection. A detection system would reduce the length of the vehicle queue on Marin, which in turn would reduce the amount of time pedestrians wait to find a gap in traffic to cross at un-signalized intersections along Marin Ave.

In 2009, the City obtained a State of California Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Grant for pedestrian enhancements around Marin Elementary School. The total amount of the SR2S grant was \$576,205, including \$86,310 for engineering and \$23,269 for an educational program. The Grant required a local match of \$63,540 from the City. The total funds allocated to the project were estimated in October of 2009 to be \$639,744. The source of the local match funds was a combination of non-discretionary Measure B funds, gas tax and TDA funds.

The final draft of the Active Transportation Plan calls for Marin Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue pedestrian and bike enhancements. At this corner, the ATP includes high-visibility school crosswalks, corner bulb outs, and elimination of the eastbound right-turn slip lane, bicycle boxes, directional signage.

On December 7, 2009, the City Council approved Contract No. 09-30 for an Agreement for Consultant Services (ACS) with AECOM in the amount of \$ 39,585 to prepare plans and specifications for this project and authorized the City Manager to execute a Program Supplement with Caltrans for the design, construction and implementation of this project.

In the summer of 2010, the Traffic & Safety Commission reviewed the 65% plans. At that time, in order to improve pedestrian safety and reduce project cost, the project proposed to eliminate the crosswalk on the west leg of the intersection. The Commission's major concerns surrounded the removal of the westerly crosswalk, the alignment of the centerline of the intersection, the bulb outs encroaching into the bike lane, and the ability of the plans to show before and after project to see the modifications that would be taking place.

On October 28, 2010, the Traffic & Safety Commission reviewed the revised 65% plans. The revised plans restored the westerly crosswalk and removed the encroachment from the bike lanes. The consultant explained that in order to retain the westerly crosswalk, it was necessary to shift the centerline to the east, and that this would require significant revisions to the design. Following the Commission meeting, the consultant was authorized to prepare complete plans and a cost estimate for the revised project.

On January 21, 2011, the City approved Amendment No. 1 to the ACS in the amount of \$10,850 for revising the horizontal and vertical design as necessary to widen the south leg to the east and attend an additional public meeting of the Traffic and Safety Commission. The reconfiguration of the southeast corner of the Marin/Santa Fe would require significant grading/concrete/drainage work on all four corners, relocation of an overhead telephone and power (joint) pole and elimination of two trees on the southeast corner of the Santa Fe/Marin intersection. With the intent of finding an option that would not move the northbound lanes on Santa Fe closer to the school, staff worked with AECOM to develop a second design option that would reduce costs without affecting safety and policy objectives. In the fall of 2011, AECOM indicated that the cost to

investigate the design options and address the unforeseen drainage, utility, pedestrian safety, and other issues would require an estimated additional \$70,000 to finalize the plans.

On December 1, 2011, AECOM presented two design options to the Traffic and Safety Commission. Option 1, which included widening the south leg of the intersection to the east is estimated to cost \$1.2 million. Option 2, which widens and realigns the north leg of the intersection to the west, was estimated to cost \$900,000. At the December 1 meeting, the Commission determined that Option 2 offered improved safety features at reduced cost and therefore recommended that final plans for Option 2 be prepared and returned to the Commission in January, 2012. The Commission also recommended that the added design cost of the increase in the contract amount with AECOM be approved.

DISCUSSION

At the December 1 meeting, the Commission recommended that the scope of the project be reduced to defer the sidewalk work on Curtis Street and additional non-essential features of the project with the intent of reducing construction and design costs. AECOM has submitted the attached revised proposal based on a reduced scope in the amount of \$49,500. The attached scope of the additional services includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Prepare and attend an additional meeting
- Prepare traffic detour plans requested by the City
- Process ADA improvements through the State Architect
- Add a speed hump and striping on Santa Fe between Solano and Marin Avenues
- Design rain gardens on the bulb outs
- Realign Santa Fe north of Marin Avenue
- Add signal timing sheets for Alameda County
- Add bicycle detector markings

Under the terms of the SR2S grant, construction of the Marin/Santa Fe signal and related improvements is scheduled to take place in during the summer of 2012. In order to meet this schedule, the City Council will need to authorize the call for bids in March/April 2012.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total amount of the project funding, including City matching funds, is currently \$640,000. With the reductions in scope, the total estimated project cost is \$ 880,000. The current shortfall in project funding is \$220,000 based on 65% design. It is recommended that a portion of this deficit be funded by Measure F 2006 funds because a significant component of the cost involves drainage and pavement improvements. Staff recommends approval of Amendment No. 2 to the ACS so that the Consultant can proceed with final design. This will allow the Consultant to prepare 100% construction cost estimates. If the project is to be constructed in 2012, the final plans must be approved by the Council no later than March 2012. Staff is searching for alternative

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funding to make up the balance. Final estimates and funding for shortfall will be presented at that time.

Attachments

Exhibit A: AECOM Scope of Work and Budget