

**STAFF REPORT****City Council****Meeting Date:** 10/20/2015**Staff Report Number:** 15-154-CC**Informational Item:** Update on El Camino Real Corridor Study**Recommendation**

This is an informational item and no Council action is required.

Policy Issues

As part of the 2013-2014 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Council directed staff to prepare the El Camino Real Corridor Study to provide alternatives for potential modifications to El Camino Real consistent with the City's General Plan Circulation Element and El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.

Background

El Camino Real is a major transportation corridor in the region, carrying approximately 30,000 - 45,000 daily vehicles, buses, and serving local business and school traffic. It is a historic asset for the region, but also a barrier to east-west travel in Menlo Park, and an opportunity for the City to define the desired vision for the corridor.

The El Camino Real Lane Reconfiguration Study was approved as part of the City's CIP for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-2014. A related project, the El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue Northbound Right-Turn Lane Design, was also included in the City's CIP for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. These two projects have been combined into one study/preliminary design and were renamed the El Camino Real Corridor Study (Corridor Study). The purpose of the Corridor Study was to identify potential alternatives to modify El Camino Real (ECR) to better meet the community's needs and evaluate each of the proposed alternatives against a set of criteria including impact on traffic congestion, travel time, safety, aesthetics, parking, and multi-modal access.

The Request for Proposals for this project was approved by Council on October 15, 2013. A contract was awarded by the Council to a team led by Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation Consultants (W-Trans) on January 28, 2014.

Analysis

On August 25, 2015, the City Council held a study session to provide direction to staff on next steps for the Corridor Study. At that meeting, the Council voiced support for a Council subcommittee of Councilmembers Keith and Ohtaki to continue to work with staff to develop a concept plan for the El Camino Real Corridor, which may include a bike lane alternative, with a possible parallel route in the northbound direction between Ravenswood-Menlo Avenues and Glenwood-Valparaiso Avenues. There

was also consensus for a trial installation, for potentially a one-year time period. A Summary of Council-directed tasks, current status, and anticipated next steps is outlined in Table 1. Additional detail is provided in the sections below.

Table 1: Summary of Council-directed Tasks		
Task	Status	Next Steps
1. Outreach to Menlo Park Fire Protection District to discuss how addition of bike lanes impedes emergency vehicle access, and address concerns	Initial staff consultation completed, September 2015	Provide trial concept plan for Fire District review prior to submitting to Caltrans
2. Meeting with Caltrans to confirm permitting process, schedule, potential trial installation and parallel route on Merrill-Garwood	Initial consultation completed September 2015. Caltrans voiced support for a bike facility so long as capacity not reduced and facility does not detour to parallel routes	Pre-encroachment permit meeting to identify detailed design review process would follow potential future Council action on the Study
3. Collaborate with neighboring cities to discuss interest in joining a trial project	City Manager/Mayor Meeting with Palo Alto held September 9, 2015.	Finalize transportation staff meeting dates
4. Outreach to ECR businesses between Live Oak to Ravenswood	To be completed	Targeted, door-to-door outreach with business owners on west side of ECR between Live Oak Avenue and Menlo Avenue
5. Prepare cost estimates to identify order of magnitude costs for design and construction	Preliminary estimates completed. Trial installation cost estimated at \$250,000 to \$1,200,000 depending on scope of pedestrian improvements included	Use cost estimate information to determine scope elements and Caltrans oversight and review process
6. Explore alternative sidewalk layout, consider tree root mapping, or identify other strategies, including scope & cost, to preserve trees at Ravenswood/El Camino	Completed, investigated scope of work for subsurface root investigation, determined not likely viable tool to assess potential tree impacts	Complete more detailed layout of alternative sidewalk concept
7. Develop metrics for a trial installation to clearly define what would be considered successful	Consultant team prepared draft list of metrics, currently being reviewed by City staff	Review drafts with Bicycle, Transportation Commissions in November 2015. Council review as part of potential future Council action on the Study.
8. Summarize bike traffic counts on Alma, Willow Place, San Mateo	Completed September 2015	

Next Steps

Staff is continuing to work on the Tasks listed above in Table 1. Following completion, staff will schedule the Corridor Study to come before the Council to adopt the Corridor Study and select a preferred alternative to move into environmental review and design. It is anticipated that the next report to the City Council for action would occur in early 2016.

Impact on City Resources

The cost and staff time for the Corridor Study were budgeted in the City's Capital Improvement Plan for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. No additional funds are currently being requested to complete the Corridor Study. Depending on the alternative chosen, a future appropriation request may be required.

Environmental Review

Construction of any of the proposed alternatives would require environmental review required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Following City Council identification of a preferred alternative, the appropriate level of environmental review will be determined.

Public Notice

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. [El Camino Real Corridor Report](http://menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/7805) <http://menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/7805>

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