

# CITY OF OAKLAND

## *Agenda Report*

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah A. Edgerly  
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency  
DATE: December 18, 2007

**RE: Resolution Authorizing the City Administrator to Apply for, Accept and Appropriate Up to Three-Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) in California Department of Transportation Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant Funds for The Under I-580 Freeway Mills College to Laurel District Pedestrian/Bike Connection Project**

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### **SUMMARY**

This item requests the City Council adopt a resolution, as required by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), to apply for a FY 2008-2009 Community-Based Transportation Planning grant for the Under I-580 Freeway Mills College to Laurel District Pedestrian/Bike Connection Project, also known as the "Mills Corridor Project". The resolution also enables the City to accept and appropriate the maximum amount of grant funds available (\$300,000) if awarded.

The adoption of this resolution represents an urgent action to secure needed outside funding for design and feasibility studies necessary for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety along the vital MacArthur Boulevard corridor linking Mills College, the Maxwell Park neighborhood, and the Laurel Commercial District. The City will serve as the lead agency for this grant and work with the established project steering committee in completing the formal planning phase for this project.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

If approved, CalTrans will commit up to \$300,000 of funds toward planning activities associated with this project. Per grant requirements, if awarded, the City must include the project as a formal work element in the City's overall work program and funds must be encumbered during the first fiscal year. The funds from this grant, totaling up to \$300,000, will be appropriated to California Department of Transportation fund (2140), Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Organization (88569), in a project to be established. The grant requires a 20% local match. Councilmember Jean Quan, District 4, has committed \$60,000 of Pay-Go funds to serve as the local match for this grant from Municipal Improvement Capital Fund (5500). Aside from in-kind staff support, there are no fiscal impacts to the City. No other funds are required to be identified or appropriated for this resolution.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Council  
December 18, 2007

## **BACKGROUND**

In the fall 2005, the Maxwell Park Neighborhood Council began efforts to make improvements to the Pierson gateway for the Maxwell Park neighborhood. In November of that year, the City hosted an "Envision MacArthur" Forum at Mills College specifically looking at how to improve connections along, and the use of, MacArthur Boulevard starting from the south with the connections between Mills College and the Laurel business district. In generating wide community interest, these two efforts came together as the Mills Corridor Project with an explicit priority goal of improving the unsafe street route along MacArthur Boulevard that snakes under and parallels the I-580 freeway, serving as the main neighborhood conduit between Mills College and the High Street end of the Laurel District.

In November of 2006, City staff from Transportation Services Division and the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Unit began meeting with representatives of Mills College and the Maxwell Park Neighborhood Council to consider the next steps needed to make improvements along this critical community route. Since these initial meetings, the Mills and Maxwell Park groups have engaged researchers and initiated a community-wide survey to assess the importance and viability of this route and the potentials for its improvement. Representatives from Council District 4, CalTrans, and AC Transit, who have also been involved in these steering committee meetings, concur that accommodating the mobility of bicyclists and pedestrians in this area is a priority. In order to move this project toward possible implementation further design and feasibility studies are needed.

At the last steering committee meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup>, after the group reviewed the research done to date, a CalTrans representative suggested the project would be well-qualified for a CalTrans Community-Based Transportation Planning grant as a means to complete the necessary studies. The grant represents a unique and timely opportunity to build on the existing momentum to move this project forward which, situated outside of any redevelopment area, has very few City funding sources available. Completing these planning studies will position the project to strongly compete for additional outside capital funding grants.

## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

Mills College, with approximately 2,000 students, faculty and staff on campus, and the surrounding Maxwell Park neighborhood, are half-a-mile along MacArthur Boulevard from the recently revitalized Laurel Neighborhood Commercial District. Unfortunately, the I-580 MacArthur Freeway bisects these two areas, creating vast areas of dark under freeway passages and a hard to negotiate series of intersections, on-ramps and off-ramps. The area has exhibited a high number of pedestrian/vehicular collisions. As a result of these existing negative conditions, the synergy that could exist between the commercial area, the college, and the neighborhood are truncated, to the detriment of all.

The implementation of this plan is expected to improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety, facilitate and encourage greater mobility along this hazardous segment of MacArthur Boulevard. It also improves the connection to the active Laurel commercial district, which is the nearest neighborhood-serving commercial area to the MacArthur main gate of Mills College. Improvements to this route may include a Class I bicycle-lane, a dedicated pedestrian footpath, new lighting, signage, landscaping, and reconstructing key intersection crossings in support of the City's goals of creating sustainable and livable neighborhoods; it would complete a key segment of the Citywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan; and improve access to and use of the streetscape investments made by the City in the Laurel District.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** Implementation of this project will encourage further economic development in the Laurel commercial district by creating safer and more attractive access for local residents in the Maxwell Park neighborhood and for nearby Mills College students, faculty and staff seeking to bike or walk along MacArthur Boulevard and under the 580 freeway.

**Environmental:** The implementation of the project will complete a key segment of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and encourage pedestrian and bicycle use along a hazardous segment of MacArthur Boulevard under the I-580 freeway. The project will also highlight the Seminary Creek watershed (the buried creek runs along portions of the route) and potential bicycle/walking connections to the Leonna Heights Open Space as part of an overall City goal of linking the hills to the flatlands.

**Social Equity:** The project specifically addresses the interests of communities affected and separated by state freeways such as the Maxwell Park neighborhood as well as the adjacent Seminary-MacArthur neighborhoods bordering Mills College to the west. These neighborhoods have suffered from the social isolating effects of two converging freeways in the area. The I-580 freeway frequently demarks an economic-racial divide between the hills and the flatlands. This project, as planned, will increase the accessibility of residents across this divide by improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure deficiencies and built environment deterrents that often prevent mobility between the neighborhoods east and west of the I-580 freeway.

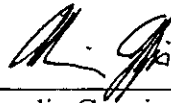
### **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

The proposed project will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with all City regulations that ensure adequate access for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the resolution authorizing the City Administrator to make a submittal to CalTrans for up to \$300,000 for the Community-Based Transportation Planning grant and to accept and appropriate such funds, if awarded, for completing necessary design and feasibility studies for the Under I-580 Freeway Mills College to Laurel District Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection Project.

Respectfully submitted,



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Claudia Cappio  
Development Director

Prepared by: David Ralston  
Urban Economic Analyst III  
CEDA

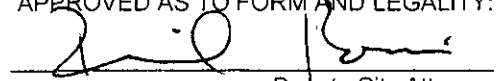
APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO  
THE CITY COUNCIL

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Office of the City/Agency Administrator

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND

2007 DEC -6 PM 6:05

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

  
Deputy City Attorney

## OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

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**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE UP TO THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$300,000) IN CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GRANT FUNDS FOR THE UNDER I-580 FREEWAY, MILLS COLLEGE TO LAUREL DISTRICT PEDESTRIAN/BIKE CONNECTION PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Oakland ("City") wishes to submit an application to the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) for up to \$300,000 in funding for a Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant for the Under I-580 Freeway Mills College to Laurel District Pedestrian/Bike Connection Project ("Project"); and

**WHEREAS**, as part of the application for funding, CalTrans requires adoption of a resolution by the responsible implementing agency stating the commitment to provide local matching funds of at least 20% and the identification of a designated City representative who will sign acceptance of the grant if awarded; and

**WHEREAS**, the Councilmember, Jean Quan District 4, has committed \$60,000 in pay-go funds, which qualifies as a local match for the Project; and

**WHEREAS**, the grant funds in conjunction with City Council District 4 pay-go funds will be used to develop necessary planning, design and feasibility studies for the Project; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the City Council hereby authorizes the City Administrator or her designee to execute and file an application to CalTrans for an amount up to \$300,000, to accept such funding if awarded, and to appropriate such funding for requisite planning activities associated with the Project to California Department of Transportation fund (2140), Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Organization (88569), in a project to be established; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That should additional funds be received for this project, the City Administrator, or her designee, is hereby authorized to accept and appropriate the same for the purposes described above; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That 20% local match totaling up to \$60,000 will be provided from Council District 4 pay-go Municipal Improvement Capital Fund (5500); and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That, if awarded, the City will include the Project as a formal work element in the City's overall work program; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That there is no legal impediment to the City making applications for the funds; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That there is no pending or threatened litigation that might in any way adversely affect the proposed Project or the ability of the City to deliver such Project; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That a copy of this resolution will be transmitted to CalTrans in conjunction with the filing of the application; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That all documents shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of the City Attorney prior to execution, and all copies will be placed on file with the Office of the City Clerk.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_, 2007

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

AYES- BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID,  
AND PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

LATONDA SIMMONS  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council  
of the City of Oakland, California