

Joint Transportation Commission and Planning Board Special Meeting

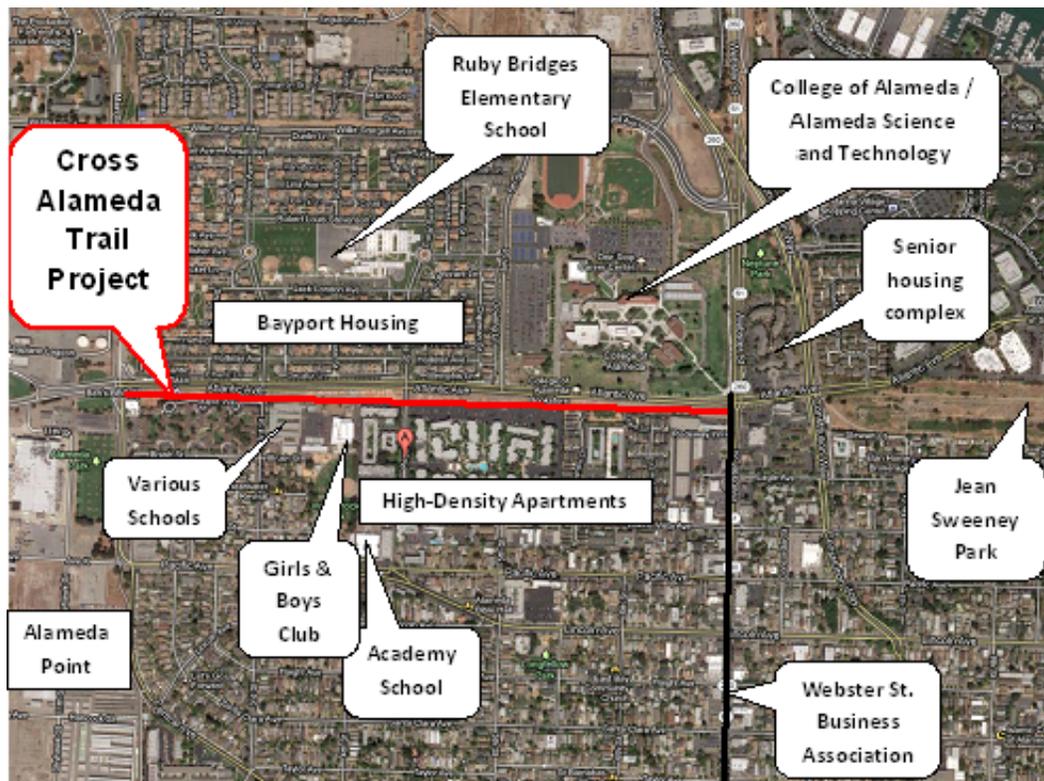
February 25, 2015
Item 5
Action

Approve Cross Alameda Trail Preliminary Design for the Ralph Memorial Appezzato Parkway Section

Background

In 2005, the City Council approved the [Cross Alameda Trail Feasibility Study](#). This Cross Alameda Trail project section along Ralph Appezzato Memorial Parkway (Appezzato Pkwy) between Main Street and Webster Street - as shown in Figure 1 - is a high priority project in the City of Alameda's [Bicycle Master Plan Update](#) (2010), is a medium priority project in the City's [Pedestrian Plan](#) (2009), and is a proposed segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail according to the [San Francisco Bay Trail Project Gap Analysis Study](#) (2005). The City's [Local Action Plan for Climate Protection](#) states the need to develop and fund alternative transportation strategies in the City's budget as a key initiative. The Cross Alameda Trail also is listed in the [Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans](#) (2012).

Figure 1: Cross Alameda Trail Project



This segment of the Cross Alameda Trail project segment will run parallel to and south of Appezzato Pkwy in the abandoned railroad right-of-way, which is about 70 feet wide. Ultimately, the entire Cross Alameda Trail will extend between the Sea Plane Lagoon in Alameda Point and Tilden Way traveling through the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park, which is a total of almost four miles. The City also plans to widen Appezzato Pkwy to accommodate exclusive bus lanes between Alameda Point and Webster Street.

The [Transportation Element of the City's General Plan](#) provides direction on how to move forward with the former railroad property in **Policy 4.1.7.d** as follows:

- “Develop strategies to preserve and identify required rights-of-way.
1. Pursue opportunities to utilize the corridor of the former Alameda Belt Line railroad for transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation.”

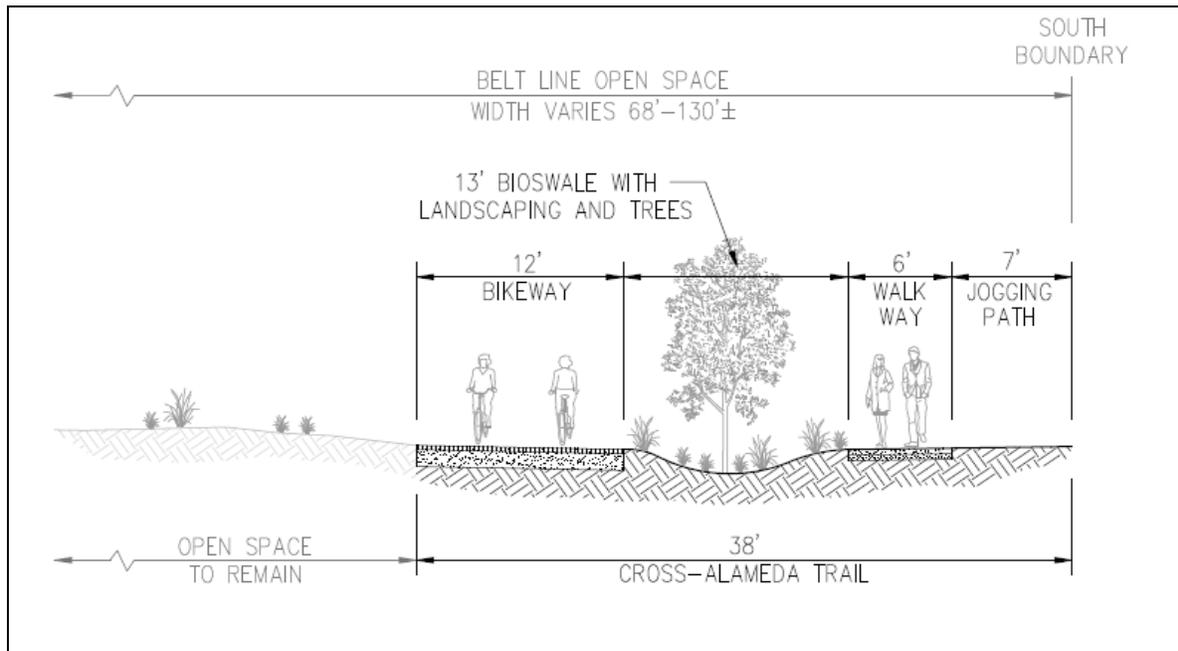
The [Parks and Recreation Element](#) also provides direction on how to move forward with a greenway in **Policy 6.1.h** as follows:

“Develop a continuous greenway, east of Main Street...The greenway should include a tree belt and paths for walking, running and biking.”

Consistent with these abovementioned plans and policies as well as the [Bicycle Facility Design Standards](#) (2013), Public Works staff submitted a grant application for a multi-use trail project along Appezzato Pkwy between Webster Street and Poggi Street to the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) for Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF)/Measure B Bike/Pedestrian monies in March 2013. In May 2013, the City Council approved the submittal of the grant application and Citywide Developer Fees as the local match. In June 2013, the City received notification from the Alameda CTC on the success of the grant application. In May 2014, the City Council approved using the Federal Transit Administration and Transportation Development Act monies to extend the project limits further west to Main Street. Thus, the current trail project is a 0.8 mile segment along Appezzato Pkwy between Webster Street and Main Street in an abandoned railroad right-of-way.

In September 2014, the Transportation Commission approved a cross section for the Cross Alameda Trail along Appezzato Pkwy, which allots 38 feet for a separate bikeway, walkway, jogging path and rain garden areas (Figure 2). This cross section is an enhancement from the original grant submittal, which included only one multi-use asphalt path and a landscaping area along with a jogging path. The outreach effort that led to the cross section approval included six focus group meetings in July and August 2014 and a community workshop on July 28, 2014.

**Figure 2: Cross Section of the Cross Alameda Trail Project:
Apezzato Pkwy Section**



Discussion

The **vision** for the proposed segment includes the following main components:

- a) Separate asphalt bicyclist and pedestrian paths;
- b) Decomposed granite jogging path;
- c) Connector paths to two intersecting streets: Fifth Street and West Campus Drive;
- d) Fifth Street bike lane re-striping at Apezzato Pkwy to better align bicyclists and bicycle curb ramps on Apezzato Pkwy at Fifth Street;
- e) Wayfinding signs at all the intersecting streets;
- f) Bicycle lockers at Webster Street;
- g) New trees (a minimum of 65 – 5 gallon) and rain gardens for landscaping and drainage improvements consistent with the Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines, the Urban Greening Plan and the City of Alameda Master Tree Plan;
- h) Additional drainage improvements, as needed, for urban runoff control; and
- i) Intersection improvements to ensure improved mobility and ADA compliance including accessible pedestrian signals, marked crosswalks and curb ramps with truncated domes.

Some **features** that are being considered include:

- a) Seating in key spots (but not adjacent to residential areas);
- b) Trash/recycling bin area (adjacent to seating areas);
- c) Bike racks (adjacent to seating areas);
- d) Trees to be initially watered by polymers or tree bags - no irrigation, and to be preferably additional coast live oaks or other native, drought resistant trees;
- e) Existing coast live oak trees to be protected include three specimens west of Third Street, which are greater than 10 inches diameter at breast height;
- f) Gateway plaza area on Webster Street at Appezzato Pkwy.;
- g) Gate(s) connecting adjacent Summerhouse apartment complex and the trail;
- h) Barrier by the schools on Third Street and Alameda Boys and Girls Club to ensure separation of adjacent motorists from the bike/pedestrian path;
- i) Path designs that lead to marked crosswalks at existing signalized intersections.

Since the Transportation Commission's approval of the cross section in September 2014, Public Works staff hired engineering and design consultants - BKF Engineers and Placeworks in December. In February 2015, the team showed preliminary design concepts at a community workshop and to the Webster Street Business Association design committee, Bike Walk Alameda, Alameda Housing Authority, Summerhouse Apartments, Alameda Unified School District and their school tenants - Nea and the Alameda Community Learning Center - along with the Alameda Boys and Girls Club. Staff distributed outreach materials on the project via a press release, project web page, email list servs and neighborhood barricades. The compiled comments from the outreach meetings are shown in Exhibit 1, and reveal a general consensus in support of the preliminary design. The project team has begun evaluating these comments for potential inclusion into the project based on the implementation parameters, and already has begun incorporating them into the preliminary design.

The preliminary design is shown in Exhibit 2 as the PowerPoint presented at this joint meeting. This preliminary design represents the vision for the Cross Alameda Trail along Appezzato Pkwy. To implement this vision, the consultant team will estimate the costs of the desired trail features, and then will prioritize the features that will be able to be funded. The highest priority features are the ones that were in the original grant application for a multi-use path, jogging path and landscaping area. Besides cost concerns, other challenges of the trail project are as follows:

- a) A sewer improvement project in the southern part of the railroad right-of-way is being timed before the trail project.
- b) The contaminated soil needs to be mitigated before construction.
- c) The federal monies need to be expended by December 2015.

The project schedule is as follows:

- 1) February 25, 2015: Request the Transportation Commission and Planning Board to approve the preliminary design;
- 2) Spring 2015: Request City Council to proceed with a construction bid process;

- 3) Summer 2015: Request City Council to award the construction contractor;
- 4) August 2015: Construction begins.
- 5) December 2015: Construction ends, which is the deadline to expend the federal monies.

Budget Considerations/Fiscal Impact

The budget for the design and construction of the Appezzato Pkwy section of the Cross Alameda Trail between Main Street and Webster Street totals almost \$1.8 million. The project will be paid for by a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF)/Measure B Bike/Pedestrian grant totaling \$793,000, Federal Transit Administration totaling \$787,440, Citywide Developer Fees totaling \$198,000, Transportation Development Act totaling \$20,000 and the Bay Area Air Management District totaling \$30,000.

Environmental Review

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is Categorical Exempt under the CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c) – Existing Facilities and 15304(b) - Minor Alterations to Land and 15304(h). In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, this project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.117(c): activity (c)(3) - Construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths and facilities.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Transportation Commission and the Planning Board review and approve the preliminary design.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Payne, Transportation Coordinator

Exhibits

- 1: Community Comments on Preliminary Design (February 2015)
2. PowerPoint Presentation for the Joint Transportation Commission / Planning Board Meeting on February 25, 2015

Exhibit 1: Community Comments on Preliminary Design (February 2015)

Main Street Section

- a) Do not obscure sign for Donut Shop with trees. Want lower shrubs like rosemary.
- b) I like to see the Main Street Plaza to be more visibly pleasing as the Webster end. After all, it will be the gateway to Alameda Point. Create a plaza area.
- c) I would like to see more seating benches there.
- d) Review connection to Site A.
- e) Less concrete, more vegetation at gateways.
- f) Public art at both ends – good as easily identified meeting sites. Maybe a giant sprocket for one?
- g) Love the place making and activities at Main Street intersection.
- h) Love the 8 ft x 8 ft separation of bike/pedestrians at the Main Street Plaza.
- i) Rotate basketball court 90 degrees to keep balls in the seating plaza.
- j) Increase the number of bike racks. Like the bike rack alignment.
- k) North side of Main Street has an awkward pork chop island making it difficult to access the Main Street trail.
- l) No path between basketball court and the Housing Authority property.

School / Boys and Girls Club Section

- a) School parking is needed. Where will the teachers park? More people will park in Bayport.
- b) Issues with the Third Street driveway exist. Parents driving west on Appezzato Pkwy, turn left onto Third Street and take another left in the driveway blocking motorists at the intersection. Could make the Third Street driveway a fire lane.
- c) Brush Street: Could prohibit parking in the mornings and afternoons to allow drop-off and pick-up, which would reduce the number of parents trying to access the Third Street driveway.
- d) The Boys and Girls Club needs a real entrance. It's a beautiful, new resource in Alameda, which merits an entrance. To have to drive past the school on the narrow road would be a tremendous shame. Does the organization know what is happening? Have they given input to the design? They may have funding for this aspect.
- e) Concern about the parking going away.
- f) Motorists drive too close to pedestrians crossing Appezzato Pkwy.

- g) The school drivers should be prevented from driving on the trail with some type of barrier.
- h) Consider the elevation changes in the design.
- i) Consider AUSD as the first to demolish in early August to minimize disruption during the school year.
- j) Students on trails need to access the school easily.
- k) Consider a parcours near the school in the rain garden area.

Fifth Street / West Campus Drive Section

- a) Access from apartment complexes to the trail is a priority.
- b) The Fifth Street intersection needs to be very attractive, very natural to use. Any designs for this entrance? This way cyclists are drawn in rather than using Appezzato.
- c) Consider another treatment rather than a bike lane in the middle of the two travel lanes in the southbound direction. Can we make cyclists feel more protected?
- d) Make the bike lane pocket similar to Channing/Martin Luther King Jr. Way in Berkeley so that a curb protects the bicyclists in the bike lane between the left and right turns.
- e) Check location of Summerhouse gate by West Campus – seems to be in the middle of the parking lot lane on the Summerhouse side.
- f) Show the new marked crosswalks at Fifth Street.

Webster Street Section

- a) Webster Street monument should be higher.
- b) Webster monolith – substantial as not at all – like ground plaque.
- c) Less concrete, more vegetation at gateways.
- d) Public art at both ends – good as easily identified meeting sites. Maybe a giant sprocket for one?
- e) Stop mixing of bikes and pedestrians at Webster Street Plaza – creates conflict. Can we design to mimic the 8 ft x 8 ft side by side path at Main Street Plaza? Should channel bicyclists away from the mixing area.
- f) 'Hiding' bike racks and lockers will discourage use and create sense of low security. Can the bicycle lockers move out forward adjacent to the bus shelter?
- g) Bike Fit it may be more used at Webster Street.
- h) Barbary coast plaque at plaza.
- i) Consider barriers/separation to circulate at plaza corner to avoid conflicts.
- j) Want the College of Alameda side to complement the new south side of Appezzato Pkwy. Use same monuments / pillars on the north and south sides of

Appezzato Pkwy to mimic the Stargell entrance. Becomes a gateway to Alameda Point.

- k) Create a plaza environment – do not flip it – do not place anything obstructing the pedestrians; want the corner as an open space. Keep the arc and make it one big circle at all four corners.
- l) Stamped asphalt for crosswalk crossing Appezzato Pkwy similar to Oakland Chinatown; need raised and widened median.
- m) Lighting is needed in this area.
- n) Like the monolith shape yet not the ball or the texture. Similar to the Webster Street portals and former Neptune Beach gateway tower.
- o) Incorporate rails in the plaza to direct users to the bikeway and the paths.
- p) Benches should integrate with the monolith.

Appezzato Parkway

- a) One mile of transit lane for bus is a waste of money – if it was longer ok – use the transit land for buses to pull off the street to pick up people. It will help flow of traffic at less cost.
- b) Will there be future bus stops? How incorporated?
- c) Be conscious of improvements that may be in conflict with the bus rapid transit.
- d) Want bike lanes on the street with highest priority on the north side of the street going westbound.

Community Spaces

- a) Continue to create community spaces along trail - great idea!
- b) Should have a rail theme - Somewhere along the trail put rail in and pave it and say this is what was there before to evoke the former use of it.
- c) Like natural play areas.
- d) Yes – compass rose.

Intersections

- a) Marked crosswalks are a priority. Add more crosswalks such as on Poggi Street (east side) where only one exists on west side.
- b) Use sensors so bikes can move freely through intersections. Consider bike sensors so bicyclists only would slow down. The street light would be triggered at an appropriate time to minimize delay for bicyclists. Want the pressure sensitive pad similar to Ohlone Trail at all signal crossings.
- c) Want dedicated and wider crossings for bicyclists. Want wider curb ramps so that two bicyclists can use it at the same time as well as pedestrians so it is not a funnel. Reorient the curb ramps so that they face each other and not into the intersection.

- d) Consider a low kick button for detection. The Ohlone Trail at the University Avenue crossing has the low pedestrian push buttons that kick instead of push with hand/arm.
- e) Want physical barriers to be at intersections to keep bicyclists in line with crosswalks.
- f) Bike signals are a priority.
- g) Third Street: cars queue to turn into the driveway at the school to access the Boys & Girls Club.
- h) Keep southbound bike lane as is and provide an exclusive bicycle signal phase used to separate conflicting movements.
- i) Provide a separate phase for bike/ped/trail movements for Third Street and Poggi Street; want a protected phase for bike/ped movements.
- j) Marked crosswalks – what are the best practices?
- k) Install warning signs showing bicycle crossings at intersections before the marked crosswalks.
- l) Want berms and plantings to prevent straight line bicyclists at Poggi Street. Need to have barriers on the south side of concrete area.
- m) Move the marked crosswalks at Poggi Street and Third Street south to align better with the ultimate build-out with the bus lanes and creates a more straight line for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- n) Is there a sidewalk on the east side of Poggi Street?
- o) Connect with natural trail to the south for users traveling to/from the south.
- p) Webster Street: Double check need to improve access to College of Alameda and the path on the west side of Webster Street to Stargell Avenue.
- q) Main Street pork chop issue – fix it – easy curb fix? Look at ultimate alignment to see what happens with pork chop.

Landscaping

- a) Continue using Bay-Friendly principles like the plant palette.
- b) Site features talk about bioswales yet end up showing rain gardens.
- c) Plants: want non-invasive California native species.
- d) I am happy with a walk/jog/bike path, however, I feel all the landscaping and decoration is overkill. How about just the minimum so people can walk and bike?
- e) City to build a well with the project to save monies instead of EBMUD irrigation.
- f) Could have similar features – like a rain garden - inside the college along Appezato Pkwy to mimic design and allow for more usable seating and walking spaces.
- g) Should consider Street Tree Plan.
- h) Match street on north side of street, which is London Plane trees.

- i) Landscaping north of bikeway is desired.
- j) A better narrow tree is Frans Fontaine – the same as the Neptune Park area.
- k) Water meter is being installed on Webster Street at bus stop.

Lighting

- a) Concerned about no lighting planned for pedestrian walkway from Third to Main. Spend money on lighting please! Or recipe for assaults (perfect drug dealing alley now with trees no lighting).
- b) Add lighting so path can be used at night.
- c) Use solar lighting for paths.
- d) Overall lighting on all trails is very important.
- e) Lighting is important because there are no bike lanes on Appezzato Pkwy.
- f) Lighting trumps gateway – I agree!
- g) Designate lighting spaces now, and pay for it later as a subsequent phase in the project.
- h) Good quality like Alameda Landing.
- i) If there are no bike lanes on Appezzato Pkwy then need lighting on the Cross Alameda Trail.
- j) Install lighting conduit or design it now to reduce modifications later. Could lay trenches for stormwater and electricity.

Maintenance

- a) Volunteer work days for ongoing maintenance.
- b) Worry about maintenance.
- c) Budget and plan for landscape maintenance (weeding). Plan for excluding weeds and exotics from both the project area and the dedicated transit right-of-way. Budget ongoing responsible employees and department identifier.
- d) No irrigation.
- e) Provide trash cans/recycling containers, and a stewardships for kids.
- f) Bayport could help sponsor maintenance.

Seating

- a) Would love to see seating walls instead of benches.
- b) Seat walls – great! Use as much as possible.

Signage

- a) Have history kiosks about Belt Line.
- b) Kiosks: Keep it updated or not needed.
- c) Provide mileage on the wayfinding signs. Include the following destinations: College of Alameda, donut shop, Park Street, Webster Street, BART, ferry terminal.
- d) Jogging path – call it something different because pedestrians should be able to walk there who prefer asphalt. What is another name for it so walkers could use it?
- e) Need street signs at Fifth Street to better understand where the cyclists and pedestrians are.
- f) Could have wayfinding stencils.

Presentation / Design Drawings

- a) Slides very detailed but cannot read the words on them from seating at the tables.
- b) Large landmarks (schools) not indicated.
- c) Write Third Street and Poggi Street on the plans.

Miscellaneous Comments

- a) Continue creating more bike access on Alameda.
- b) Continue community workshops.
- c) Great plans – just wonderful to see.
- d) At the Joint Planning Board and Transportation Commission meeting on February 25, vote for the preliminary design and start construction by August for completion.
- e) It is about time. Action speaks louder than words. Doing gets the job done. Continually talking about it changes nothing. “We are doers of the word not hearers only.” It is time to do.
- f) Very good effort and progress.
- g) Simple one mile section is more important than half.
- h) Where do joggers, bikers, walkers go east of Webster?
- i) Love separation of walking/jogging/biking, thanks for listening.
- j) Appezato Pkwy speed limit should change from 35 mph to 25 mph when the Cross Alameda Trail is completed.
- k) Consider emergency call centers.
- l) It is attractive and will draw people there.

**Exhibit 2: PowerPoint Presentation for the Joint
Transportation Commission / Planning Board Meeting
on February 25, 2015**