



CITY OF HAYWARD
AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 07/17/07

AGENDA ITEM _____

WORK SESSION ITEM WS #2

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project – Proposed Revisions in Response to Comments

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council review and comment on this report.

BACKGROUND:

The public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project ended on May 5, 2007. Council work sessions were held on April 10 and April 17, and a public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on April 26, 2007. About 40 written comments were received; many who provided written comments also provided oral comments at the public hearing.

Staff and the consultants have prepared responses to these comments, as well as those presented at the two Council work sessions. Additionally, staff has continued to refine the project design to accomplish two purposes: (1) to reduce, where possible, impacts that were of concern to the public; and (2) to reduce the project cost while retaining overall project benefits. After analyzing the proposed revisions, it is believed that there is an opportunity to construct a project that will still provide significant benefits, at a reduced cost, and eliminate some of the concerns expressed by the public. This additional work has resulted in significant revisions to the project, which are discussed below.

Staff proposes to defer action with regard to certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) (and project approval) until this fall, in order to provide an opportunity to complete a revised design. Since the project will not produce new impacts but will, in fact, eliminate some of the negative impacts disclosed in the DEIR, the City's EIR consultants indicated that a recirculation of the DEIR will be unnecessary. However, responses to all comments received will be included in the FEIR.

DISCUSSION:

Staff is proposing three major project revisions: elimination of the grade separations, elimination of some of the peak hour travel lanes, and reduction of right-of-way takes from the Bay Cities Credit Union. Each of these items is discussed below.

Elimination of Grade Separations

One of the most often-stated concerns expressed by the public about the project was the total duration of the construction, approximately four years, even though no one area would be disrupted for that length of time. Many of the comments received state that a construction time period of this duration would negatively impact businesses on Mission Boulevard and in the downtown. Construction of the grade separations is a major factor in the duration of the project. Additionally, the grade separations at Mission Boulevard/Foothill Boulevard/Jackson Street and at Jackson Street/Watkins Street are the single most expensive components of the project. Thus, staff looked at whether the grade separations could be eliminated.

As previously reported, one of the major advantages of the grade separations is the removal of the Mission Boulevard/Foothill Boulevard/Jackson Street traffic signal, which is one of the City's most congested bottlenecks. One of the key factors in deciding whether to eliminate the grade separation is to ensure that continued use of the traffic signals at this location result in a Level of Service (LOS) better than with the no-project. Additionally, since the traffic signal at Jackson Street/Watkins Street is heavily influenced by the Mission Boulevard/Foothill Boulevard/Jackson Street signal operations, it too, would need to operate at an acceptable level of service. Another key consideration in the redesign is to ensure adequate and safe pedestrian movements. Consequently, staff and the consultants have worked on a redesign of this intersection that includes a new Mission/Foothill/Jackson traffic signal, with no grade separation.

As shown in Exhibit A, it is possible to provide four southbound lanes on Mission Boulevard and two southbound to westbound Jackson Street lanes. At Watkins Street, westbound left turns from Jackson Street to Watkins Street will be eliminated, since this is not a critical movement. (This left turn movement was also prohibited with the grade separation.) There will be no change in the other turning movements from what was previously identified. The result is that the Mission Boulevard/Foothill Boulevard/Jackson Street intersection will operate at LOS C in the AM and LOS D in the PM, compared to LOS F in the no-project. The Watkins Street/Jackson Street intersection will operate at LOS D in both the AM and the PM, again as compared to LOS F in the no-project (See Exhibit C).

One reason why the grade separation can be eliminated is that the one-way street configuration (the mini-loop) results in a greatly simplified intersection operation for the Mission Boulevard/Foothill Boulevard/Jackson Street intersection, similar to the other intersections that will be affected by one-way travel. Consequently, it is possible to develop an at-grade solution with very minimal degradation of travel times from those in the original project. The addition of a traffic signal at this location adds about 19 seconds of travel time in the southbound direction in the AM and 40 seconds of travel time in the southbound direction in the PM. Travel time in the AM was always slightly more with the project than with the no-project, but in the PM, travel time with the project remains substantially less than with the no-project, about 7.5 minutes. Addition of the traffic signal can be done without resulting in additional LOS F intersections, as well as saving considerable costs, approximately \$27 million. Additionally, elimination of the grade separations will reduce the length of construction by approximately 18 months.

Elimination of the peak hour travel lanes on Mission Boulevard (except as indicated)

The purpose of the peak hour travel lanes is to provide additional capacity in the corridor in order to improve traffic operations. Of course, this will result in the elimination of on-street parking during the AM and PM peak hours in most segments of the corridor. The new car dealers along Auto Row, primarily north of Harder Road, would experience the loss of some on-street customer parking with the implementation of the peak hour travel lanes.

In response, staff and the consultants have modified the location of the peak hour lanes. The peak hour lanes in the northbound and southbound directions will end at Palisades Street. However, since additional capacity is needed at Mission Boulevard and Harder Road in the AM peak hour, an AM only peak hour parking restriction will be installed on the west side of Mission Boulevard to 600 feet north of the intersection. The peak hour lane will end about 200 feet north of Harder Road and will become a right turn lane with no parking permitted at any time.

In addition to the restriction noted above, at the Mission Boulevard/Harder Road intersection, parking will be permanently restricted 800 feet north of the intersection on the east side of the intersection and 600 feet south of the intersection on both sides. North of the Mission Boulevard/Tennyson Road intersection, parking will, also, be permanently restricted for 200 feet along the west side and for 500 feet along the east side of Mission Boulevard.

The result of this revision will, therefore, be to retain most of the existing on-street parking all day on Mission Boulevard with very little loss of parking, thereby significantly reducing this impact. See Exhibit B for the changes to the peak hour parking restrictions on Mission Boulevard.

The intersections along Mission Boulevard will still be able to operate at acceptable levels of service during the AM and PM peak hours (See Exhibit C).

As a result of the revisions to the parking, the existing curb-to-curb cross section will remain as will the 10-foot sidewalks south of Palisades Street. As previously noted, the project will complete gaps in the sidewalk system. Consequently, there will be some opportunities for additional landscaping and street trees in the sidewalk, which were not possible with the 7 foot sidewalks identified in the DEIR.

Reduction of right-of-way impacts

Representatives of the Bay Cities Credit Union had expressed concerns about the proposed partial take of the building frontage that resulted from the selected design of the Foothill Boulevard/D Street intersection. In response, staff and the consultants refined the design to reduce the sidewalk to six feet and still retain the 5 foot bicycle lane, resulting in no need to take any portion of the Bay Cities Credit Union building (See Exhibit D).

Funding

The most recent updated cost of the project escalated to the year 2010 is estimated at about \$138 million. The City's consultants estimate that removal of the grade separations would result in about a \$27 million savings, or a total cost of about \$111 million in 2010 dollars. The Alameda County Transportation Authority (ACTA) has programmed \$80 million for this project, with another \$11.5 million coming from the City. Consequently, even with a reduced scope project, at least another \$20 million is still needed. Possible sources of funding to address this gap include the federal and state funding that will be identified in the next update of the Countywide Transportation Plan, which is just underway; and the Local Alternative Transportation Improvement Program (LATIP) process, which is discussed in more detail in a separate work session report this evening.

Schedule

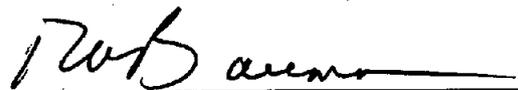
Assuming consensus from Council to proceed with the revised project approach, staff will continue to refine the project concept plans and will return in early October with a recommendation regarding certification of the Final EIR, including the Mitigation Monitoring Program, and project approval. As noted above, since the project revisions will not add any new impacts and will, in fact, eliminate some of the impacts identified in the DEIR, recirculation of the DEIR is deemed unnecessary.

Prepared by:



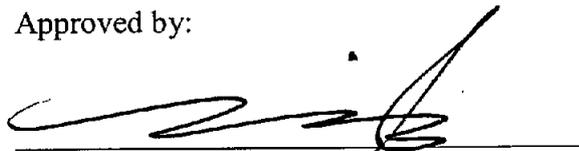
Morad Fakhrai, Deputy Director of Public Works

Recommended by:



Robert A. Bauman, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Fran David, Acting City Manager

- Attachments: Exhibit A: Revised Mission/Foothill/Jackson and Jackson/Watkins intersections
Exhibit B: Mission Boulevard Peak Hour Parking
Exhibit C: Revised Level of Service for Corridor Intersections
Exhibit D: Foothill Boulevard/D Street – Proposed Project

**DUE TO THE COLOR OF THE
REFERENCED ATTACHMENT, IT
HAS BEEN ATTACHED AS A
SEPARATE LINK**