

City of Piedmont
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: March 6, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Sara Lillevand, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Consideration of the Conceptual Design for Bulb-outs at the Intersections of Oakland Avenue and El Cerrito and Jerome Avenues and Authorization to Proceed to Construction Documents for Bidding

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the conceptual design for the bulb-outs at the intersections of Oakland Avenue and El Cerrito and Jerome Avenues and direct staff to complete the construction bid documents and bid the project.

BACKGROUND

The approved 2014 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP) identified several high priority intersections that were identified as recommended locations for Enhanced Street Crossings. Oakland Avenue at El Cerrito and Jerome Avenues were included in this list of locations (PBMP projects #9 and #10.) When the plan was updated in 2021, the updated Piedmont Safer Streets Plan (PSS) identified these same intersections (PSS projects #7 and #8) as high-priority intersections where pedestrian improvements were recommended.

Both the original and updated version of the PSS identify Oakland Avenue as a popular school route with significant vehicular traffic and a direct access route to central Piedmont. Furthermore, it identifies these intersections in particular need of traffic calming measures that would provide safer pedestrian street crossing spaced at reasonable intervals along Oakland Avenue between Highland Avenue and Grand Avenue.

Recognizing this, Council approved the contract with Coastland Civil Engineering in December 2018 to provide professional engineering services to design permanent bulb-outs at the intersections of Oakland Avenue at El Cerrito and Jerome Avenues. Coastland completed conceptual designs for both intersections that included bulb-outs and pedestrian-activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB's) similar to signs recently installed on Linda Avenue in front of Beach Elementary School, on Highland Avenue by Havens Elementary School and on Grand Avenue in front of Ace Hardware. The conceptual design was introduced to the City Council in April 2019. Due to cost implications, the Council directed staff to see if there were any reasonable less costly alternative. Less costly alternatives were explored at that time, but a

viable alternative was not identified, and the project was put on hold.

At the October 4, 2021, meeting, Council directed staff to proceed with design for the bulb out project and supported Piedmont Beautification Foundation (PBF) in their intention to adopt the bulb-out projects as their project of the year to assist with funding. Project design is near complete and staff are now seeking input from the Council on the final design concept as well as authorization to complete the bid documents and bid the project

DISCUSSION

Since restarting the design effort on this project, staff have worked through several iterations of the design. The iterations have evolved based on comments from neighbors adjacent to the project, as well as coordination with EBMUD and AC Transit. The final conceptual designs under consideration are attached for review.

Potential parking loss was one of the biggest challenges to this project. After multiple revisions based on comments from neighbors and discussions with AC Transit, the conceptual designs presented tonight include what staff believes is the option that impacts parking the least, while providing enhanced safety for pedestrians.

As can be seen in the attached exhibits, construction of the bulb-outs at the intersection of Oakland/El Cerrito will result in a net loss of parking directly adjacent to the intersection of six (6) parking spaces. The loss of parking at this intersection is due to the location and required dimensions for bus stops. AC Transit has been very cooperative and helpful in assisting with design modifications at the bus stops to mitigate parking loss to the degree possible; however, in this circumstance, loss of parking is unavoidable.

For the Oakland/Jerome intersection, impacts to parking result in a net loss of 1 parking space. Again, the loss of this parking space is due to bus stop requirements.

Staff is seeking Council authorization to finalize the construction documents based on the concepts presented and then to bid the project. If authorized to proceed with completion of the bid documents, staff anticipates that the project will go out to bid in late March or early April. Bids would open in late April or early May and award recommendations would be brought to the Council in late May or early June. Construction would take place over the summer while school is out of session.

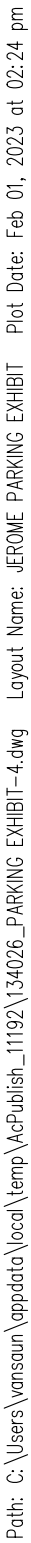
FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The current cost estimate for the construction of the project which includes bulbouts at four crosswalks and pedestrian-activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB's) at both intersections is approximately \$559,000. A contingency would have to be added to this, as well as time for construction management and inspection. Funding for the project will have to come from a combination of sources including Measure BB (both the local streets and roads and bicycle funds) and private contributions solicited by PBF.

ATTACHMENTS

A: Proposed Conceptual Design

By: Daniel Gonzales, Public Works Director
John Wanger, City Engineer

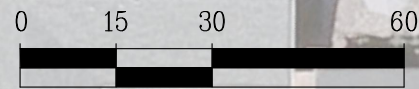


Path: C:\Users\vanaun\appdata\local\temp\AcPublish_11192\134026_PARKING EXHIBIT-4.dwg Layout Name: JEROME PARKING EXHIBIT Plot Date: Feb 01, 2023 at 02:24 pm

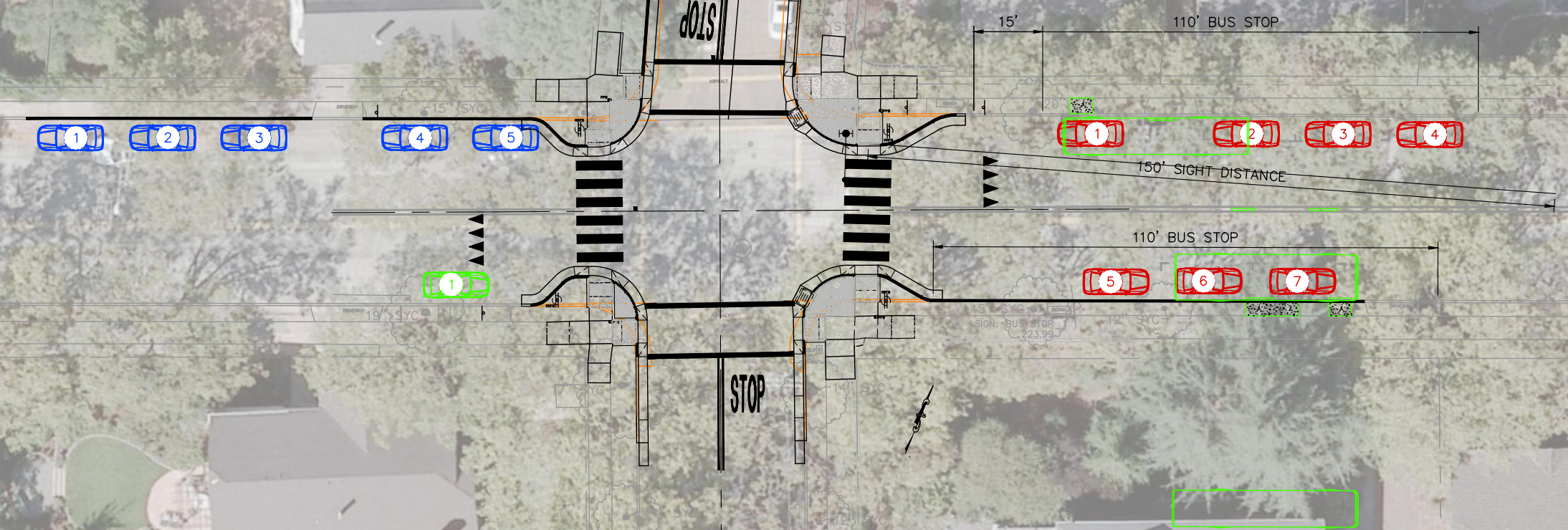
Path: C:\Users\vanaun\appdata\local\temp\AcPublish_11192\134026_PARKING EXHIBIT-4.dwg Layout Name: JEROME PARKING EXHIBIT Plot Date: Feb 01, 2023 at 02:24 pm

Path: C:\Users\vansaun\appdata\local\temp\AcPublish_11192\134026_PARKING EXHIBIT-4.dwg Layout Name: EL CERRITO PARKING EXHIBIT Plot Date: Feb 01, 2023 at 02:24 pm

GRAPHIC SCALE



(IN FEET)
1 inch = 30 ft.



LEGEND

	7	PARKING SPACES REMOVED
	5	PARKING SPACES TO REMAIN
	1	PARKING SPACES ADDED
		BUS
		CONCRETE PAD

OAKLAND AVE / EL CERRITO AVE INTERSECTION

**PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION**

**Item #4 –Oakland Avenue Bulb-Out Conceptual Design and Authorization to Bid
Correspondence Received Before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, March 6th**

Dear Jen, Betsy, Conna, Jen & Tom,

As residents of El Cerrito Ave, two houses in from Oakland Ave, we are writing with our strong support for the proposed bulb out plan. we have significant concerns about cars moving at excessive speeds on El Cerrito Ave; more than once we have nearly been hit as we get into our cars. Our experience is shared by our neighbors. Given the number of pedestrians that use El Cerrito to get to and from our schools and city center, we worry that an accident is inevitable if traffic calming mechanisms are not implemented.

We recognize that you, along with the public works department, have done significant work to reduce the parking loss from the bulb outs. Thank you! The proposal before you this evening is a very elegant solution to a complicated traffic issue and we sincerely hope you will approve it and, in doing so, make our neighborhood a bit safer.

With gratitude,
Lindsay & Ludo Thomasson

Dear Mayor Cavanaugh, Vice Mayor Smegal Andersen, and Councilmembers McCarthy, Long and Ramsey,

I am writing to you today regarding Item 4 on the March 6th City Council agenda:

"Consideration of the Conceptual Design for Bulb-outs at the Intersections of Oakland Avenue and El Cerrito and Jerome Avenues and Authorization to Proceed to Construction Documents for Bidding." I really appreciate the City Council and Public Works staff's thoughtful consideration of the pedestrian and traffic safety issues at these two intersections along Oakland Ave, of particular importance given the very large volumes of students who cross at this intersection on any given weekday..

Oakland Ave. poses some considerable pedestrian safety challenges, but particularly at these two intersections where there is a high volume of pedestrian activity under no signal control. I live on El Cerrito Ave, and everyday when I leave for work to catch the bus across Oakland Ave., after I push the crossing light, I sit there for quite some time until I can catch a break in traffic to proceed across the crosswalk. There are two major factors that contribute to the difficulty crossing Oakland Ave, both of which are corrected through this project. 1) Though the mature trees along Oakland are beautiful, offering shade and a windbreak, they also make it very difficult for motorists to see pedestrians attempting to cross. 2) The LED lined pedestrian sign is not sufficiently visible enough for motorists to notice it during daylight hours. This project would improve visibility of pedestrians by allowing them to extend beyond the treeline while still maintaining a physical separation from the street (the bulbout) while also shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians. Additionally, the project includes rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) which would improve upon the beacon lighting in the pedestrian signage. These components together allow motorists to be much more aware of pedestrians attempting to cross the street and improve safety of all users. Thank you for your consideration and I encourage you to support the proposed conceptual design.

Sincerely,
Ryan Lau

Hello city council hope everyone is doing well

I am out of town and cannot zoom for the meeting tonight, but wanted to express our family's thanks and full support for putting the bump puts and better signage on Oakland Avenue to make crossing at El Cerrito safer for students and everyone!

The current traffic measures are inadequate and living on the block I can affirm that dozens of students cross this intersection on the way to and from school (and unfortunately most of them staring at their cell phones) creating a very scary situation given drivers are barreling down the hill to get to the interstate

Once again thank you ,
Chris Ashley and Zach Cestaro
