



DATE: March 29, 2016

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Public Works

TITLE: **Castro Street Complete Street –
Modifications to Castro Street
between El Camino Real and
Miramonte Avenue,
CIP Project 14-36 – Various Actions**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Program Supplement No. N022 to the Administering Agency – State Agreement No. 04-5124R with the California Department of Transportation for Modifications to Castro Street, between El Camino Real and Miramonte Avenue, Project 14-36, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the Council report).
2. Approve plans and specifications for modifications to Castro Street, between El Camino Real and Miramonte Avenue, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project 14-36, and authorize staff to advertise the project for bids.
3. Transfer and appropriate \$130,000 from the CIP Reserve to Modifications to Castro Street, between El Camino Real and Miramonte Avenue, CIP Project 14-36. (Five votes required)
4. Authorize the City Manager to award the construction contract to the lowest responsible bidder if the low bid is within the project budget.

BACKGROUND

The modification of Castro Street between El Camino Real and Miramonte Avenue includes the following elements:

- Reduction of vehicle lanes from two lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction;
- Buffered bike lanes in both directions;
- Pedestrian bulb-outs with high-visibility crosswalks and in-roadway warning lights (IRWLs); and

- Pedestrian improvements to the intersection of Castro Street and Miramonte Avenue, including a new traffic signal to replace the existing traffic signal.

These improvements are designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel along this section of Castro Street and to facilitate safe travel for students to and from Graham Middle School. Staff presented the project to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC) on September 17, 2014, and to the City Council at the February 9, 2016 Study Session. The Study Session [memorandum](#) contains additional figures and cross-sections that describe the project in further detail.

ANALYSIS

At the February 9, 2016 Study Session, Councilmembers asked questions and raised issues about several aspects of the project, including:

1. The proposed curbside configuration of the bus stops requires bicyclists in the bike lane to pass stopped buses on the left. Some Councilmembers preferred that the buses stop in the parking lane so bicyclists can remain on the right side of the stopped buses.

The Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) requires the curbside bus stop configuration, so the City has little design latitude on this issue. Staff will consider modifications if VTA allows a different configuration in the future.

2. Councilmembers and residents expressed concerns about cut-through traffic in adjacent neighborhoods due to the lane reduction, the elimination of left turns out of the school parking lot, and traffic from the proposed Greystar development.

Staff has taken traffic volume and speed data for comparison to the post-projects condition and will work with neighborhood residents on traffic-calming measures and possibly timed left-turn restrictions if there are concerns after the projects are complete and new driving patterns have been established.

3. Several Councilmembers expressed concerns about the lack of pavement markings in the weave between Victor Lane and El Camino Real, where bicyclists cross the paths of cars turning right on El Camino Real. Staff proposed no markings so that it is clear to bicyclists that they are sharing the area with cars, and so bicyclists are not simply following the bicycle lane striping without being aware that they must cross the paths of cars turning right on El Camino Real.

In response to Council’s concern, staff recommends that a series of wide green stripes be used between where the bicycle lane adjacent to the curb ends and begins again adjacent to the El Camino Real right-turn lane. The weaving area becomes highly visible and distinct without leading bicyclists along a narrow path in possible conflict with vehicles. In addition, the skip striping designates an area both for bicyclists and drivers where crossing the lane line markings with care is permitted.

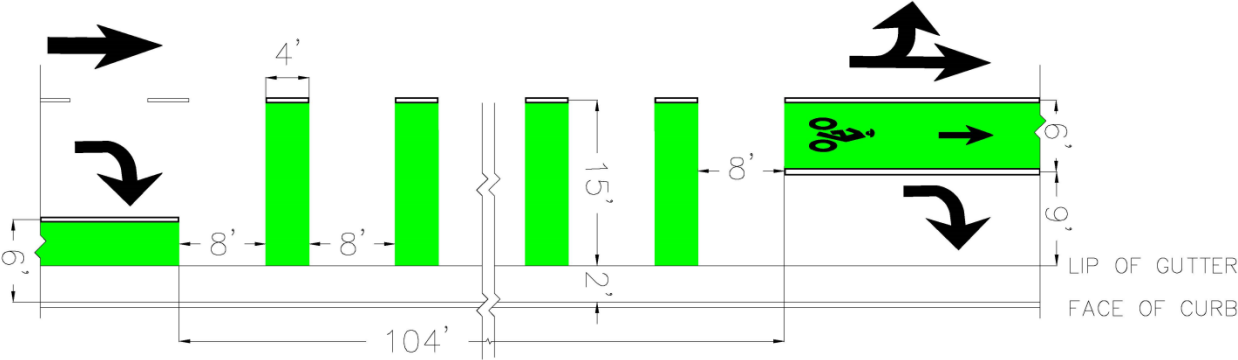


Figure 1 – Wide Skip Striping at Weaving Areas

An alternative is shared lane markings with green background or “Green-backed sharrows” to clarify bicyclists’ position within the weaving area, as shown in Figure 2 below. These markings indicate that the road is to be shared between bicyclists and cars, and gives some flexibility on the path taken by bicyclists, depending on traffic conditions.



Figure 2 – Green Shared Lane Markings

Unless directed otherwise by Council, staff will include the marking shown in Figure 1.

- Concern was expressed about drivers unable to turn left from the northerly school parking lot to go south onto Castro Street.

Mountain View Whisman School District (School District) is modifying the on-site circulation to minimize long-standing problems with peak drop-off periods. After much consideration, the School District is making the southerly parking lot staff-only to eliminate drivers queueing on the street to drop off in the lot, and reconfiguring the driveways in the main lot to provide the most efficient drop-off pattern possible. The left turns exiting the parking lot were eliminated because drivers waiting to turn left were restricting vehicle movement through the parking lot, and there were safety concerns about drivers turning left onto the congested Castro Street, particularly during peak periods.

While the new configuration will require a new driving pattern by some drivers, the overall effect on circulation is expected to be positive. Staff from the City and School District will monitor the post-project condition and evaluate measures to mitigate concerns that arise after the project is complete and new driving patterns are established.

If the recommended actions are approved, construction is scheduled during the 2016 summer school break.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated project cost is as follows:

Construction (including contingency)	\$810,000
Design and Project Management	32,000
Inspection	<u>50,000</u>
Subtotal	892,000
City Administration @ 6.5%	<u>58,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$950,000</u>

The project is funded with \$840,000 from a State Vehicle Emissions Reductions Based at Schools (VERBS) grant and \$110,000 from the Construction/Conveyance (C/C) Tax Fund. Unfortunately, the VERBS grant will only pay for a portion of construction costs, with a required local match of 11.47 percent. Based on the estimated construction cost of \$810,000, the grant funds will cover \$717,000 of the project costs.

Based on the estimated project cost (including construction and soft costs) of \$950,000, a shortfall of about \$130,000 exists because the estimated grant funding is \$717,000. Staff recommends appropriating \$130,000 from the CIP Reserve to supplement the project budget. There is sufficient balance in the CIP Reserve to cover this cost.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Do not proceed with the project and reject the grant (lose \$840,000 grant fund).
- 2. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING – Agenda posting.

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DG/TS/3/CAM
916-03-29-16CR-E

Attachments: 1. Resolution

cc: CTE, STE – Lopez, PCE – Macaraeg, AE – Galang, AAI – Grimm, F/c