

CITY OF OAKLAND

Agenda Report

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY OF OAKLAND

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency
DATE: November 28, 2006

2006 NOV 28 PM 12:59

RE: **Resolution Authorizing The Design Of The Latham Square And Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project (Estimated Construction Cost Of \$8,600,000), On Telegraph Avenue Between Broadway And 20TH Street, Including Reducing The Travel Lanes Between 16TH Street And 20TH Street**

SUMMARY

As part of the overall strategy to revitalize the Uptown Area of the Downtown Central Business District, the Agency and the City are proposing improvements to the streetscape of Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue below 20th Street. The street improvements are intended to improve pedestrian movement, increase traffic efficiency, provide for shared bicycle and vehicular travel lanes, and compliment the public and private investments being made at the adjacent Forest City Uptown Project and the Fox Theater renovation. Specifically, the street improvements will include: lane reduction on Telegraph Avenue below 20th Street and Latham Square at Broadway, widening the sidewalks to improve pedestrian movement and accommodate outdoor seating; constructing bulb-outs at the intersections to improve pedestrian safety, replacing, waterproofing and structurally strengthening the existing sidewalks; planting new trees, replacing the existing lighting fixtures along the street with the Oakland Historic Light Fixtures; modernizing traffic signals and resurfacing of streets; and installing new street furniture including bicycle racks, benches and trash receptacles. Parking pay stations will replace the meters which are currently installed along the Inner-Telegraph corridor.

The City Council has directed staff to prepare reports for their approval when bicycle or streetscape projects require the reduction of parking or travel lanes on a roadway. A resolution has been prepared for the City Council that authorizes the following actions:

- Reduction of traffic lanes from six (6) to four (4) through lanes between 20th and 19th streets.
- Reduction of traffic lanes from four (4) to two (2) through lanes and a center turn lane between 19th and 16th streets.

RHL Design Group performed a detailed analysis to determine the level of environmental review necessary for this proposed action. Based on the provisions of CEQA and additional environmental analyses, the City has determined the project as proposed is exempt from the detailed environmental analysis and review requirements of CEQA under either a Class 1 exemption or Class 2 exemption.

This project is consistent with the Mayoral and City Council goal to provide clean, well-maintained and accessible streets and sidewalks, facilities, amenities, parks, recreational facilities

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and trees. The project is located in Council District 3.

FISCAL IMPACTS

This resolution authorizes the approval of the design and removal of the traffic lanes on Inner-Telegraph.

The cost of the streetscape improvements has been estimated by the firm DKS Associates and RHL Design Group to be approximately \$8.6 million. Funding for construction of the project comes from three sources. The project will be funded through a combination of Redevelopment Agency Streetscape Funds (approved by Council in the 2003 and 2005 budget cycles), a 2002 Council approved ACTIA Measure “B” allocation, and a 2006 Council approved MTC Housing Incentive Program (HIP) grant. The total sources of construction funds are identified below:

Funding Source	Amount
Redevelopment Agency	\$2,270,000
ACTIA Measure B Funds	\$3,923,500
MTC HIP Grant Funds	\$2,469,700
Total	\$8,663,200

Staff will return to Council for approval to award a construction contract, with additional details on funding sources.

BACKGROUND

In June of 2004 the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan was completed by Bottomley Design and Associates with input and recommendations from a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of representatives from CEDA Redevelopment, Planning, Public Works, including the divisions of Transportation Services, Engineering and Street Design, BART and AC Transit. Representatives of the pedestrian and bicycle interests were also part of the TAC and reviewed the concept designs, along with the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. The “Plan” contained specific recommendations for 12 major downtown streets. Inner-Telegraph Avenue was among the 12 streets selected as it was in the heart of the Uptown District and the focus of several on-going redevelopment efforts.

In September of 2004, the City hired the design team of DKS Associates to prepare construction drawings for the Inner-Telegraph Streetscape project. The design concepts and design development drawings were presented to the community in March, June and November 2005. The project was presented to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board in September 2005. In addition, a public art workshop was held in September 2005 to identify potential art opportunities in the Uptown Area. In February of 2006, staff received updated consultant cost estimates for construction of the Telegraph Avenue and Latham Square Streetscape improvements. The estimates totaled \$8.6 million dollars. The original estimate prepared by DKS Associates and RHL Design in 2004 was \$5.1 million dollars and was based on concept plans. Therefore, the project faced a projected

\$3.5 million dollar funding shortfall for construction of these improvements. In the course of design development significant technical issues were encountered, including: 1) road reconstruction work resulting from sidewalk widening and new bulb-out work; 2) extensive traffic signal modernization work; and 3) structural strengthening of sidewalks due to a number of deteriorated basement vaults, which was not anticipated in the original estimate. In addition, there was a significant amount of cost escalation in the market over last two years.

In June 2006, the City Council authorized the acceptance and appropriation of \$2,469,700 of federal grant funds for the Telegraph Avenue and Latham Square streetscape improvement project through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Transportation For Livable Communities Housing Incentive Program. The grant program's purpose is to encourage local jurisdictions to approve transit-oriented residential development projects. The housing project that qualified was Forest City's residential development. In order to access these funds, the City is currently working to gain National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance from Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). NEPA clearance is anticipated to occur in February of 2007. Once FHWA certifies the project, the project can be advertised and bid with a project award anticipated in May 2007. With FHWA certification of the project and use of \$1 million dollars already programmed in the FY05-07 Agency Streetscape budget, the \$3.5 million dollar shortfall will be eliminated.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Inner-Telegraph Avenue

The existing conditions on Telegraph Avenue do not compliment or reflect the public and private investment being made in the Uptown area and the overall City vision of an active residential and entertainment district. The sidewalks are uneven, cracked and in disrepair. Street furniture is sparse and poorly maintained. The existing cobra head street lights are not compliant with the Dark Skies Initiative, and do not adequately light the pedestrian way. In summary, the overall character of the street is run-down and in poor condition.

Proposed improvements to Inner-Telegraph Avenue would include widened, re-paved, and water-proofed sidewalks, a re-surfaced street, corner curb bulb-outs and disabled access ramps, new street trees, new historic street light fixtures and modernized traffic signals. Street furnishings will include benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks.

In the roadway between 20th and 19th Streets, the lanes will be reduced from six to four lanes, with additional curbside parking spaces created in front of Sears and the new Uptown Residential Development. Sidewalk widening, creation of corner bulb-outs and a shared vehicular and bicycle travel lane will be accommodated.

In the roadway between 19th and 16th Streets, the lanes will be reduced from four lanes to two lanes with a center left-turn lane. Again, sidewalk widening, creation of corner bulb-outs and a shared vehicular and bicycle travel lane will be accommodated. Curbside parking will be increased by 19 spaces.

Extended corner bulb-outs would expand the Fox Theater frontage and create gathering and waiting areas for the theater and additional outdoor café space. Short term parking spaces in front of the theater will serve as a passenger drop off area.

Latham Square

Latham Square, the triangular space at the intersection of Telegraph and Broadway, anchors Inner-Telegraph on the south and is an important Downtown focal point. It is framed by the Cathedral Building and the Rotunda and several other landmark buildings. Latham Square is currently a vehicle-dominated space.

Currently, at Latham Square, “lamb chop” traffic islands punctuate the space, creating difficult and confusing pedestrian crossings. Reconfiguration of the intersection would eliminate these traffic islands thereby simplifying pedestrian crossings, enhancing safety and improving traffic circulation.

The Latham Square Project would enlarge the triangular plaza at Latham Square, allowing for more pedestrian space, café tables and benches. New paving materials, trees and furnishings are also planned. When complete, Latham Square will become a gracious plaza that is a memorable gateway to the Uptown Arts and Entertainment District.

Coordination with Forest City

The Forest City Uptown Project broke ground in February 2006. Forest City reviewed the Telegraph design and supports the lane reduction and overall approach to revitalizing the streetscape. The developer will continue to coordinate its site plans to ensure that all traffic related impacts identified in the Forest City EIR are mitigated.

Coordination with AC Transit’s Uptown Transit Center Project

Located on 20th Street between Telegraph and Broadway, AC Transit’s Uptown Transit Center will serve as a major transfer facility for BART, Transbay bus services, and local buses. The City and AC Transit have been coordinating the design of the Transit Center with that of Inner-Telegraph since Spring 2005. AC Transit broke ground on their project in June 2006 and construction is anticipated to be complete by December 2006. When complete the project will include new pavement, widened sidewalks, installation of historic street lights, signage, street furniture and the installation of new bus shelters. Widened sidewalks will serve as bus platforms for the existing buses along 20th Street as well as provide substitute facilities for the bus service currently serving Inner-Telegraph Avenue. Relocation of the bus service to the Uptown Transit Center will create a more pedestrian and bicycle oriented environment.

Coordination with the Fox Theater

The Fox Theater broke ground in September 2006 and is scheduled to be complete in September 2008. Ongoing coordination of the Inner-Telegraph streetscape improvements will be required with the Fox Theater off-site improvements.

Integrated Traffic Management Plan

Due to the number of construction projects moving forward in the Uptown area, City staff created a Traffic Management Plan webpage so local merchants and interested persons can access up-to-date information about City and privately sponsored projects occurring in the Uptown area of Oakland. The webpage includes information about construction start dates, street and sidewalk closures, detours, and City and privately owned parking garages.

Coordination with PWA Engineering Design and Transportation Services:

The project design has been fully coordinated and reviewed by PWA Engineering Design and Transportation Services.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Environmental Documentation and CEQA Determination

RHL Design Group performed a detailed environmental analysis of the proposed project. The analyses revealed that through careful project design, combined with implementation of best management practices (BMPs) during construction, substantial impacts to the environment could be avoided. Based on the results of these analyses, the City determined that the project as proposed is categorically exempt from the environmental analysis requirements of CEQA under either Class 1 (operation, repair, or minor alteration of existing facilities, 14CCR 15301) exemption or Class 2 (replacement or reconstruction of existing structures or facilities, 14 CCR 15302) exemption.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The project will create construction jobs, support existing and attract new businesses to the area.

Environmental: The new public improvements will include shared bicycle and vehicular travel lanes, an improved pedestrian environment that will encourage walking, a reduction in the amount of land needed for automobile traffic, and better pedestrian connections to existing BART stations and AC Transit's new Uptown Transit Center, thus encouraging the use of mass transit. Recycled materials will be incorporated into the project to the extent feasible.

Social Equity: The Project will improve transportation options for all pedestrians by improving safety and access to major Downtown transportation hubs. The contractor will achieve and adhere to the ACTIA local and small local business participation goals, and all other City of Oakland business and employment program requirements.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

The new streetscape improvements will be in compliance with the physical access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and will provide equal opportunity and access for pedestrians within the project area.


RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the design of the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project (estimated construction cost of \$8,600,000), on Telegraph Avenue between Broadway and 20th Street, including reducing the vehicular travel lanes between 16th Street and 20th Street. Approval of this project would be consistent with the substantial public and private investment being made in the Uptown area, would eliminate blighted conditions, increase pedestrian movement and safety in the area, and provide new streetscape amenities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the resolution authorizing the design of the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project (estimated construction cost of \$8,600,000), on Telegraph Avenue between Broadway and 20th Street, including reducing the travel lanes between 16th Street and 20th Street.


Respectfully submitted,

for 

Daniel Vanderprie
Director of Redevelopment, Economic
Development, Housing and
Community Development

Prepared by:
George Durney
Project Manager
Redevelopment Division

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

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APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:


DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C. M. S.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DESIGN OF THE LATHAM SQUARE AND TELEGRAPH AVENUE STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST OF \$8,600,000), ON TELEGRAPH AVENUE BETWEEN BROADWAY AND 20TH STREET, INCLUDING REDUCING THE TRAVEL LANES BETWEEN 16TH STREET AND 20TH STREET

WHEREAS, the City desires to proceed with the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, a comprehensive project to design and build streetscape improvements along Telegraph Avenue between 20th Street and Broadway, to improve the physical appearance and identity, public safety, and pedestrian amenities for the area; and

WHEREAS, the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project meets the goals of the City's Master Bicycle Plan to provide safe and direct bicycle access to key areas and corridors in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project meets the goals of the City's Pedestrian Master Plan to provide safe and direct pedestrian access to key areas and corridors in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project will reduce the travel lanes from six (6) through lanes to four (4) through lanes between 20th and 19th streets, and will reduce the travel lanes from four (4) through lanes to two (2) through lanes and a center left turn lane between 19th and 16th streets; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has directed staff to prepare reports for their approval when bicycle or streetscape projects require the reduction of parking or travel lanes on a roadway; and

WHEREAS, the City received \$3.4 million in Measure B Funding, the Redevelopment Agency has pledged an additional \$ 2.8 million, and \$2.47 million is anticipated in federal monies to fund the construction of the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost for the installation of the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project is \$8.6 million and the funds are available for the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project has been studied for feasibility and long-term transportation impacts and the Project as designed has been determined to have insignificant long-term impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project has been determined to be categorically exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15301 and/or 15302; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council authorizes and approves the Latham Square and Telegraph Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, including reducing the travel lanes from six (6) through lanes to four (4) through lanes from 20th Street to 19th Street, and reducing the travel lanes from four (4) through lanes to two (2) through lanes with a center left turn lane from 19th Street to 16th Street; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland has independently reviewed and considered this environmental determination, and the City finds and determines that this action complies with CEQA because this action on the part of the City is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Sections 15301 and/or 15302; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a Notice of Exemption shall be filed with the County.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 2006

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