

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
SUBJECT: INITIATE CEQA REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE
CROSSING AT JENNINGS AVENUE AND THE RAILROAD
TRACKS
STAFF PRESENTER: RICHARD A. MOSHIER, DIRECTOR OF
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

ISSUE(S)

Should the City Council, by Resolution, direct City staff to complete environmental review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for an at grade pedestrian and bicycle crossing with possible removal of a crossing at 6th, 7th or 8th Street, and an alternative ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian over rail crossing, in lieu of Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District's (SMART) plan to construct fences at the Jennings Avenue SMART crossing?



COUNCIL GOALS/STRATEGIES

A pedestrian and bicycle crossing at Jennings Avenue supports City Council Goal #3 – Provide Leadership in Environmental Initiatives - Strategic Objective #6 Improve our transportation system to reduce vehicle miles and promote multi modal transportation. This project would establish another link in the bicycle and pedestrian network to serve the Community's residents who choose to bike and walk as a form of transportation.

BACKGROUND

1. The City Council on August 14, 2012, by Resolution No. 28181, authorized a funding agreement with SMART to complete the environmental review and design alternatives of a grade separated bicycle and pedestrian crossing at Jennings Avenue.
2. In October 2012, SMART's contractor completed the feasibility study of the various options listed below:
 - Construction of a fence or barrier wall on the west and east side of SMART's right of way at Jennings Avenue

- Construction of a fully signalized and protected at grade crossing at Jennings Avenue meeting the requirements of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).
 - Construction of an ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian over rail crossing aerial structure at Jennings Avenue meeting the requirements of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).
 - Construction of an ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian under rail crossing tunnel, with elevated tracks, at Jennings Avenue with sight distances through the tunnel that allows visibility from one approach to the opposite approach.
3. On November 13, 2012, City staff presented the results of the study to the City Council. The City Council at that meeting expressed a preference to study an at grade pedestrian and bicycle crossing as the preferred project. Staff informed Council that CPUC staff had clearly stated that approval of an at grade crossing at Jennings Avenue would be very unlikely unless at least one other crossing was eliminated at either 6th, 7th or 8th Streets.

ANALYSIS

1. Council expressed interest in studying the at grade crossing including closure of 6th, 7th or 8th Street if necessary.
2. SMART will conduct a separate analysis for 4th Street. They will take the lead due to presence of the station and their ownership of adjacent land
3. The cost estimate to complete the environmental document is \$275,000. There is \$241,637 in Account # 17485 - Jennings Avenue Rail crossing, sufficient to begin the document in the current fiscal year. Pending approval of the Fiscal Year 13/14 Capital Improvement Program budget there will be \$60,000 additional funds appropriated to complete the environmental review.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by Resolution, direct City staff to complete environmental review in compliance with CEQA , for an at grade pedestrian and bicycle crossing with possible removal of a crossing at 6th, 7th or 8th Street, and an alternative ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian over rail crossing, in lieu of Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District's (SMART) plan to construct fences at the Jennings Avenue SMART crossing.

Author: Nancy Adams, Transportation Planner

Attachments: None