



DATE: April 28, 2021

AGENDA ITEM # 4

TO: Complete Streets Commission

FROM: Jaime O. Rodriguez, Interim Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: El Camino Real Bike Lane Installation / On Street Parking Removal

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and Provide Input on the Preliminary Findings and Recommendations Report on the Feasibility of Installing Bike Lanes along El Camino Real

INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Transportation – Caltrans is on schedule to resurface El Camino Real from the northern Palo Alto City Limits to the Highway 237 Ramp in Mountain View, this includes the length of El Camino Real within the Los Altos City Limits (Adobe Creek to ~500-FT South of Rengstorff Avenue).

Caltrans received a grant that will accommodate the installation of Class II Bike Lane facilities (i.e., on-street facilities designated for bicyclists using stripes and stencils, which may include buffer striping to provide greater separation between bicyclists and moving or parked vehicles) within the street resurfacing project limits, but Caltrans is requiring that any agency interested in having the bike lanes installed as part of the resurfacing project provide local agency City Council approvals and any supporting environmental documents by January 2022. The El Camino Real street resurfacing project is scheduled for construction in Summer 2022.

Within the Los Altos City Limits, bike lanes along El Camino Real can be accommodated through the removal of on-street parking on El Camino Real: 248 spaces total (140 spaces on the Los Altos side of El Camino Real and 108 spaces on the Mountain View side). This report summarizes the findings of a parking study conducted by Traffic Patterns in April 2021 to help begin policy discussions, formulate preliminary recommendations, and to help identify any additional traffic or parking data of interest to help advise final policy approval discussions and environmental clearance requirements.

BACKGROUND

The Los Altos City Limits along El Camino Real are bound by Adobe Creek (to the north), approximately 500-FT south of Rengstorff Avenue (to the South), and along the curb face on the East side of El Camino Real (Mountain View side). The City of Los Altos maintains sidewalk facilities on the West sidewalk of El Camino Real and provides monthly street sweeping on both sides of El Camino Real, including along median islands. The City of Mountain View completed policy approvals in 2020 accommodating parking removal along

El Camino Real to support bike lane facilities including the portion operated by the City of Los Altos. The Mountain View policy approvals may not adequately support parking removal along the East side of El Camino Real as curb operations are within the City Limits of Los Altos; Los Altos staff has informed Mountain View, Caltrans, and Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) staff of this preliminary finding but additional Right of Way confirmation is required.

The 2012 Los Altos Bicycle Transportation Plan (Exhibit A) does not currently identify any preferred bike facility type along El Camino Real. The City is currently updating its Bike Plan as part of the 2021 Complete Streets Master Plan (CSMP) project and El Camino Real is scheduled to be recommended as a Class IV Bike Lane facility to be consistent with regional documents including the VTA – Bicycle Superhighway Program but Los Altos is not requiring any vertical element accommodations within the buffered bike lanes at this time. The CSMP is not scheduled for Los Altos City Council approval until the Fall 2021. In order to meet Caltrans required submittal of policy and environmental documents for bike lane installation before January 2022 these documents must be completed in parallel with the CSMP or before to allow for adequate community engagement.

DISCUSSION

Traffic Patterns, the City's On-Call Traffic Engineering consultant firm conducted a parking study of El Camino Real between the Los Altos City Limits (Adobe Creek to Approximately 500-FT South of Rengstorff Avenue), on both sides of El Camino Real, including up to two blocks on each side street bisecting El Camino Real in both Los Altos and Mountain View. On-street parking data was gathered over several days to determine Average Weekday and Average Weekend parking conditions on and along El Camino Real during the following times of day:

- 8:00 AM
- 12:00 PM (Noon)
- 4:00 PM
- 8:00 PM

The complete *El Camino Real – Parking Removal for Bike Lane Installation Study* is available in Exhibit B including Raw Data from the parking study.

The report determines that Noon on-street parking occupancy is moderate in some areas due to construction worker parking use, but this is considered a temporary impact. Late evening (8:00 PM) parking conditions along El Camino Real, which better represent the potential intrusion of neighborhood parking within Los Altos, is light and can be considered a Light Impact under the current COVID-19 traffic and parking conditions. These lighter than normal traffic and parking conditions introduce a unique opportunity for Los Altos to strongly consider on-street parking removals to accommodate Bike Lane facilities along El Camino Real and to control future redevelopment and recovering traffic and parking conditions in a future post-COVID-19 environment.

The City of Los Altos has approximately four active (in construction or approved) and three pending development applications along El Camino Real. The City of Mountain View has an additional 6 projects under different approval levels.

The Parking Study recommends that the City begin discussions via this Complete Streets Commission and public outreach process to consider parking removal along El Camino Real to accommodate Bike Lane installation. The Parking Study also recommends that the City continue active monitoring of residential use side streets bisecting El Camino Real, including:

- Los Altos Avenue
- Sherwood Avenue
- Jordan Avenue
- Distel Circle
- Distel Drive

Parking monitoring will track whether parking intrusion begins to impact adjacent Los Altos neighborhoods as COVID-19 health order restrictions begin to subside and private development projects come online and ultimately begin to occupy future housing and commercial use space. If these results occur, the City can consider parking intrusion measures such as time-limited parking or a Residential Permit Parking program.

This first discussion with the Complete Streets Commission is intended to serve as an opportunity to identify any additional traffic and parking data that would help advise a future recommendation to the City Council for a change in the parking policy in Los Altos neighborhoods adjacent to El Camino Real. Environmental approval is still required, but is not anticipated to be a comprehensive effort as impacts from Bike Lane projects are typically exempt from substantial environmental analysis and loss of parking is not considered to be an Environmental Impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). However, community perception does not always align with CEQA requirements. As part of noticing for this project the City sent mailers to all residences within 1,000-FT of El Camino Real within the Los Altos City Limits and an additional 500-FT east of El Camino Real within the Mountain View City Limits. The City also installed several sandwich boards along El Camino Real to help advise residents and business owners of these discussions.

City and Traffic Patterns staff will be available during the Complete Streets Commission to answer questions.