



CITY OF ALBANY CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

Agenda Date: December 2, 2024
Reviewed by: NA

SUBJECT: Pierce Street Path Segment II – Phase 3 (Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection) Authorization to Submit Application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Active Transportation Capital Design Technical Assistance Program

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SUMMARY

The action before the City Council is to consider adopting a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection portion of the Pierce Street Path Segment II for grant funding from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Active Transportation Capital Design Technical Assistance Program. Segment II of the Pierce Street Path closes the gap to the Bay Trail and Buchanan Bikeway by connecting the existing segment of the Pierce Street Path along the 500 block of Pierce Street, extending the path through Peggy Thomsen Pierce Street Park and along Cleveland Avenue, to the Buchanan Bikeway to the south.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Council adopt Resolution 2024-82, authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application for the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection project to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Active Transportation Capital Design Technical Assistance Program, enter into a funding agreement with MTC upon award of grant, and authorize grant funds awarded for expenditure on the project.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection project, a phase of the Pierce Street Path Segment II, is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 "Existing Facilities" and Section 15333 "Minor Alterations to Land" of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public facilities, involving negligible or no expansion of existing use.

BACKGROUND

On April 16, 2012, the City adopted the Albany Active Transportation Plan (ATP), which included an update to the Bicycle Master Plan and the development of the City's first Pedestrian Master Plan. One of the proposed bicycle projects, the "Pierce Street Path," involved the creation of a shared-use path connecting Pierce Street from the Albany-Richmond City limit to the Bay Trail and the Buchanan Bikeway (at the Pierce/Buchanan intersection). The ATP "Pierce Street Path" was divided into two segments:

- ATP Segment I is a Class I bikeway along the west side of the 500 block of Pierce Street, starting at the north City limit and terminating just south of the 555 Pierce complex (Gateview).
- ATP Segment II is a Class I bikeway from the southern terminus of Segment I, continuing south toward Washington Avenue, connecting to a bikeway along Cleveland Avenue, and ultimately connecting to the Bay Trail and Buchanan Bikeway at Buchanan Street.

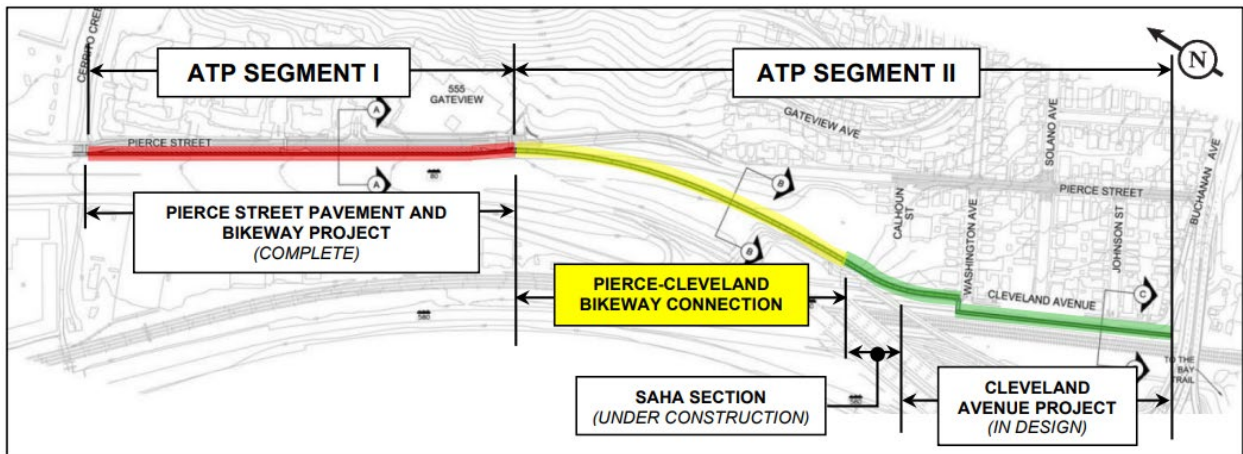


Figure 1. Potential Pierce Street Path Alignment, Kimley-Horn & Associates (2009), amended to including ATP Project Segments and Project Names

The ATP "Pierce Street Path" was divided into two segments during preparation of the Active Transportation Plan, and further subdivided into various phases for implementation within each segment as described below:

- **Pierce Street Path - Segment I** is a Class I Bicycle/Pedestrian Path along the west side of the 500 block of Pierce Street, starting at the north City limit and terminating just south of the 555 Pierce complex (Gateview). ATP Segment I was completed in 2012 under the "Pierce Street Pavement and Bikeway Project."
- **Pierce Street Path - Segment II** is the portion of the Pierce Street Path from the southern terminus of Segment I, continuing south toward Washington Avenue, connecting to a bikeway along Cleveland Avenue, and ultimately connecting to the

Bay Trail and Buchanan Bikeway at Buchanan Street. This segment is subdivided into three phases:

- Phase 1 (SAHA Bikeway) is a Class I Bicycle/Pedestrian path completed in partnership with the SAHA affordable Albany Family Housing development. Work is substantially complete as of October 2024.
- Phase 2 (Cleveland Bikeway Section) is in design under the City's "Cleveland Avenue Bikeway, Storm Drain, and Paving Project," which includes the construction of a Class IV Separated Bikeway on the west side of Cleveland Avenue. This segment completes the path between the Phase 1 (SAHA) limits and the existing bikeway on Buchanan Street. Construction of the Cleveland Avenue Project is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2026.
- Phase 3 (Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection) is a Class I Bicycle/Pedestrian path connecting the ATP Segment II to the Phase 1 (SAHA limits) to the south. This is the final stretch of ATP Segment II needed to complete the bikeway facility. Preliminary design efforts were conducted for rough grading and estimating purposes.

On June 17, 2024, the Albany City Council adopted Resolution No. 2024-50, authorizing the establishment of the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection Project, appropriating \$50,000 from Measure BB Bicycle & Pedestrian funding to the project for conceptual design, and authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Safe Routes to Transit & Bay Trail Program for the project.

On October 21, 2024, the Albany City Council adopted Resolution 2024-74, authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application for the Phase 2 Cleveland Avenue Bikeway Project to the Alameda CTC 2026 Comprehensive Investment Plan (2026 CIP) Call for Projects.

DISCUSSION

With approximately half of the ATP Pierce Street Path Segment II limits under construction or in design, Staff has established the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection Project as a CIP project for the purposes of applying for grants for the project. Staff is assembling funding to cover the construction phase of the Cleveland Avenue segment and the planning, design and construction phases of the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection segment (shown in green and yellow respectively in Figure 1 above). Staff recently submitted an application for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Safe Routes to Transit & Bay Trail Program (SR2TBT) grant to cover a portion of the project's design and construction phase funding. Staff also submitted an application for Alameda CTC's 2026 CIP Grant Program for the Cleveland Bikeway construction.

Subsequent to the MTC Safe Routes to Transit & Bay Trail Program call for projects, MTC released a call for projects for the 2024 Climate Program Implementation Grants. One category of grant opportunities within this call was for Active Transportation Capital Design Technical Assistance. Given the reduced availability of state Active Transportation Program funds this cycle, the Safe Routes to Transit & Bay Trail Program is expected to be highly competitive. Staff recommends the City apply for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Active Transportation Capital Design Technical Assistance Program for

the Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection project to have a second opportunity to fund the next steps in developing this project if the prior grant to MTC to cover design and construction is not awarded. This would allow staff to continue planning and conceptual design work to prepare the project for future funding rounds.

Staff has concluded that this project is competitive due to its inclusion in the Bay Trail Gap Closure Implementation Plan, its benefit for MTC-designated Equity Priority Communities in and around the City of Albany, and its provision of a cycling facility separated from motor vehicle traffic. The project will also greatly improve multi-modal access for Albany residents along Pierce Street and at the new affordable housing project at 755 Cleveland Avenue, where elevation, railway, freeway, and creeks create multiple barriers. This project, in conjunction with the Buchanan Bikeway, will connect residents to schools, transit, commercial areas, and recreational opportunities.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The Pierce-Cleveland Bikeway Connection project, a phase of the Pierce Street Path Segment II, is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 “Existing Facilities” and Section 15333 “Minor Alterations to Land” of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public facilities, involving negligible or no expansion of existing use.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

To achieve bicycle mode share goals and greenhouse gas emission reduction goals in the Active Transportation Plan and the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, a network of cycling facilities has been in development throughout the City. This project supports these goals by providing safer bicycle facilities along Pierce Street and a safer connection to existing bikeways, including the Buchanan Bikeway and the Bay Trail.

SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY CONSIDERATIONS

The project improves safety for vulnerable roadway users and improves access for those without motor vehicles in an area of Albany with significant infrastructure and topographic barriers, including the adjacent site of the new affordable housing development.

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

- GOAL 3: Promote Streets that Support Safety & Transportation Mobility Options – This project implements an Active Transportation Plan project to provide a separated bicycle and walking facility adjacent to Pierce Street.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staff time to prepare a grant application for the project is within existing capacity. Further budget appropriations for the Project will be recommended as appropriate, contingent on grant award.

Grant funds, if awarded, will be allocated to the City on a reimbursement basis for expenditures incurred.

NEXT STEPS

Grant applications are due December 20, 2024. Notification of grant recommendations are expected in March 2025.

Attachment

1. Resolution No. 2024-82