



MEMORANDUM

Public Works Department

DATE: April 28, 2021

TO: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

FROM: Aruna Bodduna, Transportation Planner
Ria Hutabarat Lo, Transportation Manager

SUBJECT: Castro Street Bikeway Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDATION

Receive recommendations from the Castro Street Bikeway Feasibility Study Draft Report (Attachment 1 to the memorandum).

BACKGROUND

The Castro Street Bikeway Feasibility Study (Study) was identified as a project under the Council Major Goal to: “develop and implement comprehensive and innovative transportation strategies to achieve mobility, connectivity, and safety for people of all ages.” The purpose of the Study is to assess options for improving bicycle accommodations along Castro Street between El Camino Real and California Street.

The draft report with three concept alternatives was presented to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC) on August 26, 2020 and Downtown Committee on October 12, 2020. The three concept alternatives previously presented include:

- Alternative 1: Class II bike lanes;
- Alternative 2: Class III sharrows; and
- Alternative 3: Hybrid option with Class II bike lanes between El Camino Real and Yosemite Avenue/High School Way and Class III sharrows between Yosemite Avenue/High School Way and California Street.

Both the B/PAC and Downtown Committee supported Alternative 1 (Class II bike lanes) and did not support Alternative 2 (Class III sharrows). If Alternative 1 (Class II bike lanes) was considered infeasible for the whole Study segment, members supported the

principle of Alternative 3 (hybrid option). However, for Alternative 3, members indicated that the length of the bike lane is too short to support a Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) and suggested extending bike lanes further north towards California Street and adding wayfinding and intersection crossing improvements at Yosemite Avenue to enhance and encourage bike access via parallel routes. Members also requested investigation of intersection improvement options to reduce potential car/bike right-hook conflicts between southbound right-turning motorists and through-movement bicyclists at the Castro Street/El Camino Real intersection. Members referred to the Miramonte Avenue/Castro Street intersection as an example of how this improvement could be achieved.

ANALYSIS

The roadway segment between Yosemite Avenue and the Kaiser Permanente driveway (555 Castro Street) has a 32' to 34' curb-to-curb width with one travel lane in each direction and left-turn lanes at Yosemite Avenue and Church Street. Implementing Class II bike lanes north of Yosemite Avenue will have significant right-of-way, parking, and traffic operational impacts, including removal of left-turn lanes and signal modifications at the Castro Street/Church Street intersection. The Castro Street/Church Street intersection was recently modified, and the traffic signal was converted from four phases to eight phases. This change provided protected left-turn phasing to eliminate conflicts between pedestrian crossings and vehicle left-turn movements. Adding Class II bike lanes in this segment will result in reversing and reconstructing the recent improvements and reintroducing the pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. City staff does not support such modifications to the intersection.

Based on the alternatives evaluation and input from the public, B/PAC, and Downtown Committee, the Study recommends Alternative 3 (hybrid option) with the following key features:

- Installation of Class II bike lanes between El Camino Real and Yosemite Avenue;
- Bicycle protection treatments for conflicts with southbound right-turning traffic at the El Camino Real intersection to be coordinated with Caltrans;
- Green dashed bike lane paint at conflict zones, including the approach to El Camino Real;
- Crossing improvements, including potential installation of a pedestrian refuge island at the Castro Street/Yosemite Avenue intersection, to be further explored during design;

- Installation of Class III sharrows between Yosemite Avenue and California Street; and
- Wayfinding signage to direct bicyclists onto parallel routes.

This alternative enhances bicycle safety and visibility while balancing feasibility, cost, and pedestrian safety concerns. Although all the concept alternatives included modifying parking alignment from head-in to rear-to-curb angled parking, this feature is not recommended due to the proximity of the major intersection with El Camino Real and the heavy vehicle demand.

Intersection improvements at El Camino Real, such as bicycle detection, leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs), green bike boxes, and a protected intersection, will be explored with Caltrans. These changes could occur as part of the El Camino Real Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements project being undertaken in conjunction with an upcoming Caltrans repaving project.

DISCUSSION

B/PAC input is sought on the following questions:

- Does B/PAC support the recommended alternative?
- Does B/PAC have any other comments?

NEXT STEPS

Staff will update Chapter 6, Stakeholder Input and Alternatives Refinement, to incorporate any additional feedback from the B/PAC. As noted above, staff will work with Caltrans to incorporate the intersection improvements at El Camino Real into their upcoming repaving project. The other improvements outside the intersection area will be pursued as opportunities arise and funding is available, such as integrating the new pavement striping and markings into the next pavement resurfacing project for this section of Castro Street.

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Attachment: 1. Castro Bikeway Feasibility Study Draft Report

cc: PWD