



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 18, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: *PK* Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Lisa Caronna, Deputy City Manager

Subject: Removal of the Berkeley Aquatic Park Noise Barrier Project - 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution requesting California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to delete the Berkeley Aquatic Park Noise Barrier project from the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and release \$1.5 million that can be allocated to the Ed Roberts Campus as part of matching grant funding.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION: Allows \$1.5 million in STIP funding to be released by Caltrans and reprogrammed by the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA) for matching funds for construction of Ed Roberts Campus.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Council took action on November 27, 2007, to match \$4.5 million dollars of Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) funding with other funding including \$1.5 million from the 2008 STIP allocation for the Aquatic Park Noise Barrier, totaling an additional \$9 million for the Ed Roberts Campus, enabling construction to begin in Spring 2008. A resolution by the City Council is required for the Department of Transportation to delete the Berkeley Aquatic Park Noise Barrier Project from the 2008 STIP.

BACKGROUND

When Caltrans proposed Operational Improvements to route I-80 through Berkeley in 1982, abatement measures included 3,100 linear feet of sound walls and planting of small trees and shrubs in the strip of Caltrans land adjacent to the freeway. At that time, the City of Berkeley did not accept a standard concrete block sound wall as proposed and worked over the course of many years to identify a "living wall" planted alternative. The 1984 Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement (FEIR/S) and the 1991 Environmental Reevaluation for the I-80 Operational Improvements Project recommended a noise barrier at Aquatic Park to abate existing freeway noise levels. (See attachment 2 for details on existing noise levels and abatement recommendations)

For several years staff met with representatives from Caltrans and the ACCMA to create a mutually acceptable design for the Sound Barrier Project along Aquatic Park.

Over the years, two primary designs were developed. The first design in 1996, by Mr. Steven Grover, included a 12-1/2 foot high concrete frame that was filled with soil. Caltrans refined the design and developed the structural support system to hold the structure. Ultimately, the final design of the Caltrans solution was extremely costly resulting in abandonment of the concept.

Again on October 24, 2000, Council took action to proceed with a sound barrier system designed by Patrick Crosby of The Crosby Group, a third party structural engineer. The City of Berkeley's Seismic Technical Advisory Group (STAG), the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Waterfront Commission, the Civic Arts Commission and the City Council supported the Crosby Group sound barrier design in concept. The design is comprised of two barrier types (concrete pipes on end, and a metal serpentine wall that maximize plantings along the one-mile length of the park).

Caltrans never agreed to The Crosby Group conceptual design, but rather developed a list of technical questions that were never answered due to the limited scope of the Crosby contract. The next phase of the project was to be a "Type Selection Report" to answer the Caltrans questions and provide comparative wall designs with engineering detail and costs as needed for the City and Caltrans to make a final determination and proceed with the project. The purpose was to provide a realistic budget for the design and construction of two wall types: 1) a standard concrete block wall; and 2) the proposed alternative design as developed by The Crosby Group. If the City and Caltrans did not agree on an approach, the City would choose to either: 1) accept Caltrans' proposal to build a standard block wall, such as is typically used along highways; or 2) contribute City funds to augment Caltrans funding designated for the project. This work was to be completed with the funding authority through the STIP and with the commitment of \$20,000 by the City of Berkeley. This work has not been completed.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

A City match is needed to acquire \$4.5 million for the Ed Roberts Campus. Deprogramming this funding from the STIP will allow for the reprogramming by the ACCMA as part of the match.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None, Council has already taken action at the meeting of November 27, 2007

CONTACT PERSON

Lisa Caronna, Deputy City Manager, 981-7000
Jeff Egeberg, Manager of Engineering, 981-6406

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Letter from Department of Transportation dated November 21, 2007

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

REQUEST CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS) DELETE THE BERKELEY AQUATIC PARK NOISE BARRIER PROJECT FROM THE 2008 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP).

WHEREAS, the 1984 Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement (FEIR/S) for the I-80 Operational Improvements Project recommended a 12 foot high, 3,100 feet long noise barrier along Aquatic Park to abate existing freeway noise levels at key areas in the park, and

WHEREAS, the 1991 Environmental Reevaluation recommended the wall be 14 feet for the same purpose, and

WHEREAS, the noise barrier is a community abatement to the project; and not a mitigation to the increase in noise by the project itself, and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has developed two conceptual designs over the years for a 'Living Wall" as an alternative to a traditional sound wall without acceptance by Caltrans, and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley can request a sound wall or other sound reducing enhancements in the future as a request through the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA), and

WHEREAS, The City Council took action on November 27, 2007 to provide matching funds to \$4.5 million of Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) grant using a minimum of \$1.5 million in funding from the remaining money in the Aquatic Park Noise Barrier Project as funded through the STIP; and

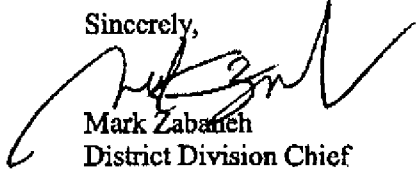
WHEREAS, the City Council must take action to formally delete the project from the STIP and deprogram the funding.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) delete the Berkeley Aquatic Park Noise Barrier Project from the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Mr. Frank Furger
November 21, 2007
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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cheryl Nevares, Project Manager, at (510) 286-5925.

Sincerely,



Mark Zabaneh
District Division Chief
Program/Project Management- East Region

c: Mayor Tom Bates, City of Berkeley

