



DATE: September 30, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 4

**TO:** Complete Streets Commission

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

**SUBJECT:** El Monte Avenue Sidewalk Gap Closure Project Update – Almond Avenue to S. Clark Avenue (CIP Project No. TS-01038)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and Provide Input on the Final Improvement Plans for the El Monte Avenue Sidewalk Gap Closure Project

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**INTRODUCTION**

The El Monte Avenue Sidewalk Gap Closure project was initiated in 2017, but then delayed since 2018 due to design restrictions impacting private properties and staffing and General Fund budget constraints. The intent of the project is to provide a dedicated pedestrian pathway along the west side of El Monte Avenue between Almond Avenue and S. Clark Avenue. The City reinitiated the project with a simpler design at the end of summer to take advantage of existing CDBG Grant Funds. Use of Traffic Impact Fees will be recommended to the City Council if CDBG funds are insufficient to cover the project's costs.

The new design limits private property impacts by building a shared use bicycle and pedestrian facility with pavement treatments to define a designated pedestrian pathway. The City anticipated the new plans to be in a Bid Phase by the time of this commission meeting, but commission input is being requested on final elements that can be modified as part of an addendum to the bid phase.

**BACKGROUND**

The El Monte Avenue Sidewalk Gap Closure project is being expedited to help take advantage of existing grant funds that expire at the end of 2020. The City held a community outreach meeting on August 19, 2020 to reintroduce the project, propose alternative design concepts that limit private property impacts and solicit feedback on measures to protect bicycles and pedestrians within a shared use space. The Complete Streets Commission also received an update on the project at its August 26, 2020 session.

**DISCUSSION**

The City contracted with ActiveWayz Engineering to help complete the development of new civil improvement plans to help implement the project's sidewalk facility. The new design concept is more cost effective to the City and eliminated private property impacts to vegetation

along El Monte Avenue helping to preserve the streets rural character. Specific design treatments include:

- **Buffered Bicycle Lanes on both side of El Monte Avenue**  
A 2-FT striped buffer will be provided on both sides of El Monte Avenue to provide consistent design treatments between S. Clark Avenue and Almond Avenue.
- **Low-Profile Rubber Curbing within Buffer Zones**  
The project proposed the use of low-profile (~3.5-Inches) at intersection approaches only to discourage cars from driving into the bicycle/pedestrian zones to pass other vehicles waiting to make left turns off of El Monte Avenue. Limiting the low-profile curb to intersection approaches maintains easy access to private properties along El Monte Avenue and parking spaces on the street.
- **Roadway Widening Treatment**  
A shared use bicycle-pedestrian space along the north side of Almond Avenue is proposed that is approximately 11-FT wide, including the 2-FT striped buffer zone. The roadway widening will provide consistent pavement treatment along El Monte Avenue.
- **Distinctive Pedestrian Pathway Treatments**  
To designate the pedestrian portion of the shared bicycle-pedestrian space, a muted but distinctive pavement treatment will be used to distinguish pedestrian vs bicycle pathways. Input on specific color tones and texture treatment is requested.
- **Painted Intersection Returns at Higgins Avenue and El Monte Court**  
The original design concept delayed in 2018 removed landscape and vegetation at each of the intersection returns at Higgins Avenue and El Monte Court. The new design concept tightens the returns at each intersection using striping treatments and the low-profile rubber curbing.
- **All-Way STOP at N. El Monte Avenue & S. Clark Avenue**  
A new All-Way STOP at N. El Monte Avenue & S. Clark Avenue is proposed in response to resident input regarding speeding concerns and to improve the pedestrian crosswalk experience at the intersection for students at Almond Elementary School.
- **Flashing Beacon at El Monte Avenue & Mills Avenue**  
The proposed project retains the proposed rectangular rapid flashing beacon to cross El Monte Avenue at Mills Avenue.

Specific input requested of the Complete Streets Commission by staff on the new project design include:

- 1) Color Preferences on Pedestrian Pathway Sections
- 2) Low-Profile Rubber Curb Treatments

Proposed and original design plans for the El Monte Avenue project will be shared at the Commission meeting.