



DATE: January 27, 2021

TO: Council Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT East Bay Greenway Project: Design Elements and Aesthetics

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC) reviews and comments on this report.

SUMMARY

The East Bay Greenway Project (Project) proposes to construct a regional bicycle and pedestrian trail facility that will generally follow along the BART alignment for 16 miles. The Project spans the Cities of Oakland, San Leandro, and Hayward, as well as unincorporated areas of Alameda County. The Project connects seven BART stations as well as downtown areas, schools, and other major destinations. The Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) is the project sponsor and implementing agency.

The East Bay Greenway design team is requesting feedback and direction from participating jurisdictions on essential project style elements to inform decision making, the project design approach, and the aesthetics design guidelines document.

BACKGROUND

The Project, situated between the Lake Merritt and South Hayward BART stations, is sponsored by the Alameda CTC, and proposes to construct 16 miles of bicycle and pedestrian trail facilities between Downtown Oakland and South Hayward, through Class I and Class IV facilities. The Project spans the Cities of Oakland, San Leandro, and Hayward, as well as unincorporated areas of Alameda County. It will improve access to regional transit, schools, downtown areas, and major activity centers by creating a regional trail transportation facility that is accessible and safe to bicyclists and pedestrians.

In the City of Hayward, the Oakland Subdivision owned by Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), is parallel to the BART tracks along Western Boulevard, Whitman Street and East 10th Street. The Project alignment is approximately 3.4 miles from Sunset Boulevard and ending at Tennyson Road, adjacent to the South Hayward BART station.

Two Greenway corridor design alternatives are being considered, with the selection and location of the final alignment dependent on the amount of UPRR right-of-way that is acquired. Much of the project corridor contains an active UPRR line and availability of UPRR right-of-way will determine the ultimate project design. A Rail-with-Trail option would construct a trail adjacent to the rail line while preserving rail operations. An alternative Rail-to-Trail option would involve abandonment of the rail line and conversion to a trail facility. Both options, outlined in the Alameda CTC East Bay Greenway Presentation/Slides (Attachment II), are under consideration to provide "bookends" for environmental analysis purposes. Decision of the final design option for the preparation of engineering plans, specification, and estimate phase is dependent upon UPRR.

The Oakland Subdivision, owned by UPRR, is a rail line that traverses north-south from 47th Avenue in Oakland to the Niles Junction in Fremont. Currently, UPRR is determining if their operations require continued use of the Oakland Subdivision. The Project alignment for either design option requires right-of-way acquisition, either in fee or in easement, for approximately 12.5 miles beginning at 47th Avenue and ending near the South Hayward BART station. The Greenway route is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: East Bay Greenway Project Vicinity Map



In the City of Hayward, the Oakland Subdivision is parallel to the BART tracks along Western Boulevard, Whitman Street and East 10th Street. The Project alignment is approximately 3.4 miles long in the City beginning from Sunset Boulevard and ending at Tennyson Road adjacent to the South Hayward BART Station. The Project would provide an active transportation facility through the core of the City. This would enable residents a non-motorized option of travel directly into Downtown from the north and south. The Project also proceeds northwards to the Lake Merritt BART station running parallel to BART. The Greenway consists of off-street Class I Multi-Use Paths and street-adjacent Class IV Separated Bikeway facilities dependent upon the trail's location along the Greenway and will include physical separation and protection between vehicles and trail users to provide a facility that is safe and comfortable for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Class I multi-use-path facilities are proposed through the City Limits for both design options. Street crossing improvements would be done in the vicinity of the Hayward BART Station as well as crossing enhancements at key access points to the path.

The Project will also include crossings at intersections and midblock locations including traffic control (stop signs and signals) and other modifications to provide safe and accessible operations; connections to existing sidewalks and pathways along the project corridor; wayfinding signage, pathway lighting, fencing, barrier railings, and other features needed to ensure safety and security; bridge structures and retaining walls; and landscape and hardscape.

DISCUSSION

Based on initial input and feedback from jurisdictional representatives, the East Bay Greenway project team is requesting input and direction on the Project design approach and aesthetics design guidelines. Staff requests that the CIC provide comments on the preliminary recommendations and, if it deems necessary, provide alternative recommendations for further study. Specific design elements for consideration are:

1. Greenway-branded or consistent design character
 - Recommendation - Establish and use an East Bay Greenway-consistent design character throughout the corridor.
2. Greenway-branded or consistent color
 - Recommendation – Select a color to be used on all signage; staff recommends the City of Hayward “green’, to maintain Citywide consistency.
3. Consistent wayfinding signage style
 - Recommendation - Develop consistent wayfinding signage consisting of a logo that is placed above each jurisdiction’s signage.
4. Consistent pathway lighting style
 - Recommendation – Use a consistent pathway luminaire and pole style and color along the corridor.

Example of pathway luminaire



5. Consistent rail fence style

- Recommendation – Follow the style used for the existing Segment 7A rail fence. The new rail fence provides variation and offers the opportunity for community customization or public art.

Example of existing rail fence character along Segment 7A of the Greenway project



A coordinated project-wide character, wayfinding signage, pathway lighting, rail fencing, street hardscape, and color can establish a recognizable and unique visual identity for the Greenway, create a sense of place, develop a unified appearance, and build upon the importance of the Greenway project as a regional asset.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The East Bay Greenway Project fosters economic vitality by creating dynamic, bicycle and pedestrian network connectivity in communities along the BART line; improve access to regional transit, schools, downtown area, and other destinations, decreases transportation and healthcare costs, and increases property values and tourism. It connects communities with a high quality of life that helps support small business development, attracts new businesses, increases property value and job opportunities, and the overall transportation system will be more efficient; thus, reducing travel time.

FISCAL IMPACT

Project funding is sponsored by the Alameda CTC and will not impact the City's General Fund. There will be a right-of-way focus meeting in February 2021 to determine who will own and maintain the project after completion.

This project encourages walking and cycling which will result in a reduction of single-lane occupancy vehicles, reduced congestion, and costs related to automobile-related infrastructure maintenance.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item supports the Strategic Priority of Improve Infrastructure. Specifically, this item relates to the implementation of the following project(s):

Project 8, Part 8b. Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; Add 7 lane miles of bike lanes per year.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

East Bay Greenway project will be a comprehensive effort to improve bicycle and pedestrian network connectivity in communities along the BART line; improve access to regional transit, schools, downtown area, and other destinations; create a facility that is accessible and comfortable for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities; improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians; and support promotion of a multimodal transportation system, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. By applying best practices, the plan will enhance the overall quality of life for residents.

NEXT STEPS

Upon receiving input and direction from the participating jurisdictions on essential project style elements to inform decision making, the project design approach, and the aesthetics design guidelines document, Alameda CTC will establish a base investment and an operations and management agreement for the East Bay Greenway to aid in its design, funding, and implementation.

Prepared by: Dr. Ayeh Khajouei, Associate Transportation Planner

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written in a cursive style.

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager