

February 22, 2005

Tom Bates, Mayor
City of Berkeley
2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear Mayor Bates:

This is in response to your letter dated January 27, 2005 to the Albany City Council. The City of Albany appreciates the Berkeley City Council decision to unite together [join Albany] in the Phase I Marin Avenue Reconfiguration project. Albany has been studying ways to calm traffic on Marin Avenue for over seven years. Based on those studies, we believe this particular project will improve the safety for all users regardless of what type of transportation mode is chosen (i.e., pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists).

Nonetheless, as your neighboring City, we understand the concerns Berkeley City Council and residents have with the potential increase in traffic congestion and traffic diversion onto residential side streets as a result of this project. We have directed Albany staff to work cooperatively with Berkeley staff members on implementation and monitoring efforts so that both cities can assess the effects of the Marin Avenue reconfiguration project in a timely manner and plan for implementing corrections if needed.

With regard to a 90-day review, our traffic consultants advise us that traffic patterns are not expected to fully settle for approximately one year. It is for this reason that the project description in the Negative Declaration referred to a one-year trial period prior to deciding whether Marin should be returned to its current configuration. However, it has always been our intention to convert Marin Avenue back to its former configuration should the one-year trial project fail to calm traffic on Marin Avenue; hence our commitment to use only paint and signage at this time.

In light of that commitment, and in order to remain consistent in our data collection efforts, we agree to participate with you in collecting data 90-days after the re-striping is complete and making corrections and adjustments if needed. While we give you our assurance that we will revisit this issue after the 90-day period, we may not make a final decision on the issue at that time unless results from the data is compelling, and recommendations from our professional staff and consultants, advise us to do so.

We look forward to working closely with Berkeley regarding Marin Avenue, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Robert Good
Mayor of Albany

cc: Berkeley City Council
Albany City Council