



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

CITY OF ALBANY

APR 17 2006

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

April 13, 2006

Revised version: To replace letter dated March 29, 2006

Ms. Ann Chaney
Community Development Director
City of Albany
1000 San Pablo Ave.
Albany, CA 94706

Dear Ms. Chaney:

I appreciated the opportunity to discuss with you and City of Albany Staff on March 23, 2006 the proposed Bike/Pedestrian Path along Buchanan Street which the City of Albany is investigating, to connect to Marin Avenue bike lanes and the Bay Trail.

The USDA-Agricultural Research Service (ARS) location supports the concept of a connector bike/pedestrian path. We understand that the alternative which you will be proposing to the City of Albany Traffic Commission would be along a route on the south side of Buchanan Street, extending about 15 ft. into the USDA-ARS lawn area, crossing the USDA/ARS employee exit driveway on the south side of Taylor Street/Buchanan St. intersection continuing west on USDA-ARS property to the Pierce St./Buchanan St. intersection. At that intersection the pathway would cross to the north side of Buchanan, then continue west over the overpass to the west side of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks.

We offer four comments on the proposed routing:

- (1) It would require extending the easement which now exists between USDA-ARS and the City, originating at the center of Buchanan Street. We can support this extension of the easement.
- (2) It would likely increase congestion where the USDA-ARS main employee driveway meets Buchanan Street. Exiting from this driveway is already problematic for our personnel, particularly those who exit west onto Buchanan. Between the auto-truck-bus traffic on Buchanan, and the addition of bicyclists and pedestrian traffic from the proposed pathway, an automated traffic signal at Taylor St./Buchanan St. intersection would appear to be needed as an element of the Bike/Pedestrian Path plan.

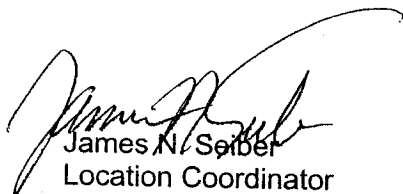
Pacific West Area - Western Regional Research Center - Office of the Director
800 Buchanan Street, Albany, CA 94710-1105
Voice: 510.559.5600 Fax: 510.559.5963 E-mail: jseiber@pw.usda.gov

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- (3) USDA-ARS is planning to replace its outdated landscape irrigation system, and to use recycled water in parts of the new system. The City should coordinate with EBMUD on the routing of the recycled water lateral proposed to be routed along the south side of Buchanan Street. And USDA-ARS should be given as early notice as possible of the recycled water lateral and bike/pedestrian pathway final routings, so that we may proceed with our irrigation system improvements project.
- (4) For security and safety reasons, we proposed that the Bike/Pedestrian Path plan include a fence along the path's southern boundary, as it traverses USDA-ARS property from just west of the USDA-ARS main employee driveway to the path's crossing of Buchanan Street at Pierce Street.

Again, we support the concept of a bike/pedestrian path, and will work with the City as the planning continues.

Best regards,



James N. Seiber
Location Coordinator

cc: Jack Nelson, Procurement Officer
Thomas Moreno, Facility Engineer
Gwyn Watson, Location Administrator Officer
Monta Whitehurst, Mgmt. Program Analyst
Jeffrey Van Houten, Deputy Area Director