RESOLUTION NO. 08-73 (MODIFIED)

RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL APPROVING A TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO SUPPORT FULL STUDY OF THE CLEVELAND OPTION (THIRD ALTERNATIVE) OF THE BUCHANAN BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Buchanan Street cyclist improvement project is critical to providing a safe route for Albany’s cyclists to reach the Albany waterfront; and

WHEREAS, the Buchanan Street cyclist improvement project is one of the fifteen highest priority projects identified in Alameda County for the next few years (final 2006 Alameda Countywide Bicycle Master Plan); and

WHEREAS, the Buchanan Street cyclist improvement project is part of the 99 miles of highest priority routes for completion in Alameda County over the next two decades (final 2006 Alameda Countywide Bicycle Master Plan); and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority provided approximately $270,000 of grant funding for 35% design and environmental study of the Buchanan Street cyclist improvement alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the major element of the Buchanan Street cyclist improvement is envisioned to be a Class I cyclist facility (a “bike path”) extending from San Pablo Avenue on the East to the existing Class I facility on the Buchanan overpass to the west; and

WHEREAS, Albany’s grant application proposed study of a Class I facility on the south side of Buchanan Street to the east and on the north side of Buchanan Street to the west, and

WHEREAS, Albany’s grant application proposed studying whether the facility would cross Buchanan Street via a new traffic signal at the intersection of either Buchanan Avenue and Pierce Street (the “Pierce Street Option”) or Buchanan Avenue and Taylor Street (the “Taylor Street Option”); and

WHEREAS, DMJM Harris, the engineering consulting team hired by Albany to perform the 35% design, proposed a third option in its proposal; and
WHEREAS, this third option envisions the Class I facility extending entirely
along south side of Buchanan, passing under Buchanan at Cleveland, and connecting to
the existing Class I facility on the overpass via a new ramp (the “Cleveland Option”); and
WHEREAS, the Cleveland Option was not previously presented and analyzed in
the conceptual alternatives analysis report prepared by TY Lin International in 2005
using TETAP grant funding from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission; and
WHEREAS, the Cleveland Option has advantages and disadvantages relative to
the other options; and
WHEREAS, the chief advantages of the Cleveland Option as currently
understood include no requirement for facility users to cross Buchanan Street and no
requirement that cyclists travel eastbound against traffic on the north side of the street as
compared to the other options, a direct connection to a future Class I facility along
Cleveland to the north as a part of the Cerrito Creek Connector Trail (which the other
options do not allow), connection of the future Class I facility on Cleveland to the
overpass path via the new ramp, and the absence of impacts to residents along the north
side of Buchanan as compared to the other options; and
WHEREAS, the chief disadvantages of the Cleveland Option as currently
understood are gaining approval from the United States Department of Agriculture
(USDA) to allow access to its property at the Western Regional Research Center at 800
Buchanan Street for the Cleveland Option, and resolution of security issues at this
location relative to the proposed facility; and
WHEREAS, the USDA supports study of the Taylor and Pierce options; and
WHEREAS, staff of the City of Albany have indicated to the USDA that
necessary security enhancements could be incorporated into the 35% design of the
Cleveland Option and subsequently could be included in grant funding requests which, if
fully successful, could be at no cost to the USDA if this Option were chosen for
implementation; and
WHEREAS, the USDA still opposes the Cleveland Option due to security
concerns; and
WHEREAS, the USDA has articulated its security concerns related to
infrastructure and facilities in the vicinity of its “west gate”; and
WHEREAS, upwards of 2,000 motorists per day already drive past the west gate; and

WHEREAS, there is on street parking adjacent to the west gate; and
WHEREAS, there is a public sidewalk immediately adjacent to the west gate; and
WHEREAS, there is an AC Transit stop immediately adjacent to the west gate; and
WHEREAS, the Western Regional Research Center does not have any public access across its property along Buchanan Street, such as via a sidewalk or any other facility; and
WHEREAS, this creates a gap in the transportation grid for pedestrians; and
WHEREAS, this gap will not be rectified by either the Taylor or Pierce options;

WHEREAS, the Traffic and Safety Commission of the City of Albany recommends that the City Council of the City of Albany support full study of the Cleveland Option; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Albany request that the USDA participate in full study of the Cleveland Option so that its benefits and costs relative to the Pierce and Taylor Options may be openly evaluated and considered.

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Robert S. Lieber, Mayor