



DATE: July 22, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 4

**TO:** Complete Streets Commission

**FROM:** Jaime O. Rodriguez, Interim Staff Liaison

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Year 2020-21 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Discussion Item Only. Receive update on deferred CIP Projects as part of the FYs 2019-20 and 2020-21 CIP Program.

---

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Los Altos provides a 5-year CIP Program that is partially funded each year based on funding availability, program priorities and staff resources. The FYs 2019-20 and 2020-21 CIP Program required special focus due to unusual financial restraints stemming from COVID-19 impacts to normally sound revenue sources such as sales tax and transient occupancy tax revenues. Funding for numerous General Fund projects was deferred to both balance the FYs 2019-20 and 2020-21 CIP Program budgets and to allow staff opportunities to rescope the projects for future year CIP programs. The goal was to defer “non-essential” projects in those two FYs. A number of projects budgeted prior to FY-19/20 were also deferred or partially deferred, including:

- TS-01038, El Monte Sidewalk Gap Closure
- TS-01050, Carmel Terrace Sidewalk Gap Closure
- TS-01051, University & Milverton Sidewalk Gap Closure

**BACKGROUND**

The Los Altos – Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a 5-year budgeting document to help prioritize annual programs (i.e., street resurfacing) and one-time infrastructure projects (i.e., Community Center). The budget is prepared with community, commission, and staff input and then approved by the City Council for implementation.

Project implementation is managed by staff with annual programs and time-sensitive grant funding typically taking priority to adhere to construction timing and project delivery constraints. Over the past four years Transportation CIP Projects were also impacted due to limited staff resources from staff turn-over and new staff training. 2021 resource impacts were further strained with COVID-19 impacts to normally reliable funding resources that required City staff to reprioritize available funding and defer funding for projects to future years.

## **DISCUSSION**

Funding or partial funding for the above Transportation CIP Projects was deferred to future years to allow staff to focus available funding and staff resources to other priorities. These projects are not permanently deferred, project implementation is just delayed a minimum of one year to allow to accommodate funding constraints and to allow staff to advance preliminary engineering through other CIP Project efforts in response to known constraints.

### 1) TS-01038, El Monte Sidewalk Gap Closure

The El Monte Sidewalk Gap Closure project includes the installation of a pedestrian pathway along the north side of El Monte Avenue between Almond Avenue & S Clark Avenue. The project was funded through the design phase and a consultant, TJKM Associates, brought on board three years ago to complete the design.

The design stalled due to unidentified constraints during the initial project planning phase. In addition, CDBG funding was deferred due to restraints in the program due to COVID-19 impacts.

The design restrictions include impacts to private property landscaping that would remove a majority of screening to private property residents and heritage tree impacts that may result in tree removal. The design team was unable to develop a final design that responds to the design constraints.

City staff continued to advance priority elements of the project including bulb-out and crosswalk improvements at the intersection of El Monte Avenue & Almon Avenue. Staff is currently negotiating with the 2020 Street Resurfacing contractor to implement improvements at the intersection or will bid-out a separate project in the Fall to complete the intersection improvements as a stand-alone project. Focused intersection improvements for the El Monte Avenue & Almond Avenue intersection are complete and currently under review by City staff.

The current design contract may be terminated and the project rescoped to address design constraints. This will require a new community engagement process that focuses on direct discussions with private property owners and tenants to develop an implementable project that balances private property impacts and accessibility goals. This may require the project to be implemented in smaller segments, similar to the current El Monte Avenue & Almond Avenue intersection improvements.

### 2) TS-01050, Carmel Terrace Sidewalk Gap Closure

The Carmel Terrace Sidewalk Gap Closure project was never initiated due to a limited project work scope. Staff explored this project in 2019 and identified substantial parking impacts as part of the current project definition: implementation of a pedestrian pathway along the East side of Carmel Terrace between Portland Avenue and the Bullis Charter Middle School.

Staff plans to advance preliminary engineering as part of the Complete Streets Master Plan and new Safe Routes to School project, both of which will be led by Alta Planning + Design. Staff anticipates development of preliminary engineering in the Fall 2020 in advance of the FY2021-22 CIP planning process in the Spring. Any preliminary engineering will be presented to the community and commission for input as part of the Complete Streets Master Plan community outreach process.

Deferment of project funding will allow the City to better define the project work scope to ensure that the proper amount of funding can be estimated through an advancement of preliminary engineering. Taking advantage of the current Complete Streets Master Plan and Safe Routes to School projects also allows the City to focus staff resources away from multiple consultant Request for Proposal (RFP) processes that have similar work scopes.

### 3) TS-01051, University & Milverton Sidewalk Gap Closure

The University Avenue & Milverton Road was never initiated into a design consultant contract. Staff did explore the design in 2019 to help define a consultant work scope for advertising into an RFP but identified at that time substantial private property landscape impacts, drainage impacts, and accessibility design impacts. The previously estimated \$55,000 project budget is not enough to accommodate a design phase, much less both design and construction.

As part of the Foothill Expressway Widening Project, funding for traffic calming measures is provided that include speed hump and signage & striping implementation. Staff developed a plan to convert the University Avenue & Milverton Road intersection into an All-Way STOP with a crosswalk across University that connects Milverton pedestrians to University's sidewalk. However, staff has not initiated a community engagement process to-date for this concept.

During the June 24 Complete Streets Commission meeting, the commission expressed concern with staff's decision to defer funding with the above projects and requested this focused discussion to receive additional information that helped advise staff's decision without commission input. Funding constraints to the CIP Program due to COVID-19 impacts did not provide the opportunity to solicit commission input prior to presentation of the CIP Program to City Council on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Each of the projects are still included in the 5-Year CIP Program, but funding deferral was appropriate due to financial impacts and to allow staff to advance preliminary engineering through other projects to help develop better advised design concepts and to develop better project budgets for future CIP Programs.