


Office of the City Manager

December 4, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Christine Daniel, City Manager 

Subject: Update on AC Transit Line 51 Corridor Delay Reduction and Sustainability Project

Several Councilmembers have requested an update on the status of the AC Transit Line 51 proposed changes. This memorandum provides information on the project to date, as well as the proposed schedule moving forward.

At the November 21, 2013 Transportation Commission meeting AC Transit presented an update of their proposals for grant funded improvements to the Line 51 Transit corridor. The goal of the project is to reduce delay and increase reliability of service. Although 35% concept drawings were provided, there was not yet sufficient detail or technical analysis to evaluate many project elements, so AC Transit proposed a phasing plan (attached) that would allow simple or non-controversial elements of the project to continue with technical review and approval, while projects in need of more public review or technical evaluation would follow a more rigorous review and approval process.

The Commission voted to split the project elements into two categories according to significance and the corresponding process they would like to see. Several project elements such as coordination or detection upgrades at existing signals were deemed noncontroversial and the Commission both supported the concepts and felt comfortable with staff approving the plans administratively provided they pass our technical review. These were labeled "Phase 1" project elements and would not need to return to the Commission or Council for further review.

The remainder of the AC Transit proposals were labeled "Phase 2" project elements. The Commission wishes to see status reports on those, as well as have them presented to Council, possibly in January (pending completion of the technical peer review in time to submit the Council report). Phase 2 includes consideration of any significant geometric modification or new traffic signal (College at Bancroft or College at Russell). While new traffic control devices, including signals, are generally within the approval authority of the City Traffic Engineer, staff's administrative policy is to follow a public

Page 2

December 4, 2013

Re: Update on AC Transit Line 51 Corridor
Delay Reduction and Sustainability Project

process culminating in Council action if there is any doubt of public support. This is the same process staff would follow for a major encroachment permit. Part of the discussion before the Commission concerned Phase 2 projects coming to Council in groups or sub-phases if necessary to ensure a thorough and efficient public process and project schedule. Some Phase 2 elements may also be dropped entirely if appropriate.

The only new signal that the Transportation Commission left in Phase 1 is proposed for Bancroft at Dana where there is an existing pedestrian beacon. There has long been a consensus that upgrading this to a traffic signal would significantly benefit pedestrians and traffic, as well as eliminating a source of delay to the bus.

Attachment:

1. Line 51 CDRS Berkeley Improvements Phasing Plan DRAFT revised 111413 530.pdf

cc: William Rogers, Deputy City Manager
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Ann-Marie Hogan, City Auditor
Andrew Clough, Public Works Director
Farid Javandel, Transportation Manager
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager

