



CITY OF HAYWARD
AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 02/13/07
AGENDA ITEM _____
WORK SESSION ITEM WS#2

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Director of Public Works
SUBJECT: Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project Update

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council review and comment on this report.

DISCUSSION:

Last July, staff presented the Council an update on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project. The EIR is being prepared by a team led by the consulting firm of Mark Thomas and Company, with support from the firm of Jones and Stokes and several other sub-consultants. Work on the EIR is progressing and staff expects the Draft EIR to be completed by April 2007, at which time it will be released for public review and comment.

During the preparation of the EIR, staff and the consultant's team continued to refine the project design. Consequently, staff is proposing several changes from the concept plans that were originally presented. These changes have improved the design and have addressed some of the concerns received at the public scoping meeting held in December 2005. Some of the changes are fairly significant and are a departure from the information Council has already seen; hence, the necessity for this update and to receive Council feedback prior to finalization of the preliminary design and the Draft EIR.

Foothill/D Intersection

As Council will recall, significant changes to the D/Foothill intersection are part of the mini-loop concept. Due to the significance and complexity of these changes, staff has continued to refine the design for this location. During this process and as a result of more-detailed analysis, it was determined that the concept plan originally presented has proven to be impractical. The right-of-way constraints resulted in a severely skewed and off-set intersection, which could have increased the propensity for accidents, particularly in the eastbound direction (see Exhibit A). Consequently, two other options were developed, as discussed below.

Option 1 (Exhibit B) – Similar to the previous design, this option preserves the north curb line on D Street and limits right-of-way take to only the south side of D Street, west of Foothill Boulevard. There are a few advantages to this design. As presented, it requires no more right-of-way take than before. Although like other options for this intersection, the level of service

(LOS) remains an F; the overall traffic operation improves significantly and is the best of the options studied. This option also addresses one of the concerns expressed relative to pedestrian access by providing a crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection, so that pedestrians can more-easily cross the intersection. Crossing from west to east, they would land closer to existing sidewalks and would be closer to the major destination points, such as Bret Harte School.

The disadvantage of this design is that it is unconventional. As noted, eastbound through-traffic on D Street must remain in the left-most lane. Left turns to northbound Foothill Boulevard must be made from the three right lanes, which is different than what most people are accustomed to. This could result in confusion for motorists, particularly if they find themselves in the wrong lane and must change lanes at the last minute. Sufficient signage could help minimize this.

Option 2 (Exhibit C) removes the potential for driver confusion in Option 1 by placing the three eastbound-D Street to-northbound Foothill Boulevard left turn lanes on the left side and includes the through-lane on the right side of D Street. It is still possible to place the pedestrian crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection, as discussed above in Option 1. The drawback is that implementation of this design would require some limited right-of-way acquisition on the north side of D Street. Two additional buildings located at the intersections of Foothill and D and Main and D would be affected. Our initial evaluation indicates it may be possible to limit the impact to one of the buildings (the credit union building) to about 12 feet and reconstruct the front of the building, but this would need to be confirmed.

The tradeoff between these two options is that Option 1 will operate at a better LOS, but will likely be confusing to drivers until they become used to the unconventional design while Option 2 is more conventional, somewhat less efficient, and impacts more right of way. Staff requests Council's feedback on the choice between these two options.

Pedestrian Crossings at Mission/Foothill/Jackson

One of the issues expressed at the scoping meeting concerned the proposed elimination of the existing pedestrian crossing at the Mission-Foothill-Jackson intersection. Since current traffic counts show a relatively high volume of pedestrians at this location, particularly during the noon hour, it was determined that this access needed to be preserved. Consequently, a pedestrian-actuated traffic signal is now proposed for this location.

One benefit of the grade separation is elimination of the Mission-Foothill-Jackson traffic signal. While a pedestrian signal will affect the free flow of traffic, analysis of this concept determined that a pedestrian-activated signal could be provided with minimum disruption to traffic operations. A barrier separating pedestrians from Mission Boulevard traffic would need to be created, and additional sidewalk would also need to be installed (see Exhibit D.)

Southbound Mission to Northbound Foothill Left Turn

The original concept plans included a southbound Mission to northbound Foothill left turn. However, further analysis of the traffic information revealed that very few vehicles will actually make this turn and, therefore, it is not needed. Vehicles traveling southbound on Mission that need to go northbound on Foothill can make a left turn at D Street and then a left turn at Foothill.

Elimination of this left turn will provide an opportunity to create additional landscaping and parking.

Foothill Boulevard Median Closures

In the original project concept, closure of the median at certain locations on Foothill Boulevard and Mission Boulevard was proposed and their access was to be converted to right-in/right-out only movements. By doing so, it was anticipated that traffic flow on Foothill Boulevard would be improved. Since the ability to add any more capacity on Foothill is limited, access management is an effective tool to improve operations without widening the street.

Staff was asked to re-visit the proposed median closures on Foothill Boulevard at two locations – Cotter Way and Kimball Avenue. After a more detailed review of the project design, it was concluded that by restricting left turn access into these streets, access and circulation into the neighborhoods would be significantly affected. Consequently, staff has revised its previous position and now recommends to keep the median open and maintain access to these streets (see Exhibit E).

SCHEDULE:

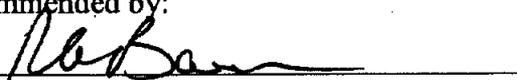
As indicated earlier, the Draft EIR is near completion and will be released within the next 60 days. It is anticipated that a work session to obtain Council comments as well as a public hearing before the Planning Commission will take place in May. Depending on the nature and extent of comments received on the Draft EIR, it is anticipated that Council consideration of the Final EIR can occur prior to the Council's summer recess. Assuming this timeframe, the next major steps include final design and right of way acquisition, which can begin immediately thereafter and could take until late 2009 with the first phase of construction potentially beginning in early 2010.

Prepared by:



Morad Fakhrai, Deputy Director of Public Works

Recommended by:



Robert A. Bauman, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Jesús Armas, City Manager

- Attachments: Exhibit A: Original Foothill/D Intersection Design
Exhibit B: Foothill/D Design Option 1
Exhibit C: Foothill/D Design Option 2
Exhibit D: Mission-Foothill-Jackson Area
Exhibit E: Foothill Boulevard Median Closures

DUE TO THE COLOR OF THE
ATTACHMENTS, THEY HAVE BEEN
INCLUDED AS SEPARATE LINKS