



**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: 03/16/2015
Reviewed by: PL

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 2015-11- Marin/Curtis Intersection Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Pedestrian Improvements: Approval of Construction Plans with amendment, Contract Amendment with TJKM Transportation Consultant for Design Change and Authorize the City Manager to issue a Call for Construction Bids for the Project

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SUMMARY

The action before the Council is to consider the proposed construction plans for improvements to the intersection of Marin Avenue and Curtis Street adjacent to Marin Elementary School. Related actions include appropriation of required funds and authorizing the City Manager to issue a Call for Construction Bids in May 2015.

The design amendments include a raised crosswalk at the north leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection with the option to add public art, the incorporation of the high visibility crosswalk with curb ramps at the south leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection and the installation of a speed hump on Sonoma, between Neilson and Peralta. This request requires an amendment to the existing contract with TJKM Transportation Consultants and the appropriation of additional funds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt Resolution No. 2015-11, which includes:

- a) Approving the Construction Plans and Engineer's Estimate for the Marin/Curtis Safe Routes to Schools Project;
- b) Authorizing the City Manager to execute an amended professional services contract with TJKM Transportation Consultants for the development of plans, Final Estimates and specifications for a raised crosswalk on the north leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection, installation of a high visibility crosswalk on the south leg of this intersection and installation of a speed hump on Sonoma between Neilson and Peralta and allocate the necessary funds to design the additional task.
- c) Appropriating funds for construction of the project; and
- d) Authorizing the City Manager to issue a Call for Construction Bids in May 2015 and allocate the needed funds to close the construction phase funding gap.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the City has prioritized pedestrian safety improvements near the City's elementary schools. For the intersection of Marin Avenue and Curtis Street, the design process began with the City obtaining a State Safe Routes to School (SR2S) grant in 2012 for the design and construction of pedestrian improvements on the east side of Marin Elementary School.

The recommended safety improvements consist of constructing bulb outs to shorten the walking distance across Marin Avenue as well as installation of high visibility crosswalks at the intersection of Marin Avenue and Curtis Street, and Curtis Street and Sonoma Avenue. In addition, the project includes sidewalk widening and repair along the east side of Marin Elementary School and installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the intersection of Marin Avenue and Curtis Avenue to increase driver yielding behavior during school bell times. These improvements are intended to complement the recent improvements completed in 2012 on the west side of Marin Elementary School at Marin Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue.

For the design of this project, the City hired the team of TJKM Transportation Consultants and Siegfried Engineers through competitive process. Design work started in November 2013 and has been processed by the Traffic and Safety Commission through four meetings at the 35, 65, and 95 percent engineering detail. Neighborhood residents and property owners were invited to participate in the public process for the planned improvements. The plans developed for the project are presented in Attachment 1. These plans present the design without the proposed amendment. Attachment 2 presents the proposed design amendments at the Curtis/Sonoma intersection.

DISCUSSION

The improvements to the Marin/Curtis and Sonoma Curtis intersections are consistent with several City Council Strategic Plan themes, including improvements to sidewalks and implementing the Climate Action Plan and Active Transportation Plan. At their July 2014 meeting, the Traffic and Safety Commission approved the 95% detail plans and issued a recommendation to Council for plan approval and authorization to City Manager to issue construction bids. The Commission also recommended the addition of a raised crosswalk at the north leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection as an optional task for Council consideration.

Following completion of the 95% plans, a field test of the proposed configuration of the intersection of Curtis Street and Sonoma Avenue found that maneuvering a fire engine will be problematic if there are other motor vehicles in or near the intersection. At the February 2015, the Traffic and Safety Commission reviewed the design at the Sonoma/Curtis intersection and recommended elimination of the bulb out and inclusion of the raised crosswalk, alternative task into the design, on the north leg of the intersection. In addition, the Commission recommended inclusion of high visibility crosswalk at the south leg of

Sonoma and Curtis, and installation of a speed hump on Sonoma, between Neilson and Peralta.

The City Council approved the original contract with TJKM, thus the Council also needs to authorize the amendment to the agreement (Attachment 3). In order to avoid a series of incremental Council actions on this project, the staff recommendation incorporates both the amendment to the design contract and authorization to call for bids. If approved, the next Council action will be approval of the construction contract.

The Commission also suggested consulting with the Arts Committee to look for opportunities for implementation of Public Art with the project and use the Art Fee generated by the project to offset the cost of the added work. Staff presented the Traffic and Safety Commission request at the Arts Committee meeting in October 2014. The Arts Committee supported the recommendation, but could not recommend commitment of funds at the time because more information was needed about cost of design and process for artist selection. The Arts Commission is expected to make a determination in the spring of 2015.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Implementation of improved pedestrian infrastructure encourages more walking and rolling for the trip to school, improving children's health by promoting active modes of transportation. This in turn reduces vehicular congestion and greenhouse gas emissions around Marin Elementary School and improves air quality. Specifically, the Climate Action Plan includes Measure Transportation and Land Use Policy 4.4, which calls for a series of actions to reducing peak hour automobile trips. One of the actions steps includes infrastructure improvements to facilitate safe-routes-to-school.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Staff has determined that the proposed project is categorically exempt from the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA) per Section 15301, "Existing Facilities" of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts projects that involve alterations of streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle paths, and similar facilities for purpose of public safety.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated total project cost for the construction of the project is \$775,486. The recommended appropriation for the project is presented in Attachment 4. The primary funding source for the project is a grant of \$419,400 from the State of California for Safe Routes to School improvements. An additional \$306,595 of City administered transportation and storm drain-related funds are recommended to be appropriated to the project. The School District has pledged \$25,000 to the project. CDBG funds in the amount of \$24,491 are also proposed to fund a portion of the curb ramps of the project.

Staff estimates that the implementation of custom stamped asphalt on the raised crosswalk would add \$15,000 (with art), assuming custom-made design by a local artist, which is a requirement for the use of Public Art funds.

Another alternative could be painting the crosswalks with a design created by a local artist, which is estimated at \$10,000. The estimated fee for the Art Fund generated by the project is \$10,806, which can be used to pay for the development of the artistic design. Attachment 5 shows some examples of stamped and painted crosswalks.

Funds for the alternative treatments could be furnished by a combination Gas Tax, Measure F, or Measure B Local Streets and Roads.

NEXT STEPS

The project is scheduled to be constructed in 2015. To the degree possible, the work will be scheduled when school is not in session. Plans for the amended design will be developed between the end of March and beginning of April 2015, ready for the call for projects in the spring of 2015. If the Public Arts component is included in the project, the Arts Committee will bring to Council a recommendation on any commitments and process in May 2015.

Attachments

1. Project Construction Plans
2. Proposed Design Changes
3. Design Contract Amendment No. 1
4. Proposed Appropriation and Construction Cost Estimate
5. Examples of Stamped Asphalt and Painted Crosswalk
6. Resolution No. 2015-11