



DATE: June 27, 2018

AGENDA ITEM # 2

## AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Complete Streets Commission

**FROM:** Zachary Dahl, Planning Services Manager

**SUBJECT:** Los Altos Community Center – 97 Hillview Avenue

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommend approval of Design Review Application 18-D-03 to the Planning Commission

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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a Design Review application for a new community center at 97 Hillview Avenue. The new community center will be located on a 3.9-acre portion of the civic center campus in approximately the same location as the existing community center. The project includes a one-story building, 24,500 square feet in size, with associated patio and open space areas around the building and a surface parking lot with 162 parking spaces. The existing community center is 30,300 square feet in size with a surface parking lot with 145 spaces.

The Community Center Campus is designated as Public and Institutional in the General Plan and zoned PCF (Public and Community Facilities).

A project narrative from architect Noll & Tam that provides an overview of the project's pedestrian, bicycle and traffic elements is included as Attachment A; the project's traffic analysis is included as Attachment B; and a condensed version of the project plans that focuses on the project's bicycle, pedestrian, circulation and parking amenities is included as Attachment C.

### BACKGROUND

As outlined in the Zoning Code, the Complete Streets Commission (formerly the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission) considers projects at a public meeting and acts in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission and City Council on bicycle, pedestrian, parking and traffic matters. For Public and Community Facilities Design Review applications, the Commission shall provide an advisory recommendation on the elements of the application that pertain to bicycle, pedestrian, parking and traffic issues.

With regard to traffic analysis, the Circulation Element in the General Plan includes an implementing program (C8) that outlines the criteria for reviewing traffic and circulation for new development as follows:

Evaluate development proposals and design roadway and access improvements based on established Level of Service standards and vehicle trip distribution to minimize impact on local residential and collector streets:

- 1) Require public review of any development project or other proposal that causes an intersection to degrade by one or more levels of service (e.g., LOS A to B, LOS B to D);
- 2) Require a transportation analysis for all development projects resulting in 50 or more net new daily trips. The analysis shall identify potential impacts to intersection and roadway operations, project access, and non-automobile travel modes, and shall identify feasible improvements or project modifications to reduce or eliminate impacts. Impact significance should be consistent with the criteria maintained by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. City staff should have the discretion to require focused studies regarding access, sight distance, and other operational and safety issues;
- 3) As part of the development review process, the primary access for major traffic generators should be established on arterial roadways, and overall access should be designed to minimize traffic intrusion to residential neighborhoods; and
- 4) Only after preparation of an environmental impact report with associated findings, accept Level of Service E or F operations at City-monitored signalized intersections after finding that no practical and feasible improvements can be implemented to mitigate the lower levels of service. A proposed development that causes or exacerbates LOS E or F operations and causes a significant intersection impact should be considered for approval if it will provide a clear, overall benefit to the City (e.g., library expansion or relocation, new community center).

With regards to bicycle parking standards, the City does not have an adopted ordinance, but does rely on the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle Technical Guidelines as a recommended bicycle parking guideline. For cultural and recreational uses, the VTA Guidelines recommends one Class I space per 30 employees and one Class II space per 1,500 square feet of floor area. A Class I space is defined as one that protects the entire bicycle and its components from theft, vandalism or inclement weather and is appropriate for long-term parking (two hours to all day). A Class II space is defined as a rack to which the frame and at least one wheel can be secured with a user provided U-lock or padlock and cable and is appropriate for short-term parking (less than two hours).

## **DISCUSSION**

### Traffic and Parking

The site layout will be redesigned, with the new community center building occupying a location at the north end of the present community center site with new surface parking to the west and south. The existing vehicle circulation pattern on the site would be improved while still maintaining the primary driveway that connects to the Museum, Library and other areas of the civic center campus. The driveway connections to Hillview Road would be realigned, with a total of two driveway connections (one primary and one secondary) replacing the four existing driveways. The existing surface parking lot that serves the community center includes 145 parking spaces and the proposed parking lot will include 162 spaces. The Site Plan (Sheet D1.00) in Attachment C provides additional information on the proposed site layout and circulation.

The new community center is being designed to maintain existing staffing and programming levels while being approximately 5,800 square feet smaller in size than the existing community center.

Therefore, the existing traffic volumes associated with the community center are not anticipated to change or increase. The project's traffic report (Attachment B) includes existing traffic counts that were taken earlier this year and projected traffic counts during the summer to provide an overview of the existing traffic conditions. The traffic report also evaluated existing and proposed parking demand for the community center. For the existing community center, the peak parking demand was estimated at around 133 spaces. For the proposed community center, the ITE peak parking demand rate of 3.2 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area was used, so at 24,500 square feet, the peak parking demand for the new community center would be around 79 spaces. Therefore, under either of the estimates, the 162 parking spaces in the new parking lot would provide sufficient parking to meet the needs of the proposed facility.

As part of the project the pedestrian pathway to the Library is proposed to be widened and enhanced with additional landscaping to strengthen the connection between the two facilities. However, in order to accomplish this improvement, 13 parking spaces adjacent to the Library will be displaced and relocated to the new community center parking lot. While the project will be resulting in a net increase of four on-site parking spaces, there will be fewer parking spaces adjacent to the Library, so staff is interested in receiving input from the Commission on if this is an acceptable trade-off. Or, should the pathway improvement be modified to maintain some of these parking spaces in their current location?

#### Bicycle and Pedestrian

As recommended by the VTA guidelines, the project should provide at least one Class I bicycle parking space to serve the 15 employees and volunteers (average) and 17 Class II spaces to serve the 24,500 square-foot community center facility. As outlined in the project narrative, 2-4 Class I spaces will be provided at the employee patio to serve employees and volunteers and 72 Class II spaces will be provide around the facility to serve community center users. Thus, the project is significantly exceeding the VTA Guidelines for bicycle parking spaces.

To ensure that the new community center is well connected and accessible to the surrounding uses, the project has focused on establishing strong pedestrian connections. There are three pedestrian pathways to Hillview Avenue, an enhanced pedestrian pathway to connect with the Museum and Library, two pathways to the East Edith pedestrian walkway as well as multiple pathways around the new facility. The project narrative (Attachment A) provides additional details about the project's pedestrian amenities. Overall, with the circulation layout and amenities, the project has been designed to ensure that the new community center is very accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians.

#### Environmental Review

An environmental initial study and mitigated negative declaration (MND) are being prepared for this project as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The initial study and MND will be published and available for a period of 20 days, which will occur prior to the Planning Commission public hearing, which is tentatively scheduled for August 2, 2018.

#### Attachments:

- A. Project Narrative
- B. Traffic Report, Hexagon Transportation Consultants
- C. Project Plans