

San Francisco Bay Trail - Castro Street to the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge

Community Meeting Summary

Thursday, December 1st, 2011

Meeting Purpose: Solicit public input regarding trail alignment alternatives and preliminary design concepts. Meeting included presentation and comment period on “Recommended Alternative.”

Attendance: A total of forty-five (45) members of the general public were in attendance. Thirty-one (31) individuals provided names and contact information. Attendees included City of Richmond Vice-Mayor Tom Butt, City Engineer Edric Kwan, Bruce Beyaert and Nancy Strauch from TRAC, Lee Huo from ABAG-Bay Trail, Chairperson Adrienne Harris of the Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Nathan Rapp from the Office of State Senator Loni Hancock.

Geographic Distribution: Attendees providing their location of residence on a street map included numerous residents from the Point Richmond neighborhood and an even distribution of residents from throughout the City of Richmond. Also in attendance were a few residents from Berkeley, Oakland, and Marin County.

Meeting Format: A one-half hour overview of the project, including background and history, opportunities and constraints, alternatives evaluated, followed by a presentation of the Recommended Alternative and conceptual design details by the project consultant team. The presentation included a brief introduction of the Bay Trail gap project by Bruce Beyaert from TRAC; a slide show, which accompanied the discussion; oversized wall maps of site constraints, alternative trail alignments considered, design details, and the Recommended Alternative Plan. Two 3D scale models of the project, including a model of the entire site with the recommended alignment, and a more detailed model of the proposed bridge structure portion of the project were on display during the meeting, and were referred to during the presentation.

Summary of Questions and Responses

Below is a summary of the salient discussion points and comments generated during the meeting. Following the trail alternatives presentation, the consultant team took questions from the audience and provided answers. *Consultant team responses in italics.*

- 1) **Recommended Project Support.** The Recommended Trail alternative received broad support from members of the community in addition to representatives from ABAG Bay Trail, RBPAC, and TRAC, with many in attendance acknowledging the difficult engineering challenges of the project area and that the Recommended Alternative Plan provides a sound engineering solution. No one in attendance objected to the recommended trail alignment, or requested that another trail alternative be further considered.
- 2) **Define Project Area.** Need to clearly define project boundary. Members of the audience expressed concerns with the potential impacts on existing uses under the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge that must be examined and considered in the plans, including compatibility of public access and wildlife (shorebirds and harbor seals). *These issues will be addressed in the CEQA document.*
- 3) **Parking.** A member of the audience expressed concerns with impacts to parking around Castro Street. *Possible staging areas with parking are being studied on Caltrans property north of the Castro Street intersection on Tewksbury Ave., and south of the Marine Street*

intersection on Tewksbury Ave. Staging areas on Caltrans property will require permanent encroachment permits.

- 4) **Connection to Pt. Molate via Existing Trail Under Bridge West of Toll Plaza.** A member of the audience asked a question regarding safety and security of the existing trail that passes under the bridge west of toll plaza, and if it will be upgraded. *The proposed Castro St. to Richmond/San Rafael Bridge trail will connect to this existing segment of trail, and the East Bay Parks District is currently working on the design of shoreline trail to the north of this segment. The City of Richmond and the Consultant design team will coordinate with East Bay Regional Parks District on the issue of safety and security along this segment of trail.*
- 5) **Trail Design Standards.** A question was asked if proposed trail width, grade and cross slope will be ADA compliant? *The trail is being designed for multi-use (bicycles and pedestrians) and ADA compliance with maximum running slopes of 5%, maximum cross slopes of 2%, and a minimum width of 12 feet.*
- 6) **Trail Connection through old town Pt. Richmond and south to Bay Trail.** A member of the audience asked that the Bay Trail connection through downtown Pt. Richmond be better defined and marked, and improved as needed. *Bruce Beyaert from TRAC responded that existing development and available right-of-way will make it difficult to construct a separate trail facility into downtown from the Castro Street bus terminal, but improvements are being considered.*
- 7) **Scofield Deck Replacement Project.** Vice-Mayor Tom Butt and Nathan Rapp from State Senator Loni Hancock's Office brought up the issue of the Caltrans Scofield Deck Replacement Project and any possible connection or impacts to this project, including the projected two-year closure of the Western Drive on-ramp to eastbound Freeway 580. Several in attendance urged Caltrans (no representatives present) to contribute resources for oversight of the project planning and design, right-of-way, and to assist with funding at-no cost to the City. *The consultant team and City Engineering Services staff indicated that they will pursue continued Caltrans participation, and evaluate detour options during the on-ramp closure.*
- 8) **Bridge Aesthetics.** Questions were raised about bridge aesthetics and appearance, including materials, the screening or fencing material, and the need for and choice of roof material and roof design. *These design issues will be further presented before the RBPAC and City of Richmond Design Review Board in early 2012. There will be at least 4 additional opportunities for the public to comment on the proposed trail plan and bridge design details, including before RBPAC, Design Review Board, and City Council.*
- 9) **Construction Costs.** Vice-Mayor Tom Butt asked for a current construction cost estimate for the project. *The current cost estimate ranges from \$15 to \$20 million. Final cost estimate will vary based on final trail and bridge design features and geotechnical improvements, which require further study.*
- 10) **Next Steps.** A member of the audience asked what the next steps were for the project and appreciated the fact that a presentation would be made to RBPAC. *Finalize Architecture and Engineering report, and release administrative draft copy, initiate environmental (CEQA) review, presentations before RBPAC and Design Review Board and City Council.*