



Memorandum

6.9

1111 Broadway, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94607 • 510.208.7400 • www.AlamedaCTC.org

DATE: February 21, 2018

TO: Alameda County Transportation Commission

FROM: Carolyn Clevenger, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Approve Measure BB Freight and Economic Development Program (TEP-41) funds, authorize release of Request for Proposals (RFP) for Professional Services for Preliminary Engineering and Environmental and Design phases of the Rail Safety Enhancement Program, and authorize negotiations with top ranked firms

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Commission approve the following actions related to the Rail Safety Enhancement Program:

1. Allocate \$5,500,000 of Measure BB Freight and Economic Development Program (TEP-41) funds for the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental and Design phases; and
2. Approve release of Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional services for Environmental, PA&ED and Design phases of the Rail Safety Enhancement Program and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate with the top ranked firms.

Summary

Safety at rail crossings in Alameda County is an on-going need. There are about 10 fatalities on average every year along Alameda County rail tracks from either a collision at a highway-rail crossing or between crossings as a result of trespassing. At the same time, multiple recently completed plans at the local, regional and state levels, including the Countywide and Regional Goods Movement Plans, the Countywide Transit Plan, the State Rail Plan, Capitol Corridor's Vision Plan, and *ACEForward* all identify growth potential for rail in the county. Both freight rail and intercity passenger rail provide opportunities to reduce congestion and vehicles miles traveled on our roadways, reduce emissions, and provide efficient transportation options for regional and interregional trips. The Rail Safety Enhancement Program (SEP) identifies at-grade safety treatments that can be implemented in the near-term to address existing safety issues along rail tracks and mitigate against future safety issues as rail service are expected to grow.

This recommendation builds upon the grade crossing prioritization framework approved by the Commission at its March 2018 meeting. The prioritization framework identified 10 Tier 1 rail corridors and 23 Tier 1 crossings to focus the agency's initial analysis. Since then, staff have worked with jurisdictions and a consultant team to assess safety issues at Tier 1 crossings and corridors and identify potential treatments for crossings as well as for locations where trespassing between crossings is prevalent. The project team has subsequently identified a set of near-term treatments and developed a potential implementation approach in which Alameda CTC staff would work closely with local jurisdictions to manage and deliver a multi-jurisdictional program of near-term improvements.

Advancing the rail safety program immediately as one coordinated program would have the following benefits:

- Address existing safety issues, particularly near schools
- Achieve project development efficiencies through one point of contact with California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) as well as one application to CPUC and one environmental clearance
- Well-position grade crossing projects to compete for funding such as Regional Measure 3 and the State Trade Corridors Enhancement Program
- Achieve delivery efficiencies through one program manager strategically coordinating contracting and construction management

This item provides an overview of the type of treatments that could be implemented with this program and a brief description of a potential implementation approach.

Background

The rail system in Alameda County is a critical transportation link, moving both people and goods. Alameda County contains the core of the Bay Area/Northern California freight and passenger rail system, and there is growing demand for both freight and passenger service. The goals of the Alameda County Goods Movement Plan, adopted in 2016, included a multimodal and safe goods movement system that supports improved quality of life, and identified rail as a key opportunity area. In addition, the Countywide Transit Plan identified intercity passenger rail as a key opportunity area to reduce congestion, vehicles miles traveled, and emissions. This grade crossing safety analysis was conducted in order to better understand and develop programs to address community impact issues and safety issues pertaining to both current and anticipated rail activity in Alameda County.

In November 2017 and February 2018, staff met with Alameda County Technical Advisory Committee (ACTAC) to get input on the development of the SEP, including review of the methodology used to prioritize crossings, review initial results, and share a grade crossing toolkit resource. The analysis was used to prioritize a subset of the 133 at-grade rail crossings and 23 rail corridors in the county in order to focus resources and advocate to implement improvements. This analysis created a list of 23 Tier 1 Crossings and 10 Tier 1 Corridors. An update on the grade crossing analysis, including the prioritized list of Tier 1

crossings and corridors, was presented to the Alameda County Planning, Policy and Legislation Committee (PPLC) on March 5, 2018. The Alameda CTC Commission approved the item at its March Commission meeting. In addition, staff consulted with UPRR to compare this analysis to safety assessments that UPRR has conducted.

Following the identification of the Tier 1 crossings and corridors, Alameda CTC conducted site assessments of the Tier 1 crossings and corridors. In addition, Alameda CTC consulted with jurisdictions that had Tier 1 crossings and corridors and discussed existing issues and concerns, identified on-going efforts, and invited them to the site assessments. These meetings helped to inform the assessments and potential recommendations. Note that the Martinez – Emeryville corridor was excluded from the scoping assessment because it has received funding from SB 1 and Emeryville is actively advancing that project.

Near-Term Safety Improvements

The existing safety conditions of a total of 56 grade crossings in Alameda County were assessed. (The 56 grade crossings includes those crossings that are Tier 1 grade crossings, as well as additional crossings that are part of the Tier 1 corridors.) Based on the results of the existing condition surveys, the following potential near-term safety improvements were considered for each crossing:

- Track removal
- Driveway and/or side street closure
- Conversion of one-way couplet
- Pavement markings
- Roadway paving
- Dynamic envelope marking
- Signage upgrades
- Crossing panels
- Raised median
- Street lighting
- Four-quadrant gates
- Signal interconnect
- Pre-signal / queue cutter
- Pedestrian flashing lights and gates
- Sidewalk realignment, widening, repair
- Bike path realignment
- Pedestrian "Z" crossing
- Anti-trespass fencing
- Anti-trespass landscaping
- Closure of crossing

Recommendations for the majority of crossings included treatments such as: anti-trespassing fencing at the crossing, upgrades to signing and striping, sidewalk modification, installation of raised medians, and pedestrian flashing lights and gates. Pedestrian treatments are aimed at notifying pedestrians that they are approaching a crossing and would include pedestrian-level flashing lights for when a train is approaching.

One of the areas in the county with known safety and noise issues is the set of 8 crossings in Jack London Square, from Market to Webster Streets in the City of Oakland. This set of crossings is of particular interest to Capitol Corridor and UPRR due to the high volume of trains in this area as well as the area serving major freight rail access to the Port of Oakland. The Commission approved this rail crossing as a priority project area to address at its October 2017 meeting. Given the complexity of this area, a concept for the Jack London Square corridor was developed and discussed with UPRR, Capitol Corridor, and the City of Oakland. This project would clearly separate rail tracks from pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers and would establish a set of secure crossings. The engineering

treatments would significantly increase safety, improve Capitol Corridor and UPRR operations in this area, and could qualify as a Quiet Zone should the city choose to establish one.

Conceptual Cost Estimates

Conceptual estimates of treatment costs were developed for improvements at the Tier 1 crossings and corridors. A very preliminary cost estimate to implement the current recommendations for the Tier 1 crossings and corridors, including contingency, is approximately \$65 million. Additional consultation with local jurisdictions, UPRR, and CPUC must take place in order to update and refine the potential improvements, and before any recommendations could move forward. More refined cost assessments would also occur as crossing design treatments are further defined.

Potential Implementation Approach

The SEP is proposed to be delivered as one comprehensive program of near-term safety improvements. This will allow for a consistent approach to be used across the county in working with UPRR and CPUC, and provide all parties with one point of contact. Local jurisdictions would be closely involved in the process, with Alameda CTC serving as an overall program manager. It is recommended that all the improvements at each crossing be implemented as one program, potentially in phases as funding and project delivery resources allow, to achieve maximum benefits while reducing traffic disruptions and reducing the overall cost of the improvements if constructed as one project. To achieve this objective, Alameda CTC would operate as the lead agency for preparation of design plans, submission of appropriate paperwork to CPUC, coordination of design review by UPRR, CPUC, and local jurisdictions, as well as lead for environmental clearance. Given efficiencies through delivering one program, it is anticipated that the program could be delivered between 3 and 5 years.

Funding Opportunities

There are a number of upcoming funding opportunities specifically focused on goods movement that the SEP could be well-positioned to compete for. Two potential funding opportunities are: Regional Measure 3 Goods Movement and Mitigation funds, and the State Trade Corridor Enhancement Program, each of which would require local funding matches to move projects into construction.

Fiscal Impact: Approval of the recommended action will allocate \$5,500,000 of Measure BB Freight and Economic Development Program (TEP-41) funds for subsequent encumbrance and expenditure. This budget will be included in Alameda CTC's annual budget starting in FY 2019/20.