TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING
AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2008

REPORT TYPE: STUDY SESSION

SUBJECT: 2020 Peninsula Gateway Corridor (US 101) Study Presentation

This report provides background information in advance of a study session on a presentation from the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) of San Mateo County about the 2020 Peninsula Gateway Corridor (US 101) Study.

Richard Napier, the Executive Director of the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) of San Mateo County will present the 2020 Peninsula Gateway Study to the Council during the study session. This study was completed on July 29, 2008 (see Attachment A).

The study identifies several projects that impact Palo Alto. The purpose of this study session is to give Council an opportunity to review the projects that have been identified in the Action Plan as “Near Term” (0 to 5 years) and “Long Term” (longer than 10 years) Implementation. The next steps for the City on this project are for staff to continue to monitor this project and report back to the Council when the second phase of the Gateway study has been finalized.

BACKGROUND

This study is sponsored by the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) of San Mateo County in partnership with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA).

The purpose of this study was to define and evaluate alternative traffic improvements on Highway 101 just north of State Route 84 (Woodside Road) to just south of Route 85 (Stevens Creek Freeway) as well as State Route 84 (Bayfront Expressway) from the Dumbarton Bridge landing to Highway 101. The objective of this study is to identify short, medium, and long-range
roadway improvement options for addressing traffic congestion and local community impact due to regional traffic between Highway 101 and the Dumbarton Bridge.

**DISCUSSION**
The State highways within the study area all experience substantial traffic demand and poor operating conditions during peak commute periods. Unconventional bridge and highway connections on Highways 101 and 84 create congestions on highways such as University Avenue (State Route 109) and Willow Road (State Route 114). Congestion on these arterial highways leads to congestion and neighborhood traffic impacts in Menlo Park, Palo Alto and East Palo Alto.

With the existing problems being substantial and very few projects being programmed in the short term, the study focuses on a long-term horizon to identify needed traffic improvements in the project area.

The 71 project alternatives presented in the final report of the Peninsula 2020 Gateway Study Report evolved from a series of interim products which described a universe of alternatives that could potentially address the traffic issues in the project study corridor. These projects were developed with feedback from the project’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). Staff from Planning and Transportation Division and Council Member Yoriko Kishimoto represented Palo Alto in the TAC and PAC, respectively. An assessment of benefits, costs and impacts were developed as part of this study. Projects on the list would reduce congestion with minimum impacts to the community.

A list of “Near-Term” improvements (0 to 5 years) and “Long-Term” improvements (longer than 10 years) were developed as part of the Action Plan. The near term implementation projects would study the development, construction and implementation of each project and the long term projects would involve additional engineering analysis of the project alternatives.

**Palo Alto Projects:**
As part of the 71 projects the “101 Southern Connection (Expressway/viaduct along edge of the Bay) skirting East Palo Alto over the Baylands and Palo Alto Golf Course” was listed as one of the potential improvements for the Dumbarton Bridge to Highway 101 connection and has been placed under Category “Not consistent with Goals”, and therefore will not be pursued and developed any further. City Council is on record as being opposed to any Southern Connection between the Dumbarton Bridge and Highway 101.

One project in Palo Alto was identified in the “Near-Term” implementation category under the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and Traffic Incident Management:

1. The possible designation of East Bayshore (San Antonio to University Avenue) as a reliever route to provide congestion relief for incident management on Route 101. This
would also include operational improvements at intersections and installing directional signage.

Two projects in Palo Alto were identified in the “Long-Term” category for further study and development in the next phase of this study.

1. Highway 101 - Reconstruct Embarcadero/Oregon Expressway Interchange, including considerations for bicycle/pedestrians. This option would not include any connections between Highway 101 and the Dumbarton Bridge with the southern connection across environmentally sensitive baylands.
2. Highway 101 - Reconstruct San Antonio Interchange. This option would include a new southbound on-ramp to Highway 101 from San Antonio Road.

Additional information for the reconstruction of the Embarcadero/Oregon Expressway and the San Antonio Road Interchange Project would be identified in the next phase of this study as each project is further developed. The next steps would consist of engineering analysis and preliminary engineering for operational improvements to the interchanges. Traffic benefits and potential impacts (i.e. visual, noise, environmental and right of way) will all be evaluated and identified as part of the next phase of this study.

The final report of the 2020 Gateway Study Project can be found at the following website: http://ccag.ca.gov/2020_Gateway_agendas.html.

NEXT STEPS
The next steps of this study are the development of the Action Plan to prioritize projects, identify funding strategies and to establish a schedule. Projects categorized as “Near Term” would be moved into the development, construction and implementation phase and the “Long Term” projects would be moved into preliminary engineering phase.

Staff will monitor this project and report back to the City when the projects in the Action Plan have been further developed and finalized.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS
The project recommendations support and conform to Transportation Policy T-53: Participate in seeking a regional solution to improved roadway connections between Highway 101 and the Dumbarton Bridge without construction of a southern connection across environmentally sensitive baylands.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
This is an information item and no environmental review is required. Any future project will undergo environmental review at the appropriate time during project development.
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ATTACHMENT
Attachment A: 2020 Peninsula Gateway Corridor Study

COURTESY COPIES
C/CAG