

## 4 Project Readiness

### 4.1 Environmental Risk

The project team prepared a risk register that identifies potential risks and mitigation strategies and that is regularly evaluated and updated. The East Bay Greenway Multimodal Project (EBGW) is entirely within an existing, highly developed, urbanized area, and it consists of safety improvements to existing facilities. As such, it poses no major environmental risks. It also does not propose any major utility relocations or road closures during construction, and it is fully in the public right-of-way, so no easements or right-of-way acquisitions are required.

In addition, the project cost estimate includes contingencies to ensure any unexpected delays will not put RAISE funds at risk of expiring before they are obligated.

### 4.2 Project Schedule

The EBGW is currently at a 35% design level. Environmental clearance for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) under a Categorical Exclusion (CE) is underway in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under the state's NEPA assignment. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance under a Categorical Exemption (CE) is also in process, and both clearances are expected by summer 2023. The project will be fully designed and ready to advertise for construction by 2025.

**Table 4-1. Project Schedule**

PROJECT SCHEDULE	DATES
Begin Environmental/Preliminary Engineering Phase	01/01/2022
End Environmental/Preliminary Engineering Phase	06/30/2023
Begin Final Design Phase	09/01/2023
End Final Design Phase (Ready to List for Advertisement Milestone)	12/05/2024
Begin Right-of-Way Phase	05/09/2024
End Right-of-Way Phase (Right-of-Way Certification Milestone)	11/06/2024
Allocate Construction Funds	03/26/2025
Begin Construction Phase (Construction Contract Award Milestone)	07/30/2025
End Construction Phase (Construction Contract Acceptance Milestone)	07/30/2027
Begin Closeout Phase	08/01/2027
End Closeout Phase (Closeout Report)	06/30/2028

Throughout the history of the project, as discussed in [Section 3.7](#) Partnership and Collaboration, the project team actively engaged the surrounding community with special attention to environmental justice and historically disadvantaged communities along the project corridor. The input to date has led to meaningful changes and improvements to the EBGW's development and design. Outreach to these communities and local business owners will continue into the design phase, with the goal of keeping the community informed on project progress and to solicit additional feedback on design enhancements. All necessary activities will be completed in advance of the administrative deadline (June 30, 2027) to fulfill RAISE grant fund obligations.

## 4.3 Required Approvals

### 4.3.1 Environmental Permits and Reviews

The EBGW is located in a highly urbanized area, and it will be built on existing public right-of-way. It will not require any federal or state permits. Section 106 compliance is required as part of NEPA, and a review of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is underway, but it is not expected to require State Historic Preservation Officer Review.

#### CEQA/NEPA Documentation Type and Status

As noted in Section 4.2, a CE is currently underway in coordination with Caltrans. The Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) has been regularly coordinating with the Caltrans Office of Local Assistance to meet NEPA requirements. Caltrans requested a limited set of technical studies to support the CE findings, which are currently underway. State Historic Preservation Office review is not expected as the project incorporated measures to avoid known archaeological resources within the project footprint as part of the design.

CEQA clearance under a CE is also in process. The EBGW was specifically designed to avoid impacting sensitive resources. Supporting technical studies are currently underway and are expected to be complete by May 2023. Although tribal outreach and consultation is not required under CEQA for CEs, the project team also conducted state-level tribal consultation to keep tribes informed of project progress and to solicit specific feedback on known sensitive archaeological resources.

### 4.3.2 State and Local Approvals

#### Consistency with Plans

The project is included in a wide range of adopted local, county, and regional plans, including the following:

- [Plan Bay Area 2050](#): Regional Transportation Plan ID 21-T08-060
- [MTC Transportation Improvement Program](#) (2023, Draft): ID ALA230007
- [Countywide Transportation Plan 2020](#): ID #18
- [Community Based Transportation Plan](#) (2020)
- [Countywide Active Transportation Plan](#) (2019)
- [City of Oakland Pedestrian Master Plan](#) (2017)

- [City of Oakland Bicycle Master Plan](#) (2019)
- [City of San Leandro Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](#) (2018)
- Caltrans District 4 [Bicycle](#) and [Pedestrian Plans](#) (2018, 2021)

EBGW's consistency with adopted plans and the comprehensive outreach done in the corridor speak to its broad support.

### State Approvals

As the owner of a portion of E. 14th Street (State Route 185), the following approvals will be required from Caltrans:

- Approval of a Design Engineering Evaluation Report and supporting project development documentation
- Review and approval of Plans, Specifications, and Estimates
- Execution of a Maintenance Agreement
- Utility and right-of-way certification
- Encroachment permit for construction
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan in compliance with California's Construction General Permit Order 200-0009-DWQ

### Local Permits

Minor, local permits expected during the design phase include the following:

- Encroachment Permits: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), Cities of Oakland and San Leandro
- Tree Removal Permits: Cities of Oakland and San Leandro

Local permit acquisition is expected to be routine as the project team meets regularly with the cities, BART, and Caltrans, and they have a clear understanding of the permit requirements process for submittal. Early in the development process, the project team reviewed requirements for tree removals and revised the project to minimize removal as much as possible and to avoid heritage tree removals. The team is planning to replace trees at or beyond the required minimum replacements.

#### 4.3.3 Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

As noted in Section 4.3, the EBGW will meet all federal transportation requirements affecting state and local planning. It is included in the relevant state, metropolitan, and local planning documents.

#### 4.3.4 Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

A risk register is being maintained through project development. The following sections includes risks to the EBGW, along with associated risk levels and mitigations. Risk is assessed primarily on the potential to increase project costs or to result in delays to project implementation.

## Public Controversy

**Risk Level – Low:** The EBGW is **not** expected to generate public controversy, given its long support by communities and businesses in the corridor. A portion of the alignment was previously included in the 2018 East Bay Greenway: Lake Merritt BART to South Hayward BART CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). None of the public comments on the IS/MND expressed opposition to the EBGW, which developed a project-specific public outreach and communications plan in coordination with Alameda CTC and the Cities of Oakland and San Leandro. While the project proposes some parking and circulation changes that will have localized effects, it will provide substantial mobility, public health, air quality, and safety benefits to low-income and minority populations. No disproportionately high and adverse impacts are anticipated on low-income and minority populations.

**Risk Mitigation Strategy:** Alameda CTC recently undertook a fresh round of outreach efforts to inform the local community, including posting project information on agency websites and social media; mailing postcards about the project to residents and businesses along the corridor; conducting pop-up events at BART stations along the corridor and at popular cultural, community, and sporting events; holding focus groups with community stakeholders; and distributing surveys. The project team also prepared a Race and Equity Impact Assessment of the project in Oakland that included establishing key performance indicators and feedback reporting for continued community input as the project advances, and securing a [resolution of support](#) for the project from the San Leandro City Council. The project team is currently working with the City of Oakland to secure a similar resolution of support.

## Utility Conflicts and Agreements

**Risk Level – Low:** There are several utility owners along the City- and Caltrans-owned streets; however, the nature of the project is such that conflicts and the need for utility relocations are relatively minor. Utility agreements may be needed to adjust utility access holes or covers to grade with the proposed improvements.

**Risk Mitigation Strategy:** Early coordination with utility owners and extensive potholing will be conducted to identify potential utility conflicts. This schedule and cost risk will be proactively monitored during the design phase to avoid delays and to identify the potential for increased costs.

## Hazardous Materials

**Risk level – Low to Medium:** An Initial Site Assessment was prepared to assess the EBGW's potential to impact hazardous waste and materials on its alignment. The draft Initial Site Assessment identified 11 sites in the project area that represent Recognized Environmental Conditions listed on the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List (Cortese list). Of the 11 sites, all but three sites are located adjacent to but not on the direct, project footprint.

**Risk Mitigation Strategy:** A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment will be required during the design phase, and it will be used to determine the presence of hazardous materials or petroleum products above the relevant environmental screening levels for soils and groundwater. Samples will be collected in locations where subsurface

excavations are planned near Recognized Environmental Conditions. Following the Phase II testing, design modifications may be required to minimize the potential to impact hazardous waste and materials.

### **Cultural (Archaeological) Resources**

**Risk level – Low to Medium:** Archeological resources were identified within the corridor; however, the EBGW is specifically designed to avoid known archaeological resources.

**Risk Mitigation Strategy:** Archaeological monitors will be used during construction to ensure all protective fencing and signage are in good order. Native American consultation is ongoing, and preliminary discussions resulted in a commitment to support tribal monitors in specific areas of interest.

## **4.4 Technical Capacity**

Alameda CTC has an exceptional project delivery record, having delivered express lanes, major freeway interchange reconstructions, and other multimillion dollar, regionally significant projects. Over the past 10 years, the agency has delivered \$1.3 billion in projects that include innovative designs to provide safe facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. Alameda CTC routinely delivers projects with state and federal grants, such as the I-80 SMART Corridor project (\$79 million bi-county Intelligent Transportation Systems project, completed in 2015), I-580 express lanes (12-mile-long express lanes project, completed in 2016), I-80 Gilman Interchange Project (\$85 million federally funded interchange modernization, currently under construction), and 7th Street Grade Separation East Project (\$365 million project, including more than \$175 million in external grant funds, currently in construction). Alameda CTC routinely works with federal agencies (FHWA, Federal Transit Administration, and resource agencies) and has adopted and implemented policies and procedures for complying with [Title VI](#).

## **4.5 Financial Completeness**

The project funding plan includes various external grants in addition to the RAISE request, including one that is secured (State Active Transportation Program) and one that is pending (State Solutions for Congested Corridors Program), which is a partnership application with Caltrans. Alameda CTC has the capacity to fully fund the project beyond the RAISE contribution with Measure BB local transportation sales tax funds as the Measure BB Transportation Expenditure Plan includes a funding program of \$264 million specifically for three major trails, including the EBGW. EBGW construction costs are based on concept design plans (approximately 15% level of design), but they include prudent assumptions regarding contingency, construction administration, and escalation. The estimate assumes a 30% contingency and escalation to 2025. In addition, Alameda CTC maintains a reserve to cover cost overruns across its entire portfolio of capital projects, which provides additional reserves over and above those assumed as part of the project estimate/funding plan. Alameda CTC has an exceptional financial record, including routinely receiving a [AAA credit rating](#) from major reporting agencies and receiving [awards for excellence](#) in financial reporting.