



# City of Emeryville

CALIFORNIA

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 15, 2021  
**TO:** Christine Daniel, City Manager  
**FROM:** Mary Grace Houlihan, Public Works Director  
**SUBJECT:** **I-80/Ashby Avenue (Route 13) Interchange Improvements Project Status Update**

### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Council receive a status update on the Interstate 80 (I-80)/Ashby Avenue (Route 13) Interchange Improvements Project ("Project").

### BACKGROUND

Alameda County Transportation Commission ("Alameda CTC"), in cooperation with California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans") and Cities of Emeryville and Berkeley, proposes to reconstruct the I-80 / Ashby Interchange to improve safety, provide traffic congestion relief, and enhance mobility at this critical access point and important intersection of regional transportation routes. The project will also provide multimodal transportation options, while improving community connectedness, including connectivity to the existing Bay Trail. These improvements collectively are hereafter referred to as the "Project."

The Project is currently in Project Approval and Environmental Document ("PA&ED") phase. Caltrans is the lead agency for securing California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") clearances for the Project. Caltrans is expected to approve the release of Draft Environmental Document ("DED") for public review and comment in fall 2021. Caltrans in cooperation with Alameda CTC and the Cities will lead the outreach efforts during the 45-day comment period.

Final project approval is expected to be secured in early 2022.

### DISCUSSION

The existing I-80/Ashby interchange does not provide access to Shellmound Street to or from Westbound I-80 or from Shellmound Street to the Frontage Road (located west of I-80), thus forcing all westbound traffic to travel further south and access the City of Emeryville via the I-80/Powell Street interchange. In addition, there are no protected or zero-conflict bike/pedestrian facilities between the San Francisco Bay Trail ("Bay Trail") and east of I-80 within the City of Emeryville, which will be remedied by the Project. The Project proposes to reconstruct the I-80/Ashby Interchange to provide a standard interchange familiar to users of all modes, construct a new stand-alone bicycle-pedestrian overcrossing (BPOC) structure over I-80, and connect the bicycle/pedestrian facilities, located east of I-80 with the Bay Trail located along the shoreline west of I-80.

These improvements will enhance safety, provide traffic congestion relief, and enhance mobility at this critical segment of I-80.

Since Fall of 2017, the Project team has reviewed various project alternatives and worked with stakeholders to narrow them down to two project alternatives: a no-build alternative and a single tight diamond interchange build alternative. The Project team is also reviewing various structure types and conform alignment options for a stand-alone Bicycle/Pedestrian Overcrossing (BPOC) structure. The public will have the opportunity to review and comment on project alternatives, including the BPOC structure and conforms types during the DED review and comment period, anticipated in the fall of 2021. Although it is not a requirement, it would be helpful for the City Council to adopt a support position when the Project DED is released. Alameda CTC anticipates the City's participation throughout the project development through the construction completion.

Major project improvements of the single build alternative include:

- Reconstruction of the interchange with a Type L-1 (tight diamond) interchange that will also provide connections to Shellmound Street and the Frontage Road
- Construction of a new structure to replace existing connector bridges over I-80
- Construction of a new bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing structure over I-80
- Realignment and reconstruction of the West Frontage Road
- Construction of a new drainage outfall structure into San Francisco Bay

The Project team will provide a presentation at the June 15, 2021 Council Study Session to provide a project status update. The update includes project alternatives, design variances, BPOC and siting options, and other items to be discussed/evaluated in the DED. In their presentation, the team will also highlight project constraints requiring Caltrans approval for a non-standard ramp design (ramp meter policy variance) and measures to be implemented to prevent traffic spill over on to local streets. Caltrans has requested the City's acknowledgment of the proposed non-standard ramp design.

Furthermore, the Project schedule, funding, and processes/timeline for determining future maintenance roles and responsibilities will be discussed in the presentation.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This is an informational item. There is no fiscal impact at this time.

## **STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC**

The Project team has been engaging with the general public and the bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups during the project development and scoping throughout the current PA&ED (environmental study) phase. Continuing into the future phases of the Project, Caltrans (in cooperation with Alameda CTC and the Cities) will lead the outreach efforts during the 45-day DED review and comment period. Alameda CTC and other stakeholders, including the City staff, will work with Caltrans to accommodate local needs,

including choosing the sites for public meetings, presentation content, and locations where hard copies of the DED will be made available for public review and comment.

City staff attends regular meetings for the Project to ensure the City's interests are addressed.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

N/A

### **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends that the Council receive a status update on the Project and provide any input ahead of the release of DED for public review and comment.

**PREPARED BY:** Ryan O'Connell, Senior Civil Engineer and Mary Grace Houlihan, Public Works Director

### **APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE:**



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Christine Daniel, City Manager

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A – Project Location Map
- Study Session Presentation