



DATE: June 8, 2021

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Public Works

TITLE: **Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Study, Project 18-68 – Approve Preferred Alternative**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Alternative No. 2—Pedestrian hybrid beacon with a southern crosswalk, left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue, and northern bicycle crossing as the preferred alternative for Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Study, Project 18-68, as recommended by the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Council Transportation Committee.

BACKGROUND

The intersection of Grant Road at Sleeper Avenue is located along Grant Road approximately midway between North Drive and Cuesta Drive (see Figure 1). The intersection is adjacent to Cuesta Park to the west and is an essential connection to the entrance of the Stevens Creek Trail that is approximately one-half mile to the east of the intersection. El Camino Hospital and YMCA are both to the west of the intersection along North Drive. There is only one marked crosswalk at the eastern leg of the intersection to cross Sleeper Avenue, while a median opening and accessible curb ramps are provided on the southern leg of the intersection to allow pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Grant Road (see Figure 2).

The purpose of Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Study, Project 18-68 (Study), is to develop and evaluate conceptual alternatives for improvements to facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing Grant Road at Sleeper Avenue. In January 2019, TJKM Transportation Consultants was selected as the consultant for the Study.

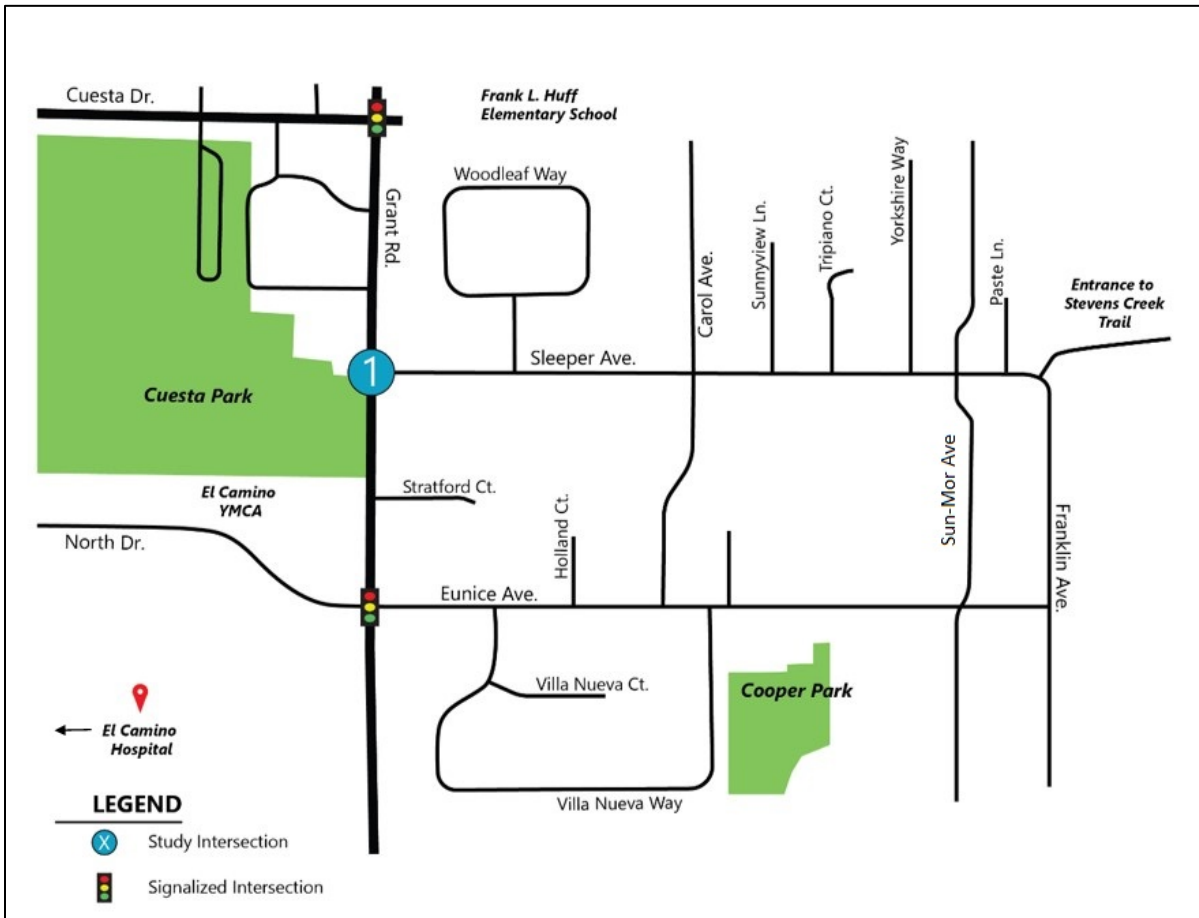


Figure 1: Study Intersection – Grant Road at Sleeper Avenue

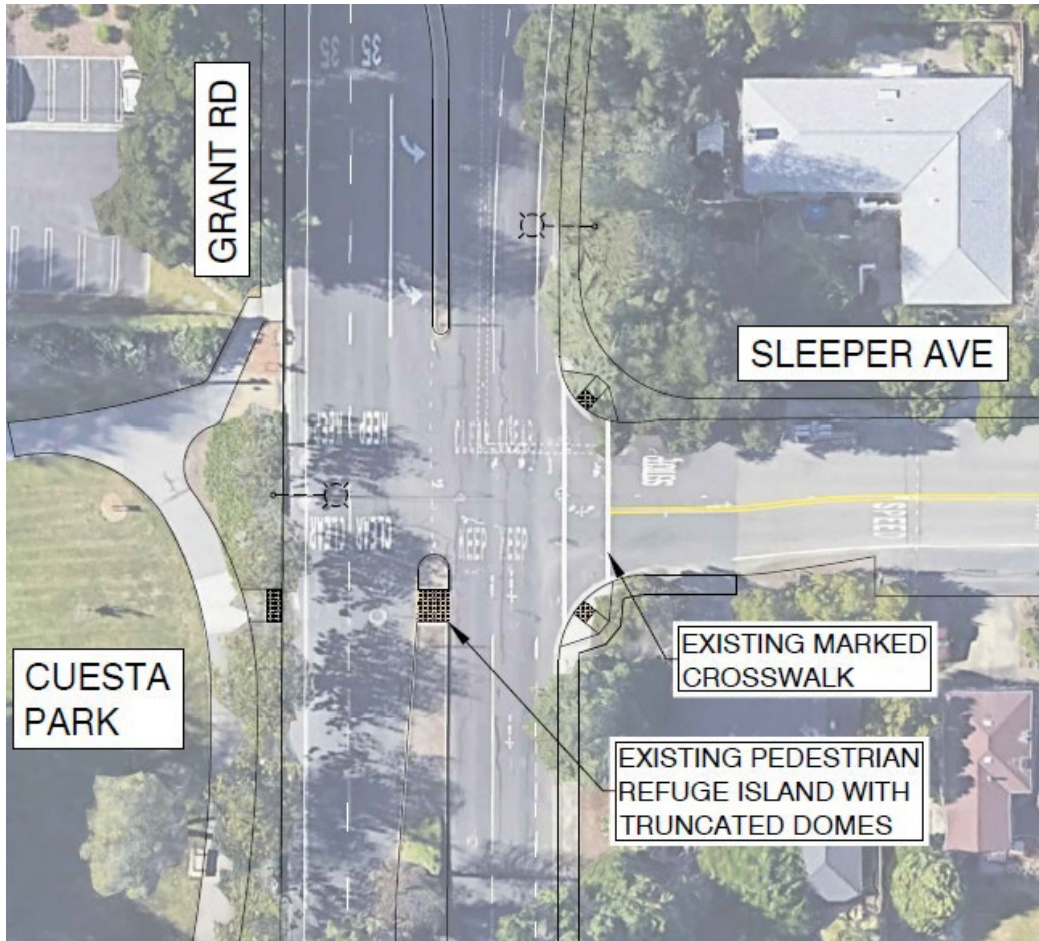


Figure 2: Existing Conditions

ANALYSIS

To improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at this intersection, several alternatives were considered to enhance operations for all modes of transportation. These alternatives, which were presented to the community, Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC), and Council Transportation Committee (CTC), are summarized below:

1. Pedestrian hybrid beacon (PHB) with a northern crosswalk (crossing Grant Road on the north side of Sleeper Avenue).
2. PHB with a southern crosswalk (crossing Grant Road on the south side of Sleeper Avenue) and left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue.

3. Traffic signal with a northern crosswalk.
4. Keep existing condition as is.

Staff also considered other alternatives, including adding a crosswalk only or an LED-enhanced crosswalk at this location. These alternatives were dismissed as unsuitable for this location due to the high traffic volumes, high pedestrian demand, relatively high speeds, and multi-lane configuration.

A PHB is a traffic control device used to increase motorists' awareness of pedestrian crossings at uncontrolled marked crosswalk locations. A PHB is distinct from traffic signals and constant flash warning beacons because it is only activated by pedestrians when needed. PHBs are becoming more prevalent in the Bay Area, and Caltrans has installed several on El Camino Real, including one in Mountain View on El Camino Real at Distel Circle. (The City has installed pedestrian-activated, LED-enhanced signs in several locations but has not yet installed any PHBs.) In addition, these devices are less costly, readily programmable, and can be coordinated with nearby traffic signals to allow minimal delay and vehicular congestion. PHBs can be effectively used to address public requests for crossings, resolve safety issues, or generally increase pedestrian access where needed.

Community Outreach

A virtual community meeting for this Study was held on October 22, 2020. The purpose of the meeting was to present the proposed alternatives to the community, gather public input, and address questions raised by community members. Approximately 277 notices were mailed out to residents and property owners, including properties within a 750' radius of the intersection, YMCA, El Camino Hospital, and properties with frontages along Sleeper Avenue, Eunice Avenue, and any affected side streets east of the intersection. Approximately 28 members of the public attended the virtual meeting. Key feedback included the following:

- Pedestrian safety, vehicle safety, bicyclist safety, and speeds on Grant Road were the main concerns of attendees.
- The majority of attendees supported the concept of a left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue to Grant Road (Alternative 2).
- The concept of a PHB (Alternative 1 or 2) was supported by attendees.

- Most attendees did not support the traffic signal alternative (Alternative 3) or keeping existing conditions at the intersection (Alternative 4).
- Community members noted that drivers are reluctant to use Sleeper Avenue to access southbound Grant Road during peak hours due to the high traffic volume and limited gaps during peak hours along Grant Road. As a result, peak-hour counts for the westbound left turn from Sleeper Avenue may be somewhat depressed.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Study was presented to the B/PAC on February 24, 2021. Approximately 16 members of the public attended the B/PAC meeting. Key B/PAC feedback included the following:

- The B/PAC supported and recommended Alternative 2–PHB with a southern crosswalk and left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue.
- The B/PAC highlighted that the intersection should be treated as a four-way intersection for bicyclists. Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue is considered a T-intersection for motorists.
- Several B/PAC members expressed a desire to have crosswalks with pedestrian refuge islands installed on both approaches along Grant Road, if possible. However, due to the lack of a right-of-way, the installation of a crosswalk with a refuge island on the north side of the intersection is not feasible without the removal of a through-lane on Grant Road or the left turn from southbound Grant Road to Sleeper Avenue.

Council Transportation Committee

Based on staff analysis and input from the community and B/PAC, staff recommended that Alternative No. 2–PHB with a southern crosswalk and left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue – be the preferred alternative to the CTC at their meeting on [April 20, 2021](#).

The proposed improvements included in Alternative No. 2 (see Figure 3) are as follows:

- Pedestrian hybrid beacon system;
- High-visibility crosswalks on the southern and eastern legs of the intersection;

- Left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue onto Grant Road via signage, extended median striping, and flexible posts (delineators);
- Adaptive signal equipment would be added to this intersection, and it would be incorporated into the existing adaptive signal system for traffic signals along the Grant Road corridor. Adaptive signal control refers to technologies that capture current traffic demand data to adjust traffic signal timing to optimize traffic flow in coordinated traffic signal systems;
- Traffic signal interconnect would be added to this intersection. Traffic signal interconnect allows traffic signals to communicate with adjacent traffic signals along a corridor to provide coordination between intersections to facilitate the smooth movement of traffic with minimal stops;
- New streetlights; and
- Enhanced signage and striping at the intersection.

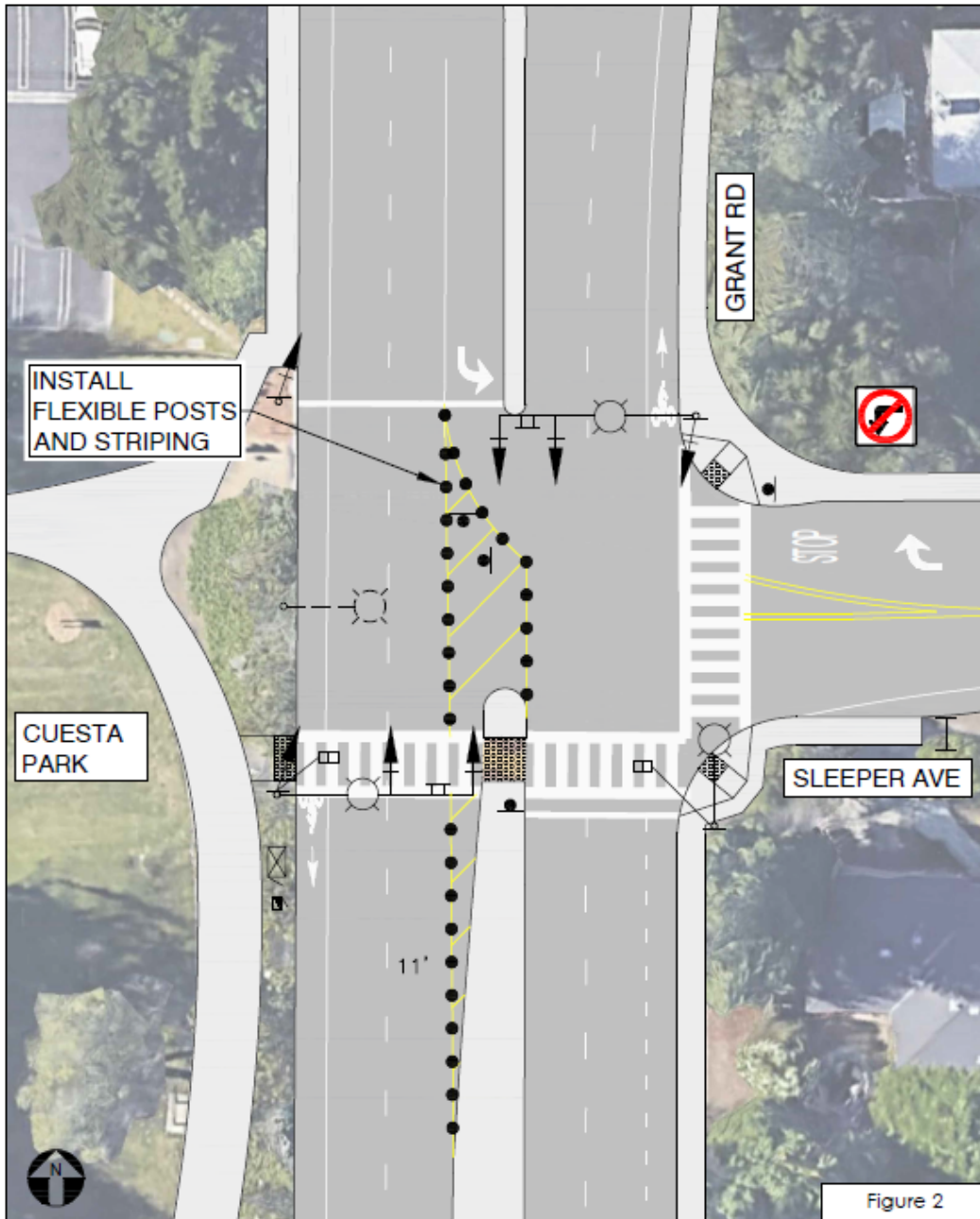


Figure 3: PHB with a Southern Crosswalk and Left-Turn Restriction from Sleeper Avenue

The CTC unanimously supported staff’s recommendation for Council to approve Alternative No. 2 as the preferred alternative for the Study with the addition of a bicycle crossing to be incorporated into the final project design. The recommended Council action incorporates the CTC’s direction.

The CTC also directed staff to conduct additional community outreach during project design and to return to the CTC with the final design and community outreach findings prior to seeking Council approval of the plans and specifications to advertise the project for construction.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact with the recommended action. Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Study, Project 18-68, is funded with \$50,000 from the Construction/Conveyance Tax Fund. The design and construction of the proposed improvements is included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) under Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Improvements, Design and Construction, Project 21-39. Project 21-39 is funded with \$750,000 from the City's allocation of Measure B Sales Tax Local Streets and Roads funding.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the Study is to develop and evaluate conceptual alternatives for improvements to facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing Grant Road at Sleeper Avenue. Based on staff analysis, input from the community and B/PAC, and CTC direction, Alternative No. 2—PHB with a southern crosswalk and left-turn restriction from Sleeper Avenue and northern bicycle crossing—is recommended as the alternative to proceed into design. If the recommended action is approved by Council, staff would complete the Study and proceed with project design by spring 2022. Additional community outreach will be held during project design.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not approve Alternative No. 2 with the incorporated modifications as the preferred alternative for the Grant Road and Sleeper Avenue Intersection Study.
2. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

In addition to agenda posting, notices were mailed to the residents and property owners within the Study area.

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