

Transportation Commission

September 24, 2014

Item 5B

Action

Approve Cross Alameda Trail Design Concept

Background

In 2005, the City Council approved the [Cross Alameda Trail Feasibility Study](#). This Cross Alameda Trail project section along Ralph Appezzato Memorial Parkway (Appezzato Pkwy.) between Main Street and Webster Street - as shown in Figure 1 - is a high priority project in the City of Alameda's [Bicycle Master Plan Update](#) (2010), is a medium priority project in the City's [Pedestrian Plan](#) (2009), and is considered a proposed segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail. The City's [Local Action Plan for Climate Protection](#) states the need to develop and fund alternative transportation strategies in the City's budget as a key initiative. The Cross Alameda Trail also has countywide and regional significance since it is part of the San Francisco Bay Trail so it is listed in the [Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans](#) (2012).

Figure 1: Cross Alameda Trail Project



This Cross Alameda Trail project segment will run parallel to and south of Appezzato Pkwy in an abandoned railroad right-of-way, which is now owned by the City of Alameda and is about 70 feet wide. The [Transportation Element of the City's General Plan](#) provides direction on how to move forward with the former railroad property in **Policy 4.1.7.d** as follows:

“Develop strategies to preserve and identify required rights-of-way.

1. Pursue opportunities to utilize the corridor of the former Alameda Belt Line railroad for transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation.”

The [Parks and Recreation Element](#) also provides direction on how to move forward with a greenway in **Policy 6.1.h** as follows:

“Develop a continuous greenway, east of Main Street...The greenway should include a tree belt and paths for walking, running and biking.”

Consistent with these abovementioned plans and policies, Public Works staff submitted a grant application for the Cross Alameda Trail project to the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) for Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF)/Measure B Bike/Pedestrian monies in March 2013. In May 2013, the City Council approved the submittal of the grant application and Citywide Developer Fees as the local match. In June 2013, the City received notification from the Alameda CTC on the success of the grant application. In May 2014, the City Council approved using the Federal Transit Administration and Transportation Development Act monies for the project.

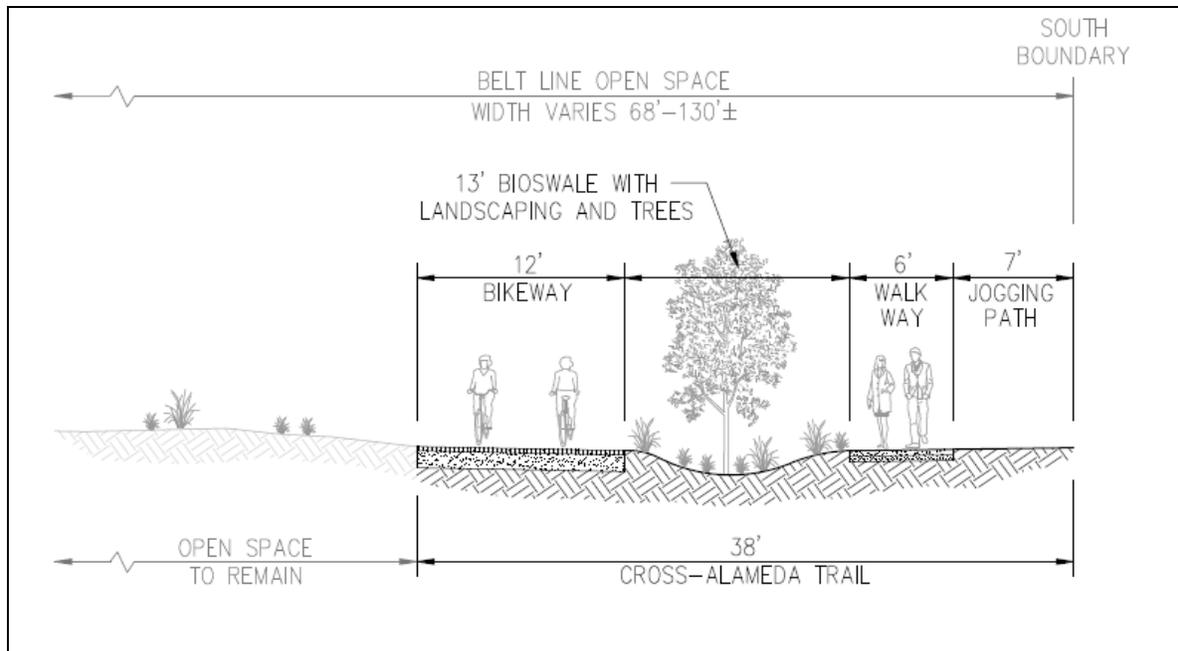
Discussion

The City is seeking to design and construct a 0.8 mile segment of the Cross Alameda Trail that will run parallel to and south of Appezzato Pkwy in an abandoned railroad right-of-way, which as of 2010 is owned by the City. Figure 2 shows a proposed cross section of the project, which allots 38 feet for the bikeway, walkway, jogging path and bioswale.

The proposed segment will enhance access for bicyclists and pedestrians by constructing a facility to separate them from the five lanes of vehicle traffic on Appezzato Pkwy., which has traffic volumes totaling about 20,000 vehicles per day and 85th percentile speeds of 39-40 miles per hour. There are no pedestrian facilities on the south side of the street and no bicycle facilities along the street. Exhibit 1 shows photos of existing conditions.

Ultimately, the entire Cross Alameda Trail will extend between the Sea Plane Lagoon in Alameda Point and Tilden Way, which is a total of almost four miles. In the long term, exclusive bus lanes are expected to share the northern part of the abandoned railroad right-of-way with the proposed paths.

Figure 2: Proposed Cross Section of the Cross Alameda Trail Project



The proposed segment will include the following main components:

- Asphalt bicyclist and pedestrian paths – elevated in some areas to reduce flooding;
- Decomposed granite jogging path – elevated in some areas to reduce flooding;
- Connector paths to two intersecting streets: Fifth Street and West Campus Drive;
- Fifth Street bike lane re-striping at Appezzato Pkwy. to change its positioning;
- Bicycle curb ramp on Appezzato Pkwy. at Fifth Street;
- Wayfinding signs at all the intersecting streets;
- Bicycle lockers at Webster Street;
- New trees (a total of 65 – 5 gallon) and bioswale for landscaping and drainage improvements consistent with the Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines and the Urban Greening Plan;
- Additional drainage improvements, as needed, for urban runoff control; and
- Intersection improvements for accessibility to ensure ADA compliance including accessible pedestrian signals and curb ramps with truncated domes.

Some features that will be considered include:

- Benches in key spots (but not adjacent to residential areas);
- Trash/recycling bin area (adjacent to benches);
- Bike racks (adjacent to benches);
- Trees to be initially watered by polymers or tree bags - no irrigation;
- Trees to be preferably additional coast live oaks or other native, drought resistant trees;

- Existing coast live oak trees to be protected include three specimens west of Third Street, which are greater than 10 inches diameter at breast height;
- Gateway feature on Webster Street at Appezzato Pkwy.;
- Gate connecting adjacent Summerhouse apartment complex and the trail;
- Barrier or fencing by the schools on Third Street and Alameda Boys and Girls Club to ensure separation of adjacent motorists from the bike/pedestrian path;
- Recycled content products such as tire derived products or recycled asphalt for the walkway – information on cost implications, performance and purchase process;
- New marked crosswalks at Poggi Street and at Fifth Street; and
- Path designs that lead to marked crosswalks at existing signalized intersections.

The outreach on this project consists of informational status reports to the Transportation Commission, requests to the City Council for a local match and approval of the grants, six focus group meetings in July and August 2014 and a community workshop on July 28, 2014. Staff distributed outreach materials on the project via a press release, project web page, email list servs, neighborhood barricades and a letter to properties within 300 feet radius of the project. The compiled comments from the outreach meetings are shown in Exhibit 2, and reveal a general consensus in support of the project with a preference for separate walking-jogging-bicycling paths.

Public Works staff is working with a surveyor to provide a record of survey map, locate fences and potential encroachments, stake the southern property line of the City parcels and prepare exhibits along Appezzato Pkwy and the abandoned railroad right-of-way. Public Works staff also is seeking consultant teams interested in providing civil engineering and landscape design services to provide construction plans and specifications in preparation for a construction bid process.

The project schedule is as follows:

- October 9, 2014: Seek feedback from the Recreation and Park Commission;
- November 5, 2014: Seek approval from City Council to hire the design consultant;
- December 2014: Internal discussions on draft design;
- January 12, 2015: Request Planning Board to approve the draft design;
- Jan 28, 2015: Request the Transportation Commission to approve the draft design;
- March/April 2015: Request City Council to proceed with a construction bid process;
- May/June 2015: Request City Council to award the construction contractor;
- June 2015: Construction is expected to occur in Summer 2015.

Budget Considerations/Fiscal Impact

The cost to design and construct the Cross Alameda Trail between Main Street and Webster Street is expected to total almost \$1.8 million. The project will be paid for by a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF)/Measure B Bike/Pedestrian grant totaling \$793,000, Federal Transit Administration totaling \$787,440, Citywide Developer Fees totaling \$198,000, Transportation Development Act totaling \$20,000 and the Bay Area Air Management District totaling \$30,000.

Environmental Review

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is Categorically Exempt under the CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c) – Existing Facilities and 15304(b) - Minor Alterations to Land and 15304(h). In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, this project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.117(c): activity (c)(3) - Construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths and facilities.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Transportation Commission review and approve the proposed project concept.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Payne, Transportation Coordinator

Exhibits

- 1: Photos of Existing Conditions
- 2: Community Comments