



City of Lafayette
Staff Report
City Council

Meeting Date: January 8, 2024

Staff: Matt Luttropp, Engineering Services Manager

Subject: East Side Pleasant Hill Road Pathway and Pleasant Hill Road Corridor Study by CCTA Update

Summary

At the October 10, 2023 City Council meeting, Council directed staff to reach out to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and determine the current scope of work and timeline for completion of the corridor study for Pleasant Hill Road. Staff was also directed to request that CCTA include bike and pedestrian improvements in this study.

Subregional corridor management plans have been proposed for many of the Routes of Regional Significance in Lamorinda, including Pleasant Hill Road, as part of the 2023 update to the Lamorinda Action Plan and the CCTA would be the lead agency for the development of the corridor study. More specifically, Roadways-15 Action in the March 2023 version of the Lamorinda Action Plan states: “Develop subregional corridor management plans for Moraga Road, Moraga Way, Camino Pablo, San Pablo Dam Road, and Pleasant Hill Road, to provide adequate roadway capacity for local and subregional travel while also including both public and active transportation modes and nonmodal transportation issues such as equity, climate change, safety, and technology. Plans on evacuation routes should also address long-term emergency evacuation.”

Subsequent to the October 10th Council meeting Patrick Golier, Transportation and Circulation Program Manager, spoke with Matt Kelly from CCTA and was informed that a scope for the study had not yet been developed and that funding and a timeline for the study had not been allocated or determined. Thus, staff is not able to provide any definitive information about a potential future Pleasant Hill Road Corridor Management Plan at this time.

Discussion

Since a corridor study is unlikely in the near term and may lack the technical specificity that Caltrans would require to approve traffic signals at the on and off ramps. The studies and engineering work previously discussed remain as follows:

1. Provide a strip map concept drawing for east side multiuser pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000

2. Provide a strip map concept drawing for west side multi-user pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000
3. Concept sketch for signalized ramp terminals on the east side. Approximate cost \$3,500
4. Basic traffic analysis of signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$4,500
5. Develop design concept for signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$10,000
6. Develop a full traffic study for signalized ramps to be used as a basis for seeking approval from Caltrans for signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$30,000.
7. Develop full design plans, specifications and estimate for east or west side design. Approximate cost \$110,000 without signal design work. With signal work and possible ramp realignment \$350,000.

The stated goal of a multi-user pathway in this corridor is to provide a low stress facility that eliminates the need for cyclists and pedestrians to cross the uncontrolled intersections with the freeway on and off ramps. As such staff does not recommend pursuing an option without traffic signals as it would not meet this stated goal. However, it should be noted that it is likely that the impacts from the addition of a traffic signal at the on- and off-ramps will significantly impact both Highway 24 and Pleasant Hill Road traffic congestion and delay. In the unlikely event that Caltrans allows for this impact they may require additional mitigation measures to be incorporated into the project that cannot be foreseen at this time.

If the City Council wishes to further explore the scope of an east side pathway and its possible impacts as an alternative to constructing the center median pathway, Staff would recommend that the City Council pursue items 1, 4, and 5 (Strip map with design concept for signalized ramps and basic traffic analysis of signalized ramps) for an estimated costs of \$31,500. A public meeting can then be held to discuss the design option and potential impacts on traffic. If this option continues to be viable, item 6 (Full traffic study) for an estimated cost of \$30,000 can be implemented to develop a submittal for Caltrans to review. Assuming Caltrans is willing to review a submittal at less than 100% and that they find the impacts to be acceptable, a full design could then be pursued at a cost of approximately \$350,000. It should be noted that these options are currently unfunded. If the Council wishes to further explore the scope of a west side pathway and its possible impacts the costs would likely be the same as the costs associated with the east side pathway.

Caltrans is continuing to work on the installation of the RRFB (rectangular rapid flash beacon) signs at the on and off ramps within the City of Lafayette. As part of this work they are also installing additional street lighting at the off ramp locations as well as adding new pedestrian push buttons at existing signals where needed for ADA compliance.

Recommendation

The alternatives offered previously are still valid. Discuss and direct Staff

Attachments

1. Public Correspondence
2. October 10, 2023 Staff Report

From: Luttropp, Matt
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 10:35 AM
To: Janet Thomas, Golier, Patrick
Cc: Srivatsa, Niroop
Subject: RE: Update on the Pleasant Hill Road trail?

Hello Janet,

My staff report to the City Council has been delayed until the meeting of November 27. Just to be clear we are not talking to CCTA about a partnership it is simply finding out if the corridor study that is planned and incorporate some of our questions regarding an east side pathway into the study.

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From: Janet Thomas <jhthomas100@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 9:18 AM
To: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Cc: Srivatsa, Niroop <NSrivatsa@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Subject: Update on the Pleasant Hill Road trail?

Hi Matt and Patrick,

I had on my calendar that there would be an update on the PH bike/walking trail at Monday's CC meeting. I realize the agenda was very full, so can understand if the matter was moved to another date.

As I recall you were going to report on possible partnership with a local transit organization.

Thanks for letting me know when the matter might be discussed again..

Janet Thomas

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

From: Luttropp, Matt
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:33 PM
To: Stella W, Candell, Susan
Cc: Gerringer, Teresa, Golier, Patrick, Moran, Mike
Subject: RE: Trans/Circ question

Stella,

Thank you for your input.

Matt Luttropp
Engineering Manager
Engineering Services Division
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Ph. 925-299-3247
mluttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us

From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:28 PM
To: Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Cc: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Gerringer, Teresa <tgerringer@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

Hi Matt,

Thanks for the timeline. I thought we were imminently approaching 100%. Great to know there is time for folding in community input and requirements. The 60% Plans meeting should be in-person and formatted like tomorrow's School St. workshop. The Acalanes Small Gym is a good space. There could be a walkabout beforehand.

I did not hear that Council was primarily concerned with buffering only the sidewalk north of Acalanes Ave. I advocate that it is paramount to meaningfully increase the buffer of the entire length. A center median design that increases the level of stress of an existing Ped facility is not a Vision Zero solution. Caltrans makes it clear with its \$0.9M investment in Ped safety at the ramp crossings that it expects Peds to use the sidewalk. **My ask is to bring buffer options for the entire length of the sidewalk to Council with the 60% Plans.**

With respect to the requirements of residents of the adjoining neighborhoods (more than just Acalanes Ave, also Quandt, Springhill, Stanley), I heard many, many requests to not increase the level of stress of the sidewalk. I don't interpret these requests as rejection of the center median path. **We need to aim to thread the needle with a center median path design that addresses the requests to preserve the sidewalk function and not increase its level of stress.** I have heard clearly that residents and Acalanes sports teams will not cross into the median.

Frankly, I understand this sentiment. At present, there is an ~8' to 12' roadway buffer to one side of a 6' sidewalk. Peds can walk down the center of the sidewalk 11' - 15' feet from traffic. In the center median, Peds walking down the middle will have a 11' buffer, but are surrounded by high-speed traffic on both sides with double the pollution exposure. It is important to acknowledge the time that users by mode would spend in the 0.4 mile center median:

Pedestrians @ 2.6 mph = 9 minutes
Pedal Bikes @ 8 mph = 3 minutes
E-Bikes @ 20 mph = 1.2 minutes
E-Bikes @ 28 mph = 0.85 minutes.

The level of exposure is completely different for the modes. Additionally, we have to consider the Ped stress level when walking alongside bi-directional 28 mph E-bikes. We have been hearing this concern from users of the Lafayette-Moraga Trail.

Best,

Stella

On Wed, Dec 6, 2023 at 12:17 PM Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us> wrote:

Matt,

There is big reason to find out what size of buffer the East side sidewalk has for the full length. Like you and I have heard over and over, this is the biggest reason why the neighborhood is so opposed - they feel like their safety is now far more at risk than the current situation. Can we please ask Kittleson to at least push on making this buffer as wide as possible? We know this question will be coming, so why can't we ask now before they finish their 60% done? At least let them know that this is one of the key metrics that our residents are focused on, so be careful with what is happening there?

Thanks!

From: Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:57 AM

To: Luttrupp, Matt <MLuttrupp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; swotherspoon@gmail.com <swotherspoon@gmail.com>;

Gerringer, Teresa <tgerringer@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

Thanks Matt! Looking forward to seeing the designs.

From: Luttrupp, Matt <MLuttrupp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:14 AM

To: swotherspoon@gmail.com <swotherspoon@gmail.com>; Gerringer, Teresa <tgerringer@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Cc: Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike

<MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: RE: Trans/Circ question

Good Morning Stella,

Please note that the elimination of the slip lanes is subject to Caltrans review and they may take issue with this approach but we want to try to do this if we can.

Kittleson provided me with a preliminary schedule last night and I have added some public meeting to it. Unfortunately, it has the 60% plan date a little further out and I will be working with them to see if we can do better than this but it is a starting point.

60% PSE Due to City of Lafayette	2-09-2024
60% Plans Public Metting	2-22-2024
60% Plans to City Council	3-11-2024
City comments on 60% Due	3-15-2024
Contact Caltrans about E Permit	3-18-2024
90% PSE Due to City of Lafayette	4-29-2024
City comments on 90% Due	5-16-2024
Apply for Caltrans Permit	5-17-2024
100% PSE Due to City of Lafayette	6-27-2024
City Comments on 100% Due	7-14-2024
Environmental Review/NOE	8-1-2024

There should be plenty of time in this schedule to look at possible modifications to striping and possibly minor changes to the existing east side sidewalk if the City Council wishes to expand the scope work.

If I recall correctly the City Council was primarily concerned with the buffer space that would exist for the east side sidewalk between Acalanes Avenue and Deer Hill as the residents of the adjoining neighborhood indicated that the center median pathway access for them would require them to travel on north on the existing east side sidewalk to the intersection with Stanley Boulevard. The sketches that were presented to the City Council show that buffers can be provided in this area to keep or increase the existing vehicle separation from the sidewalk in this area. The portion of the east side sidewalk south of Acalanes Avenue is not intended to be the primary path of travel once the center median pathway is constructed. That said it will still be available to individuals that wish to use it rather than the center median pathway.

The grey lines that you are pointing at in the sketch below are the lip of gutter and the yellow line is the face of curb sorry for the confusion. There is no curb work planned on the east side of the road as part of the center median project.

Matt Luttrupp

Engineering Manager

Engineering Services Division

City of Lafayette

Ph. 925-299-3247

mluttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us

From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:14 PM

To: Gerringer, Teresa <tgerringer@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Cc: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

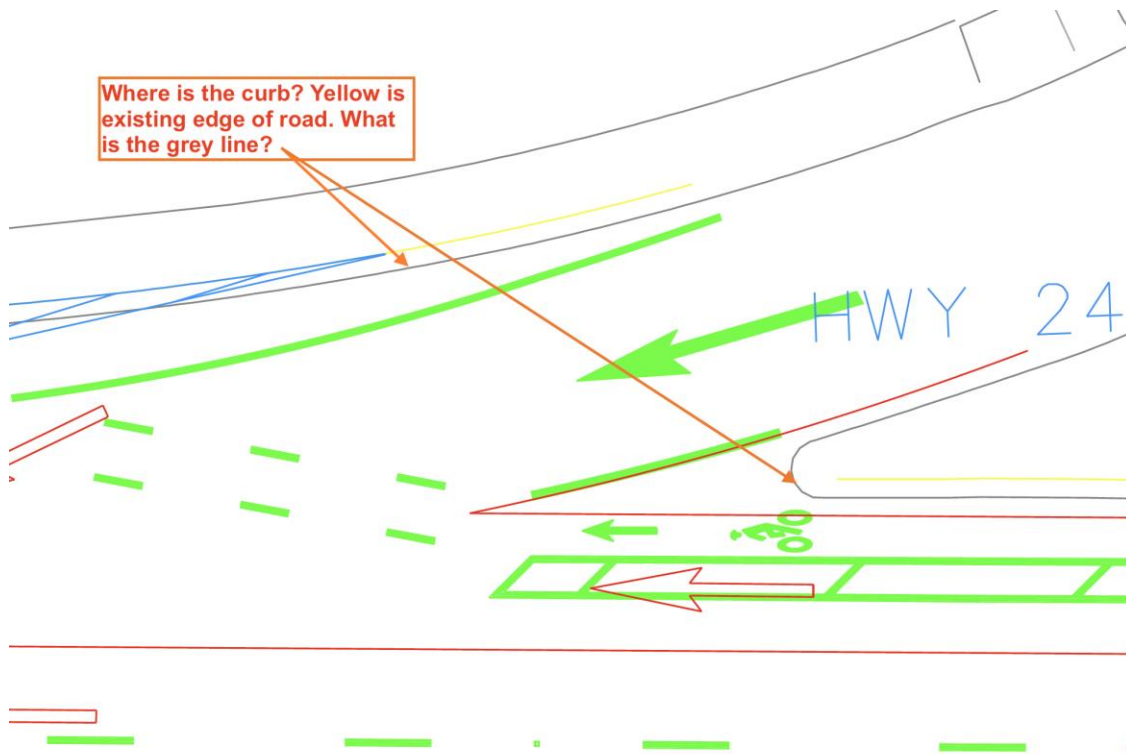
Hi Matt,

Oh wow - that is new news on the slip lanes.

Yes, I understand the staff report is only about plans for an east side path. The Caltrans project improvements to the east sidewalk and the cost are relevant.

I'm not clear on the center median path design process and timeline - by when does Kittleson need to complete the 100% design? Is there really time for iterations that evaluate alternative lane configurations or other ways to provide a sidewalk buffer that is more than 2' 6" to 4' 3" wide? Council approved striping of buffers for only less than 1/2 of the length of the project in October. When will they be shown options for buffering the remaining half - in February?

Last, what are the grey lines in the schematic? They are offsets of the yellow lines which show the edge of the road. Is there planned curb work on the east sidewalk as part of this design?



Best,

Stella

On Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 5:08 PM Gerring, Teresa <tgerring@ci.lafayette.ca.us> wrote:

Thank you for the outreach to CalTrans and all of the updates and detail.

Teresa

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From: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:29 PM

To: Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; swotherspoon@gmail.com <swotherspoon@gmail.com>

Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Gerring, Teresa <tgerring@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran,

Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

Good Evening Councilmember Candell,

At this time the City Council has not allocated funding or approved the preparation of concept plans for the east side sidewalk.

Typically we do not return to the City Council with improvement plans at the various stages of development. However, I believe I have indicated that in this case we will return with the 65% plans once they have been prepared. I believe we should have the plans in January sometime and we would be able to show them to the City Council in February.

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From: Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:41 PM

To: Luttrupp, Matt <MLuttrupp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; swotherspoon@gmail.com
<swotherspoon@gmail.com>

Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Gerringer, Teresa <tgerringer@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

When are top concept plans available for the East side sidewalk, the one that does not include building the center median?

Are the 65% plans for the center median coming to Council? Or when?

Thanks for all of your work here!!

-Susan

From: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:40 PM
To: swotherspoon@gmail.com <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Geringer, Teresa <tgerring@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Moran, Mike <MMoran@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Subject: RE: Trans/Circ question

Hello Stella,

No we are in fact including the elimination of the slip lanes in the design for the center median project. This was a relatively recent addition to the project.

As I indicated this staff report is not discussing the center median project and the pro's and con's associated with it.

I would suggest that a better time to meet and discuss your concerns and questions regarding the center median pathway project would be when we have the 65% design submittals. These should be available in January.

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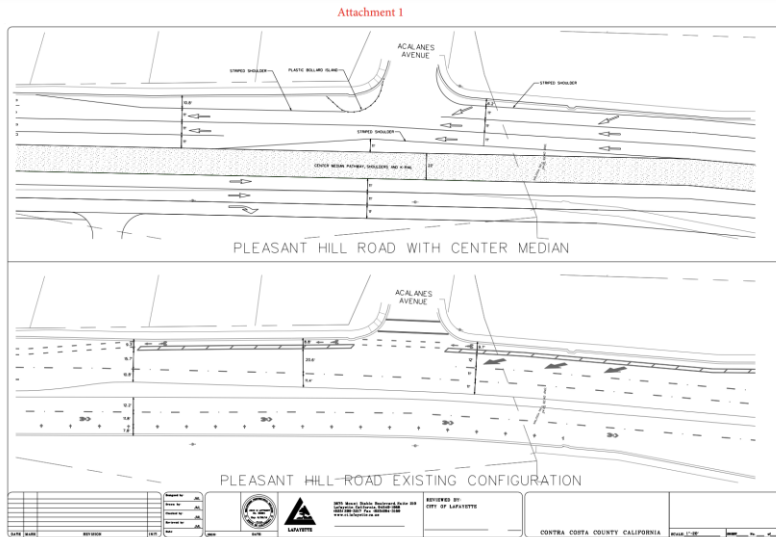
From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Geringer, Teresa <tgerring@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

Hi Matt,

Thank you for a quick and detailed response! Thanks for raising the slip lane issue with Caltrans and for noticing the inconsistency with the treatment of a slip lane at Mt. Diablo and Acalanes Ave.

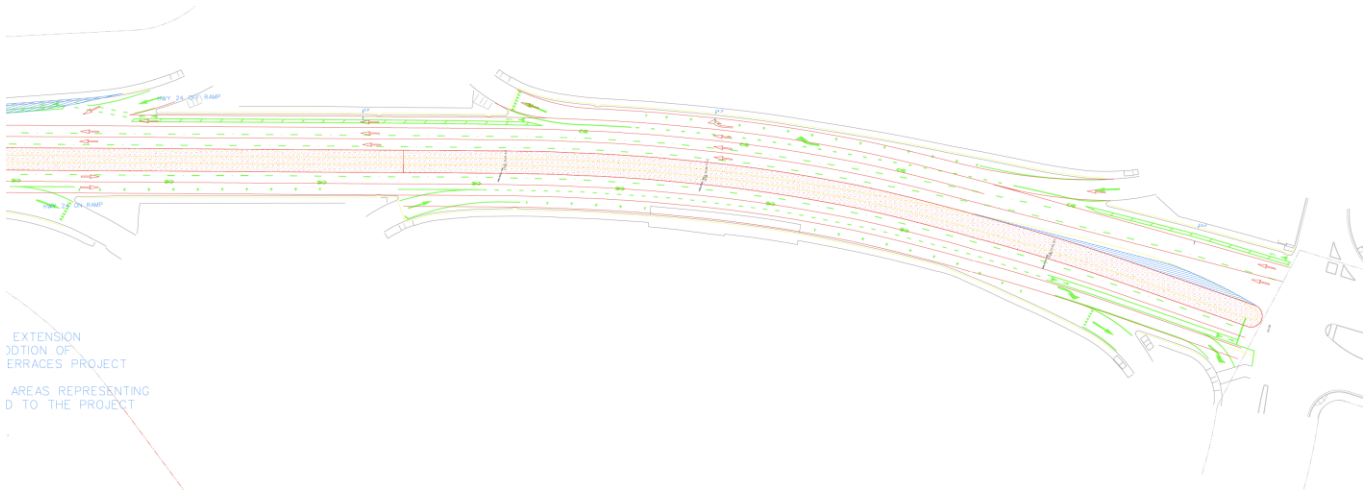
A few comments to your 1 - 4 notes below:

1. You note the elimination of these slip lanes **is** part of the center median pathway design. I think you mean "is not", right?
2. Thanks for asking for the Ped button plans.
3. Thanks for sharing the Caltrans schematics and update with Council. It is important for Council to know the scope of this \$0.9 M investment that will improve the usability and safety of the sidewalk. This is relevant to the consideration of an east side path option and the center median path design.
4. Thanks also for the attached new schematic of the continuous stretch from Mt. Diablo to Deer Hill Rd. This is what I asked about in my comments at the 10/10/2023 Council meeting - what is the buffer of the areas to the south - beyond the right side of the below attachment shown at that meeting.

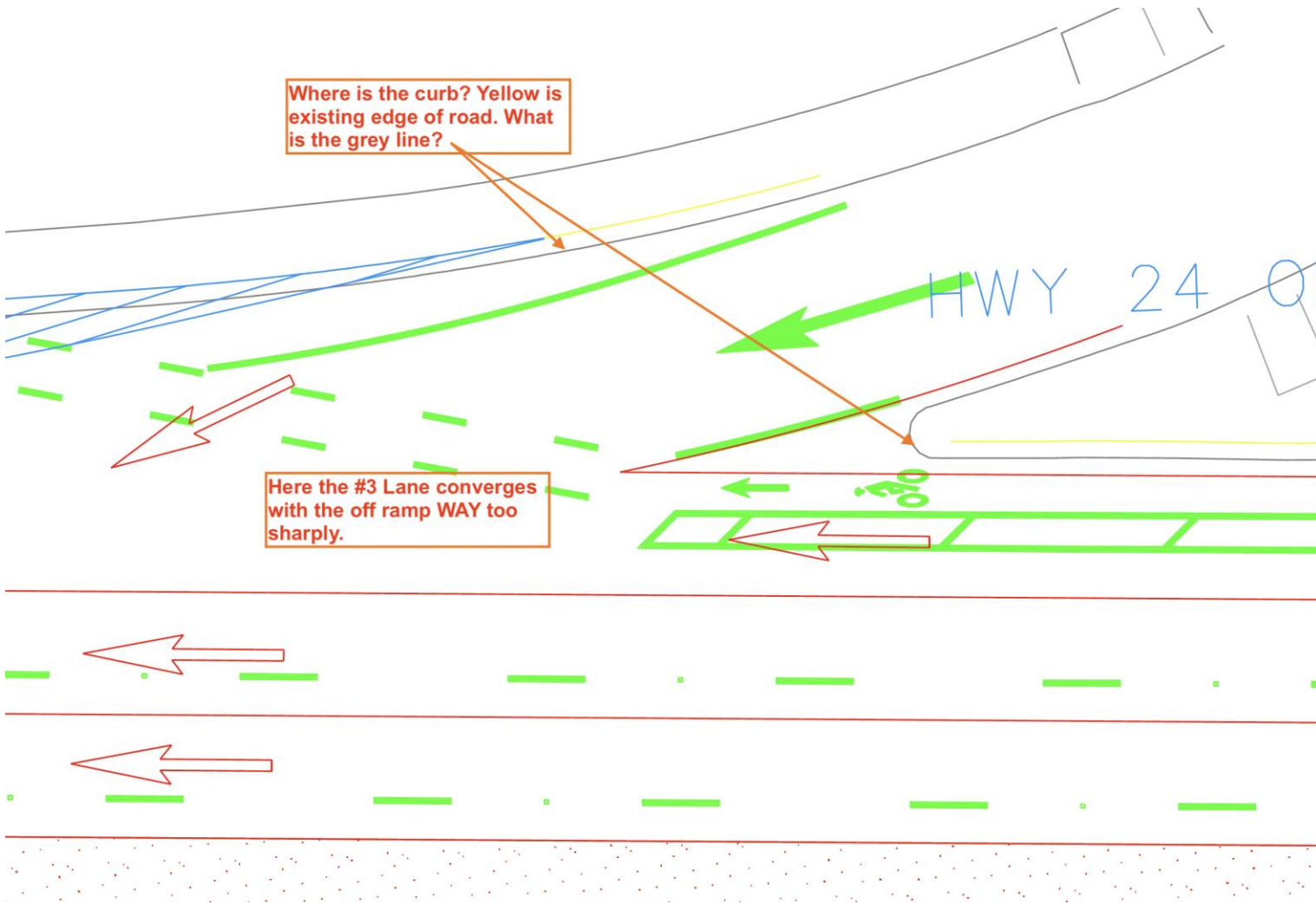


Would you also include the new schematic in the Council Item? This is the first opportunity for the public to see what are the lane changes between Mt. Diablo and the EB 24 to NB PHR off ramp. Previous schematics (5/22, 3/23, and 10/23) did not show this level of detail for the complete project extent and the buffer measures along the three ramps. It would be helpful to add the ramp crosswalk striping to the schematic.

The concern I raised at the 10/10 Council meeting is specifically the buffer in this area, which spans the three ramps and which is over 3/4 the length of the entire project. **The buffer between Acalanes Ave. and the EB 24 to NB PHR ramp ranges from 2' 6" to 4'. I believe this is inadequate for a 43 mph/85th percentile roadway. I ask that the Council review this location and determine if this is an acceptable buffer.**



There are possible ways to increase the buffer in this area that should be raised with Kittleson. One is to look at converting the #3 lane into a buffer. The convergence of the #3 lane with the EB 24 to NB PHR off ramp is too tight as exiting vehicles travel at high speed (often faster than the prevailing NB PHR speed which is 43 mph/85th percentile). The NB PHR through traffic in this lane exceeds the speed limit and I believe this alignment proposal makes the existing unsafe conditions for motor vehicles worse.



I can meet this week on Wednesday between 12 and 3, and Thursday/Friday are fully open. We can look at the slip lanes and the pathway project length to look at the lanes/buffers.

Best,

Stella

On Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 9:36 AM Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us> wrote:

Hello Stella,

I share your frustration in dealing with Caltrans. I tried for several months to get them to explain to me why they were not bringing the curb ramps adjacent to the new RRFB's into ADA compliance as part of this project. Their answer was that they did not put this in the scope of work and it would be too expensive to add it now. Not a very good answer if you ask me but that is as far as I got. You had quite a few comments and questions the following are my responses:

1. There should be a ped head and a ped button for pedestrians crossing the slip lane for northbound Pleasant Hill Road onto the Eastbound Ramp and the signal should be clearer as to the signalization of the slip lane. The signal head facing this slip lane is not intended to control the slip lane but is a redundant head for the Pleasant Hill Road northbound traffic. I agree that it would be better if the slip lane was signalized or eliminated at this location as well as the southbound Pleasant Hill Road onto westbound Mount Diablo Boulevard direction. I will forward your concerns to the contacts that I have at Caltrans for this project. As a side note the elimination of these slip lanes is part of the center median pathway design.
2. Why are new ped buttons being installed at the intersections without new RRFB's or improvements to the signal. The plans set that the City received for this work do not show these. I the plan set I sent you was the draft set. Please see the following link to download the advertised plan set. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lmsPUF1TZ9PUEZkFDv2CoXEm0HtPK1bW/view?usp=sharing>. I will be requesting the plans for the work at Mount Diablo Boulevard and Old Tunnel Road that is not shown in this plan set. My assumption is that the new ped buttons are to address ADA compliance issues with the current buttons and no other work is planned.
3. The staff report that is going to the City Council is not to deliberate the merits of the center median pathway project vs an east side pathway project it is only intended to provide the City Council with information on the costs associated with moving forward with any studies and design work for the east side option. I will add brief section to the staff report that indicates that Caltrans has added additional street lighting at the off ramps on Pleasant Hill Road as part of their RRFB project.
4. Kittelson has provided a schematic for the center median design from Mount Diablo to Deer Hill Road and this is what has been presented to the public and the City Council on multiple occasions. I have also presented a schematic for the center median design to the City Council showing where landscaping buffers or striping buffers could be added to the project from the westbound Highway 24 off ramp to Stanley Boulevard. Ultimately the City Council approved including these striped buffers in the design scope for the center median project. I have attached a schematic that shows these areas as well as the buffer space between the lanes of traffic and the existing sidewalk from Mount Diablo boulevard to Stanley Boulevard.

I am happy to meet with you to discuss the slip lanes at the intersection of Mount Diablo Boulevard and Pleasant Hill Road. However, I believe we are in agreement that these should be eliminated or changed to be signalized. Unfortunately, this signal is controlled by Caltrans and it is not part of the current scope of work. None the less I would relay our concerns to Caltrans.

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From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:32 PM

To: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Cc: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>; Gerringier, Teresa <tgerringier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>;
Candell, Susan <scandell@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Re: Trans/Circ question

Hi Matt and Patrick,

Thanks for this Caltrans planset. It is enormous!

I got the PHR pages from a newer, stamped October 2020 version that I have attached here. One new feature is Caltrans added an additional advance RRFB ~80' back on all ramps and luminaries -- so now 18 RRFBs plus new luminaires over the crosswalks.

However, I am perplexed why Caltrans is not improving the safety of the Mt. Diablo slip lane ramp to EB 24 as part of this project. This is a difficult crossing for Peds as there is only a Ped head at the ramp for EB Mt. Diablo traffic that enters the on ramp straight after crossing PHR. NB PHR Cars using the slip lane don't notice the ped signal and yield to Peds. Furthermore, there is no Ped call button for that ped head at the SE corner by the Animal Hospital so there is no way to activate it when walking north. **There should be a ped call button on the SE corner.**



Also, the Ped call button does not trigger a signal change at the slip lane. As you can see below, a green NB light can appear at the same time as the Ped ROW signal. The Ped call button should trigger a red right arrow signal on the island. An example of this is seen at EB Deer Hill at 1st St.



Either the Ped call button and signal are malfunctioning, or Caltrans considers this slip lane an uncontrolled crossing and mistakenly omitted it from the RRFB project.

Caltrans is also installing many new Ped call buttons at Mt. Diablo and Old Tunnel Rd. and the new posts are installed (you can see one above bisecting the white pickup truck), yet there is none at the SE corner by the Animal Hospital. I've requested the complete October 2020 planset from Caltrans to see if these plans include the replacement Ped call button schematics. I don't understand why Caltrans would not have included a Ped Call Button at this corner OR added an RRFB set. Leaving this slip lane as-is is not desirable.

How can we get Caltrans to address this PHR/Mt. Diablo 24 EB slip ramp within their project?

The scope of this project is larger than I realized (18 RRFBs in total plus new luminaires over the offramp crosswalks). The scope will truly change the conditions for the crossings and improve ped safety. This is a significant change to the conditions existing when the PHR Center Median Project was conceived. **Would you please include these Caltrans schematics and provide an update in your upcoming report to Council?** The Council needs this information to consider as it deliberates on the PHR Center Median Path project.

If the Council chooses to support the PHR Center Median Path, it is essential that the project design does not degrade the usability of the sidewalk that Caltrans has just spent \$0.9M* to improve. This significant

investment of public funds to improve conditions for users of the sidewalk indicates that we should not increase the level of stress by shifting the PHR traffic closer as is proposed with the elimination of the bike lane and parking buffer. The most recent ET&S shows the 85 percentile speed is 43 mph, with two vehicles at 60 and 67 mph (!). This is more than uncomfortably fast and I believe we must preserve the sidewalk buffer the length of the entire project. **Would Kittleson provide a PHR Center Median Path schematic that shows the impact to the sidewalk from Mt. Diablo to Deer Hill?** This would be helpful for fully understanding the proposed design.

I would like to meet you at the Mt. Diablo and PHR intersection to look at the EB 24 slip lane as well as the WB Mt. Diablo slip lane as I think these could use the same treatment to improve ped safety. Let me know some good times for you this week - I'm pretty open.

Best,

Stella

* There are 83 ramp crossings in the project. Six are on PHR/24. Total project cost is \$12.5M.

On Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 9:25 AM Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us> wrote:

Good Morning Patrick and Stella,

The plans are enormous so I put them in a google drive for you to download if you like.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ysU-JptcuiJFuzFHo92-p2K0UjdUDEa9/view?usp=sharing>

I believe they are currently working on the foundations for the new equipment and the electrical runs.

New signs are shown on pages 162 and 163

New RRFB's and Electrical is shown on pages 216-222

The plans do not show any additional work at MDB so I am not sure what they are doing at this intersection. Perhaps they are replacing the ped buttons with new ones as a change order. The striping work that they are doing is fairly minimal from what I could tell it is mostly new crosswalk striping and perhaps a yield line.

Matt Luttropp
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Ph. 925-299-3247
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From: Golier, Patrick <PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 9:11 AM

To: Luttropp, Matt <MLuttropp@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Subject: Trans/Circ question

Hi Matt,

I believe you're off today – hope you're able to relax – but while I'm thinking about it, I wanted to throw to you a series of questions that I got from Stella about the current Caltrans work on PH Road around the interchange:

Do you have any design drawings for the work? What work is taking place now? Do you have a striping plan? Are they putting in ped call-buttons down by MDB?

If you have any answers to her questions, please let me know and I can pass them on to Stella.

Thanks very much.

Patrick Golier

Transportation Program Manager

City of Lafayette

PGolier@ci.lafayette.ca.us

925/299-3229



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Best,

Stella

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

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Best,

Stella

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

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Best,

Stella

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

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Best,
Stella

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 2:11 PM
To: Robbins, Joanne
Cc: Luttropp, Matt, Moran, Mike
Subject: Re: FW: Pleasant Hill Rd. East Side Pathway

Ah ha! It popped up on the 11/27 agenda so I assumed it was up on 12/11. Thanks for letting me know.

Best,

Stella

On Wed, Dec 6, 2023 at 1:16 PM Robbins, Joanne <JRobbins@ci.lafayette.ca.us> wrote:

Dear Ms. Wotherspoon: Thank you for e-mailing the City of Lafayette. Your e-mail is being forwarded as requested.

This item is tentatively scheduled for the meeting on January 8th. Matt will include this e-mail as part of the public comments.

Joanne Robbins, CMC
City Clerk
City of Lafayette

[3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210](#)
[Lafayette, CA 94549](#)
925-284-1968
925-299-3210 (direct)



From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 06, 2023 12:11 PM
To: cityhall <cityhall@ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Subject: Pleasant Hill Rd. East Side Pathway

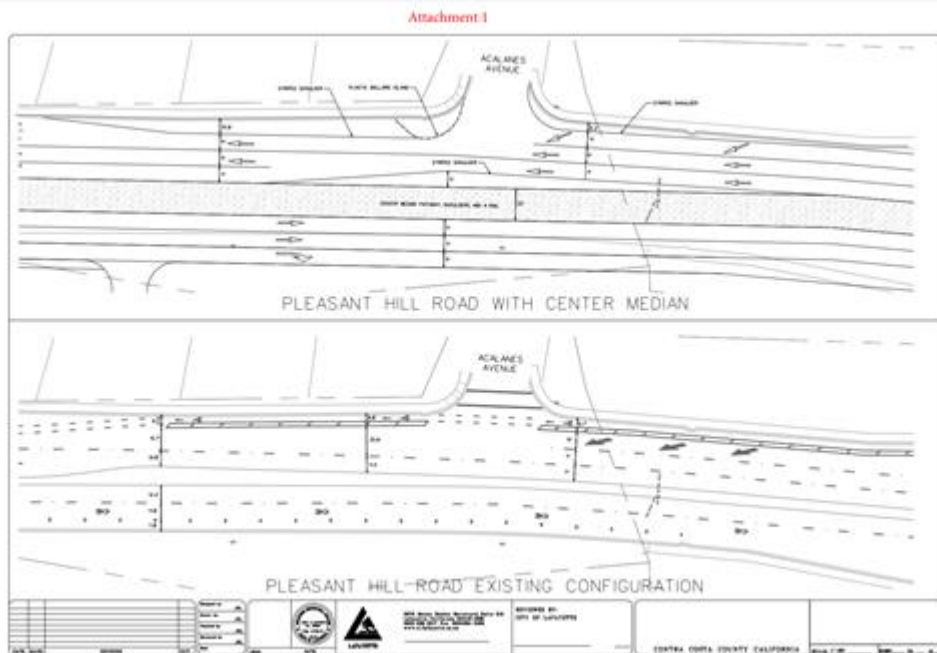
Dear City Councilmembers,

I write to you as a private citizen and do not represent the Transportation and Circulation Commission. I understand you will hear an item on December 11 regarding options for study of the feasibility of an East Side Pathway alternative.

As you know, I advocate for performing an alternatives analysis to determine the best solution for the requirement to improve safety of Pedestrians and Bicyclists between Mt. Diablo and Deer Hill. I am pleased that Caltrans has begun installation of 18 RRFBs, new crosswalk lighting and signage. There will be a pair of RRFBs at the intersection and an advance warning RRFB up each ramp. This is a \$0.9M investment in improving the safety of the sidewalks. I have attached the plans.

I understand that staff is working with Kittleson Associates on the 60% Center Median Path design and will bring this to you in Q1 of the new year. I have recently learned that there is currently **no** plan for buffering the full length of the eastern sidewalk against the high-speed traffic lanes that are shifted closer to the sidewalk in the current Center Median Path design. The buffer plan you discussed at your October 10 meeting is *only* for the segment between Stanley Blvd. and the EB 24 to NB Pleasant Hill Rd. off ramp. The remaining length south to Mt. Diablo has no buffer plan.

[Attachment 1 Item 12A 10/10/2023](#)



There must be adequate buffering against high speed traffic moved closer in the center median path design. The recent speed survey (E&TS) showed the 85th Percentile speed is 43 mph with two vehicles at 60 and 67 mph. It is necessary to buffer the entire length of the sidewalk from Stanley to Mt. Diablo.

Would you please direct staff to bring options for buffering the entire length of the sidewalk to your meeting in the new year? It does not seem prudent to wait until after this meeting to review buffer options.

Best,

Stella Wotherspoon

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City of Lafayette
Staff Report
City Council

Meeting Date: October 10th, 2023

Staff: Matt Luttropp, Engineering Services Manager

Subject: Pleasant Hill Road East Side Pathway Feasibility Update

Summary

At the May 8, 2023 City Council meeting, Council directed Staff to complete the design phase associated with the center median pathway design option. At that City Council meeting, the Council also asked Staff to return to discuss the feasibility of other alignment options for the pathway.

At the June 26, 2023 meeting, Staff provided the City Council with the following preliminary options and costs associated with a potential future study of alternatives to the current center median pathway design scheme.

1. Provide a strip map concept drawing for east side multiuser pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000
2. Provide a strip map concept drawing for west side multiuser pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000
3. Concept sketch for signalized ramp terminals on the east side. Approximate cost \$3,500
4. Basic traffic analysis of signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$4,500
5. Develop design concept for signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$10,000
6. Develop full design plans, specifications and estimate for east or west side design. Approximate cost \$110,000 without signal design work.

At that meeting the Council deferred making a decision on the alternatives listed above and asked staff to contact the stakeholders with additional questions regarding the impacts that a center median or east side pathway design may have. The following is a summary of those discussions.

Discussion

Contact Acalanes Union High School and ask the school for their thoughts on the center median pathway project and how many kids they think would use the pathway.

Staff reached out to Superintendent Nickerson as well as Principal Shawn. Principal Shawn informed Staff that he thought 50 kids may ride their bikes to school now and he does not know how many would ride after the pathway is constructed. That said he is in support of safe bike paths that would encourage more students to cycle to school.

In addition to the anecdotal reports by the School District, Staff used Streetlight Data to provide average daily bicycle volumes along the roadway segments adjacent to Acalanes High School for 2021. The bi-directional bicycle volumes are as follows:

Roadway	Section	2021 Average Daily Bike Volume (bi-directional)			2021 School Year Average Bike Volume (bi-directional) *	
		M-Su All Day	Weekday (M-Fr) All Day	Weekend (Sa-Su) All Day	Weekday (M-Fr) 7am – 9am	Weekday (M-Fr) 3pm – 5pm
Pleasant Hill Road	North of Deer Hill	95	73	150	13	18
Pleasant Hill Road	Deer Hill to Acalanes	101	93	122	11	21
Pleasant Hill Road	Acalanes to Old Tunnel	110	103	152	11	25
Stanley Blvd	East of PH Road	41	41	42	10	11
Deer Hill Road	West of PH Road	47	43	56	7	9

* Excludes data from June, July, and August

Contact the bike community to ask them for input on the possible removal of the proposed bike lane on southbound Pleasant Hill Road between the future trap lane to westbound SR-24 and the through lane. Staff had a detailed conversation with Robert Prinz, Advocacy Director for Bike East Bay. Robert indicated that he has safety concerns about the conflicts associated with the location of the southbound Pleasant Hill Road bike lane within a vehicle weaving area (for vehicles moving between the through lanes and the on-ramp via the future trap lane) and that he would support the elimination of the existing southbound bike lane if the center median pathway project is constructed. However, he would like to see the shared bike lane markings (‘sharrows’) remain in place that indicate that cyclists have the option to travel in the vehicle lane. Further, he indicated that if the City seeks future grant funding for the project he would be willing to write a letter of support for it.

Contact the Fire District and ask them for comment on the potential addition of a buffer that would be constructed along the east side of the road to separate vehicles from pedestrians on the sidewalk, and other concerns about emergency vehicle access and evacuation routes.

Staff discussed the project with Fire Marshall Bachman. He indicated that his preference is for a configuration that would allow vehicles to pull to the right side of the road sufficiently to allow a fire truck or other emergency vehicles to drive along the left side of the road. In the existing roadway configuration, the bike lane, painted buffer, or parking spaces provide for an 8 foot wide refuge on both sides of the street that can be encroached into by vehicles to allow for emergency vehicles to pass on the left side of the street. With the construction of the center median pathway or an east side pathway this refuge area would be reduced or eliminated. However, Fire Marshall Bachman indicated that if the center median configuration is constructed, he does not see an issue with the construction of a concrete or plastic delineator bulb out at Acalanes Avenue to prevent motorists from using the area as an extended right turn lane. A sketch of this configuration is shown in Attachment 1 where the shoulder would be striped and the bulb out would have plastic bollards to prevent vehicle access. If the pathway

were to be constructed along the east side of Pleasant Hill Road it may be possible to maintain an adequate refuge depending on the configuration selected.

Contact the Police Department and ask them to comment on how the center median or east side pathway designs may impact the evacuation routes on Pleasant Hill Road.

Staff discussed the project with Chief Alldritt and he indicated that when evacuations are planned most of the scenarios assume that people will be heading toward the freeway, not past it or away from it, as would be the case for northbound Pleasant Hill Road in the vicinity of the center median or east side pathway designs. His concerns in this area are primarily related to possible impacts on the southbound direction of travel but the construction of the Terraces project would improve this condition with the construction of the proposed trap lane. As such, within the limits of this project he does not believe that the center median pathway project creates a concern for evacuation routes in the area.

Contact Caltrans and discuss with them possible alternative pathway locations or enhancements that could be implemented on the east side of Pleasant Hill Road.

Engineering Staff and Council Members Geringer and Candell met virtually with Greg Currey, the Caltrans Pedestrian and Bicycle Branch Chief for District 4. At this meeting the group discussed the various configurations, including the center median pathway, an east side pathway with and without signalized on and off ramps, elimination of slip lanes at the Mount Diablo and Pleasant Hill Road, and installation of raised crosswalks at the on and off ramps. Greg was generally supportive of all of the options. However, he indicated that Caltrans would only perform one courtesy review of a project and after that any further reviews would need to be part of a formal project (typically part of an encroachment permit application once plans are 100 percent completed).

Mark Wong, Project Manager for Caltrans emailed staff and indicated that he had spoken with the Highway Operations office about the idea of signalizing the ramps. He indicated that they would need to see traffic volume studies, queue length information, delay calculations, ramp metering impacts, etc. He also indicated that they would need to see minimal degradation to mainline operations to allow signalizing of the ramps. He also indicated that there are many other factors that could influence that decision such as the weighted benefits to bicyclists and overall mobility. He indicated that an ICE (Intersection Control Evaluation) analysis would also be required as there are simply too many unknowns.

Staff contacted our design consultant and we have received a preliminary cost estimate of about \$30,000.

Greg agreed to forward our center median project and east side design alternative to the District Design Liaison to see if they would be willing to provide preliminary high-level comments on the center median project and east side design alternatives. To date we have only received comments with regard to the process for applying for an encroachment permit and an indication that we will need to enter into a revised maintenance agreement for the new facility within Caltrans Right of Way. At this time staff does not believe additional information will be forthcoming until such time as we apply for an encroachment permit for the project.

Recommendation

The alternatives offered previously are still valid. Discuss and direct.



City of Lafayette Staff Report

City Council

Meeting Date: June 26, 2023

Staff: Matt Luttropp, Engineering Services Manager

Subject: Consider appropriating funds to design an alternative to the center median pathway design on Pleasant Hill Road between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Deer Hill Rd./Stanley Blvd.

Summary

At the May 22, 2023 City Council meeting the Council requested that staff bring back cost estimates for our design consultant to complete a preliminary design and final design for a multi-use pathway (MUP) along the east side of Pleasant Hill Road. This proposed work would be in addition to the existing design being completed for a MUP in the center median of Pleasant Hill Road, between Deer Hill Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

The request by Council was prompted by some members of the community who have requested that staff look at all possible options to improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure in the area. In response, our design consultant (Kittelson and Associates) has provided the following proposals and costs:

1. Provide a strip map concept drawing for east side multiuser pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000
2. Provide a strip map concept drawing for west side multiuser pathway with summary of pros/cons and potential impacts. Approximate cost \$17,000
3. Concept sketch for signalized ramp terminals on the east side. Approximate cost \$3,500
4. Traffic analysis of signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$4,500
5. Develop design concept for signalized ramps. Approximate cost \$10,000
6. Develop full design plans, specifications and estimate for east or west side design. Approximate cost \$110,000.

Discussion and Update

Center Median Design

To review, the current design alternative for the center median pathway assumes:

- No loss of any vehicle lanes on Pleasant Hill Road, Deer Hill Road, or Stanley Boulevard; the roadway configuration would remain as it is today.

- No change in vehicular delay unless pedestrians or bicyclists use the facility. Any additional delay to drivers would be the direct result of additional pedestrian or cyclist “calls” at the signal to facilitate movement between the pathway and the sidewalk.

Since the May 22nd meeting, staff has reached out to the developer of the proposed Terraces development to discuss the right-of-way requirements for the center median pathway design. A review of the designed frontage improvements indicates it will be possible to move forward with the center median design without the need for additional right of way beyond what has already been accounted for in their approved design project, provided the bike lane on the southbound side of Pleasant Hill Road is eliminated or the buffers between the center pathway and the concrete barrier, and the vehicle travel way and the concrete barrier are reduced from 2 feet to 1 foot in width. This detail would be worked out as we proceed with final design for a center MUP.

Staff was asked to consider improvements to the safety of the east side sidewalk along Pleasant Hill Road as part of the center median design effort. The primary concern that was raised was the proximity of vehicles to individuals walking on the sidewalk with the elimination of the bike lane, which would be necessary to facilitate the center median design. It is important to note that vehicles currently are directly adjacent to the sidewalk along the northbound side of Pleasant Hill Road starting at the right turn lane to the intersection with Stanley Boulevard. In this section of the roadway there is very limited right of way and as such it will not be possible to improve upon this situation without reducing the sidewalk width or acquiring additional land from a private property owner. Thus, this condition with the project would not change from existing conditions and the construction of the center median pathway will not move vehicles any closer to the sidewalk than they currently are at this location.

However, south of the right turn lane along northbound Pleasant Hill Road there is enough right of way and road width on the east side of the Pleasant Hill Road to construct a striped or landscaped buffer between the vehicles and users of the east side sidewalk, even with construction of a center median pathway. Specifics associated with these options will be studied by the project design team and incorporated into a center pathway design.

Although staff recognizes that residents have expressed a desire to explore other options regarding the location of the MUP on Pleasant Hill Road, it is important to reiterate that the primary goal of this project is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles at the high speed freeway interchange. The center median design eliminates the conflicts at the on- and off-ramps to Highway 24 while the other design options maintain these conflict points. Residents have voiced concerns about the safety of the center median design at the signalized intersections on both ends. It is important to point out that the use of signalized crossings to access the center median pathway is safer and more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists than the multiple uncontrolled freeway ramps that these roadway users currently must cross. While none of the designs eliminate the need for pedestrians and cyclists to cross at these intersections, unlike the on- and off-ramps these intersections afford an added measure of safety using a full traffic signal.

Fiscal Impact

Additional studies and designs are currently unfunded, and a funding source will need to be identified to cover any additional scope of work selected. Although staff does not recommend pursuing an alternative to the center MUP, for approximately \$17,000 the City’s consultant would generate a conceptual strip map drawing for the east side of Pleasant Hill Road. Other options listed earlier in this

report could also be considered up to and including a full design for the east or west side of the road which would increase costs by approximately \$110,000.

Recommendation

Because an east side path does not eliminate conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles at the freeway on- and off-ramps, and because additional design work is unfunded: staff does not recommend allocating reserve funds to consider a design alternative to the proposed center multi-use pathway.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Candell/Gerringer) to adopt Consent Calendar Items B, C and E. Vote: 5-0 (Ayes: Anduri, Dawson, Candell, Gerringer, and Kwok; Noes: None).

9. OLD BUSINESS

A. Matt Luttropp, Engineering Services Manager

Consider appropriating funds to design an alternative to the center median pathway design on Pleasant Hill Road between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Deer Hill Rd./Stanley Blvd.

Recommendation: Because an east side path does not eliminate conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles at the freeway on- and off-ramps, and because additional design work is unfunded: staff does not recommend allocating reserve funds to consider a design alternative to the proposed center multi-use pathway.

Engineering Services Manager Matt Luttropp gave the staff report and overview of the Council's consideration to appropriate funds to design an alternative to the center median pathway design on Pleasant Hill Road between Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Deer Hill Road/Stanley Boulevard.

Councilmember Candell referred to the map of the road now. The 3-lane W for the autos extends beyond Acalanes Road now and with this design the City is eliminating the bike lane on the east side. She asked where bikers would go.

Mr. Luttropp said bicyclists have some of the same options they have now. When going southbound, there is no bike lane now but there is a sharrow. That same configuration can be put in place on the northbound side which already has sharrows going underneath the freeway, but this is not a great option for people who do not feel comfortable trying to keep up with the flow of traffic. So, those people would be encouraged to use the center median as their bike route. For the Terraces, the bike lane would stop at the freeway on-ramp. If there is a desire to still preserve that they can do that, but they would need to reduce the shoulders associated with the center median pathway or center lanes adjacent to the center median k-rails.

Councilmember Candell asked if the signalized lights are safer and she asked by how much. Mr. Luttropp said he cannot quantify that, but the signals would run about \$750,000 each. In this case, there is the added difficulty of them being on Caltrans property. Caltrans would have to agree to having signals on their property which will likely impact the flow of traffic to and from the freeway. The secondary concern is when you push the call for the on-ramp signal, you will back cars out onto Pleasant Hill Road which will create additional delays on Pleasant Hill Road.

Councilmember Candell referred to a controversial project in San Francisco on Valencia Street. One of the complaints was the weaving the bikers were doing to get into the middle. They were not getting off their bikes, weaving, and have been causing accidents. She asked if this would not happen for Lafayette.

Mr. Luttropp said he thinks those that are the "road warrior bicyclists" will not use the center median because they ride 35 mph. He envisions commuters or kids going to school or people just trying to connect from one side of the freeway to the other side. They are the ones that will use the center median more often. They will not have the weave problem because much like a freeway this is a controlled access facility. You can only get in on the ends whereas you can get in anywhere you want on Valencia Street, which is the problem with it.

Councilmember Candell said by making them have sharrows on both sides, she asked how much less safe is that than having their own bike lane. Mr. Luttrupp said anytime you have a dedicated lane it will be safer if you choose to be on the road versus a sharrow.

Councilmember Kwok said there is a section that talks about reducing the margins next to the concrete barrier from 2 feet down to 1 foot in order to not infringe on the right-of-way of the Terraces. Mr. Luttrupp stated this is an option if they want to keep that bike lane. If the Council is okay with not having a bike lane in the southbound direction from Deer Hill Road to the on-ramp then they do not need to do anything to the medians.

Councilmember Kwok said the middle 2 lanes of the separated path is 10 feet, 2 feet shoulders, and 2 feet of k-rail, and then 2 more feet before paint. He asked and confirmed with Mr. Luttrupp that it is 22 feet in total and they would reduce each of those by 1 foot, so 2, 2, 2 all go down to 1, 1, 1 and 1. Or, you could do 0, 2, 2, 0 which he does not recommend, or you could make the pathway 2, 0, 0, 2. He just needs 4 feet.

Councilmember Kwok said in the cost proposals, if they design the east side it is a certain cost, and if they do the west side it is a different cost. It begs the question that if they did the east side, he asks if this implies that all southbound traffic is then coming over to cut over to the east side and use the east side and then go back to the other side. It is a combined usage so therefore what will be drawn up is a bi-directional path. Mr. Luttrupp confirmed.

Councilmember Kwok asked if you would then have bi-directional bike opportunities. Mr. Luttrupp said it would still be a multi-use path. You would take the center median concept and move it over to the east side.

Councilmember Kwok said that seems to imply there is no reason to do a study of both the east and the west side. Staff only proposed one or the other. Mr. Luttrupp said you could do both, but he would not suggest that because it would be a waste.

Councilmember Kwok said if you did the west side, the implication is that the west side would be bi-directional path or the east side as bi-directional and you are not recommending both for that reason.

Mayor Anduri asked if #6 includes 1-5. Mr. Luttrupp replied no, it does not.

Mayor Anduri asked if you could not do #6 without doing #1. Mr. Luttrupp said arguably you could if you did not want to have any preliminary work done and wanted to go straight forward with it and build it.

Mayor Anduri said if they did #6 that would not necessarily include the signalized ramp terminals. Mr. Luttrupp said no, it would not include the signalized ramps.

Mayor Anduri asked if there has been a time recently when staff has sat down with Caltrans and had a discussion of what the City's issues and safety concerns are about Pleasant Hill Road and what they might be willing to do.

Mr. Luttrupp said he has not had that discussion. He does not know if Mr. Moran or Mr. Golier have either.

Mayor Anduri asked if it might be worthwhile to schedule a meeting with Caltrans and see what they are willing to do after the City pointing out its problems and get a sense of what they might be willing to do.

Mr. Luttropp stated they would want a specific request and they would want it to be better directed, which he described. He can do it, but he would have guarded expectations.

Councilmember Candell said if they are going to install the RRFBs she thinks the City should talk to them sooner rather than later.

Mayor Anduri said he is stepping back and looking at this. It is such a difficult problem to figure out, some things are so expensive, and this whole thing was designed when Pleasant Hill Road was to be seen in the future as a freeway and yet, they have the full 4 cloverleaf. Maybe they have done that somewhere else and some other community has approached them and asked what they can do. They have people coming off the freeway at high speed expecting a freeway and it is now more of a collector street, and they are all speculating about what Caltrans would do.

Councilmember Gerringier said if they had these kinds of decisions the Council is being asked to make tonight about additional studies she asked if they could go to Caltrans ahead of that with those very specific things about stop signs, signalized ramps, speed humps, and others. Mr. Luttropp said, yes.

Mayor Anduri opened the public comment period.

PEG MATSON ceded her time to Ramsay Thomas.

RAMSAY THOMAS asked not to fund the study, said regardless what happens to this median strip their community and everyone else uses the pathway to bike or walk and they will choose to go down the east side parkway. To suggest not spending \$17,000 to study a bit of improvements seems odd. He encouraged the Council to ask tough questions of staff regarding the issue. The Vision Zero asks for a data-driven approach to crash patterns. They would like someone to ask staff where the data is that says there is a crash pattern between cars, pedestrians, and bikers on this strip of road. They know it is scary and would love to see improvements, but this does not mean it is automatically dangerous. They have lived there for decades and have not seen any crash patterns at all, ever.

In contract, there is a clear crash pattern at the 2 intersections where the red lights are. They sent pictures of an awful crash in March next to the Shell Station. Their experience is that they see piles of debris when walking, jogging, riding bikes at the 2 intersections where the stop lights are. They would estimate there are 4 crashes a year on both, possibly more. Those are exactly designed where these bikers going to the center median strip are supposed to enter. It is inevitable that drivers will be more attempted to accelerate on yellow lights, run through red lights, and cause accidents.

His second question is where is the data from a professional survey that suggests bikers will choose that center median pathway as opposed to what they currently use—the eastside pathway or open road itself. The Acalanes High School community which is supposed to be the beneficiary of this Safe Routes to Schools initiative have not been asked. One of their staff members from Acalanes walked through their neighborhood recently. They asked her if they heard about the median strip, and she said they have not heard a thing. She thinks it is the craziest idea and she would never let her child bike down a pathway.

The third question is, is it not time for staff or the Council to admit that this median strip proposal is really for bikers only, as no pedestrians will use that. That then is designated as a Class IV bike path and a Class IV bike path has consequences. The enormous study on bike paths provided by the State suggests that if a Class IV bike path is proposed or designated, the similar and simultaneous study should be made to make sure pedestrians on the other end of the pathway are not going to be impacted in a negative way. That would open the door to the Council saying they could spend money on the study of an east side parkway because they have designated this as a bike-only pathway which it most certainly will be, and they can use the money already there to produce the study on the east side pathway. With 2 comparative study, a survey of what use is likely to be, median pathway, open road, east side parkway, the City Council is working with real information to start making a decision that makes common sense, and they would urge the Council to move in that direction.

DUANE NELSEN said he and his wife appreciate that the Council is listening to concerns raised by residents about the Pleasant Hill Road median pathway by adding an item on tonight's agenda to fund the study of an alternative. However, City staff is recommending the denial of spending funds to look at an alternate. At the same time, staff is continuing to push forward with the \$3.2 million plan which ignores serious concerns from not only residents but the City's own Transportation and Circulation Transportation Circulation Commission. The City has done a lot of good things, which he described as speed bumps, solar powered flashing lights adjacent to the Acalanes Football Field. This slowed traffic, created a safer way to cross Stanley, good signage, and flashing lights. He asked to contrast that with the City's current plan for this project. The gains are that pedestrians and bikes will not have to confront Hwy 24 on and off ramps, with the caveat if pedestrians and bikes use the pathway. The losses he could see are that traffic will be delayed if pedestrians or bicyclists use the facility. The specific language was, "No change in vehicular delay unless pedestrians or bicyclists use the facility." The City must believe people will use it or they would not put it in and therefore, there will be a delay. That delay with the amount of traffic going through Pleasant Hill is a major concern for safety.

Councilmember Candell asked if people look at those RFFBs and stop when they see them flashing on Stanley.

Mr. Nelsen said yes, people have reacted well and then have been very helpful.

GILBERT WOLTJER ceded his time to Sheryl Anderson.

SHERYL ANDERSON suggested reading Ramsay Thomas's thorough and articulate letter to the City Council dated June 22nd. She said she stands in favor of the analysis and support of the east Pleasant Hill Road pathway because the median strip pathway offers more possible dangerous outcomes. She has lived here since 1978 and her husband since 1985 on the property at the end of Acalanes Avenue off Pleasant Hill Road. They have gone on 2+ walks a week during that time that always includes the east Pleasant Hill Road. They understand the freeway entrances and exits always need more focus when crossing, i.e., cannot be jabbering or be on the phone, but they have never felt unsafe in all those years. She understands data supposedly supports their experience with no crashes reported at those points. The dangerous accidents Mr. Thomas referred to have almost always been at the intersection which are planned as the entrances and exits to the possible median strip pathway, Mt. Diablo and Pleasant Hill Road, and especially at Stanley and Pleasant Hill Road. The strip could mean more foot and bike traffic and could really make it more dangerous for Acalanes High School students. If you live in this neighborhood you see readily that one of the big contributions to the crashes are people running the red stop lights from slightly to full out blatantly. You see this often or have experienced it personally.

Another issue is that if the median strip is put in the driving lanes on either side might need to be smaller so it might feel more crowded and congested. The ones inside the strip seem more captive and vulnerable until they get to one side or the other. She questioned what happens when cars change lanes and possibly getting too close and scraping the cement strip, or car accidents that cause a few cars to get jumbled and hit the cement barrier. Median occupants have nowhere to go until they can work their way out. It remains to be seen how useful such a median strip path would be. First, bicyclists and pedestrians are not good next to each other in small enclosed spaces, and she questioned if they would want to take the extra time needed to use the crosswalks that lead to getting you into and out of the median strip.

When she first heard about the median strip idea she was floored and head-shaken because it seems so counter-intuitive that someone would walk or bike down the middle of the road with 2 lanes of traffic to either side, even with a partial concrete barrier. She thanked the Council for listening and said people will still see her and her husband walking up and down east Pleasant Hill Road no matter how this plays out.

MARGIE DARLINGTON ceded her time to Janet Thomas.

JANET THOMAS said as mentioned in her letter, the median strip proposal has motivated her to speak about a situation she has been aware of for decades. There are ways that the walkway along Pleasant Hill Road could be improved to enhance safety, attractiveness, and use but she has not felt compelled to say anything until the median strip pathway proposal came up. She reiterated that she can understand and have heard this is scary and dangerous for many people, especially bikers, but she still stands by her claim that she is not afraid to walk on the east side pathway. She has jogged, ridden a bike with kids, pushed a stroller there over the years, have always done so knowing she needs to be cautious at the on and off ramps. In most cases, autos will stop as she approaches the sidewalk, or she waits until the path is clear. However, there are obvious ways to remedy some of the safety concerns along the corridor. The first is cutting the vegetation near the on and off ramps to improve driver visibility of bikers and pedestrians. She presented pictures of the on and off ramps and she recognizes it is hard to work with Caltrans, but she thinks the City needs to try.

Emboldening and shifting the crosswalks is important. This was initially meant to be part of a highway. The crosswalks do not make sense in many cases, and whatever the City does it should try to improve where those crosswalks are. That way, drivers and people using the pathway would feel safer. She asked to replace the current sidewalk or the wider pathway that has a barrier between the path and car traffic to allow 2-way biking and pedestrian use which would be a Class I pathway would be ideal. A wider path would allow bikers, who currently use the green lanes, to cross over a lane of traffic merging onto the freeway. This would no longer have to be the case because they would be together.

At the eastern corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard near the Veterinarian Hospital when coming north, this is one of the scariest places to walk in the City which is about 5 feet of a merge lane onto the highway. People are speeding and do not even look to see if there are pedestrians. There is an island there, and she would recommend that be replaced with a right-turn at the stop light. Simply making the whole pathway look more attractive through resurfacing and landscaping, thus more comfortable for those traveling on it, as well as the fact this is an entry point to Lafayette.

In her letter, she cited her reasons for not thinking the median strip pathway is the best way to improve safety which she will not go into, but she reiterated that she and others from her neighborhood would like to work with City staff as they move forward to try to do what is best for this important transportation corridor. She requests the City not pursue construction of the median strip pathway until thorough consideration, discussion, and analysis of the pros and cons of an expanded east side Class I pathway versus the proposed median strip pathway has taken place.

CHRISTINE SLOSEK ceded her time to Steve Slosek.

STEVE SLOSEK voiced support of speakers thus far who think the center median idea is a very flawed idea. He is someone who have commuted for years by bicycle over this very path that exists. He is not a road warrior but a 63-year old who rides a 30-year old mountain bike. He thinks the City got hooked on this idea of the center median by free money and there seems to be no ability to stop what seems to be a bad idea. He supports pursuing alternatives before the Council continues down this path. He applauded the intent but thinks it is a bad idea. He very much enjoys the improvements already made by adding the green marking, which was a substantial change for the better. His main point here was, while supporting alternatives, he wants to also say that he is looking for a commitment from the Council. Since the Council has already approved proceeding with the design work of the center median he asked to stop. Before committing to pursuing to any funding for the center median, to ask staff to clearly evaluate all reports because they are not clear of an analysis of Option A-put in the center median, Option B-do nothing. He asked to identify the net benefits, positive and negative. It seems this whole approach has been to eliminate this traffic conflict and everything else is secondary. So, the whole process has been to make the implications less bad and he does not think that is the right approach. He is an architect and suggested starting from the beginning at alternatives before moving forward, but unfortunately the City is past that point in the process.

He asked 5 things when getting to that point--Is a bike rider safe if they take this center median. He contends he would be less safe. He assumes pedestrians will take this path so the City is putting bicycles, E-bikes, E-scooters, kids, walking with cell phones and headphones on, and they will be put in the center of Pleasant Hill Road and he will say that is safer than the existing condition. As a bike rider he is more likely to get in an accident there than he is on the side of the road. Riding bikes on the sidewalk does not make sense and the Council is saying to put bikes going in 2 directions and pedestrians all in the same place which does not make sense. He asked to step back and determine whether this is better or worse for safety and whether it is more convenient. To him, it is far less convenient.

Right now, he has 1 stop light, 1 signal, he turns left if going to BART and is on Pleasant Hill, has a right-hand turn, and then he is home free. If he takes the center median he needs to wait for 2 signals—2 signals to get to the center median, get to the end, then wait for another signal. He thinks it would be 2-4 minutes at the signal and worse coming back because he cannot turn right onto Acalanes. He must go all the way to the end and back track.

He asked who will use this? He has never seen any analysis that says what bikers and pedestrians are using it. Earlier mentioned is there will be no change in vehicular delay at the intersection unless pedestrians or bicyclists use the facility which is an insane statement. The City does not know who will use it and the impact, so this is forcing an idea without stepping back.

There will be impacts on the neighborhood. The first meeting the Council eliminated the right-hand turn onto Stanley which was crazy. He asked that whatever the design ends up being he asked how this will impact the Reliez Creek neighborhood. Lastly, for high school drop-off or pickup, no one has looked at what happens.

Mayor Anduri said Mr. Slosek said he wanted a commitment that before the City pursues funding for the center median there would be an analysis of A) the center median; and B) nothing. Mr. Slosek clarified that he said before proceeding with funding construction, the City step back and have a simple plus/minus comparison of whatever ends up being proposed, what is the current condition, and he added any of these other alternates pursued, and how better or worse they would be.

Mayor Anduri said what is being proposed for the east side is a Class I walkway which he understands to be a 10-foot-wide walkway that can accommodate pedestrians and 2-way bike traffic. This sounds like the center median

Mr. Luttrupp said staff is basically copying what they do in the center median and putting it on the side of the road.

Mayor Anduri said in terms of flow of pedestrians, he asked if there is a difference.

Mr. Slosek said personally when riding his bike, he is not in the center of Pleasant Hill Road with 2 concrete barriers on each side. He thinks the right solution is to allow confident bike riders to stay on the sides of the roads and not make it more dangerous to keep what you have.

Mayor Anduri, in refining his question, asked if Mr. Slosek sees a difference in potential accidents between a Class I walkway or multi-purpose walkway on the east side or the center median.

Mr. Slosek said he does not know the specific details of what the alternate would be in terms of the configuration and the layout. Assuming it is the same and the same number of people were in it, the situation would be the same. His opinion would be if there is a casual or a not so confident bike rider going slow, it is better being on the side and not the center of the road. If going at a pace that is slow, they are not likely to meet someone on an E-bike going 25 mph. He and the E-bike rider will need to say on a safe path on the right side of the road going north and south.

STELLA WOTHERSPOON said she is speaking as a resident and not a member of the Transportation Circulation Commission. She thanked the Council for asking staff for obtaining the cost estimates for options for studies of an eastside path. She encouraged the Council to fund studies 1 and 3 through 5 to understand the comparative pros and cons of continuing a Class I pathway that exists south of Mt. Diablo Boulevard. They need to understand how the freeway ramps can be controlled via a stop sign or signal. This would create conditions like the southern pathway. She would not limit the study design to signalized ramps but rather allow the consultant to determine the optimal method of traffic control. There is a freeway light quality of Pleasant Hill Road and it results from its physical design as a future placeholder for a future freeway. But, it is time to work with Caltrans to re-design Pleasant Hill Road to align with the local scale.

The width of the right-of-way and the free right off-ramps maintain driver's perception that they are still on a freeway and this is why they see 85th percentile speeds well in excess of the posted 35 mph limit. Caltrans has entered a new era as she understands. In 2020, it launched a Division of Safety and adopted the Safe System framework. The Director is a former Transportation Circulation Commissioner. The City needs to engage with Caltrans and some of us may know the person who directs that division.

Exploring the control of the off-ramps aligns with the goals of Vision Zero and the tactic of reducing speed as a major focus in the 2023 draft Local Road Safety Plan. The crash analysis for that plan found that none of the incidents on Pleasant Hill Rod involved a bicyclist or pedestrian, and all were motor vehicle or motorcycle crashes. Speed and inattention were the factors, so controlling speed will benefit all modes. Interestingly, from 2009 to 2020, the City had Pleasant Hill Road, Deer Hill to Stanley to Mt. Diablo Corridor study on the Transportation Circulation Commission Work Plan and the intent was to look at ways to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. It appeared on 2 grant candidate lists and was described as "development of a corridor plan for Pleasant Hill Road to that extent, consider walkway facilities, improve crossings at freeway on and off ramp safety improvements, and feasibility of southbound bike lanes." Funding those studies 1, 3 through 5 with the east side alternative would achieve the goals of the corridor study envisioned over that 11 year span, it would also complete the due diligence of possibilities of these 2 alternatives, and most importantly it would be meaningful engagement with the broader public.

MARY ANN HOISINGTON said she understood this project was designed to protect the Acalanes students as they rode their bikes to school. If that is the case, it bothers her that she was speaking to a grandmother of children who attend Acalanes and they told her that hardly anyone rides a bike to school. Therefore, she asked how many young people at Acalanes will be using this project.

SADEGH said this is his first time speaking at a Council meeting and said he is a frequent traveler through Pleasant Hill Road. He grew up here and went to Acalanes and is familiar with the area. He referred to the area south of Mt. Diablo on Pleasant Hill Road and said there has been a recent change to the bike lane before the roundabout. One of the lanes was converted.

Mayor Anduri stated the Council will be addressing that in the next item.

CHERYL MACDONALD said she agrees with many of the speakers and their concerns of funding for the east end project for the study. There has been a difficult Caltrans relationship in the past, but she was encouraged by Ms. Wotherspoon's comments and thinks the City should speak with them.

LIBBY HENRY said she saw the recommendation from Mr. Luttrupp and is very disheartened by the disingenuous part of the staff about the east side pathway. Most residents and particularly those people most affected by this would much rather see an alternative to the median project. To say it does not solve the problems, unless the City has no pedestrians, walkways or cars, there will be problems no matter what is done. Staff fails to mention the median pathway creates a lot more problems than it solves. According to the report, it is a lot less expensive to do the preliminary work on this study than what is currently being done. She hopes the Council rejects staff's recommendation and pursues going further with this because she does not feel it was given fair attention by those involved.

Mayor Anduri said Mr. Thomas raised a point with respect to use of the funds that the City has received for the median pathway which is if they designate the center median as primarily or exclusively for bikes and it is deemed to be a Class IV bikeway then the City is required to study effects on pedestrians which might lead them to study an alternative on the east side and use part of the funds for that. He asked if this would be possible.

Mr. Luttrupp said he does not believe it is because the grant funding the City received was for a multi-use pathway in the center median. Changing that would require the City to obtain approval for that.

Mayor Anduri asked what is the extent with the interaction with the school district, specifically Acalanes Union High School District.

Mr. Luttrupp said he has not personally reached out to them. They received notices, they had the A-frame signs up, and he was not sure how anyone would not know about this project over the last year or so. There has been a great deal of information on social media, A-frames, and meetings as evidenced by the people who turned out to his public meetings.

Mayor Anduri said the last the Council discussed this, there was a comment they might need 8 feet of right-of-way from the Terraces project in order to do this, but this is new information tonight that they do not need to do that.

Mr. Luttrupp said correct. The developer already baked it into their design and had assumed they would be providing that much right-of-way to accommodate the center median pathway plus the 5-foot bike lane they had included in their design.

Mayor Anduri said if we get the 8 feet, he asked if that means they do not have to decide between a bikeway and narrowing the shoulders.

Mr. Luttrupp said they still must make that choice as to whether the City wants the dedicated bike lane in the southbound lanes from Deer Hill Road to the on ramp, and if so, they need to reduce the shoulders in the center median pathway and adjacent lanes even with the additional 8 feet of right-of-way.

Councilmember Candell said she knows the City did extensive outreach to Acalanes when they were doing all changes to the speed humps and safe routes to school items. She asked and confirmed there was no official contact with them for this project.

Mr. Luttrupp said no, and as the Council is aware, this project took a slightly different path than normal. They still could however, but at this point the City is already starting the design work.

Councilmember Candell referred to data collected before and after in Burton Valley, and she asked if there is any plan to collect data before and afterwards. Mr. Luttrupp asked what data should be collected.

City Manager Srivatsa stated they did an analysis of the number of students biking to and from the school and the number of pedestrians for Burton Valley.

Mr. Luttrupp said staff would probably want to collect that data the year before it gets built and then collect the data the year after since staff has no idea when this project will get built because it is based on funding. He would not think collecting data right now would be particularly useful, particularly if it is built 5-6 years from now because people's habits can change quite a bit in that span.

Councilmember Candell asked and confirmed staff could do the outreach to Acalanes School. Mr. Luttrupp said he was not sure what that data would look like because it would simply be asking how many people they think use it, but it costs nothing to ask for this.

Councilmember Candell said if they do these studies, they do not talk about the RRFBs, and she asked if they will assume the east side multi-use pathway if they study it will include the fact it will have RFBs in there or not.

Mr. Luttrupp said the studies in the list for the east side include pros and cons, and the RRFBs could be included in that pros and cons list.

Councilmember Candell referred to the bulb outs they might do on the east side and said she thinks they might affect evacuations or solid things like that. She asked if there would be any thought about talking with Fire and understanding if they think it might have impact on evacuation routes.

Mr. Luttrupp said the bulb outs are not taking any lanes. From Acalanes to the right turn pocket section you could arguably sneak a couple of cars in that area. If it was painted with delineators, the Fire Department could drive over them.

Councilmember Kwok referred to the strip map suggestions for 1 or 2, he was trying to clarify what is the deliverable going to look like in that report when talking about the pros and cons. He asked if it will be the pros and cons compared to what. Mr. Luttrupp replied it would be compared to the center median.

Councilmember Kwok said if they picked Option 1, he asked and confirmed the east side concepts developed are in lieu of the median and not in addition to. The designers will start with current conditions and they will paint out a vision for the east side and weighs the pros and cons against the median.

Councilmember Gerringer said she is in support of looking at buffers put north of Acalanes Avenue going into the right turn lane and vegetation, hardscape, or paint by the northbound south of Acalanes Avenue. This was part of what the Council had asked for during the decision to move forward with the study and design of the center median, which she is supportive of no matter where they go with the additional studies.

Mayor Anduri asked to focus on this because the Council has voted to move forward with the detailed study. Now, the Council is giving guidance on specific aspects of that detailed study that become more apparent as they looked at the east side options. He suggested taking them one by one because they are independent of the other decision they will make. He asked what options there are for the east side northbound, north of Acalanes.

Mr. Luttrupp said the options are relatively limited. Once you get to the right turn pocket here, there is no room left which is the same as it is now. Once you go south, they have quite a few options. They can make this whole blue area either a landscaped area, painted with delineators that Fire personnel can drive over, or they can eliminate it entirely. If the concern is that they want it even easier to get to that right turn pocket you could conceivably extend that right-turn pocket all the way to Acalanes Avenue, but you would be pushing the cars right up against the sidewalk which is what people said they were apprehensive about. He pointed to a portion owned by EBMUD, so the City might have an easier time acquiring an easement, although it is directly over the top of their aqueducts, so they may be apprehensive about the retaining walls that would be needed to make the sidewalk wider. But, there are more options once getting further until getting by the gas station and homes which is harder.

Mayor Anduri asked what are the options on that stretch. Mr. Luttrupp said since the Council does not want to acquire more right-of-way, the options are to do a stripped median in blue, landscaping in the blue area, they could do something slightly smaller than the full 10 feet that the blue area is, or nothing could be done and make it more road which people could use like they use now as cheating their way to the right turn lane. Those are the options he sees in that area.

Councilmember Kwok said right now, there is a bike lane in there painted with green, so presumably cars would not drive into there. They might visually see this as only crossing at the hashed green. Mr. Luttrupp said the City installed delineators in there because they were finding vehicles were driving in it. That amounts to about 7 feet of real estate that is currently being used there for the bike lane and a painted separation between the bikes and cars, which is when looking at this, you see a whole 10 feet they can work with. He pointed to the red line which he said is the existing median, so that is getting carved away to give them more left turn pocket as part of the Terraces development which is why you are ending up with about 10 feet on the other side that is usable for whatever purpose they wish to use it for.

Councilmember Candell asked if there is any way to maintain the bike lane, do not use the blue area, and she hesitates on the major evacuation routes when doing things like this. She asked staff to talk with Fire and get their input. She is very concerned the City is eliminating the bike lane on there, as well. There will be sharrows, but the 2 lanes and the road diet in the middle will probably be the most heavily trafficked lanes in all of Lafayette and they are sharrowing it with bikes, which is a real concern and negative. She is not a big fan of this for those 2 major reasons.

Mr. Luttrupp asked if Councilmember Candell would not recommend creating those buffers and would rather have it be open. Councilmember Candell confirmed she would for those 2 big safety reasons.

Mayor Anduri said this recognizes there is no bike lane. Councilmember Candell said they could fit a bike lane there. Mr. Luttrupp said no, they could not because you would not have anything when you got to either side of that.

Councilmember Candell said she understands all of that, but she thinks this is a dangerous thing for the road warriors and Fire. Mr. Luttrupp emphasized you will have the real estate. It just will not be striped as a bike lane because it would not make any sense to have a tiny chunk of bike lane in the middle of nowhere with no bike lane on either side.

Councilmember Candell returned to her point and said she does not like it. She thinks it is a problem with 2 major safety issues if they go with this design exactly for those reasons. There is no way to fit the bikes and it is uncontrolled. They will have negatively impacted their evacuation route.

Mr. Luttrupp noted the center median is still there, and Councilmember Candell said unfortunately she does not think they are going to design their way out of those 2 safety problems with this design.

Mayor Anduri asked to recognize they are having this discussion on the assumption that they are designing a center median. Councilmember Candell said she thinks this is in the “cons” column then. These are the things that are going to be negatively impacted by it.

Vice Mayor Dawson said this is north of Hwy 24 and during evacuations, she asked if people would evacuate to Hwy 24. What she thinks Councilmember Candell is worried about is first responders would go that way, and Councilmember Candell confirmed.

Mayor Anduri said he is hearing to just leave it to the designers. He did not think there was guidance on this. The second one is now moving the block south on from Acalanes and possibilities there. He asked if it will be the same thing.

Mr. Luttrupp said yes, the same thing. He just wants to make sure what he is hearing and what the direction is to not to go forward with mitigating how close the cars are to the edge of the road. He is hearing to leave it as open real estate and not do any of that. He noted they are building the center median so the question at hand is, do they try to mitigate moving the cars closer to the people on the sidewalk on the east side or not.

Councilmember Candell said you must think about the bike lanes and evacuation routes, and not just about pedestrians. It is Vision Zero so she does not think this is the final design they should pursue.

Mayor Anduri said if he understands this correctly, there is no room for the bike lane, and Mr. Luttrupp confirmed and said he wants to make sure he understands again that the Council does not want to mitigate moving the cars closer to the people on the sidewalk because it is very binary. You either are mitigating it or you are not.

Councilmember Candell suggested putting a K-rail on the side of the sidewalk so you do not take space from the road. Mr. Luttrupp said you would take space from the road of 4 feet. Councilmember Candell said she does not like the design. It has too many downsides. She does not think they have struck the right balance.

Mr. Luttrupp said he needs to give the designer some direction, so he is doing the center median and he needs to know what they are going to do on the edge of the road and there are 2 choices. They either do nothing or something.

Mayor Anduri said where this ends up though is going to have a detailed design. It does not mean the Council is allocating funds. It does not mean they are approving going ahead. All they are doing is giving guidance with respect to doing a detailed design. If the detailed design returns to them and they evaluate A against B or nothing, in Councilmember Candell’s mind it would be a con, and before they go forward they would evaluate the pros and cons. If there is no way they can get around eliminating a bike lane then that may be seen as a fatal problem. He was not sure, but he is pointing that out. He asked if there is any more right-of-way from the Terraces project, and Mr. Luttrupp said, no.

Councilmember Kwok asked and confirmed with Mr. Luttrupp that the Council is looking at:

- Option 1 as the blue area north of Acalanes Avenue and direction on what should they tell the designers what to do with that; whether the blue should be blacktop and stay the same which would not provide any buffer to the sidewalk which is the northern edge of the blue;
- Option 2 would be landscaping in there and it becomes a barrier that keeps cars closer to the center median and it creates that landscape barrier from the sidewalk; and
- Option 3 would be something not formalized as landscape but something fire trucks could drive over, there could be delineators or plastic barriers that create a visual buffer.

Councilmember Candell said she would like a narrow barrier and not take any roadway away, so Option 3 is not giving her that.

Councilmember Gerringer asked what is there now other than delineators that have been put in. Mr. Luttropp said this is north of Acalanes Avenue.

Councilmember Gerringer said therefore they hear nothing raised on the roadway, but it could be paint and delineators that create a median that could go around the blue pieces and would solve the evacuation issues, but would make people realize they should not be driving in that space. She is supportive of that design coming back because it addresses Councilmember Candell's concern. Also, it is an attempt to address what the Council had asked staff to do which was to make pedestrians on that sidewalk feel more comfortable.

Mayor Anduri said the bicycles would be in the lane and there would be sharrows in that lane south of Acalanes and recognizing they lost the bike lane, and he voiced support of Option 3, as well as Councilmember Kwok, and Vice Mayor Dawson.

Mayor Anduri said the southbound bike lane can either be eliminated or they can reduce the shoulders on the center median. If they do the center median, he thinks they must have 2 feet between the roadway and the K rail and 2 feet between the inside of the K rail and the lane. He would want to keep those buffers and do away with the bike lane if they must make that choice.

Councilmember Kwok said he will take an opposing direction because he likes the idea if they can preserve the bike lane and if there is not a significant decrease in safety from a 2 foot to 1 foot. He continues to reflect on the half hour he spent on the San Mateo Third Avenue overcrossing where he saw 90 people walking across that in one-half hour. There were 90% pedestrians and not bicyclists walking. They had 8 feet and had 1 foot on the sides to the K rail and 1 to the paint stripe. There were many people using it to cross over Hwy 101 and being there gave him more confidence that this is a viable mechanism.

They still had east and west sidewalks and ways they crossed over the 2 butterflies, and he saw 3 or 4 people using those, so people have a choice. The majority use the middle, but if they only need 4 feet and can keep the bike path, it is not a sacrifice to safety and does not compromise the intent of the median multi-use pathway, he thinks it is a good trade-off so he would have a different viewpoint and save the bike path and narrow those.

Councilmember Gerringer said that sound bound piece is different than northbound which is a true, solid green bike path on the east side. On the southbound side coming into that or past the intersection onto westbound Hwy 24 is a sharrow. Right now, it is a short sharrow.

Mr. Luttrupp said right now, southbound Pleasant Hill Road is sharrows the whole way and there is no bike lane. When the Terraces gets built as part of building out their project, they had planned on installing a bike lane from Deer Hill to the first on-ramp. After that, it is all sharrows again.

Councilmember Gerringe asked if Councilmember Kwok's proposal is to stick with the Terraces had designed through that, but it changes because there will be the trap lane which Mr. Luttrupp said is shown and he presented to it. The red curb is the existing face of curb. If you were doing the sharrows, he pointed to where they would be in the through lane from Deer Hill to Mt. Diablo Boulevard like they are now. If they put a bike lane in, the bike lane goes between the through lane and the turn lane, so it is out in the middle of the street.

Councilmember Gerringe said if they did sharrows the way it is now she asked if you would still need to get 4 feet out of that or, she asked if it can be designed to put the green paint on there which also shows drivers they are sharing the lane with a bicyclist. Or, she asked if it must be the solid bike lane.

Mr. Luttrupp said what they are trading is you are taking away the proposed bike lane which is the solid green dedicated space for bicyclists. You put a sharrow in the through lane and this is how you bought your 5 feet. The sharrow in the through lane is effectively what they have out there right now. You put those feet in the center median. If you do not do that, he must get more space out of what is in the center median. The stuff in the center median are the shoulders.

Councilmember Gerringe said she is uncomfortable losing the 2 feet buffer and was trying to find a way to still do a visual and find a compromise. She still thinks people who will ride through that part are back to the 35 mph whether they are road warriors or commuters. What they have there right now does not seem like they must give up putting paint in the space, so she currently wants the 2 feet on either side, so she is leaning towards no bike lane.

Vice Mayor Dawson said she would lean with agreeing with Councilmember Kwok to preserve as much as they can of a bike lane. She also thinks with the center median in place it would be part of slowing down traffic anyway and the buffer with 1 to 2 feet on either side is okay.

Mayor Anduri pointed out on the trail if there is a problem, you have an option. Vice Mayor Dawson said she is saying with the trail itself, there is still navigation within that trail.

Councilmember Candell said she thinks they should reach out to the bike folks on this one. Having the additional bike lane would be safer, but she sees it as a conflict now because of the new slip lane for people to go onto the freeway which is a new thing they will have. If they put the bike lane in between those two, she sees people that did not get into the slip lane fast enough wanting to suddenly cross over the bike lane. The bike is there, and they are not paying attention that the bike is there. So, the sharrow in that situation may be safer for them because it is clear they are in your lane and you must deal with them, so she suggested speaking with the "bike guy."

Mr. Luttrupp said unfortunately there is not a "bike guy" that represents the whole community at large. There are handfuls of people who have given them completely different answers with the roundabout. They can ask a handful of people but there is not just one person.

Councilmember Candell said since they are at a stale mate it seems they could reach out and get some ideas because she sees the 2 options and does not know which is safer.

Mayor Anduri said the third guidance item makes the most difference in the design because it impacts the median itself. He suggested talking about what more information about what they want, such as reaching out to the bike community.

Mayor Anduri said the Council has given guidance, and he recommended discussion regarding an alternative and what they do.

Councilmember Gerringer said she thinks they should go forward with studies, spending the money on the conceptual strip map drawings, looking at pros and cons, looking at the signalized ramp terminals, stop signs, or speed humps. She thinks what the Mayor said about having that conversation with Caltrans is an important part of the ultimate study of the whole east side path and trying to make those intersections and ramps coming on and off safer and hinge on whether Caltrans will work with the City. They can look at the new Caltrans Safety Division, look at safe streets, but before she feels comfortable moving forward and spending any money, she would like to know they have a path forward with Caltrans.

Councilmember Candell said she agrees the City should talk with Caltrans, but she is comfortable in doing #1 to swag out what that multi-use pathway looks like and the pros and cons. She would hesitate on doing the signalized on and off ramps until they talk with Caltrans to see if they have any chance of doing those. So, she suggested looking at #1 with the RFFBs and see where they are at.

Vice Mayor Dawson said they want it safe in the long term but in the short term it sounds like they have come up with a lot of things they can maybe do, and even in the short term. Even before they decide to build the center median, they can still make it as safe as possible. One of the things would be enhancing the east side pathway. So, she sees providing a strip map to see what it is they can do inexpensively if that is even a possibility. It is \$110,000 and she also supported talking with Caltrans about doing things in the short term.

She is of the mind as Councilmember Gerringer that she would not be comfortable doing any signalization, given the cost of them as well as other components that are costly.

Councilmember Kwok said the simple thing for him is if they are going to approve some study expenditures of \$17,000 he feels uncomfortable voting on it now because he thinks it is all part of the rest of the unfunded items on the list. If they had a lot of surpluses, it would be easy to do this, but they are not in that luxury now. If they deem this as something they want to consider, he would suggest moving it into the next budget discussion and weigh what other things they will cut. They are in a difficult situation with their budget where they cannot just say "yes" to every public request. He has said that everybody wants to do more, but they need to raise the money. He would feel uncomfortable voting for this at this time and would feel comfortable if there is a consensus to do this to vote for it later. The thing about doing the \$17,000 strip concept is only going to lead to being better than the median or not or in the middle. If it is better, it still triggers lots of dollars to do the next and final steps to get it done and he asked where the City would get that money.

This is a completely unfunded path and since the City is in a budget deficit situation now, he does not feel comfortable embarking on that and bringing the public along to think they could do this. He would rather make the tough decision now, so he is leaning for practical reasons. He would like to see more study but for practical reasons he would support the staff recommendation.

Mayor Anduri said when Councilmember Kwok says to decide later, he asked and confirmed he meant during the budget discussion when discussing all other unfunded measures.

Mayor Anduri said he sees this as something they could decide now. He would feel more comfortable if they had a discussion with Caltrans before making the decision this evening. He would like to hear any input that would affect what they are doing. If they felt Caltrans would be cooperative and willing to discuss this, he would be in favor of going ahead with Option 1 or in any event because they need to look at the south side. Even starting down that road would be more productive if they have a better sense of what Caltrans has in mind.

Councilmember Gerringe asked if Mayor Anduri was proposing moving forward with Option 1 and then talk with Caltrans. Mayor Anduri said no, he would favor talking with Caltrans first because that may give guidance with respect to the direction on Option 1. In fact, it might make them feel more optimistic or not. It is critical to what they want to do so it is worth reaching out.

Mayor Pro Tem Dawson asked Mr. Luttrupp if it would be helpful if she and Mayor Anduri reached out to Caltrans. Mr. Luttrupp said if they have a specific contact they already have a relationship with, that would be great, but if not, he will see what he can do, and Mr. Golier might have some connections as well.

Mayor Anduri received consensus Councilmembers were comfortable with the direction. He noted the other thing that relates to this is that he thinks it would be worthwhile to do an official outreach to the Acalanes Union High School District to discuss the project.

Councilmember Candell said she and Councilmember Gerringe talk with them a lot for the other projects and could do that. Mr. Luttrupp asked about the timing of that, and he asked if this is separate from finishing up the design on the center median pathway. Councilmember Candell said they can be done along the same times

Councilmember Gerringe stated she believes there is a City/Schools meeting being scheduled just as school starts where they could provide this information, but staff can also conduct direct outreach. She is sure someone has contacts for Caltrans as well as CCTA folks.

Mr. Luttrupp confirmed he had direction and it sounds like the most important thing to do is first talk with Caltrans before doing anything else.

Mayor Anduri recognized Brian Candell who wishes to speak.

BRIAN CANDELL said it is amazing what the Council does for 6 hours twice a week giving their time for free for doing all of this, being with your family and kids, and sometimes you miss an important event like your birthday. He wished Councilmember Candell a happy birthday and said there is also ice cream.

BREAK

Mayor Anduri called for a break at 8:10 p.m. and thereafter reconvened the regular meeting at 8:24 p.m.

B. Mike Moran, Director of Engineering and Public Works Olympic Boulevard Roundabout Design Update

Recommendation: 1) Maintain the lane merge and other striping and delineation on southbound Pleasant Hill Road. 2) Do not perform additional traffic studies or analysis. 3) Continue outreach with other agencies to determine possible additional efforts that could be implemented to improve the safety of the intersection. 4) Hold a public meeting to present proposed design changes and receive input from the community prior to implementing additional temporary or permanent changes to the intersection.

Director of Engineering and Public Works Mike Moran stated Matt Luttrupp will cover most of this item, but he added that he, Mr. Luttrupp and Mr. Golier have all been involved. This is the roundabout update and looking at some of the pilot study elements put in place and evaluating those to date.

Mr. Luttrupp stated at the March 13th City Council meeting, the Council directed staff to preserve the temporary reconfiguration of the roundabout and reopen the slip lane for south bound Pleasant Hill Road and perform additional traffic studies and public outreach on the final design option to be implemented in the summer of 2024. This update is to provide the Council with costs for further analysis and update on the data collected thus far.

He gave a background of the item which was in response to a fatality in the roundabout in 2021. After that, they met with the Bike East Bay bike advocates, the Transportation Circulation Commission liaisons, 2 Council liaisons, and the City Manager to discuss possible changes that could be made to the roundabout that would improve bike and pedestrian safety. In these discussions the primary concern was that vehicles are traveling too fast in advance of and through the roundabout.

Following the meeting, Kimley-Horn was hired to develop modifications that could be made to the roundabout that would improve the safety of the facility. The preliminary plans were presented and reviewed by the City, slightly modified, and then shared with Transportation Circulation Commission at the November 2, 2022 meeting. On January 25, 2023, the City reduced Pleasant Hill Road from 2 lanes to 1 lane just south of the intersection with Reliez Station Road and made other striping modifications to clearly delineate narrowed vehicle lanes into and out of the roundabout. Further modifications were made to the roundabout on February 21st with elimination of the slip lane from southbound Pleasant Hill Road to westbound Olympic Boulevard. The removal of the slip lane was in response to comments staff received that there was not sufficient time for motorists making this right turn from southbound Pleasant Hill Road to westbound Olympic to judge vehicles' intent to depart the roundabout and see pedestrians in the crosswalk on the west leg of Olympic Boulevard.

On March 13th, the City Council directed staff to restore the slip lane for southbound Pleasant Hill Road and to improve the vehicle merge, reducing Pleasant Hill Road from 2 lanes to 1 lane. These changes were implemented on April 14th. In addition, the Council directed staff to continue to collect data to determine how the changes put in place had impacted driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety.

In summary, what they found was a drop in vehicle speeds which they were hoping they would see from this. The 85th percentile vehicle speeds leading to the roundabout are within the posted speed limits now whereas before they were higher than that. Pleasant Hill Road southbound between Reliez Station Road and the roundabout is now 36 mph. Olympic Boulevard eastbound between Reliez Station and the roundabout is 32 mph, and Olympic Boulevard westbound between Reliez Station and the roundabout are about 39 mph. A good thing to point out is the 85th percentile speed in the southbound direction of Pleasant Hill Road has been reduced by 7 mph as part of these improvements, and this is based on a speed survey done in 2015 that showed the 85% for that reach of the road at 43 mph. The good news about that is that these reduced speeds may allow for consideration of speed tables in advance of the intersection.

Staff asked Kimley-Horn to submit a proposal to provide a robust traffic study and model for the traffic flow leading to and through the roundabout. The cost for that modeling effort is estimated at \$50,000. At this time, staff does not believe this study will provide additional information that is not already well understood, nor will it likely provide meaningful guidance in moving forward with future design features.

Since last report to the Council on the roundabout, staff again met with the bike and pedestrian advocates at the roundabout to observe the conditions and consider options for further updates. In addition, staff continues to receive guidance from Kimley-Horn and has consulted with staff from other Bay Area cities to help determine potential improvements that have proven to be successful in other cities.

Items currently under consideration include adding flashing beacons or RRFBs at all crossings but especially the crosswalk on the west leg of Olympic Boulevard which the Council has already approved, adding stenciling to the Class I facilities on both sides of Pleasant Hill Road to raise awareness for both pedestrians and bicyclists that bicyclists are permitted on the pathway which he described, adding bike “merge ahead” stenciling in the roadway specifically southbound Pleasant Hill Road right before it splits to have the right turn lane and the lane going to the roundabout so people know to expect bikes which is in addition to the green dashed line, and replacing white delineators along Olympic Boulevard with green delineators and perhaps other raised elements to make the bike lanes more visible and apparent to drivers. In speaking with Mr. Moran, maybe they do not have to have those delineators quite so close together as they currently have the white ones. This might make it less obtrusive. Those items along with others would be presented in a public meeting to be held in late summer or early fall to solicit input from the public and inform the public on the design changes proposed to improve the safety at the roundabout.

At this time, staff recommends 1) maintain the lane merge and other striping and delineation on southbound Pleasant Hill Road; 2) do not perform additional traffic studies or analysis; 3) continue outreach with other agencies to determine possible additional efforts that could be implemented to improve the safety of the intersection; and 4) to hold a public meeting or perhaps multiple public meetings to present proposed design changes and receive input from the community prior to implementation of additional temporary or permanent changes to the intersection.

Mr. Moran added that the roundabout is an efficient way of moving traffic. You can go out to Olympic tomorrow because they are working on Olympic with curb, gutter, and sidewalk as part of the project, having to close one lane, circulating traffic around on Reliez Station Road and having them make a stop at Pleasant Hill Road and then make a left or a right. The used to have an all-way stop where the roundabout is, and traffic backed up 27 minutes up and around the hill. From the beginning, discussions have been with the bike community, traffic engineers, and roundabout specialists, the main things are reducing speeds into, though, and out of the roundabout. That is the safety thing for everyone. There are fender benders that occur in that roundabout, but it is a matter of speed, spacing, and timing.

He knows when they closed the 2 southbound lanes and merged them to one lane, they did get complaints from some of the public saying to open it back up and restore it to the way it was. But, having had those discussions to reduce speeds, one of the ways of reducing speeds is that lane merge. So, while it may not be popular, it is not really adding delay. There is a slow movement through, a few cars stopped, but it is not backing up even when staff observed it during the school periods.

So, the recommendation is what the Council's recommendation was to them; the status quo on that lane merge and this is the only tool they have had so far for southbound Pleasant Hill Road that would allow them to maybe add something more traffic calming into that roundabout and particularly to slow cars before they make that free right turn, where, when they opened it up, there was some confusion with people because they changed things 3 times in quick succession. But, they only got calls and emails on that for a few days, but they have heard no follow-up on that. He thinks people have learned it, got used to it, and know to make the free right. Some feedback was received voicing appreciation that the City reopened the free right turn for the efficiency of the roundabout. They want it to be safe, but he thinks the tool is to slow speeds.

Mayor Anduri opened the public comment period.

SADEGH, 840 Reliez Station Road, said he was one of the people who complained that the switching 3 times about the southbound Pleasant Hill Road where it meets Olympic Boulevard. He thinks the situation it has created is unsafe for bikers because he has had a few instances himself where they merge into one lane and bikers take the right side and if they want to go around the roundabout, they must merge left again and cars must merge right if they want to exit westbound on Olympic Boulevard. It creates a weird environment where cars do not know where the bikers are going, but bikers can see where the cars are going if they have their blinkers on or not. He thinks it does slow down traffic, but it has created an unsafe environment for bikers whereas before you had a better idea because the cars on the right lane were going to turn right so people knew where they were going to begin with.

He understands the roundabout is great. It is a great addition to that area where they used to have the stop sign. He thinks it was a lot slower and they had a lot of backups, but he would be in favor of restoring it to the 2 lanes it was before and perhaps exploring other options for slowing traffic down before reaching the roundabout.

Councilmember Candell said when it goes back in, she asked the speaker if he could imagine something they could do there when it goes back up into 2 lanes that it would make it better than it is now and make him feel safer.

Sadegh said from a biker's standpoint, if they have the white posts or delineators on the ground going all the way to the roundabout it could help.

Councilmember Candell said then they would have to close the slip lane. Sadeh said he guessed the way it used to work before was that the kids would bike all the way to the roundabout and the use the crosswalks to get over to the other side.

Mr. Luttrupp said right now, one option is kids can get on the multi-use pathway on the side of the road rather than dealing with where that merge occurs where people are trying to get to the slip lane. So, they can get on the pathway and then go to the crosswalks at the roundabout. One thing mentioned in the staff report is putting designations on that pathway to make it clearer for people; that if they do not want to deal with the merging activity, the cars, and the roundabout, that pathway is an option for both bicyclists and pedestrians to be able to bypass some of the cars.

JUDY CARNE agreed with what Sadeh, thinks southbound going towards the roundabout is extraordinarily confusing and she is a bicyclist. There is no signage, no way for them to know which way to go, no way for her driving her car, and she understand it has slowed traffic and thinks that is the right concept but there is a lot of cross-over going on there and it appears to be unsafe. There is also someone's driveway at someone's home so there are 2 cutoffs. Initially, that was a bit of a frenzy and she asked if there were any solutions to help with that.

Mayor Anduri asked for discussion by Councilmembers.

Councilmember Kwok said he was happy to see that the speeds came down by 7 mph and everyone is driving less than 40 mph in all directions. He read the report to say this whole project is trying to move in the direction of slowing speeds down, so he thinks the mission has been accomplished for this phase. They could keep tweaking and learning which is what staff is suggesting the Council do. Mr. Moran's comment is that there were concerns and reopening a lane, but the public feedback has subsided, so people are getting used to it by and large. His reaction was that this was a successful exercise and glad they did it.

Councilmember Gerringier said she is glad they did the study and pilot and asked what were the comments from the bike advocates.

Mr. Moran said they came to consensus for the east/west directions for Olympic. The southbound Pleasant Hill Road is the hardest portion. The Council gave staff direction to add an RFFB at that location, which was also a staff recommendation at one point, so they are planning to do that. They did not have a lot of emphasis other than making it clearer that there is a bypass. Even some of the bike community came to the realization of using the Class I pathway on the right which they have always had sign there to route people around the roundabout.

Other things include striping things. Instead of the white delineators they might go with the green indicating the bike lane and bike travel, so it is more striping, delineation, and pinching down. There was a suggestion to make that the elephant feet green paint crossing where everybody does cross. A bike would have to cross a vehicle which is merging into the right lane and make that a little steeper, which shortens that distance they are crossing. Another suggestion was the opposite—take the delineators back further, give a bicyclist a longer merge so people have more time to fit themselves in between traffic. He thinks it would have to be run through their traffic engineers, particularly those very familiar with roundabouts. There were some suggestions, but it comes down to what Councilmember Kwok said—tweaking the ideas they are trying to do now and trying to improve on them, making them more visible. If it is safer for bikes and pedestrians it inherently is going to be safer for vehicle drivers as well. There was no suggestion to re-open it to two lanes for that southbound Pleasant Hill.

Councilmember Gerringer said she is very supportive of the work done and supportive of not doing the additional \$50,000 study. She is also supportive of number 4 presented in the update and holding public meetings as they look at other potential changes.

Mr. Moran said he thinks they would gather more data. They would not do the extensive study but would re-affirm vehicle speeds before they made another change. It is not they would not collect more information as part of this tweaking process, but it would not return as a 100-page study because the consensus is narrowing the lanes and speeds and ensuring everything is as visible and concise as possible.

Councilmember Candell echoed comments, supported helping bikers know where they need to go for the southbound Pleasant Hill Road, but she thinks there is still confusion with drivers. She asked to let them know the merge is coming and to be prepared for it. Mr. Luttrupp stated they have all permanent and regulatory signs up too, and the changeable message sign out there is the only temporary sign.

Vice Mayor Dawson said she drives that daily and has noticed great improvements. It is well signed even with arrows that have been helpful. She thinks whatever can be done to slow down when turning in the slip lane because the crosswalk is further out, and people are not seeing that, so they pick up speed at the corner. She asked if the flashing lights would show up at the crosswalk or sooner before.

Mr. Moran said that is a tough one. Sometimes they do an advanced flashing light. The problem is around the corner they already have flashing beacon crossings there, so you cannot confuse which crosswalk it applies to. He thinks they will be at that west leg and you will see them as they slightly come up. There will be a center median one too that might be farther forward, so as you turn that corner, you might catch this one and may see the other one on the right side of the vehicle as you are driving. They are a little restricted and the delineators will probably not be in their exact configuration had there not been a driveway there that the need access to in and out of. It would be clearer, but obviously the homeowners need access in and out of their home. If they can improve it more, staff will do so.

Vice Mayor Dawson asked if the flashing lights are already budgeted. Mr. Moran said he thinks they can be covered in their current project for Olympic/Glenside/St. Mary's. They may be contingency funds. He knows they were talking about adding many improvements at one time around the roundabout, so this is probably \$45,000 just for the flashing beacons. The ones that cross Pleasant Hill Road at the north leg are a combination of solar and hard lined power. This would maybe be the same, but they would be as efficient as they can with pricing and packaging.

Mayor Anduri said he agrees with the staff recommendations and echoed comments. He asked and confirmed staff has sufficient direction. He and Councilmembers thanked staff for their work on this.

**C. Patrick Golier, Transportation & Circulation Program Manager
Update to the Traffic Calming Program**

Recommendation: Approve the adoption of a new Traffic Calming Program for Lafayette, as described in the updated Guidebook, that replaces the existing Traffic Calming Program Guidebook previously approved by City Council in 2003.

Transportation and Circulation Program Manager Patrick Golier gave the staff report and overview of the Traffic Calming Program, as described in the updated Guidebook, which replaces the existing Guidebook previously approved in 2003. He introduced Bruce Brubaker from PlaceWorks who described the process for the program.

Bruce Brubaker gave a PowerPoint presentation, described the purpose of the update to align traffic calming with Vision Zero and other efforts for the City, and identifies the priorities for traffic calming on community support and balances that with data, equity, and available resources, and to ensure traffic calming measures includes design, engineering, and best practices.

The Transportation Circulation Commission gave direction to have succinct goals and policies, to make sure process steps are clear, and to ensure the toolbox has appropriate tools for Lafayette streets. He displayed the various goals and described 4 key policies for the plan.

Vice Mayor Dawson referred to page 8 of the Guidebook under striping and signage, second to the last line which says, "modifying speed limits", and she thinks they mean "signs that show modification of speed limits." Mr. Golier said they have limited ability to reduce speeds but do on streets like Mt. Diablo where the land use is changed along with the speed limits. They are tending to think about school limit zones, as well this year to dovetail with this program.

Councilmember Gerringer referred to the same page and asked if they are encouraging residents to put official signs on city bus stops and she suggested changing the photo. She also noticed in public comments, Geoff Bellenger made a comment regarding speed hump negatives and air quality. She asked if that was something that could be added.

Mr. Golier explained they seek to encourage the maintenance of a single speed across the corridor and unlike the old bumps that might create more noise and encourage people to speed up afterwards, the design of speed humps are flatter on top so it is more moderate, and he confirmed that style is one of the new ones they installed in Burton Valley.

Councilmember Gerringer said she appreciates the process and she referred to the process of getting majority support from one's block to agree. In a situation where there are several blocks connected, she asked how this would be analyzed.

Mr. Golier said he would likely insert himself into the community and try to achieve consensus and would like have staff intervene with "no" blocks.

Mayor Anduri noted that 50% is needed for the application to get in and that will be a factor staff will take into consideration in deciding which ones to recommend for funding.

From: Janet Thomas <jhthomas100@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 07, 2023 9:37 AM
To: cityhall, Niroop Srivatsa, Moran, Mike, Golier, Patrick, Luttropp, Matt
Subject: Pleasant Hill Pathway proposal
Attachments: Letter to City Council for June 12th meeting - PHRd Pathway.docx

Dear City Council Members, Niroop, Mike, Matt and Patrick,

Attached is a letter for your consideration concerning a proposed east side class one pathway on Pleasant Hill Road. I believe the issue is on the City Council agenda for the June 12th meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Janet Thomas
3206 Pleasant Hill Road
Lafayette
(925) 878-9098

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

June 4, 2023

To: Lafayette City Council
Lafayette City Manager and Engineering Staff

Dear Council Members and Staff,

In one's life, one can sometimes point to an event or bit of news or understanding that has motivated action. For me, understanding the background and facts about the proposed Pleasant Hill Road median strip is the catalyst for my writing to you today and attempting to help the City proceed in a manner which I feel best serves the community.

For almost four decades I have regularly jogged (in prior years) or walked along the east sidewalk of Pleasant Hill Road, traveling both north and south, many times a week. **I have noticed things that could be improved to make that pathway safer and travel along it more pleasant. The improvements include:**

- a) cutting of vegetation near the on and off ramps to improve driver visibility of bikers and pedestrians
- b) improvement of signage on the on and off ramps and addition of blinking lights to caution drivers of bikers and pedestrians in a crosswalk ahead
- c) emboldening and shifting the crosswalks at the on and off ramps to improve visibility and awareness for drivers and ease of crossing for bikers
- d) creating a wider pathway on east Pleasant Hill Road where the sidewalk currently is to allow two- way biking, walking and jogging. This would be especially helpful for bikers going to and from Acalanes High School. A wider path would also mean that bikers who currently use the green lanes would no longer need to cross over a lane of traffic merging onto or off of the freeway.
- e) at the eastern corner of Pleasant Hill Rd at Mt. Diablo Blvd. near the veterinarian hospital, taking out the merge lane onto Highway 24 east and replacing it with a right turn at the stoplight
- f) simply making the whole pathway look more attractive through resurfacing and landscaping and thus more comfortable for those traveling on it.

But for years, I had accepted that these improvements were out of the realm of possibility. I know that the City has many important responsibilities and is not flush with funds.

When I heard about the median strip proposal on Pleasant Hill Road I realized that, in fact, an individual or a neighborhood does have the power to advocate for changes in infrastructure. I am now aware that the City will respond to a proposed vision or idea that would benefit all and am motivated to make a case for what I feel is a better plan than the proposed median strip path. I realize that federal grants, though not necessarily easy to obtain, are available for such projects. I also realize that collaborating with Caltrans is becoming potentially easier due to their heightened focus on safety.

I have already listed improvements that would make the existing east Pleasant Hill Road pathway safer. The following are reasons I feel the median strip path is a less desirable proposal:

1) Using the proposed median strip pathway would necessitate entering and exiting the median strip in the middle of crosswalks at two of the busiest intersections in Lafayette. At these intersections, drivers often speed through yellow lights and even red lights, or carelessly make right turns on red lights, and thus pose potential danger to walkers and bikers using the crosswalks.

2) Since the entrances and exits to the median strip would not be easily accessed by those in our neighborhood around Acalanes Avenue, walkers and bikers we've talked to say they would continue to walk or ride on the east side of the road. We believe many other bikers and walkers would continue using the east side pathway as well because the idea of walking or biking in a median strip pathway would be undesirable. Addition of the median strip will take out roadway on the east side which currently acts as a buffer. Thus the east side would be less safe for those who continue to use it.

3) The addition of two crosswalk entries to the median strip will add to traffic wait time at intersections in an area that currently receives an "F" rating. Road rage and recklessness due to the stress of increased wait time for drivers who travel on Pleasant Hill Road are a possible reality. And during peak hours traffic is already backed up into highway 24. Increased wait times at the intersections would only increase this dangerous back up.

4) Plans for the median strip include major construction costs and challenges. Improving the east side pathway would most likely cost less and require fewer infrastructure change.

I request that the City not pursue construction of the median strip pathway until thorough consideration, discussion and professional analysis about the pros and cons of an expanded east side pathway versus the proposed median strip pathway has taken place. I would be happy to speak with anyone about possibilities, and look forward to being part of a neighborhood that works with City staff as we move forward.

In short, I feel strongly that an enhanced class-one east side bike and pedestrian pathway would be a cheaper and potentially safer alternative, used by more walkers and bikers, than the median strip proposal that is now being developed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Janet Thomas
3206 Palomares Avenue
(925) 878-9098

Item 9A
Additional Public
Comments

From: Ramsay Thomas <ramsaybthomas@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2023 8:57 AM
To: cityhall
Subject: East Pleasant High Road pathway
Attachments: Letter to City Council from Ramsay Thomas 6-22-23.docx

Dear City Council Members,

Attached is my letter regarding item 9A on the City Council agenda for the upcoming Monday, June 26th meeting.

Many thanks for your attention.

Ramsay Thomas

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

June 22, 2023

Lafayette City Council,

Just last night (June 21st) we received the agenda for the June 26th City Council meeting. As with earlier agendas, we remain disheartened and perplexed by the city staff's dogged dedication to the center median pathway without providing any data that such a drastic project is needed, would be well used, and that a center median pathway would, in fact, be *"more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists than multiple uncontrolled freeway ramps that these roadway users need to cross."* In our neighborhood experience, this unsubstantiated claim feels more like a fantasy project in search of a largely non-existent problem rather than a sober analysis of how to make the 99+% safe-but-unpleasant east side path still safer and decidedly less unpleasant.

For us, the City staff has lost credibility as an honest broker on this issue. At Monday's June 26th City Council meeting we appreciate, as always, being able to voice our concerns in three minutes segments. But what we really need is to directly ask staff critical questions at these meetings. Since we can't, we ask instead that the City Council ask such critical questions in our place. In doing so, it is worth remembering that Vision Zero calls for *"...a data-driven approach that will result in a better understanding of the city's crash patterns..."* Examples, of critical questions we would like staff to answer follow:

1. What data shows that the Mt. Diablo to Stanley / Deer Hill stretch of Pleasant Hill Road has experienced a worrisome crash pattern between cars and bikers/pedestrians? In the experience of local residents there has been no such pattern – and in fact not a single such crash between cars and bikers/pedestrians.

2. Over the years, doesn't data show that the most serious crash patterns on the Mt. Diablo to Stanley / Deer Hill stretch of Pleasant Hill Road occur at the two stop-light intersections at the two ends – the very entrance and exits points for the proposed center median pathway? In the experience of local residents those two points are where the major crashes have occurred. Both are periodically littered with debris left behind from those crashes. At the Pleasant Hill Rd and Stanley/Deer Hill Road intersection such a crash about decade ago was fatal. A recent multiple vehicle crash (March 2023) was nearly fatal again (March pictures attached.)





3. Where is the data that confirms a center median pathway would be used or would be preferable to an east-side, class-one bike / pedestrian pathway (data more credible than Facebook posts)?

Members of the Acalanes High staff occasionally walk through our near-by neighborhood. One of the most veteran, most respected and most ears-to-the-ground staff members was asked recently if the Acalanes staff had heard about the city's proposed center median pathway for Pleasant Hill Road? Her answer. *"Are you kidding me?! No, we haven't heard a thing. That's a crazy idea. I would never let my child ride or walk down such a thing!"*Members of our community have heard hundreds of similar reactions from Lafayette citizens with whom we interact.

4. Does the staff still insist that the center median pathway would be for both bikers and pedestrians? Local residents will certainly not walk in such an uninviting pathway. So who would? Aren't pedestrian needs almost totally ignored – and indeed worsened -- by the center median proposal?

If common sense and basic honesty prevails, shouldn't staff concede that the proposed center median pathway would be for bikers only – i.e. a class-four bike path? The construction of a class-four bike path requires, by California Department of Transportation Guidelines, substantial and same-time improvements for pedestrians, meaning a more safe – not a downgraded, less safe– east-side walkway.

5. Any project -- center median pathway, class-one east-side path, or other -- will take years to implement. In the meantime, if the staff is truly committed to improved bike and pedestrian safety, is staff ready to implement immediate and obvious safety improvements already available? Examples: (a) Demand that Caltrans remove bushes, tree branches and weeds on the Highway 24 exits to the north on to Pleasant Hill Road. That 'landscaping' severely limits drivers' ability to see bikers and pedestrians moving along the east-of Pleasant Hill Road sidewalk -- and vice versa. (b) Realign Highway 24 exit and entrance crosswalks to facilitate straighter and therefore safer biking along that east side walk AND paint those crosswalks with the brightest, boldest colors possible.

Below: No ability of drivers to see sidewalk pedestrians and bikers when exiting Highway 24 North from the east -- until the very last second.



Below: No ability of pedestrians and bikers heading north on the Pleasant Hill Road sidewalk to see oncoming cars exiting Highway 24 from the east.



To use Highway 24 exit and entrance crosswalks, bikers on the east of Pleasant Hill Road sidewalk must make severe right hand turns and then severe left hand turns traveling north – or vice versa traveling south. These crosswalks are awkward and poorly designed. Further the crosswalk colors need to be bolder to alert cars. Give bikers a nearly straight path (green line.) Paint the crosswalks brightly (yellow??)



For the moment, we in the Acalanes Ave. community, and in Lafayette at large, depend on the City Council to ask the oddly obstinate City staff some tough questions. We urge you to reject the staff's recommendation and instead fund the \$17,000 to: *“Provide a strip map concept drawing for an east side multiuser pathway [which we interpret as a class one pathway] with a summary of pro/cons and potential impacts.”*

We look forward to sharing more thoughts with you Monday, June 26th.

For the Acalanes Avenue Community,

Ramsay Thomas

From: Brad Rosenthal <bradrosenthal@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2023 1:20 PM
To: cityhall
Cc: Anduri, Carl, SUSAN CANDELL, Dawson, Gina, Kwok, Wei-Tai, Gerringer, Teresa
Subject: Public Comment for the Pleasant Hill Road Pathway Design

In advance of Monday's meeting, can you please incorporate the below into the public comments regarding agenda item 9A. Thanks!

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Hi Council Members,

Thank you for your time for considering an alternative design for the PHR pathway; it is really great of you to listen to members of the community and take action based on the feedback. I am in support of pursuing an additional design for the east side of PHR.

Vision Zero -- Tradeoff Negatively Impacting the 'most vulnerable'

From a very high level, if the goal of vision zero is to protect the 'most vulnerable', the current design does not align with the goal. The most vulnerable are not the experienced bikers, who will be using this bike path; it's the young children, elderly, and disabled, who will be walking or biking on the side of the street and will be worse off with the center median. The center median would shift the road closer to the sidewalk, which would make the east side of PHR between Acalanes Ave and Stanley less safe, negatively impacting many who walk this stretch, including many young children; this is a concern that was raised previously and acknowledged by Matt Luttrupp, who, in an email to Mike Moran and Patrick Golier on July 19th, 2022 (in a draft response to an inquiry from Stella Wotherspon), said "*I think she is concerned that cars will be closer to the sidewalk. There is not mitigation for this, if you do not like this the project should be stopped*".

Further, Matt Luttrupp's memo for the June 26th meeting says: "*In this section [northbound side of Pleasant Hill Road starting at the right turn lane to the intersection with Stanley Boulevard] of the roadway there is very limited right of way and as such it will not be possible to improve upon this situation without reducing the sidewalk width or acquiring additional land from a private property owner.*" So, if the center median is pursued, it will make things WORSE along the east side of PHR (from Acalanes Ave to Stanley). We should not have to make tradeoffs and sacrifice the safety of our most vulnerable.

In addition, I think we should have a look at the statistics of where accidents have happened along this stretch of PHR. Have there been any accidents between bikers/pedestrians at the on and off ramps? I have seen two bad accidents at the PHR/Stanley intersection just in the last few months.

-
-
- If used (the demand has not been studied, as
- you know), the center median pathway would make that (already terrible) intersection worse - more complicated, more wait times, and more obstacles to watch out for (people). Matt Luttrupp said in an email to Mike Moran, Tracy Robinson, and Suzanne Irala on
- July 12, 2022: "*this project will*
- *most definitely make the drive through this area worse*"

- and “*The*
- *policy decision to move forward with Vision Zero would argue that yes we are willing to make things worse for cars.*”
- The tradeoff: 'safer' for a small (relatively)
- number of bikers and more dangerous for the ~23,000 vehicles passing through this intersection each day (page 17 of the
- [Kittleson](#)
- [study](#)). When accidents happen along
- this intersection, the documents that the city will have to produce as part of written discovery in litigation will make personal injury attorneys salivate...
-
-
-
- The unfortunate and tragic accident near Stanley
- Middle School happened in a crosswalk. The center median bike path puts students and bikers in the middle of the intersection (again, which will be made worse if people actually use the pathway), thus putting students at a higher risk in a spot where accidents
- have actually occurred. Students will also have to cross both the four lane northbound part of PHR (which is the high speed/most problematic part to cross) AND Stanley Blvd to get to school vs. just Stanley if we put the path on the east side of PHR. The tradeoff:
- 'safer' for experienced bikers, and more dangerous for high school students/others.
-

Other studies surrounding traffic and safety impacts were requested by both city staff (including members of the Trans Circ Committee) and members of the community, but most of those have not been done. In an email by Matt Luttrupp to Mike Moran and Niroop Stivatsa on July 19, 2022, Matt says “*I think we want to make sure that we do not send our consultant off the deep end with studies that burn up the full \$200k grant.*” It would be negligent to ignore the requests for additional safety studies for such a complex project on a highly traveled road involving a grade F intersection.

Other cities' recent projects

I also encourage you to examine some other recent projects by local municipalities:

- 1.
- 2.
3. The center median bike path on
4. [Valencia Street in San Francisco](#)
5. has come under scrutiny as of late given the accidents that have occurred and the increased traffic issues. While I realize there are no concrete barriers on the Valencia bike path, San Francisco made the mistake of hastily moving this forward without evaluating

6. other options, and fixing this will cost them more money. Let's not make the same mistake.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Meanwhile, Fremont is getting accolades ("Best
11. Bikeway in the Bay Area") for the
12. [Walnut Avenue Bikeway](#)
13. that uses a state of the art, Dutch-style concept, which is a concept that has worked in many cities, globally. I realize there is no on-ramp/off-ramp conflict for this project, but the pathway does go through several busy intersections. There are reasons
14. why so many cities use the Dutch concept and not center median pathways; why would we try to be an exception to this?
- 15.

Community Involvement

This project should incorporate the voices of the community, not just a selected group of biking advocates. Yes, I realize that the FB group has 300+ members, but, as a member myself, the vast majority of the members are inactive and do not show any signs of engagement (e.g., comments or likes), and the discussions are being filtered and naysayers have been removed by the moderators.

According to the City's Traffic Calming Guidebook, this project would be considered a Level 3 measure, but Level 3 measures are not appropriate for arterial roadways. Given that, it's logical to conclude that this project should have even more community involvement than a Level 3 project on a non-arterial roadway. I know getting the grant went through an unusual process; in fact, in an email from Matt Luttrupp to Stella Wotherspoon on November 21st, 2022, Matt said: *"This project did not follow the Cities standard procedure for a project. In this case the project was driven by Eric Law and he presented his conceptual plan to TRANSCIRC as well as the City Council without any discussion as to possible alternatives."* Alas, here we are; however, it's not too late to course correct and do the right thing for the community.

The process for the BV traffic calming measures (voted on by the CC on May 22nd) enabled 737 households to vote (unlike the PHR project)! Yet, members of the community still felt as though that process was 'undemocratic' (see [public comments](#)); one person (who happens to be one of the main proponents of the PHR pathway) even said it was *"the most undemocratic action this City has taken"*. I hope we can learn from this and make the process for the PHR pathway more democratic than the BV process, and develop the best possible solution for the community at large. For example, it would be great to have two designs, work with Acalanes High School to have students provide input, conduct a survey for residents of the community, really understand demand/potential usage, and come up with a design that's the best fit for all members of the community, not just the experienced bikers.

I understand and am empathic to the fact that a lot of time, energy, and some money has been spent over the last few years in getting us to this point. I further understand that we're completing the center median design, in part, because of fear we'll be unable to compete for future state funding, as was clearly articulated by Patrick Golier in an email to Teresa Gerringer and Susan Candell on April 4th, 2023: *"this is a commitment that Lafayette made to Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan when we agreed to accept the funding that she was responsible for allocating to us. There are risks associated with a re-allocation of remaining funds to another effort and we would not want to jeopardize our ability to compete for future State funding."* However, let's not fall for the sunk cost fallacy; continuing to go down the route of only developing one design just because of all the time, energy, and fear is not what's in the best interest of the community.

I am grateful for your time.
Brad Rosenthal,
Acalanes Ave neighborhood resident

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

From: Lisa Williams <lisavwilliams@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2023 7:28 PM
To: Anduri, Carl, Candell, Susan, Gerring, Teresa, Dawson, Gina, Kwok, Wei-Tai, cityhall
Subject: Center of the Road PHR Pathway - Monday Meeting
Attachments: PHR Alternative Pathway.pdf

Dear Council Members,

Please see attached letter. Thank you for your service and dedication to our community.

Lisa Williams
12-year Lafayette Resident

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

June 23, 2023

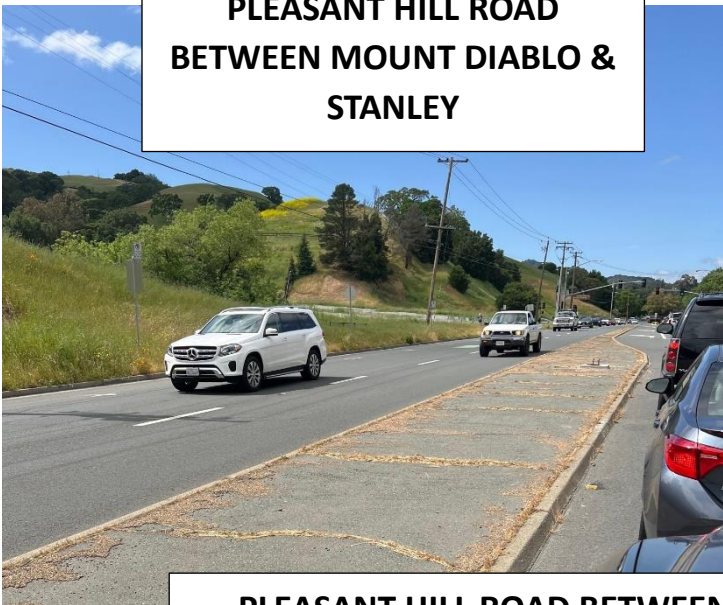
Dear Council Members,

Thank you for considering an alternative design for the Pleasant Hill Road Pathway. I am in SUPPORT of pursuing an additional design for a Class One East PHR Pathway and DO NOT SUPPORT the Center of the Road Pathway. When looking at a costly project that affects thousands and thousands of daily commuters as well as surrounding Lafayette residents, we should absolutely be evaluating multiple options to come up with the very best solution.

Studies show that most accidents happen at intersections. With this in mind, it should be our goal to keep bikers and pedestrians on the side of the road where it is most safe. With Caltrans putting in flashing lights at the on and off ramps, the side of the road pathway will be much safer and comfortable. Additionally, new pathways should never make current pathways that will continue to be used less safe. Especially on a dangerous, heavily trafficked road like PHR.

It would be amazing if the East Side of PHR matched the South side of Pleasant Hill Road. Also, continuing this Class One pathway up and over Deerhill to connect downtown Lafayette. Trees naturally calm traffic, telling drivers they are in a neighborhood and should slow down. As you can see from the pictures, PHR currently looks like a freeway.

**PLEASANT HILL ROAD
BETWEEN MOUNT DIABLO &
STANLEY**



**PLEASANT HILL ROAD
BETWEEN MOUNT DIABLO &
OLYMPIC**



**PLEASANT HILL ROAD BETWEEN MOUNT DIABLO & STANLEY
LOOKS LIKE A FREEWAY. Trees should be planted to help calm
traffic and beautify the area surrounding our only high school.**



THE TREES STOP AT MOUNT DIABLO INTERSECTION



I absolutely LOVE biking and walking on the South Side of Pleasant Hill Road. It is calming and pleasant. The cars seem far away with the 5-foot white lane barrier plus tree barrier.

The center median pathway, would make our current sidewalk less safe, which **contradicts Vision Zero.**

- Cars would move closer to the sidewalk, making it unpleasant and less safe for the MANY people that use this sidewalk and will continue to use this sidewalk – including elderly, handicapped, and young children.
- With the center median pathway, the green bike lane, which is used by adults who take their young children to school as well as avid bikers, who I mostly see use this on the weekends, would be eliminated. (Reference Pictures Below)
- The Acalanes High School Cross Country Team uses this sidewalk. A supervisor bikes next to them in the 5-foot barrier (white line to sidewalk space) while they run. (Reference Pictures Below)



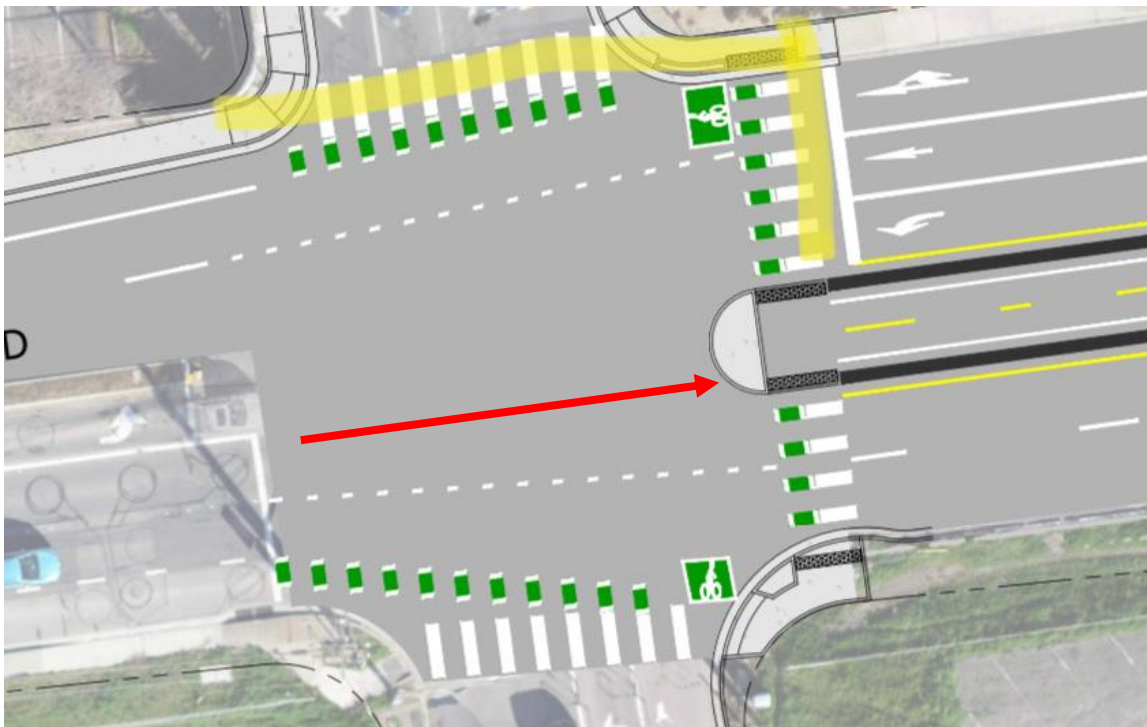


Biker Supervises kids running and uses the 5-foot barrier space between the road and sidewalk.

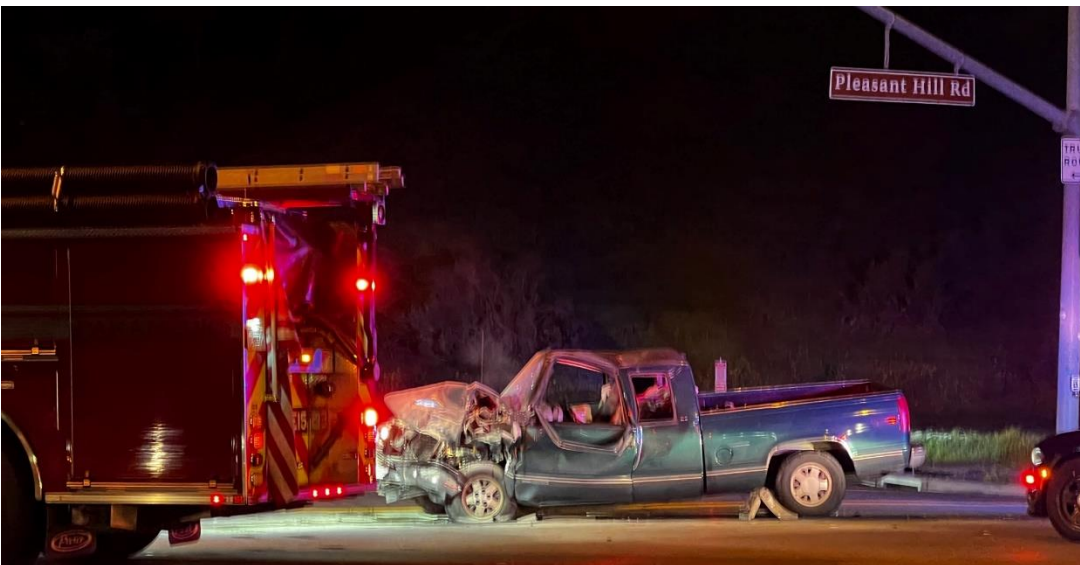
Thousands of commuters outside of Lafayette use PHR for commuting. At rush hour times, this road is extremely dangerous not only because the **“demand exceeds its capacity”** (documented in traffic study provided in public meeting), but because people are angry and frustrated with the delays. A total of 12,610 injuries and 218 murders have been attributed to road rage over a seven-year period in the United States (SafeMotorist).

It would be negligent to put people in the middle of such a dangerous road. According to the below studies, most pedestrian accidents occur in an intersection – (referenced from Reiner, Slaughter, and Frankel Law Offices).

- The Federal Highway Administration found approximately 50 percent of fatal and non-fatal crashes happen at or near intersections. Most of them involve someone taking a left turn.
- The CDC found around 104,000 people go to the emergency room after a pedestrian accident yearly. **Many were likely at or near an intersection when a car collided with them.**
- Of course, the government may be liable if faded centerlines cause someone to swerve into another lane. A lack of visible lines is more dangerous if the intersection has **complicated merging or turn lanes**. *As brought up in public comments, the merge from PHR (coming from Springhill Elementary and crossing through the Stanley intersection, has a unique swerve (due to the center median pathway) which if continuing to go straight, a car would crash right into the center median. This was brought up by multiple civilian engineers during public comment.*



A look at Pleasant Hill Road and why pedestrians/bikers should not be in the middle of it.





Police chases on Pleasant Hill Road are unfortunately becoming a common occurrence – I hear the sirens way too often.

Just this year, in 2023, our friends that live on Woodborough were on lockdown three different times due to police pursuits on PHR.

- **March 2, 2023**- A Lafayette police officer attempted to stop the driver of a black Nissan Altima early Thursday, falling in behind the driver when she fled **onto Pleasant Hill Road at high speed in an attempt to elude the officer.**
- **Feb. 12, 2023** - Three men attacked a driver in her car at the Olympic Boulevard Staging Area near Olympic Boulevard and Pleasant Hill Road at approximately 3:30 p.m. Sunday, smashing the owner's window and making off with her 2019 Hyundai Elantra. Lafayette police officers quickly acquired a visual of the carjacked vehicle and kept it in sight **during a chase through Lafayette and onto Highway 24 west.** The vehicle was described as a white 2019 Hyundai Elantra.
- LAFAYETTE, CA — Two people were arrested Tuesday night in Lafayette in connection with a chase that began some 20 miles away in El Sobrante, police said. At 10:06 p.m. Tuesday, the Lafayette Police Department announced on Nixle that the pursuit came to an end on **Woodborough Road.**

I urge you to look at alternative designs that will keep our bikers and pedestrians on the side of the road. Thank you for your time and attention on this crucial and important matter. I appreciate your service and dedication to our wonderful community.

Lisa Williams

Lafayette Resident for 12 years

From: Claudia Cohen <claudiarcohen@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 25, 2023 7:53 PM
To: cityhall
Subject: For City Council meeting 6/26 item 9A (center median pathway on Pleasant Hill Road)
Attachments: OPINION_ Center-Running Bike Lanes Aren't as Good as Proponents Suggest - Streetsblog New York City.pdf, Cycling in Barcelona and in Catalonia_ Why a central median bike lane is not a good idea.pdf, Crashes, confusion on unfinished Valencia center bike lane.pdf, Commentary_ Remove the Valencia Center-Running Bike Lane Before More People are Hurt - Streetsblog San Francisco.pdf

Dear Joanne - Can you please forward and print out this letter and the four attachments for the Monday, 6/26 City Council meeting?

Thank you!

Claudia Cohen

Dear Lafayette City Council,

Any librarian will tell you the importance of gathering as much information as possible in order to make an informed decision. As a librarian myself, I am, in that same vein, asking the City of Lafayette: How much information have you gathered regarding the center median pathway on Pleasant Hill Road?

For starters, for whom is the pathway being built? This question has been asked at Trans. Circ. Commission and City Council meetings before, yet I don't recall it actually being answered. Is this path for Acalanes High School students? Avid cyclists? Commuters? Families? If so, have they been asked if they would use it? I have heard a lot of support during the City's public meetings for finding a safe route for people to bicycle along Pleasant Hill Road, but barely any for the center median pathway. In fact, cyclists themselves have repeatedly voiced concern about its lack of safety, and stated that they would therefore never use the center median path. Does the City have any indication that high school students will use it? If not, who, then, will use this pathway?

We have all heard the notion "build it, and they will come". Yet, building a pathway in the middle of traffic, amidst noise and pollution, along a road that will only get busier once the Deer Hill Terraces are built, simply means that it will be built. It certainly does not mean "they will come". If "build it, and they will come" is a method for traffic safety design in the Lafayette, then I suggest building a bike path/lane on Old Tunnel Rd., along the overpass (above Highway 24), along Camino Diablo and then on Stanley Blvd. to Acalanes High School and Pleasant Hill Road. These side streets are much nicer to bike along: they are shaded, quiet, and have far fewer vehicles driving along on these streets and much lower speed limits. If those streets have dedicated bike lanes/paths, the likelihood that "they will come" is much higher than in the middle of Pleasant Hill Road.

We are a cycling family and live in Burton Valley. We enjoy biking on the Lafayette-Moraga bike trail to Moraga Commons, to the Iron Horse trail and the Canal Trail in Walnut Creek. My teen boys have repeatedly told me that they would never use the center median pathway. They would not want to cross a busy street – twice! – from the sidewalk to the center bike lane and back again. This would be more dangerous than biking on the right-hand side of the road. Secondary reasons for them are noise, pollution, and distraction of cars flying by on both sides of them.

I've visited Europe many times, particularly Germany, and have yet to see center median bike lanes there. Given the Europeans' emphasis on creating bike-friendly cities and roads, there must be good reason that these center bike lanes are so scant there. I've attached some articles that shed some light onto the issues of center median bike lanes, including the recent one built along Valencia Street in San Francisco.

The City of Lafayette will make a decision soon about the center median bike lane. My hope is that it is an informed one.

Best regards,

Claudia R. Cohen, MLIS
1 Burr Court
Lafayette, CA
510-517-4421

claudiarcohen@yahoo.com

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Keep bus lanes for buses.



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VALENCIA

Commentary: Remove the Valencia Center-Running Bike Lane Before More People are Hurt

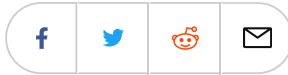
SFMTA needs to rip this dangerous facility out and put in the approved Dutch-style, side-running bike lanes immediately

3:24 PM PDT on June 21, 2023



An injured cyclist on Valencia. Photo by Ian Yep

By **Roger Rudick**



At least one cyclist has already gone to the hospital and another has been injured because of SFMTA's center-running bike lane fiasco on Valencia. It's all over Twitter: not only is the new bike lane already a disaster as far as preventing injuries, motorists are using it for parking as much as they did the old lanes. This is exactly why Streetsblog (and everyone else with any knowledge of international best practices for safe streets) pleaded with SFMTA not to install this known failure of a design.

More details from Twitter:

BikingMzStacey 🚲 🏠
@drivingmzstacey · [Follow](#)

Now imagine this happening with people biking in both directions and cars driving on either side.

DylanY @Dylan_Why_
At least 2 people crashed their bikes in the last 3 days in the new Valencia bike lane at 23rd st, one was hospitalized. The lane isn't officially open, but it's used anyway since the alternative is dealing with cars tailing you all the way down Valencia. @sfbike @SFMTA_Muni

1:29 PM · Jun 19, 2023 from San Francisco, CA

👍 35 💬 Reply ↗ Share

[Read 2 replies](#)

Mission Local also did a great piece breaking down this brain fart of a bike lane.

SFMTA director Jeffrey Tumlin deceitfully rammed this pet project through at an [April 4 SFMTA Board meeting](#); the board was asked to "vote" on a center-running bike lane, when that was the only option they were given. The hearing was like watching something out of the old Soviet Union.



Motorists continue to make illegal left turns on Valencia, despite the signs. Photo: Streetsblog/Rudick

During the meeting, when board members asked why previously approved and successfully piloted designs for standard, Dutch-style protected bike lanes were removed from the options, Tumlin told them that the fire department requires 26 feet of unencumbered space in the center of the street. "I would generally agree with that [having a backup plan], but as we've expressed, the design constraints we faced demonstrated that the alternatives that we had available to us were fatally flawed. We have to face the 26-foot requirement from the Fire Department [...]"

That's nonsense. Of course, there's room for the Dutch-style lanes [the "backup plan"]. For one, the fire department requirement is for 20 feet, as this screen capture of the fire code indicates:

CHAPTER 5. – FIRE SERVICE FEATURES.

SECTION 503. – FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROADS.



The following San Francisco section replaces the corresponding International Fire Code

Section:

503.2.1. [For SF] Dimensions. Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6096 mm), exclusive of shoulders, except for approved security gates in accordance with Section 503.6, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches (4115 mm). The Fire Department shall review projects impacting street width, and may request greater minimum unobstructed street width or unobstructed vertical clearance on a case-by-case basis.

And if Tumlin's SFMTA can't find enough room for a truly safe bikeway, then they're valuing on-street parking over people's lives. Remove some God damn parking. It's not worth building some janky center-running nonsense and slamming people into the pavement regularly to preserve so much space for drivers.


Before SFMTA tries to blame the recent injuries on the ongoing construction, the section where the recent bike crashes occurred is, for all intents and purposes, finished. We don't need to continue this immoral and failed experiment that will cost people their lives and limbs. As Copenhagenize's Mikael Colville-Andersen told *Mission Local*, the Valencia center-running design is an "abomination."




raymonst  
@raymonst · [Follow](#)

sure the car is at fault here, but it's frustrating as fuck to see [@SFMTA_Muni](#) fail at building protected bike lanes despite hundreds and thousands of successful examples around the world 🤔

Maureen Futtner @mfuttner

Really, dude? You're blocking the bike lane on Valencia, even when it's protected? @SFMTA_Muni @sfbike Is there a way I can report this vehicle? License plate clear in this pic!

11:38 PM · Jun 18, 2023 

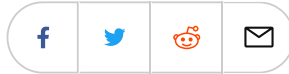
 92  Reply  Share

[Read 6 replies](#)

SFMTA needs to rip this crap out and put in Dutch-style, side-running bike lanes immediately.

Jeffrey Tumlin, Jamie Parks and the SFMTA management may as well have pushed those cyclists off their bikes and into the pavement with their own hands. They need to stop this disaster now before anyone else is hurt. And the SFMTA Board needs to take a stand and overrule staff if they refuse.

And if Tumlin and his team continue to make up reasons why they can't, then they need to be fired.



Roger Rudick

Read More: [GJEL](#), [PROMOTED](#)



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June 23, 2023

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How cop settlements are decided — and how they are spent

Local news needs you!

TRANSPORTATION

Crashes, confusion on unfinished Valencia St. center bike lane

“It is an abomination. It is the worst infrastructure I have ever seen anywhere in the world.”



by ELENI BALAKRISHNAN

JUNE 21, 2023



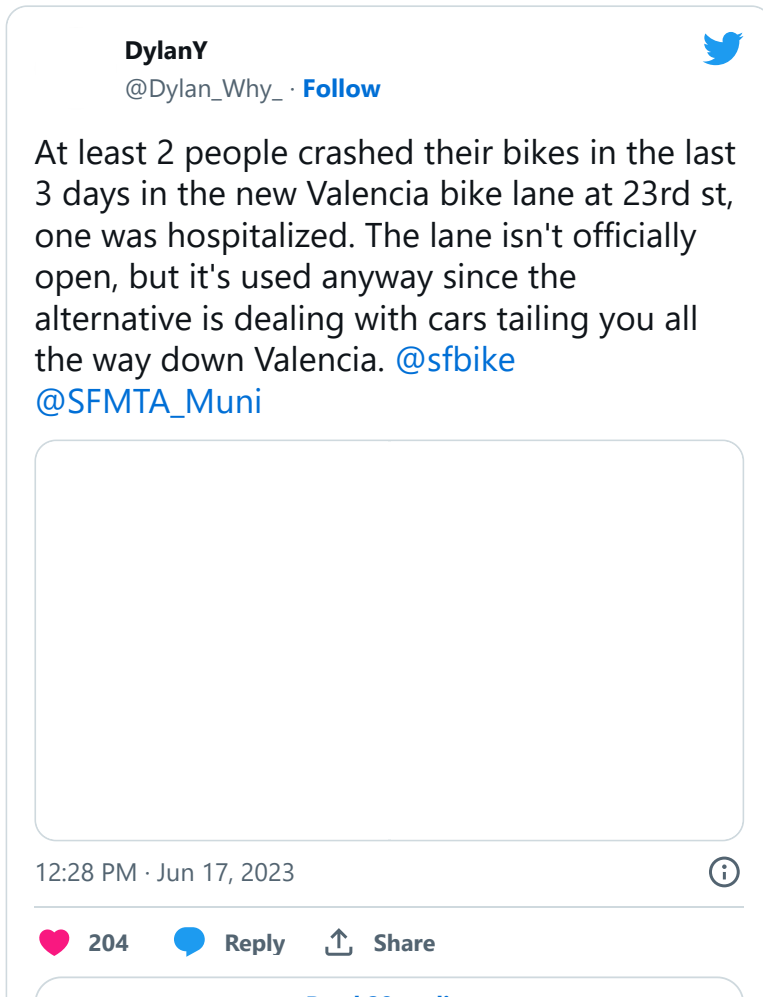
Photo by Eleni Balakrishnan

The unfinished, controversial center bikeway on Valencia Street has caused confusion and at least two bicycle crashes in its first eight weeks, with one cyclist reportedly landing in a hospital last week.

Multiple bike riders interviewed by Mission Local on Tuesday were confused about the street design and worried for their safety while cycling down Valencia.

“Right now, it’s dicey,” said Jessica, a daily cyclist who said she prefers to ride on Folsom Street whenever possible. “I just think Valencia is a scary road.”

Currently, a two-way bike lane has been painted in the middle of Valencia between 17th and 23rd streets. The center lane currently has “Bike Lane Closed” signs on every block, but the old right-side bike lanes have been mostly removed, leaving cyclists with the option of riding among cars, or using the new center lane.



majority of residents **opposed** putting cyclists in the center of the roadway and removing dozens of parking spaces and the center median, both of which are often used for loading.

New passenger and commercial loading zones have been added to Valencia Street, but they are being routinely ignored in favor of the center lane. This has **reaffirmed concerns** that drivers will park in the bikeway, even when it is officially open.

“I think it sucks,” said Kappy, who called the bikeway “reinventing the wheel” as he rode to meet a friend near 18th and Valencia streets. “Whoever designed it doesn’t ride bikes.”

Like Jessica, Kappy said he takes different streets to avoid Valencia when he can.

“I *might* like it,” said Douglas Evans, a daily cyclist who rode on the unfinished bikeway on Tuesday. Cars frequently park in the center lane, sometimes chased away by police driving down Valencia; at least one San Francisco Fire Department truck was spotted taking up the middle lane over the weekend.

Evans said he was hopeful that, eventually, with protection like rubber curbs and plastic bollards, cars would stop parking in the bike lane and cyclists would be safe from being “doored” by drivers leaving their cars.

But he was still unsure. “It’s very difficult to tell how good they’re gonna be.”

The MTA **launched** the Valencia Street project in late April, despite community feedback showing a large



An Amazon Prime van parks in the center bikeway on Valencia Street. Photo by Eleni Balakrishnan

On Tuesday, delivery vehicles could be seen parked in both the center bikeway and the middle of the car lane, forcing cars to drive into the bikeway to maneuver around them.

Workers on Tuesday installed rubber curbs on Valencia between 19th and 20th streets; the center bike lane will eventually extend north to 15th Street.

And, despite signs along Valencia indicating that the half-finished bike lane is closed, and that cyclists should use the car lane, about half the cyclists observed on Tuesday morning were using the new lane to avoid riding among cars.

The confusing interim period has caused issues: Jessica said she is worried about the new rubber curbs, and is scared of weaving in and out of them. And the two people who crashed last week reportedly did so because of similar confusion.

SFMTA spokesperson Stephen Chun confirmed that the agency is aware of the two recent crashes, and that they were believed to be “related to ongoing construction on the mid-Valencia pilot.”



Chun said members of the public had expressed “confusion with the construction signage and placement of the ‘Bike May Use Full Lane’ sign,” but noted that cyclists are not supposed to use the center bikeway yet.

Even when the bikeway is complete, however, cycling infrastructure experts from around the world said the plan is a bad one.

“It is an abomination. It is the worst infrastructure I have ever seen anywhere in the world,” said Mikael Colville-Andersen, an urban designer and founder of the Copenhagenize Design Company. “You save lives, you keep people safe, by using tried and tested techniques.”

Colville-Andersen added that the transition between the center bike lane and existing right-hand lanes would be tricky: Right now, cyclists are meant to cross between cars in the middle of an intersection to enter or exit the center bike lane.

Claudia Adriazola-Steil, deputy director for the global urban mobility program at the World Resources Institute, said it was a “bad idea” to create such a complicated crossing and keep bikes in the center of the road, especially on an avenue with constant traffic like Valencia.

On Tuesday, every single car observed by Mission Local drove through newly painted white buffer zones meant to separate car traffic from cyclists.

And since the bikeway project began, cars have been banned from turning left across the center lane on Valencia.

But do drivers still turn left illegally?

“All day,” said William Lucas, the chef at Etc. Wine Bar at 19th and Valencia streets, who stood outside on Tuesday morning.

The new bikeway also forces cyclists to stay in the middle of the road or wait to exit the bike lane at an intersection, even if their destination is a shop or restaurant in the middle of the block.

“The whole point of bicycles is, you’re supposed to be able to hop off wherever,” Lucas said.

Anne Eriksson, a traffic safety engineer at the Danish Road Directorate, agreed.

“I mean, don’t [cyclists] want to go to some of these commercial services and shops along the road? How are they gonna get there?” Eriksson said. “It seems like they’re sort of giving up on some basic principles because there are some Uber Eats idiots parking in the lane.”

In Denmark, Eriksson said, enforcement by traffic police is also critical to ensuring safe practices.

Those interviewed on Valencia on Tuesday said they had seen surges of enforcement since the street changes took effect, urging cars not to drive into the center bikeway, for instance. But it is unclear how frequently enforcement occurs.

Chun did not provide an estimate for the end of construction. Last week, the MTA surpassed its original time estimate of eight weeks.

Andy · Jun 2, 2023



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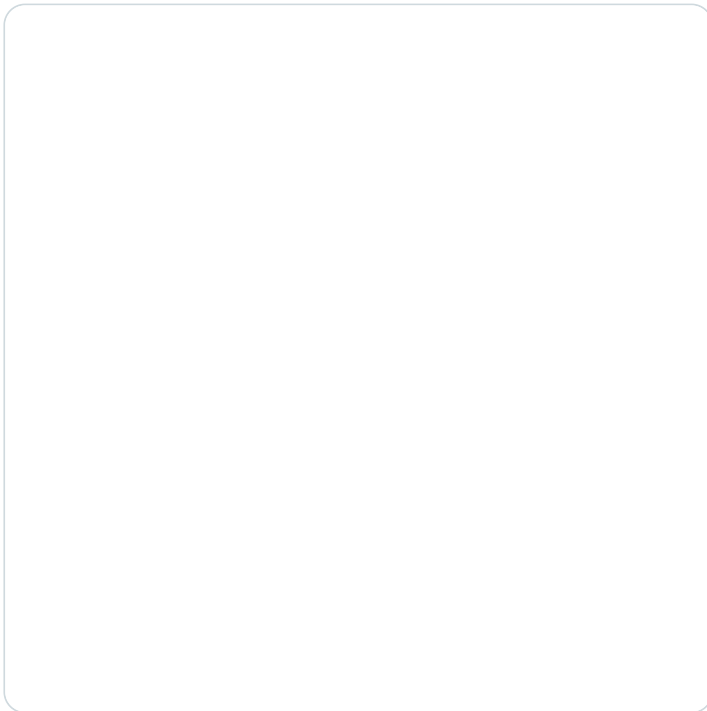
Replying to @SFMTA_Muni

When does enforcement begin? There were tons of cars parked in this closed lane yesterday.

Andy

@Shenanigans_ATL · [Follow](#)

And are you waiting for someone to be killed before someone begins enforcing no left turns?



11:15 AM · Jun 2, 2023



10 Reply Share

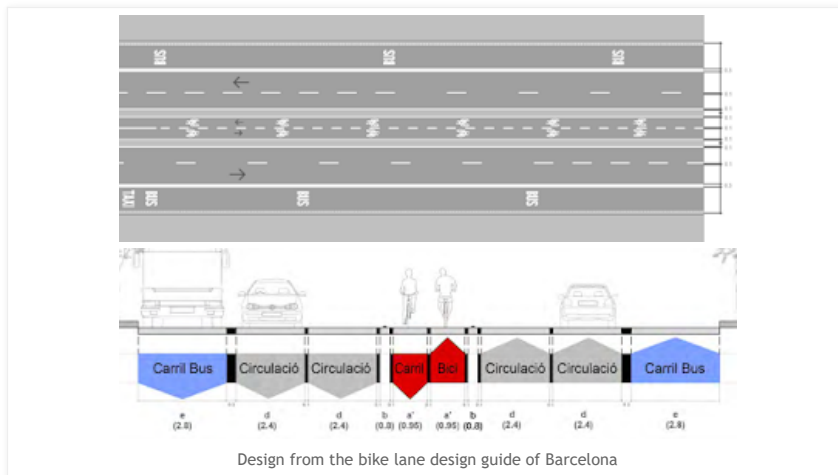


Cycling in Barcelona and in Catalonia

2018/05/14

Why a central median bike lane is not a good idea

In Barcelona, several new two-way bike lanes have been constructed in the central median of avenues. Usually, this design is used in wide two-way streets (at least 20 m wide) with several lanes for cars (or for buses). It's a design that some designers say that is safe for bicycle and car interaction, easy to implement and does not affect much car mobility, but is it really convenient for bikes?



Junctions and crossings

The biggest problem of this design solution are junctions and how to manage all the possible turns that each mean of transport might legally do. The worst case scenario may occur when two two-way bike lanes cross each other and at least one of them is a central one.

The central median two-way bike lane is far away from the sidewalks and the perpendicular streets. How does a cyclist turn left or right? There is usually not enough space for the cyclist to wait for the green light and turn. How do cyclists start or end their trips? How do they go to the sidewalk? Do they dismount? Do they have bicycle crossings next to the pedestrian crossings? Are they allowed to use the car lanes? Will they use them or will the cycle on the sidewalk?

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Why a central median bike lane is not a good idea



Safety

Another concern is safety. Cycling in the middle of the traffic does not give a safety feeling, but based on facts, staying in the middle of the cars you are doubling your chances of being hit by a car.

The bike lane width, the buffer width and the type of separation used are key elements of this real safety. Enough width will allow cargo bikes to use the bike lane safely, and also, spaces to wait before turning left or right.

A good safety indicator are children using the bike lane. Would you allow your children to cycle on a bike lane like this?

Air Pollution

It is widely known that in the middle of the streets a higher level of pollutants can be found, and that on the sidewalks, as you move further away, pollutants decrease.

It is not fair that cyclist have to breath the air pollution they do not produce. And considering that cyclists do breath more air (because of their physical activity), this design is specially unfair.



Shade and lightning

It might seem a minor issue, but on hot summer days, it is much more comfortable to ride in the shade than in the sun. This design does not usually has space for trees and because the bike lane is such a far distance from the buildings, the shadows might no reach the bike lane. We might also consider that traffic might rise up temperature into 1.5°C. All in all, cyclist might look for alternative routes on hot days.

Another issue reported in some of these bike lanes, as they are two-way lanes, is the car headlights glare. Also, the lightning of the bike lane might be problematic as the street lamps are usually on the sidewalks.

Types of central bike lanes

There are different types of central bike lanes especially in Barcelona and its metropolitan area and all of them them have similar problems. Sometimes we have a median (usually with a footway) and one-way bike lanes in each side.

Conclusions

Two-way bike lanes are not the best design and it gets worst when we implement them in the central part of the road because:

- Junctions are much more difficult to design.
- Makes cycling less safe.
- Some cycling itineraries (turns) might be forgotten and the cyclist might have to ride a longer distance.

- More cyclists ride on the sidewalks.
- The design is not convenient for short rides on these streets. On the other hand, with a good green wave, it could be a fast route for cyclist.
- Cyclists might avoid the bike lane on hot summer days.
- Cycling traffic does not interfere with car parking, bus stops or bus lanes, but brings cyclist to the sidewalk.
- It might be cheap to implement when forgetting some essential parts: bicycle signs, bicycle traffic lights for turns, convenient street lamps, etc.



Roundabout with no bike lane in Cornellà (La Saboga)

More information:

- [Barcelona. Bike lane design guide 2016 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Portland. New idea for Foster Road: A center median bike lane](#)
- [What's the problem with median bike lanes \[Catalan\]](#)
- [The influence of traffic on road surfacetemperatures: implications for thermalmapping studies](#)



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BIKE LANES

OPINION: Center-Running Bike Lanes Aren't as Good as Proponents Suggest

12:01 AM EDT on May 9, 2023



The writer would prefer to bike along the curb. Photo: DOT

By **David Meyer**



“Center-running bike lanes” — which run down the middle of the road — are few in number in New York City, but more have been proposed. In a piece in February, Streetsblog contributor Austin Celestin proposed more use of existing medians to add pedestrian space and parkland.

Celestin was right to suggest a more democratic use of medians — many of which are filled with inaccessible greenery or just concrete. But cycling isn't exclusively the realm of commuters and athletes — most people who bike typically travel short distances, within their neighborhoods, to run errands or visit with friends. Accessing community amenities requires access to the curb — which is where bike lanes belong.

The goal of urban cycling infrastructure is to make cycling a feasible door-to-door (or door-to-transit) transportation option. Most city dwellers live inside buildings, which they access via front doors abutting sidewalks. The purpose of all transportation should be to make it easier to get to those front doors. Center-running bike lanes isolate cyclists from the public realm, shoving them between moving cars and dead space instead.

This is backwards. As a friendly mode well-suited for quick, short trips, cycling should have curb priority over cars, parasites of the public realm that currently take up more curb space yet sit idle most of the time.

Many people bike to get to work, but biking most valuable for short trips — the kind that involves frequent interface with businesses and other destinations along the sidewalk. But a center-running lane primarily serves people who commute 45 or more minutes to work or ride between transit deserts — and is next to useless for someone who rides a bike short distances.

In fact, center-running bike paths have the potential to discourage casual riders by distancing them from the places they want to go. This leads cyclists to ride in ways not everyone may like — such as on the sidewalk — or worse, lead them to choose not to ride at all.

It is harder to browse shops in the neighborhood away from the curb, for example, while spontaneous stops — to window shop for special sales and lucky finds or to grab a snack — are harder for the rider to justify. The dance to cross



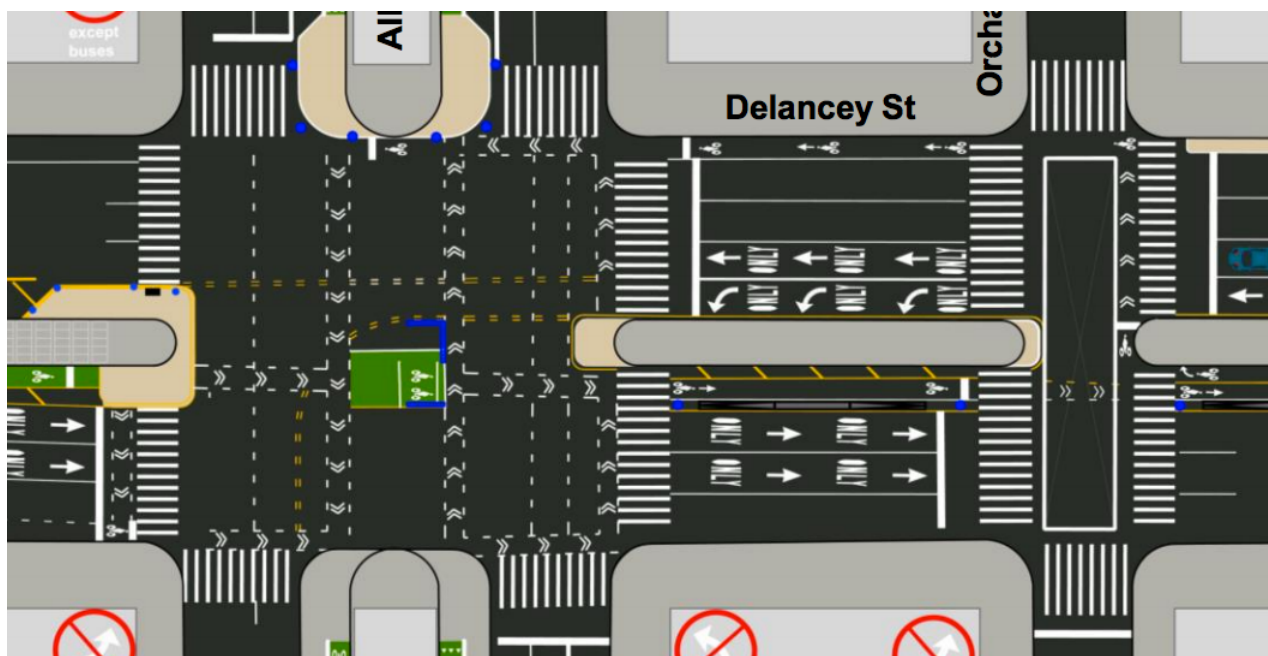
Samuel Santaella

multiple lanes of car traffic adds an unnecessary, dangerous step for cyclist-shoppers as well as food delivery people who make multiple stops. From a

business perspective, that means fewer customers stopping at local merchants. Wherever bicycle parking and safe access are built, cyclists visit and spend more than drivers – making them attractive customers that deserve more attention.

Center-running bike lanes are also terrible for turns. Continuing straight through the median may be easy, but turning left or right is hardly intuitive. Cyclists lined up to make the same right or left turn can also cause dangerous back-ups in the bike lane.

A perfect example of this is the intersection of Delancey Street and Allen Street in Manhattan, where two center-running bike lanes meet. A bike box in the middle of Delancey Street is intended to serve cyclists turning off of both streets, but is often too crowded for more than a few cyclists to make the turn. The rest block incoming traffic.



The city's redesign of Allen Street and Delancey Street created this awkward bike box that's too small for the numbers of cyclists on both streets. Image: DOT

Curbside bike lanes, in contrast, make room for many cyclists to line up to turn, including when there is a red light.

Bus lanes, on the other hand, belong in the center. Unlike bicycles, buses don't serve every potential front door, but only stop every few blocks at designated locations. Plus, median bus stops automatically double as refuge islands that make pedestrian crossings safer. Curbside bus lanes, meanwhile, are chronically

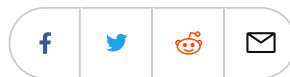
blocked because there's nothing keeping drivers (including cops) from parking their cars on them.

Center-running bike lanes already exist on Sands Street in Brooklyn near the Manhattan Bridge, 108th Street in the Rockaways, and Allen Street in Manhattan, the latter seen as the gold standard because its medians are wide enough to allow public park space. But even Allen Street is surrounded by car lanes that only leave space for narrow sidewalks. Extra-wide sidewalks would better connect the auto-free space to the community around it.

This may be a counterintuitive message to give as our bike network expands at a glacial pace while actual glaciers are melting due to climate change. But the urgency of encouraging cycling doesn't mean we should settle for suboptimal cycling infrastructure.

Now is the chance to design streets that serve as many people as possible.

Samuel Santaella, a frequent Streetsblog contributor, lives in Queens. His opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Streetsblog editorial board, but we offer them for perspective.



David Meyer

 @dahvnyc

David covered nearly every community in the city and then some as Streetsblog's do-it-all beat reporter from 2015 to 2019. He returned as Streetsblog's deputy editor in 2023 after a three-year stint covering the MTA and transportation at the New York Post. A graduate of Montgomery Blair High School and the University of Maryland, he lives in Brooklyn. Email David at dmeyer@streetsblog.org

From: S & J Schwartz <magicbeau@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 25, 2023 8:56 PM
To: cityhall
Subject: East Pleasant Hill Road Pathway

Hello---We are residents of the Acalanes Ridge neighborhood. We are adamantly opposed to the median strip pathway on Pleasant Hill Road, mainly because it seems very dangerous, especially because it is supposed to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians in the middle of a major roadway. We support the development of an east Pleasant Hill Road pathway plan as an alternative to the median strip plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Jerri Fields and Steve Schwartz
Quandt Road residents

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.

From: Stella W <swotherspoon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 26, 2023 11:57 AM
To: cityhall
Subject: Agenda Item 9A Pleasant Hill Road Pathway

Dear City Council,

I write to you today as a private citizen and do not speak on behalf of the Transportation and Circulation Commission.

I thank you very much for requesting that staff obtain cost estimates for studies of an east side pedestrian/bicycle multi-use pathway on Pleasant Hill Road between Mt. Diablo and Deer Hill/Stanley Blvd. I encourage you to fund studies #1 and #3-5 in order to understand the comparative pros and cons of continuing the Class I pathway that exists south of Mt. Diablo.

I think we can all agree that the southern Pleasant Hill Road pathway provides safe and comfortable passage along this high-volume, high-speed road. What we need to understand is how the freeway ramps can be controlled via STOP sign or signal. This would create conditions similar to the southern pathway. I would not limit a study design to signalized ramps, but rather allow the consultant to determine the optimal method of traffic control.

The staff report states that an east side path is less safe as pedestrians and cyclists have to cross multiple uncontrolled freeway ramps, but conversion to controlled ramps will be more safe than the center median concept. Pedestrians and cyclists will cross 3 one-lane ramp crossings. In the center median design, they will cross 6-8 lanes across Pleasant Hill Rd. where too many cars and trucks run red lights. I am truly concerned that the future southbound dedicated SR 24 lane will increase the number of red-light violations as it will be perceived as an extension of the on ramp.

There is a freeway-like quality of Pleasant Hill Road that results from its physical design as a placeholder for a future freeway. The Pleasant Hill Road interchange is a full cloverleaf design because it was intended to serve SR 24 and a planned SR 77. Caltrans is done building new freeways and it is time to redesign Pleasant Hill Road to align with the local scale. The width of the right of way and the free right off ramps maintain drivers' perception that they are still on a freeway. This is why we see 85 percentile speeds well in excess of the posted 35 mph.

Studying control of the off ramps aligns with the goals of Vision Zero and the tactic of reducing speed is a major focus in the 2023 draft Local Road Safety Plan. The LRSP crash analysis found that none of the incidents on Pleasant Hill Rd. involved a bicyclist or pedestrian. All were motor vehicle or motorcycle crashes. Speed and inattention were factors. Controlling speed will benefit all modes: automobile, pedestrian and bicyclist.

From 2009-2020, the city had a "Pleasant Hill Rd. (Deer Hill/Stanley to Mt. Diablo) Corridor Study" on the TransCirc work plan. Over this time period, it appeared on two grant candidate lists and was described as "Development of a SR2S Corridor Plan for PHR (Mt. Diablo to Deer Hill/Stanley - Acalanes HS). *Consider walkway facilities, improved crossings at freeway on- and off-ramps, safety improvements, and feasibility of southbound bike lanes.*"

Funding studies #1 and #3-5 of the east side alternative will achieve the goals of the corridor study the city envisioned over this 11 year span.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Best,

Stella Wotherspoon

CAUTION: This email has been originated outside the organization.