

DATE: September 2, 2025

TO: Council Transportation Committee

FROM: Marichrisse Hoang, Associate Civil Engineer
Joy Houghton, Senior Civil Engineer
Robert Gonzales, Principal Civil Engineer
Edward Arango, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer

VIA: Jennifer Ng, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: El Monte Corridor Improvements, Project 21-38

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the preliminary design for El Monte Corridor Improvements, Project 21-38, and direct staff to advance the project into final design.

BACKGROUND

El Monte Avenue is a four-lane street with two travel lanes and a bicycle lane in each direction with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour (mph) and an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of approximately 14,000 vehicles per day (vpd) based on data collected in 2023.

In October 2015, a pedestrian fatality occurred at the intersection of El Monte Avenue and Marich Way which prompted community requests for the City to consider improvements along El Monte Avenue. In 2019, the City installed improvements at the intersection to improve the crossing for pedestrians, but there was a continued interest from the community for an overall corridor study for safety of all modes of travel along the El Monte Avenue corridor and the adjacent West El Camino Real connection.

As part of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Capital Improvement Program, Council approved the El Monte Corridor Study (Study) project to evaluate improvements to increase safety along this corridor. In September 2019, the City entered into an agreement with Mott MacDonald to develop a study that identified viable added improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Study was conducted between 2019 and 2022 and evaluated various improvements throughout the following nine intersections within the corridor: two intersections along El Camino Real at Escuela Avenue and El Monte Avenue, and seven intersections along El Monte

Avenue from El Camino Real to the City limits at Springer Road and Jay Street. Figure 1 shows the project limits, including a section of El Camino Real from Escuela Avenue to El Monte Avenue, and El Monte Avenue from El Camino Real to the City limits at Springer Road and Jay Street.



Figure 1: Project Area

Staff conducted several public meetings and outreach efforts for the Study, including three community meetings (January 15, 2020, August 18, 2020, and July 21, 2022) and a public online survey released in December 2022. Staff presented the project to the Bicycle/Pedestrian

Advisory Committee (BPAC) at their [December 2, 2020](#) and [April 26, 2023](#) meetings and to the Council Transportation Committee (CTC) at their [May 15, 2023](#) meeting.

In 2023, the project received \$2.4 million in federal grant funding through the One Bay Area Grant Cycle 3 (OBAG 3) program for construction of the two intersections along El Camino Real: El Camino Real/Escuela Avenue and El Camino/El Monte Avenue and the roadway segment in between.

On [June 27, 2023](#), Council approved Alternative 3 (see Figure 2), a road diet from four lanes to three lanes with buffered bike lanes on El Monte Avenue, as the preferred alternative for the project, as recommended by the BPAC and CTC. The scope elements for Alternative 3 include:

- El Camino Real, from Escuela Avenue to El Monte Avenue:
 - High-visibility crosswalks at each intersection;
 - Green bike lane striping at conflict areas;
 - Removal of the slip lane from eastbound El Camino Real to southbound El Monte Avenue;
 - Maintaining two left-turn lanes from westbound El Camino Real to southbound El Monte Avenue; and
 - Protected intersection treatments and green street elements, where feasible.



Figure 2: Study Alternative 3—El Camino Real, from Escuela Avenue to El Monte Avenue

- El Monte Avenue, from El Camino Real to the City limits at Springer Road and Jay Street:
 - Road diet from four vehicle lanes to three lanes, consisting of one vehicle lane in each direction and a center median two-way left-turn lane (see Figure 3);
 - Class IV bicycle lanes and Class II bicycle lanes where vertical elements are not feasible;
 - High-visibility crosswalks, LED pedestrian crossing signs, and pedestrian refuge islands at the intersection of El Monte Avenue and Hollingsworth Drive;
 - Lighting improvements;
 - No access restrictions on side streets; and
 - Green street elements, where feasible.

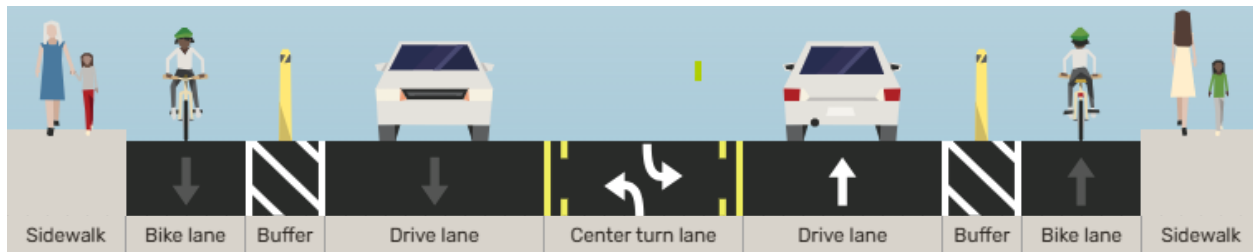


Figure 3: Study Alternative 3—El Monte, from El Camino Real to Jay Street

On [May 14, 2024](#) Council awarded a professional services agreement to BKF Engineers (BKF) to provide data collection, design services, grant application support, and bidding and construction support services.

DISCUSSION

BKF and staff have taken the findings from the Study and OBAG 3 grant application scope and requirements and begun preliminary design.

Escuela Avenue and El Camino Real Intersection

Consistent with the Council-approved alternative, the preliminary design for the Escuela Avenue intersection with El Camino Real implements the feasibility study's recommendations of high-visibility crosswalks, green bike lane striping at conflict areas, and removal of the right-turn-only lane from southbound Escuela Avenue onto westbound El Camino Real with the installation of curb ramp extensions (bulb-outs) on Escuela Avenue (see Figure 4). The intersection will also

receive traffic signal upgrades, which includes converting the existing configuration to an eight-phase traffic signal system. The new phasing creates protected left-turn movements in all directions, allowing left turns to be made only on a green left-arrow signal indication, with no pedestrian movement or vehicular traffic conflicting with the left turn.

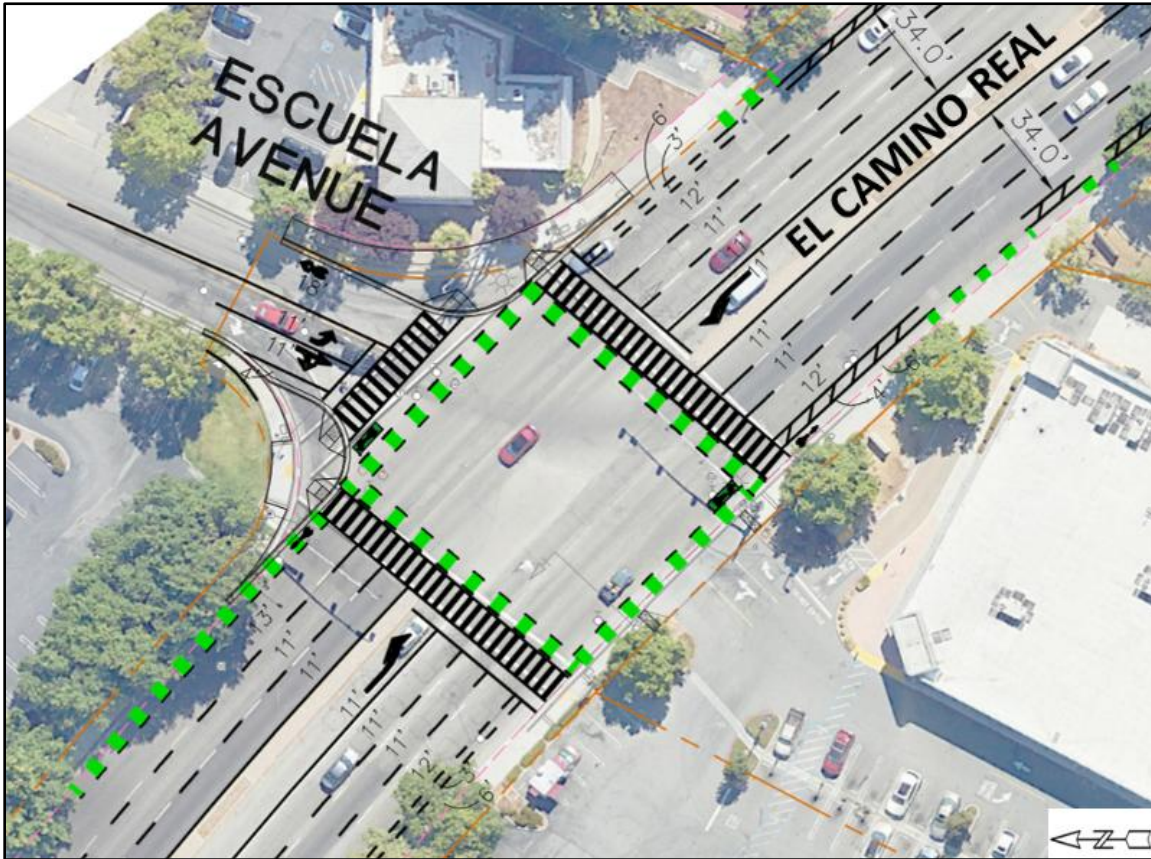


Figure 4: Escuela Avenue and El Camino Real Intersection

Since El Camino Real is within the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way, the project requires Caltrans design review and permitting. Furthermore, the Caltrans Safety Investigation team is reviewing information related to another, more recent accident from April 2025 at the Escuela Avenue intersection to determine if any changes should be made to the Escuela Avenue and El Camino Real intersection. Should Caltrans identify substantial changes, staff expects additional project funding would be needed.

El Monte Avenue and El Camino Real Intersection

The preliminary design for the intersection at El Monte Avenue also implements the feasibility study's recommendations of high-visibility crosswalks, green bike lane striping at conflict areas, and removal of the right-turn slip lane from El Camino Real onto El Monte Avenue (see Figure 5).

Additionally, staff is coordinating with Caltrans to incorporate protected intersection elements at the southwestern corner of the intersection.

This intersection will also receive traffic signal upgrades, which include a new signal controller and cabinet, signal pole relocations, and new signal poles. The updated signal phasing will provide protected left-turn movements, with no vehicular left-turn movements conflicting with pedestrian or bicycle crossings.

Staff is still evaluating the specific elements for the area created by removal of the slip lane from westbound El Camino Real to southbound El Monte Avenue. Elements will include green infrastructure elements as well as landscape improvements and a replanting plan to offset tree removals, if needed. Tree impacts will be determined at the next step of the design and, should Heritage tree removals be required, staff will present the project to the Urban Forestry Board to seek a recommendation of a tree mitigation plan.



Figure 5: El Monte Avenue and El Camino Real Intersection

El Monte Avenue, El Camino Real to Jay Street

The preliminary design for El Monte Avenue from El Camino Real to the City limits at Jay Street is consistent with the feasibility study's recommended road diet with Class IV bicycle lanes and

Class II bicycle lanes, where a vertical element is not feasible, and high-visibility crosswalks (see Figure 6). At the intersection of El Monte Avenue and Hollingsworth Drive, pedestrian refuge islands will be included (see Figure 7). Staff will be incorporating vertical delineators within the bicycle buffer area and is evaluating types of delineators to include. Dimensions shown along the El Monte corridor will be further evaluated during design review.

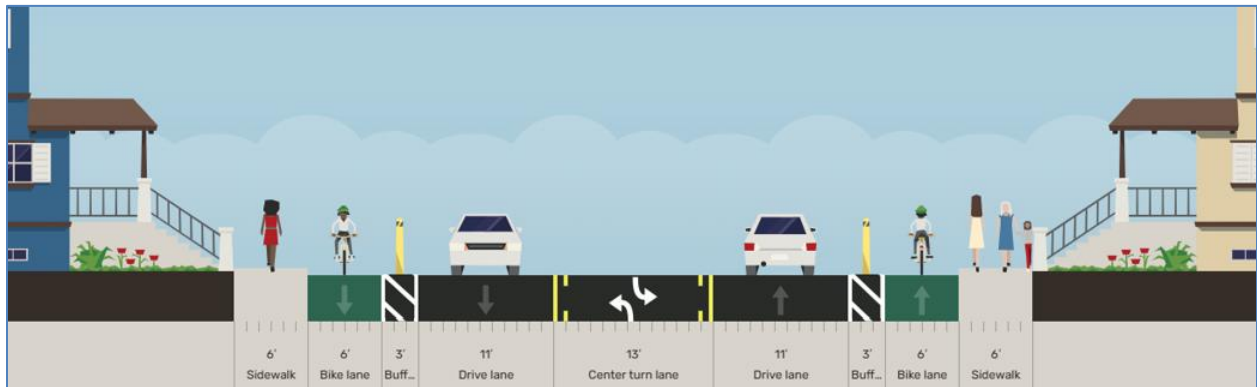


Figure 6: El Monte Avenue Typical Road Diet Cross-Section

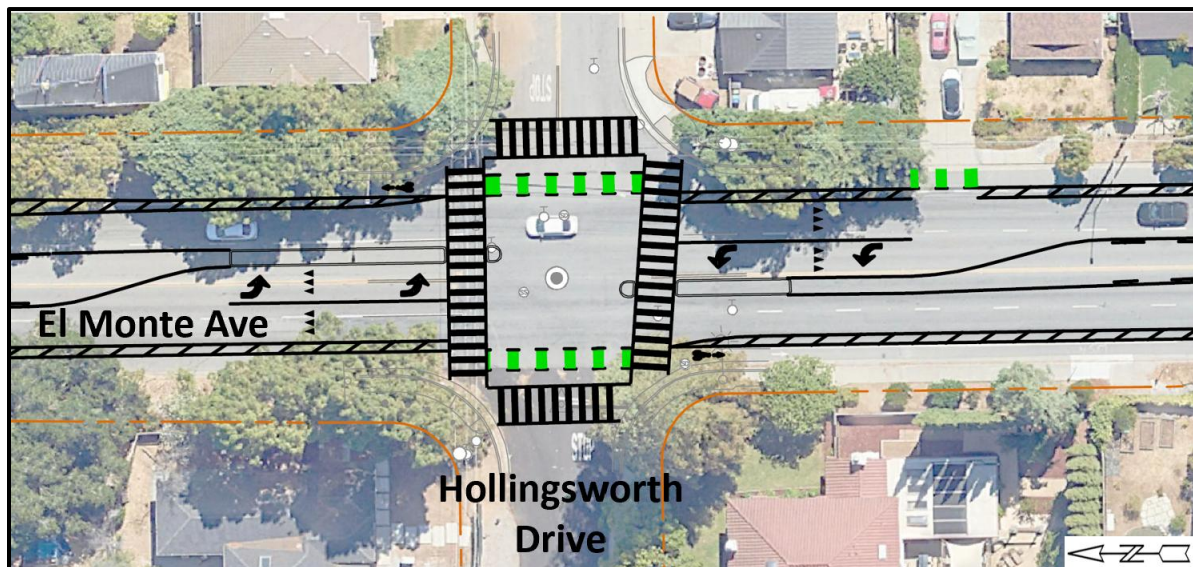


Figure 7: El Monte Avenue Intersection with Hollingsworth Drive

Attachment 1 includes the details of the preliminary design shown in the figures above.

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On [June 25, 2025](#), staff presented these same design concepts to the BPAC. The BPAC recommended that CTC approve the preliminary design. As part of the recommendation, the BPAC provided the following feedback:

- On the El Camino Real and Escuela Avenue intersection:
 - Provide a protected northbound left-turn lane from the private parking lot;
 - Include protected intersection treatments on the northwest and northeast corners; and
 - Evaluate increasing the bicycle lane width on the northbound direction on Escuela Avenue.
- On the El Camino Real and El Monte Avenue intersection and the El Monte Avenue corridor:
 - Include protected intersection treatments on the southeast corner; and
 - Conduct a speed study on El Monte Avenue upon the implementation of roadway changes to determine eligibility of a reduced posted speed limit.

Staff will evaluate the additional elements above and will incorporate those elements that do not have substantial impact to the project budget and schedule as the design develops further. In addition, as recommended by the BPAC, staff will conduct a new Engineering and Traffic Survey to determine if El Monte Avenue is eligible for a speed limit reduction, including applying those applicable reduction provisions under Assembly Bill 43.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will evaluate BPAC and CTC feedback and advance the project to final design and continue through the Caltrans federal aid process toward final federal funding obligation in 2027. Furthermore, staff will continue working with Caltrans and the design consultant to refine the project costs and forecast need for additional funding to comply with Caltrans design guidelines. Final design of the project is expected to be completed by summer 2026 when it will be submitted to Caltrans for both grant funding review and permitting due to the El Camino Real improvements being within their right-of-way. Construction is anticipated to start in spring 2027 to meet the federal grant deadline.

PUBLIC NOTICING

In addition to the standard agenda posting, notices were mailed to residents and property owners within 750' of the project area.

CDD/LL-09-02-25M

Attachment: 1. Preliminary Design

cc: APWD—Arango, PCE—Gonzales, CTE—Lopez, SCE—Houghton, ACE—Hoang