

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

Agenda Date: November 19, 2018

Reviewed by: NA

SUBJECT: Solano Avenue Complete Streets Planning Project – Status Update
and Possible Back in Angle Parking Demonstration

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SUMMARY

The Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan preparation commenced in March 2018. This report provides a status update of the overall planning process, and discusses the option of a “pop up” event to further analyze back in angle parking in the study area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Traffic & Safety Commission recommendation: that the Council endorse a demonstration of back-in angle parking and charge the Traffic & Safety Commission to oversee the details of a demonstration project.

Staff recommendation: that the Council provide direction on back in angle parking. If the Council would like to authorize a demonstration project, staff recommends that it be under a separate contract and separate timeline from the Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan planning process.

BACKGROUND

Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan

The City received a grant through Caltrans for the preparation of the Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan. The complete streets planning study area includes Solano Avenue from the Masonic Avenue intersection to the City limit line beyond Ventura Avenue. The focus is on complete streets infrastructure, which includes improvements to the Solano Avenue right-of-way to serve a range of users including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, commercial vehicles, and public transit. The effort commenced in March 2018 with Toole Design Group as the consultant. The plan will include consideration and refinement to street lighting, intersection alignments, signal modernization, sidewalk improvements, streetscape landscaping, street parking, bus stops,

storm water systems, and underground utilities. The incorporation of public art, directional signage, and gateway improvements will also be incorporated into the draft plan.

A public workshop was held in May 2018, and included corridor walks and a public workshop at the Albany Community Center. Most recently, a pop-up event was held on Saturday September 22, 2018 to demonstrate a preliminary design idea proposed for the plan. The demonstration consisted of using straw waddle to narrow travel lanes, create bulb outs, and temporarily installing a shorter, higher visibility crosswalk. This allowed for a multi-modal test for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle access on Solano Avenue. Additionally, the City had the opportunity to partner with Flowerland who allowed use of their nursery for display boards and consultants to facilitate community engagement. There was significant participation and feedback received.

At this stage in the process, the remaining budget balance is allocated to the preparation of the draft planning document. A draft is expected to be completed in late November and is anticipated to be reviewed by the Traffic & Safety Commission in January 2019. The final draft is expected to go to City Council in February 2019.

DISCUSSION

Back In Angle Parking

Back-in angle parking is an alternative to the existing front-in angle parking used as street parking in various locations around Albany (Solano Avenue, Portland frontage of Memorial Park, west side of Pierce Street along I-80). Additionally, the Albany Police Department has back in angle parking on Buchanan where they park police vehicles. At the September 27, 2018 Traffic & Safety Commission meeting, commissioners requested that staff undertake a public demonstration of back-in angle parking and evaluate this parking configuration for Solano Avenue. The concept of back in angle parking as a potential policy, as well as an illustrative detail showing how the parking could be configured on Solano Avenue will be included in the Plan.

Back in angle parking is regarded as providing better visibility for motorists upon pulling out of the parking space and it can create better visibility of on-street cyclists. However, this type of parking has not gained widespread acceptance with the general public. Members of the Community Advisory Group for the Plan have expressed concerns about back in angle parking based on driver behavior. Additionally, a goal of the Complete Streets Plan includes sidewalk widening and ADA accessibility in the corridor. Most vehicles have comparable front-end dimensions. With back in angle parking, vehicle lengths vary, which has the potential to create overhang issues on the curb and obstructions in the sidewalk. As a policy, this can be further analyzed as part of the future design and construction phases of the project.

ANALYSIS

Logistics and Associated Costs of Pop Up Event

As part of the Traffic & Safety Commission review on September 27, 2018, the Commission suggested that a back in angle parking demonstration be held as part of the plan preparation process.

A pop-up event is a one-day event where staff and consultants install and measure its efficacy. Development of a demonstration would entail identifying:

- Location of event
- Duration of event
- Timing of event

Technical details required for the event:

- Development of a site plan with dimensions that fit within the existing street design
- Materials to cover up existing pavement markings and materials for installation
- Preparation and execution of a traffic control plan
- Development of public engagement and evaluation measures
 - Intercept surveys of people who park, walk, and bike during the demonstration
 - Measuring time delays/vehicle cuing on the corridor
- City staff time and technical consultants to staff the event
- Public Works Maintenance staff time for the set up and breakdown of the event

Staff conferred with the project consultants to estimate costs associated with a one-day back-in-angle parking pop up demonstration. A brief overview and breakdown of cost estimates is as follows:

- Materials for the installation: \$1500
- Local Government Commission: \$5000
 - Materials ordering
 - Demonstration Installation
 - Assistance with Traffic Control
- Toole Design Group: \$7000
 - Site plan design
 - Intercept Survey preparation
 - Data collection-includes intercept survey and vehicle cuing
- Public Works Staff (Overtime)
 - 2 maintenance staff workers to help with set up and breakdown
 - Use of City vehicle
 - 4 hours on overtime and incidentals: \$1500

- Total Cost: \$15,000

Should the Council wish to conduct a pop up event to study back in angle parking on Solano Avenue, staff will work in coordination with technical consultants regarding the matter, once a budget and funding for this analysis is confirmed. The Traffic and Safety Commission will be provided updates at their regular meetings. It is not appropriate, however, for any commission subject to Brown Act open meeting laws to oversee day-to-day administration of an event.

Remaining Budget

The remaining budget for the Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan is \$12,000 which will fund the preparation and completion of the final plan document. Additionally, the Plan is anticipated to be adopted in February 2019, with April 2019 as the deadline date to complete the Plan.

The estimated costs for the pop-up event exceed the remaining budget both tasks could not be completed concurrently. Once the plan is completed, staff will pursue grant funding opportunities for plan implementation. Typically, infrastructure plans of this scale are conducted in three phases:

- Plan Preparation (current status)
- Design Services
- Construction/Implementation

Once the Plan is adopted, staff would pursue grant funding opportunities for design services. Actual construction funding would be pursued once 100% design details are finalized. It is estimated that it will be at least two or three years before the design phase commences and a few more years before construction would start, including lead time to ideally secure grant funding for both the design and construction phases.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The approximate cost associated with holding a pop-up event is \$15,000. The cost of the demonstration was not anticipated at the time of preparation of the current approved budget. Funds appropriated in the City Council discretionary fund or Community Development Department professional services could be used.