CITY OF HAYWARD AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 2/10/98
AGENDA ITEM 9
WORK SESSION ITEM _____

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: **AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT LETTER TO CALTRANS REGARDING THE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT AGENCY ALTERNATIVE H1 FOR THE I-880/92 INTERCHANGE PROJECT**

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to submit a letter (Exhibit A) updating Caltrans on the City's position regarding the I-880/92 Interchange project and the Congestion Management Agency Alternative (H1).

Background/Discussion:
On July 15, 1997, the City Council considered a draft response to Caltrans providing comments on the I-880/92 Interchange Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (DEIS/R). The City Council unanimously approved sending a letter to Caltrans (Exhibit B) identifying outstanding issues and rejecting Caltrans' "build alternatives" 2C and 2D. By the same motion, staff was authorized to submit comments on the draft environmental document and to continue working with Caltrans to look at other alternatives which meet the City's criteria. These criteria were identified in the agenda report and are the same as the outstanding issues in the Mayor's letter.

At an earlier City Council work session held on July 8, 1997, staff described Alternative 2H, which the City developed, but Caltrans rejected in the environmental document due to "concern about not meeting a large number of design standards." So, based on Caltrans' position and Council's direction of July 15, 1997, staff pursued other alternatives with Caltrans that might meet the City's criteria and conform to Caltrans' standards. Concurrently, the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) was identifying possible projects along the I-880 corridor for the Measure B Reauthorization Expenditure Plan. Their design consultant, Rajappan & Meyer, who was looking at the I-880/92 Interchange, proposed a promising modification to the City's 2H Alternative that would minimize exemptions to Caltrans' design standards, but at the same time maximize meeting the City's criteria. This alternative eventually was dubbed H1 by Caltrans. For the first time, Caltrans has expressed a willingness to pursue an alternative other than 2C or 2D as a "build alternative," specifically H1, the CMA alternative.

Caltrans, with funding support from the Alameda County Transportation Authority, has been working to evaluate and refine Alternative H1. Ongoing studies are expected to confirm satisfactory compliance with Caltrans' standards and operational requirements. Before taking it to the next step (inclusion of H1 in the environmental document), Caltrans desired an indication that the City is open to studying Alternative H1. Hence, the purpose of this report and the attached letter.

Description of Alternate H1:

The CMA Alternative, H1, is an outgrowth of the earlier alternative proposed by City staff, 2H. They both have a two-level interchange and similar right-of-way, which is less than the previous Caltrans alternatives. For example, the Southgate Swim Club, the Alameda County Maintenance Yard, and Southland Mall parking are spared in both alternatives H1 and 2H. Also, in those alternatives connectors would be constructed within existing right-of-way to provide a potential construction bypass.

The H1 and 2H alternatives each have their advantages and disadvantages. For example, H1 has significantly lower soundwall heights. Also, H1 provides higher design speeds along the eastbound SR-92 to northbound I-880 movement, which mitigates Caltrans' design speed concerns, but raise a new local circulation issue that 2H did not entail.

Part of the design speed solution was the incorporation of a barrier separation of eastbound SR-92 traffic wanting to go north or south on I-880 from the traffic continuing onto Jackson Street. This separation would need to occur east of the Hesperian off-ramp. Thus, as a consequence of this separation, Hesperian Boulevard traffic using the eastbound SR-92 on-ramp would no longer be able to continue through onto Jackson Street toward downtown, but instead would have to go northbound or southbound onto I-880. Nonetheless, traffic originating from west of I-880 that currently uses SR-92 could still use one of the four alternate routes to access downtown:

- Eastbound SR-92, northbound I-880, and eastbound Winton Avenue/"D" Street
- Westbound Sleepy Hollow to Industrial Boulevard and eastbound SR-92 to Jackson
- Southbound Hesperian Boulevard, eastbound Tennyson Road, northbound I-880, and eastbound Jackson
- Northbound Calaroga over SR-92, eastbound La Playa around Southland Mall, and eastbound Winton

The clear disadvantage of these alternate routes is that all entail additional travel, and alters current circulation patterns. The effect of this change in circulation patterns is being evaluated in the ongoing study. It also is one of the main concerns expressed by CAC members.

Conclusion

The draft letter (Exhibit A) reiterates the City's opposition to alternatives 2C and 2D; reiterates the City's criteria for an acceptable alternative; acknowledges that alternative H1 appears to address the City's criteria, but also raises other issues. The letter expressly states the City cannot take a position on H1 until the evaluation is completed. It does, however, support continued evaluation of alternative H1.

This draft letter was considered by the 880/92 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) at its meeting of January 21, 1998. The 880/92 CAC was briefed by staff on the current process of evaluating the CMA alternative and was given the opportunity to ask staff questions about the alternative and the draft letter. At the conclusion of its meeting, CAC members were asked if anyone was opposed to forwarding the draft letter and none were.

Prepared by:

Robert A. Bauman, Deputy Director of Public Works

Recommended by:

for Dennis L. Butler, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

Jesús Armas, City Manager

Attachments: Exhibit A: Draft Letter for the Mayor's Signature
Exhibit B: Previous letter signed by the Mayor
Exhibit C: CMA Alternative, H1

[DC/fsr: agenda98\transportation\collins\alternative (H1)-B; February 5, 1998]

DRAFT

February 11, 1998

Harry Y. Yahata, District Director
California Department of Transportation
111 Grand Avenue, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94623

SUBJECT: **I-880/92 Interchange Project**

Dear Mr. Yahata:

I am providing this letter to update you on the City's position regarding the I-880/92 Interchange project. The City is aware of the new alternative proposed by the Congestion Management Agency, presently designated as Alternative H1 by Caltrans. As previously indicated, the City is opposed to either of the build alternatives evaluated in the current draft EIS/R for the project. The City's position regarding those alternatives has not changed, although, the City Council has directed staff to pursue with Caltrans the development of alternatives which satisfy the following criteria:

1) That eastbound State Route (SR) 92 traffic be able to directly access Winton Avenue via I-880 northbound.

2) That the interchange be no more than two levels -- similar to Alternative 2H.

3) That the height of the structure and soundwalls, and resultant visual impacts, be minimized and lowered relative to the 2C and 2D Alternatives.

4) That the removal of homes be minimized, and that the Southgate Swim Club continue to operate as a community asset.

5) That traffic flow be maintained on SR-92 and I-880 during construction without taking additional homes.

At initial glance, it appears that Alternative H1 responds to a number of the issues raised by the City. Yet, it also raises other issues, such as access from Hesperian Boulevard to the downtown, which need to be carefully examined. Since Caltrans is currently evaluating the CMA alternative, it is premature for the City to take a position on the alternative. At the same time, the City is supportive of the continued evaluation of Alternative H1, but will reserve final judgement until the evaluation is complete.

The City Council has directed City staff to continue to work with Caltrans, ACTA, and the CMA to be certain the City's concerns are addressed during the evaluation of this alternative.

Sincerely,

ROBERTA COOPER
Mayor

cc: City Council Members
CAC Members
Jesús Armas, City Manager
Dennis L. Butler, Director of Public Works
Dennis Fay, Alameda County CMA
Christine Monsen, ACTA

Office of the Mayor

July 16, 1997

CLK JUL18'97 PM 3:2

Harry Y. Yahata, District Director
California Department of Transportation
111 Grand Avenue, 11th Floor
Oakland CA 94623

Subject: **I-880/92 Interchange Project**

Dear Mr. Yahata:

The City of Hayward held a public hearing on this project on July 15, 1997. The City Council authorized me to send this letter to you expressing our serious concerns about this project and clearly stating the City's position.

This project has a long local history. Six years ago, the City Council appointed a 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee to work with Caltrans to assure local input on the project. They have met regularly since then, many times with Caltrans. City staff also supported this effort.

While some progress has been made, for the most part Caltrans has failed to be responsive to the concerns expressed by the Citizens Advisory Committee. I'll highlight just a few of the issues still outstanding:

- The height of the proposed three-level interchange which towers 33 feet above the level of the existing structure.
- The combination retaining and soundwalls rising 39 feet above residents' backyards, impacting views, light, and air circulation in this area of Hayward.
- Cutting off freeway access from the west side of Hayward to our regional shopping mall, the Southland Shopping Center, and the government complex between Santa Clara Street and Amador Street
- Significant construction impacts, which may take more homes, to build temporary structures that would carry Route 92 traffic during at least three years of construction.
- Displacing the Southgate Swim Club, which is a volunteer effort without resources to deal with a relocation.
- Perhaps most disturbing is Caltrans' rejection of every alternative locally suggested to mitigate the City's concerns. The environmental document analyzes only the two build scenarios, one of which would take 57 homes, while rejecting 19 other alternatives.

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The Citizens Advisory Committee and staff spent a great deal of time and energy developing more acceptable alternatives, such as 2H and 4BX. Yet Caltrans rejected these alternatives out of hand because "they don't meet their purpose and need." Even though the 2H Alternative will carry the projected traffic, Caltrans found that it does not meet "their" standards. Nor did Caltrans attempt to refine this alternative to make it more acceptable. Local input was never requested on developing the project's purpose and need. Why hasn't Caltrans proposed a project to meet both state and local needs?

As I mentioned, we held our public meeting on this project on July 15, 1997. We listened to our citizens and have addressed local issues and a multitude of deficiencies in the environmental report through our comments on it, which you will receive by separate letter.

The City flatly rejects the 2C Variation and 2D Variation identified as "build" alternatives in the document. We will pursue all options necessary to prevent them from being built. We will insist on a freeway agreement for this project and the City will not sign a freeway agreement to build either of these "build" alternatives.

We urge that Caltrans listen to local input. We have directed our staff to work with you to develop more locally acceptable alternatives.

Very truly yours,

Roberta Cooper

Roberta Cooper
Mayor

cc: City Council Members
City Manager
Director of Public Works
City Clerk
John Schultz, FHWA Chief District Operations, North

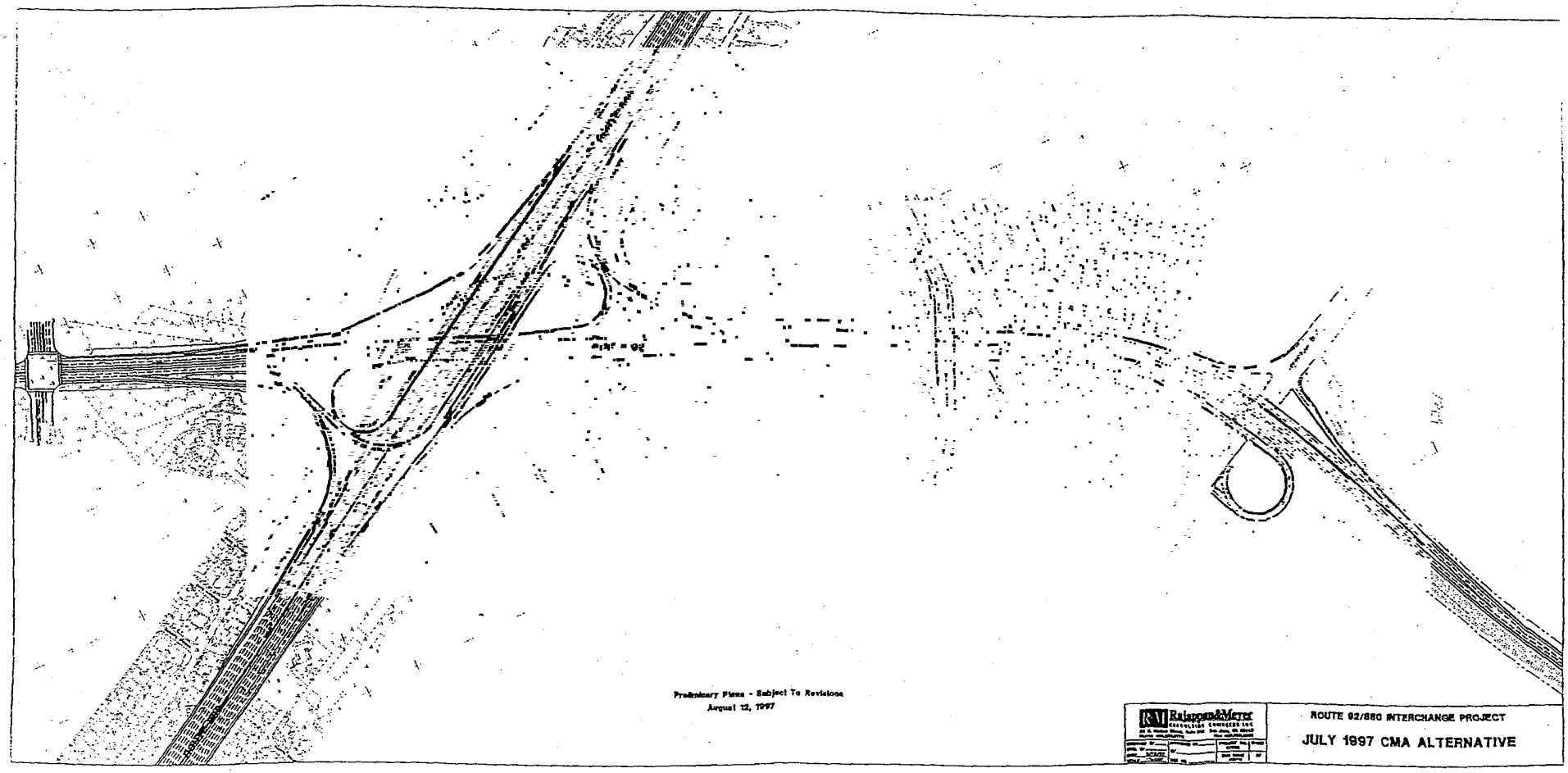
Preliminary Plans - Subject To Revisions
August 12, 1997
Rajappa & Meyer
ROUTE 92/880 INTERCHANGE PROJECT
JULY 1997 CMA ALTERNATIVE

EXHIBIT C