MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Investment and Infrastructure Commissioners

FROM: Tiffany Bohee
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Approving, consistent with the 2006 Transbay Streetscape and Open Space Concept Plan, and pursuant to the Transbay Implementation Agreement, an addendum to the Schematic Design Package for the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project adding an east-bound separated bike lane, or cycle track, within the Folsom Street roadway; Transbay Redevelopment Project Area

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 4, 2013, the Commission approved the schematic designs for the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project ("Schematic Designs"). The Schematic Designs were prepared by a team lead by CMG Landscape Architecture ("CMG"), under contract with OCII to complete design documents for select elements of the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area Streetscape and Open Space Concept Plan ("Concept Plan"), which was approved by the former San Francisco Redevelopment Agency ("Former Agency") in 2006. CMG is responsible for full design and construction administration for the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project and Under-Ramp Park. The Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project includes the public right-of-way on Folsom Street between Second and Spear Streets, within the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area ("Project Area").

The Schematic Designs were approved by the Commission with the caveat that staff would analyze the inclusion of a separated east-bound bicycle lane ("cycle track") along the length of Folsom Street within the Project Area and potentially present an addendum for the Commission’s consideration at a future date. An analysis was completed by CMG under the direction of staff, which concludes that an east-bound cycle track on the south side of Folsom Street can be added to the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project without affecting the curb locations and sidewalk improvements within the approved Schematic Designs. Therefore, the proposed addendum includes the addition of an east-bound cycle track and the elimination of one west-bound vehicle travel lane ("Schematic Design Addendum"). In addition, the Schematic Design Addendum can accommodate a west-bound cycle track on the north side of Folsom Street in the future, after bus service to the Temporary Terminal moves to the permanent Transbay Transit Center in 2018. The only significant change to the approved Schematic Designs is the lane striping proposed between the north and south curbs. The addendum proposes to eliminate one of the west-bound vehicle travel lanes, widen the remaining travel lanes, and add a cycle track on the south side of the street.

As stated in the Concept Plan, Folsom Street will be a “boulevard with two-way circulation, widened sidewalks, an eastbound bike lane, and transit service.” The proposed Schematic Design Addendum constitutes a change from the Concept Plan. However, the Concept Plan acknowledged that there were ongoing studies being conducted by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (“SFCTA”) that would help guide the future of Folsom Street. The proposed Schematic Design Addendum is consistent with Transbay Redevelopment Plan’s goal to “facilitate the
installation of bike lanes and bike facilities in coordination with the Department of Parking and Traffic [now part of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency ("MTA")], and the City-wide goal for transitioning Folsom Street into the main retail corridor linking the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods.

The Schematic Design Addendum has been thoroughly reviewed by staff from MTA, but must still go through the formal MTA approval process for street striping changes. OCII has executed a contract with the San Francisco Department of Public Works ("DPW") to assist in coordinating City design review and approval of the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project. Staff may make non-material changes to the Schematic Designs based on other agencies' approval process. However, approval of the addendum is needed at this time so that staff can move forward with the design documents and the MTA approval process. If the MTA Board of Directors requires any material changes to the Cycle Track or the previously approved Schematic Designs, then Staff will return to the Commission for approval prior to expending any additional funds. The Schematic Design Addendum was reviewed and approved by the Transbay Citizens Advisory Committee at its meeting on January 9, 2014.

Staff recommends approval of the Schematic Design Addendum for the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project.

BACKGROUND

The Project Area was adopted in 2005 with the goal of developing: 1) a new, multi-modal Transbay Transit Center and related public infrastructure; 2) a new, transit-oriented neighborhood on approximately 10 acres of publicly-owned property, most of which was formerly owned by the State of California ("State-owned parcels"); and 3) approximately 1,150 affordable housing units, which is estimated to be 35 percent of the total residential units that will constructed in the Project Area. A majority of the new residential development will be on parcels along Folsom Street between Essex and Spear Streets. The ground floor of all developments along Folsom Street will contain retail space, transforming the street into the primary neighborhood commercial boulevard for the residents of Transbay and Rincon Hill to the south.

The Transbay Redevelopment Project Area Implementation Agreement ("Implementation Agreement") is an enforceable obligation that requires the Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure ("OCII"), as the Successor Agency ("Successor Agency") to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency ("Former Agency"), to among other things, "execute all activities related to the implementation of the Transbay Redevelopment Plan, including but not limited to, activities related to major infrastructure improvements." (Section 2.1 (d) of the Implementation Agreement at p. 4) On April 15, 2013, the California Department of Finance ("DOF") determined "finally and conclusively" that the Implementation Agreement, along with other Transbay-related documents, is an enforceable obligation that will not require additional DOF review in the future, although expenditures under the Implementation Agreement are subject to continuing DOF review. The Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project is a central component of the Concept Plan and is the first infrastructure improvement project that will be implemented by OCII in the Project Area. The project is necessary for the development of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

The Schematic Designs approved by the Commission in June 2013 and the attached addenda both achieve the goals laid out in the Concept Plan. Specifically, the goal of turning Folsom Street into
a neighborhood main street with a modified circulation pattern that is more conducive to pedestrians. The key elements of the approved Schematic Designs are as follows:

- **Sidewalk Improvements:** On the north side of Folsom Street, developers will be required to set back buildings 15 feet from the existing property line to create a 25-foot-wide sidewalk. The south sidewalk is currently 10 feet wide and will be widened to 12 feet (where possible). The wider sidewalk on the north side will have a double row of trees, matched by a single row of the same species on the south side of the street. The paving will be a combination of granite pavers perpendicular to the Folsom Street frontages, saw cut concrete, and a strip of permeable pavers adjacent to the curb running parallel to Folsom Street.

- **Intersection Improvements:** In order to slow traffic and make Folsom Street safer for pedestrians, bulb-outs will be added to each intersection. The bulb-outs include raised rain gardens with concrete seat walls and custom benches.

- **Site Furnishings and Materials:** Modern concrete and steel benches, sleek trash receptacles and bike racks will be used throughout the length of Folsom Street. Significant attention has also been paid to the tree species and plantings in the rain garden to be resilient and aesthetically pleasing.

The improvements detailed in the Schematic Designs will be constructed in phases, with contractors hired by OCII building permanent improvements on the south side and temporary improvements on the north side, and the developers of each master block on the north side building the permanent improvements for their respective blocks. The previously approved schematic designs include four 11-foot travel lanes within the Folsom Street roadway – two in each direction – and a standard, four-foot east-bound bike lane on the south side of the street.

**DISCUSSION**

During the review of the draft Schematic Designs, staff from MTA asked about the possibility of including a separated east-bound cycle track in the design. Cycle tracks are safer for bicycles and MTA is currently in the process of analyzing new configurations for Folsom Street west of Second Street, which will include either an east-bound or an east-bound and a west-bound cycle track. Staff requested that CMG undertake a study analyzing various options for a cycle track on Folsom Street. The proposed addendum to the Schematic Designs in Attachment 1 is the result of many months of planning and coordination with MTA, the San Francisco Planning Department (“Planning”), and DPW. Particular attention was paid to accessibility of street parking spaces and the interaction between pedestrians, vehicles, and bicyclists along this length of Folsom Street.

The Schematic Design Addendum from Essex to Spear Streets includes a 10.5 foot cycletrack adjacent to the southern curb. The bike lane width varies from 5.5 foot to 8 foot bordered by a 5 foot to 2 foot buffer strip. Parallel parked cars between the cycletrack and the closest travel lane create a vertical barrier improving cycletrack safety. There will be two east-bound travel lanes and one west-bound travel lane with parking adjacent to the northern curb. This configuration eliminates one of the west-bound travel lanes from the approved Schematic Designs in exchange for wider lane widths and a cycle track. Since Essex Street will be a critical access street to the Bay Bridge through 2018 there will continue to be four travel lanes on the portion of Folsom Street between Second and First Streets, along with a dedicated bike lane adjacent to the travel lanes and no parking on either side of the street. In addition to connecting to existing bike lanes on Folsom
and Second Streets, the cycle track will connect to the proposed new bike path in Under-Ramp Park, which will create a bicycle connection to Howard Street and the new Transbay Transit Center.

The proposed Folsom Street cycle track will connect to the existing Second Street north-bound bike lane and existing Folsom Street east-bound bike lane west of Second Street. MTA is currently analyzing alternative configurations for Folsom Street west of Second Street, including the possible addition of an east-bound cycle track on the south side of the street and a west-bound cycle track on the north side of the street. The proposed Folsom Street cycle track constitutes a change from the Concept Plan approved by the Former Agency in 2006. At that time, cycle tracks were not being considered in San Francisco, though a small number existed in other cities.

Because MTA has not fully analyzed the potential traffic impacts of a two-way cycle track on Folsom Street, which would reduce the number of vehicle lanes from three to two, a west-bound cycle track on the north side of the street is not proposed as part of the Schematic Design Addendum. In addition, a west-bound cycle track could potentially create conflicts with Temporary Terminal buses, which travel west on Folsom Street to get to the Bay Bridge. However, the Schematic Design Addendum can accommodate a west-bound cycle track at a future date, most likely after the Temporary Terminal closes in 2018 and all bus traffic routes to the new Transbay Transit Center. The west-bound cycle track could be implemented sooner if MTA completes its traffic analysis and is able to resolve any conflicts with the Temporary Terminal buses. The addition of a west-bound cycle track would not require any changes to the curb locations in the approved Schematic Designs, including the proposed addendum. Only the lane striping and parking areas would need to be changed, which requires repainting the street, but no additional construction. The west-bound cycle track, also shown in Attachment 1, would be similar to the east-bound cycle track, except that the addition of the west-bound cycle track would reduce the number of vehicle lanes on Folsom Street, as discussed above. If any decision is made by MTA that a west-bound cycle track can be implemented on Folsom Street in the Project Area without significant adverse traffic impacts, staff will provide an update to the Commission.

Assuming approval of the attached Addendum, 50% Design Development documents will be submitted to DPW at the end of March 2014. This package will be routed to the other impacted City Agencies with comments incorporated into the 100% Design Development Documents which will be completed by August 2014. 100% Construction Documents are anticipated one year later with construction expected to begin in Summer 2015.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The Schematic Design Addendum is within the environmental impact parameters already analyzed as part of the Transit Center District Plan Environmental Impact Report (“TCDP EIR”), approved by the San Francisco Planning Commission by Motion No. 18628. The Environmental Planning Group within the San Francisco Planning Department, under contract with OCII, has reviewed the proposed addendum and intends to prepare a note to the TCDP EIR file when the street configuration is presented to MTA for approval and prior to OCII approval of construction funding for the Folsom Streetscape Improvements Project.
Approval of the Schematic Designs will allow for the completion of design development and construction documents for portions of the Transbay Streetscape and Open Space Plan. These activities would have no resultant significant impacts on the physical environment, and are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061 (b)(3) and 15262.

(Originated by Courtney Pash, Assistant Project Manager, Transbay)

Tiffany Bohee
Executive Director

Attachment 1: Schematic Design CycleTrack Addendum