

## **SABERCAT TRAIL EXTENSION PROJECT -**

**The following questions were assembled following the first public meeting to address common inquiries about the Project.**

### **SABERCAT TRAIL EXTENSION QUESTIONS**

#### **1. What has prompted the need for the Sabercat Trail Extension?**

The Fremont General Plan (approved in 2011) identifies the Sabercat Trail and a bridge over I-680 as an element of the City's mobility and recreational plans. In 2018, the City adopted a Bicycle Master Plan which identified the Sabercat Trail extension as a priority project to close a gap within the bicycle network. The objectives of the Bicycle Master Plan are to provide both alternative modes of transportation throughout the City as well as recreational opportunities for the residents of Fremont. Concerning the I-680 crossing, neither the Washington Boulevard nor the Auto Mall Parkway overcrossings include sidewalks nor adequate shoulders to accommodate safe non-motorized access along the congested roadway. Another objective of the project is to connect persons visiting the planned paleontological museum (*proposed to be located west of I-680*) with the locations where the resources were discovered and the educational signage that have been erected along the Sabercat Trail within Sabercat Historical Park. This park is located on the east side of I-680, opposite from where the museum site is proposed.

#### **2. What is the purpose for this project?**

The purpose of the trail extension phase of the project is to provide a safe and convenient east-west crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists of the existing I-680 and UPRR/BART railway corridors between the Mission San Jose and Irvington Districts of the City of Fremont. The trail extension would provide connections to future phases of the project consisting of a proposed paleontological museum west of I-680 and a second northerly trail extension to the proposed Irvington BART station.

The purpose of the paleontological museum is to curate and display fossils of prehistoric animals recovered from the area surrounding the crossing of I-680 and Sabercat / Mammoth Creeks which are currently not easily available for viewing. The museum would serve as a historical and educational resource to the community while the second trail extension would facilitate convenient connection from the proposed Irvington BART station.

#### **3. What will this project consist of?**

The initial phase of the project would be the extension of the paved section of Sabercat Creek Trail from Sabercat Historical Park to Blacow Road west of the UPRR/BART railway

corridor. The trail would have a paved width of 10 feet with 2-foot graded shoulders along both sides and would accommodate mixed use by pedestrians and bicyclists. Subsequent phases of the project are planned to include a paleontological museum on the west side of I-680 and a trail extension north toward the planned Irvington BART station on the southwest corner of the Washington Boulevard and Osgood Road intersection.

**4. What stage of development is the project in?**

As of early summer, 2020, the project is in the early planning and environmental review phase. Design would proceed following environmental review and construction would commence after design is completed and rights-of-way have been acquired.

**5. What opportunities will the public have to review and comment on the project?**

A community meeting, conducted as a webinar, was held on June 17, 2020 to inform the public about the project, answer questions and receive input. A second community meeting is planned for early fall, 2020 to discuss preliminary project design elements, answer questions and gain further community input. The draft environmental document is scheduled to be issued for public review and comment in Spring 2021.

**6. What type of bridge is being designed over I-680?**

Development of alternative bridge designs has just begun with the input from the public meeting on June 17, 2020. The Scoping Report from November 2018 showed two types, a cable-stayed bridge and a multi-span tied arch type. Themes heard during the public input period included emphasizing paleontological history, the natural setting and Fremont Hills backdrop, a modern futuristic theme pointing toward the City's future or a lower-visibility more humble design more similar to existing structures crossing I-680. The public will have an opportunity to review a range of options at the next public meeting in early fall, 2020.

**7. What safety elements will be incorporated into the Project? Will lighting be part of the Project and if so, where would it be provided and where would it not be provided?**

The need for lighting will be assessed during project development and may vary in different areas of the path accordingly. Other safety measures may include barriers to limit users to bicycle and pedestrians only. Other safety consideration may be physical elements such as plantings and small fence structures that help keep users on the trail.

**8. The Sabercat Trail is not wide enough for both pedestrians and bicyclists? How will the City address the incompatibility of the connection to Sabercat Trail within the Sabercat Historical Park?**

The City of Fremont is currently evaluating the compatibility of the existing Sabercat Trail. Modifications and adaptations of the current trail would be considered as separate project(s).

**9. What is the schedule for Trail construction?**

The start of construction will depend on the City Council advancing the project following the environmental review and then, securing sufficient funding to move forward with acquisition of right-of-way and advertising for construction bids. The earliest that the City would expect to start construction is Spring 2022.

**10. How would design and construction be funded?**

Preliminary design and environmental review and final design for the primary east-west trail extension only is being funded by a grant from the State of California Natural Resources Agency. Funding for final design of the museum and the northerly trail extension, and for construction of all project phases has not yet been secured. The City is currently pursuing several local, state and federal funding sources for construction of the primary east-west trail extension phase.

**PALEONTOLOGICAL MUSEUM QUESTIONS**

**1. Why is a museum being proposed?**

The City and members of the community with strong interest in the rich paleontological history of Fremont envision the museum as an extension of the Children’s Natural History Museum to house, display and provide an educational resource for the fossils recovered in the vicinity of the former Bell Quarry site where I-680 now crosses Sabercat / Mammoth Creeks. The site was made famous as the namesake for the Irvingtonian North American Stage representing the time period of 300,000 to 1.8 million years ago during the Pleistocene Era of history.

**2. How would a museum be funded and operated?**

Funding is not yet established. A public-private partnership may be a potential financial strategy for the museum.