



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Albert Balagso

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** 05-15-06

Approved

*Deanna Santana*

Date

*5/18/06*

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 4  
**SNI AREA:** N/A

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE AN ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS (ABAG) PLANNING GRANT AGREEMENT FOR THE BAY TRAIL REACH 9B PROJECT**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute an ABAG Planning Grant Agreement for an amount not to exceed \$95,000 for the TRAIL: Bay Trail Reach 9B project.

CEQA: Mitigated Negative Declaration, PP02-05-116.

**OUTCOME**

The City Council's resolution will permit staff to further investigate the development challenges associated with the Alviso Slough Pedestrian Bridge, which may serve as an important component in developing the Bay Trail.

**BACKGROUND**

On June 25, 2002, the City Council approved the Bay Trail Master Plan (Plan). The Plan defined a nine-mile trail system within Alviso that was divided into nine reaches to facilitate future development. Reach 9 of the system provided continuity between Gold Street and San Tomas Aquino Creek by traveling along the perimeter of a former landfill site identified as Legacy Terrace. The Plan provided three alternative means of developing Reach 9 due to complex site issues in the area, including a narrow Gold Street bridge, an active railway corridor, and the crossing of Alviso Slough.

During the summer of 2003, staff convened a committee of department and stakeholder agency representatives to revisit the Plan. Staff sought to define the reaches that were most feasible for short-term development as changes in the area's planned developments had occurred and the Plan had not provided a recommended course of action.

The committee determined that Reach 9 presented good opportunities for development. Additionally, the reach's proximity to existing facilities (County of Santa Clara Alviso Marina, City of Santa Clara San Tomas Aquino Trail, and Sunnyvale Baylands Park) provided an opportunity to build upon existing recreational opportunities in the area.

Staff investigated the three alternatives presented in the Plan for Reach 9:

Alt.	Description	Challenges	Conclusion
9A	Legacy access road and vehicular bridge	Bridge development by the developer is uncertain and development of an at-grade railway crossing is required.	Meetings with California Public Utilities Commission staff suggest that railway crossing is highly unlikely because a federal mandate seeks to reduce the number of crossings.
9B	Alviso Slough Pedestrian/Bike Bridge	Feasibility of pedestrian/bicycle bridge must be determined.	Existing railway and roadway bridge over the slough suggest that a pedestrian/bike bridge may be feasible. Resulting structure would provide a more superior trail experience than Reach 9A or 9C.
9C	Gold Street	Two-lane vehicular bridge with pedestrian facility on east side only.	No improvements are planned by the Dept. of Transportation. Cost of new vehicular bridge structure would be substantially more than 9B.

Utilizing local Council District 4 Construction and Conveyance funds, preparation of a feasibility study commenced in June 2005. The study documented the site challenges and permitting requirements, and confirmed that the bridge could be built. Community outreach was conducted to obtain buy-in for the bridge's appearance. The study was completed in March 2006.

In April 2005, staff was made aware of an ABAG grant funding opportunity that could support a greater level of analysis as part of the feasibility study. An assessment of geotechnical and soil contamination issues (due to proximity of landfill) would permit the City to better define and estimate future stages of design and construction work. ABAG notified the City that a \$95,000 grant was identified for the study.

## **ANALYSIS**

Per the March 2006 feasibility study, the total cost to design, obtain environmental clearance, and construct the pedestrian/bicycle bridge was estimated to cost \$4,100,000. The study made a number of assumptions about site conditions that may be impacted by the proximity of former landfills and the elevation of the banks along the Alviso Slough. Utilizing the ABAG grant will permit the existing feasibility study to be amended to better define the underlying soil conditions and topographical features in the project. This data can support future efforts to precisely define the scope of work so that adequate resources can be secured and programmed.

The feasibility study amendment would include the following technical deliverables:

Task	Purpose
Topographical maps	Determine site elevations for placement of footings and determine necessary clearance of the Alviso Slough.
Geotechnical analysis	Determine soil conditions in order to design appropriate bridge footings.
Initial environmental assessment	Determine level of documentation required to conform to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.
Project management	Provide funding for City staff charges.

Preparation of the feasibility study amendment will require that testing occur in the waterway. The project consultant will seek permits from appropriate resource agencies to perform testing. Work is generally limited from June 1 to October 15 by permits granted by Resource Agencies. The agencies seek to limit work activities that could impact wildlife during high water periods.

Staff anticipates that analysis and preparation of the feasibility study amendment can be completed well before the grant deadline of June 30, 2007 for completion of study tasks and invoicing.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

Development of the feasibility study amendment provides the City with the data necessary to more accurately define the scope of work and associated funding for construction of a pedestrian bridge. As an alternative, the current feasibility study could be used when and/or if staff is directed to seek funds for the project. However, there is risk in this approach that the project may be under-funded if site challenges have not been identified or sufficiently defined.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Staff made a presentation to the Alviso Water Task Force on November 5, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to show the Task Force three design alternatives and determine a preference.

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**Subject: Bay Trail Reach 9B Project Grant Agreement**

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### **COORDINATION**

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Department of Public Works, and the City Manager's Budget Office.

### **COST IMPLICATIONS**

The ABAG grant has been structured to fully fund the preparation of the feasibility study amendment. Sufficient funding will be in place for a consultant firm to conduct the analysis and report preparation, and Department of Public Works staff to manage the contract. The funds have been identified as part of the Council District 4 Construction & Conveyance Fund for development work related to the Bay Trail.

### **CEQA**

CEQA: Mitigated Negative Declaration, PP02-05-116.

  
for ALBERT BALAGSO  
Acting Director of Parks, Recreation and  
Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Yves Zsutty, Trail Manager, at (408) 793-5561.