

I-880/Broadway-Jackson Interchange Project Management and Project Alternative Evaluation Services

Oakland, CA



I-880 freeway ramps onto downtown Oakland streets also link to tunnels to Alameda, but earlier reconfiguration proposals drew objections from adjacent Chinatown. FTS assisted engineering prime WMH Corporation with community workshops and streetscape concepts along and below I-880 to show possibilities for buffering, walkability, and placemaking benefits – introducing new revitalization thinking and setting the stage for later environmental review work.

BEFORE



Before: View of the existing I-880 exit ramp next to 6th Street at the edge of Chinatown in downtown Oakland.

- Downtown's I-880-edge buildings and streets have long been both value-impacted and freeway-visible – holding back investment and weakening the city's image (especially as seen from the northbound Broadway off-ramp).
- Under I-880, existing parking lots, trash, noise, and poor lighting make it feel sketchy and reinforce its neighborhood barrier effect.
- These conditions as well as fast arterial traffic on 7th Street have kept Chinatown life from growing and flourishing southward toward I-880.
- Previous ramp concepts did little to change the character of traffic-dominated arterial streets.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Develop urban design and "complete streets" treatments to buffer the effects of heavy traffic, introduce pedestrian-friendly and placemaking concepts, and create incentives for revitalization.
- Provide educational presentations of visioning and concepts to diverse stakeholders.

OUTCOMES

FTS Project Phase work was completed in 2011.

- The project work introduced concepts for city gateways, 6th Street buffering of Chinatown from traffic, new greenery, better property access, and more walkability and bikeability.
- Concepts were presented in workshops to Chinatown community members, businesses, and municipal officials.

CLIENT: WMH Corporation and Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA)

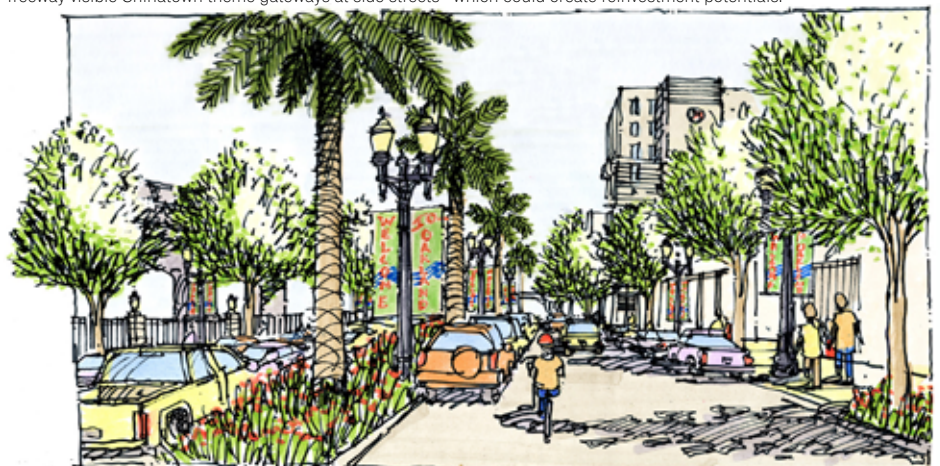
IN COLLABORATION WITH: City of Alameda, City of Oakland, CHS Consulting



A diagram of the arrival experience (in red) of the existing I-Broadway off-ramp from elevated I-880 and the resulting "welcome to downtown" impression of blocks and uses next to the freeway. The lack of buffering and affected livability in these blocks as well as fast arterial traffic on 7th Street has kept Chinatown life and activity mostly north of 7th Street (upper right in view).



Potential "After": A "complete streets" reconfiguration of 6th Street with an earlier freeway off-ramp touch down, a palm-lined center median and increased freeway buffering, a new "slow lane" for local traffic, better under-freeway walking and biking, and freeway-visible Chinatown theme gateways at side streets - which could create reinvestment potentials.



Potential "After": A "complete streets" reconfiguration of 6th Street with an earlier freeway off-ramp touch down, a palm-lined center median and new "slow lane" for local traffic, on-street parking and shared bike lane, freeway buffering from 2 more rows of trees, new lighting and banner poles to enhance the "welcome to Downtown" opportunity, and increased walkability.