



# STAFF REPORT

## CITY OF SOLANA BEACH

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**FROM:** Gregory Wade, City Manager  
**MEETING DATE:** September 9, 2020  
**ORIGINATING DEPT:** Engineering Department  
**SUBJECT:** **Project Update to the City Council on the Lomas Santa Fe Corridor Improvement Project – Phase III**

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The Lomas Santa Fe Corridor Improvement Project (the “Project”) has been in the City’s Work Plan for the last few years. Phase I and Phase II of the Project were performed during Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/17 and 2017/2018, respectively. Early phases of the project included a Community Walk Audit, identification of infrastructure deficiencies, preparation of a feasibility analysis, development of design options, several community workshops and two City Council meetings.

After receiving project updates and public input during Phases I and II, the City Council ultimately directed Staff to move forward with Phase III which included preparation of final design plans of the project with the specific direction that no roundabouts be studied and that four lanes (two lanes in each direction) be maintained throughout the corridor.

At the February 19, 2019 City Council meeting, Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a Professional Service Agreement (PSA) with Michael Baker International (MBI) for preparation of final engineering plans, specifications and cost estimate for the Project. Since that time, an Open House was held in May 2019 and a Community Workshop was held in October 2019. The results of the community workshop was shared with the City Council on January 22, 2020.

This item is before the City Council to receive an update on the Lomas Santa Fe Corridor Improvement Project and provide comments and direction.

### **DISCUSSION:**

COUNCIL ACTION:

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During the City Council meeting held on January 22, 2020, Council provided a series of specific directions to the design team that included:

- Increase safety
- Decrease vehicle emissions
- Encourage bicycle ridership
- Maintain four narrow lanes to calm traffic
- Maintain a multiuse trail along the north side of Lomas Santa Fe Drive (LSF) on the east side of Interstate 5 (I-5)
- Consider extending the multiuse trail along north side of LSF west of Interstate 5 to the extent feasible
- Improve signage
- Do not eliminate existing parking

In response to Council's direction to extend the multiuse trail west of I-5 along the north side of LSF, Staff and MBI evaluated this option by performing accurate field surveys and in-house design analyses. During this process, the direction provided by Council as listed above was respected.

Per Caltrans design guidance, it was determined that the minimum width required for a true multiuse path would be 15.5 feet beyond the face of curb. This would consist of a 3-foot landscaped buffer area, a 10-foot paved walkway/bikeway and another 2.5-foot landscaped buffer area. Pathways less than 15.5 feet would simply be considered a wider sidewalk and would constitute a true multiuse path.

With this 15.5-foot dimension, the design team analyzed each block west of the freeway to determine where and how the multiuse path could be constructed without improvements occurring north of the existing back edge of the sidewalk and where constructing the path would require relocating, widening, or adjusting the existing improvements north of the sidewalk. At locations where improvements were needed north of the existing sidewalk to allow for the multiuse path, the design team identified impacts to the existing public right-of-way as well as physical site constraints.

Utilizing the 15.5-foot dimension together with the survey and mapping data, the design team concluded that the proposed multiuse path could be constructed on the following blocks of LSF, without the need for additional right-of-way or major reconstruction of existing improvements north of the existing sidewalk:

- Cedros Avenue to Rios Avenue
- Rios Avenue to Granados Avenue
- El Viento/Nardo Avenue to Hilmen Drive
- Hilmen Drive to Glencrest Drive

The remaining blocks of LSF were determined to require widening and/or reconstruction to existing improvements north of the existing sidewalk in order to construct the

proposed multiuse path. The following impacts have been identified for each of these blocks:

**Highway 101 to Cedros Avenue:**

Construction of a multiuse trail north of the existing sidewalk requires widening of the existing bridge crossing over the North County Transit District (NCTD) railroad tracks. The section between the NCTD bridge and Cedros Avenue would also require additional right of way from NCTD.

**Granados Avenue to El Viento/Nardo Avenue:**

Construction of a multiuse trail north of the existing sidewalk in this section does not impact the existing public right-of-way, however, it does impact existing site improvements along this segment. Two retaining walls would be required to be removed and replaced further north of their existing locations. Additionally, four residential driveways would have to be removed and reconstructed at a much steeper grade. The approximate construction cost to implement the full multiuse path beyond the back of existing sidewalk in this section is approximately \$400,000. The design costs are estimated at 25% of the construction cost to account for geotechnical work, wall design, construction details and additional drainage analysis. If it is directed to implement this design, Staff will need to immediately contact and work closely with the adjacent property owners to determine the most suitable design for this segment. The additional design cost is not included in the current design contract. The alternate option for this section is a 10-foot wide sidewalk with no major impacts to the adjacent properties or frontage improvements.

**Glencrest Drive to Solana Hills Drive:**

Widening north of the existing back of sidewalk for this segment would require improvements outside the public right-of-way. In addition to impacts to the public right-of-way, impacts to existing site improvements include the removal/replacement of the retaining wall on the northwest corner of LSF and Glencrest Drive, removal/replacement of three school driveways and the removal/replacement of 12 tree grates fronting the school. The approximate construction cost to implement the full multiuse path north of the existing sidewalk in this section is an additional \$450,000, not including the associated right-of-way acquisition costs. The design costs are assumed to be 25% of the construction cost to account for geotechnical work, wall design, construction details and additional drainage analysis.

Another alternative for this segment is to remove and reconstruct the existing raised median (recently installed with the Skyline School project). The southerly curb line along LSF would also need to be shifted approximately 2-feet to the south immediately east of Stevens Avenue for approximately 300 feet in order to provide the required space for the four through lanes, dual westbound LSF to southbound Stevens left turn lanes, bike

lanes, and raised median. This alternative would avoid impacts to the retaining wall, school driveways, and the sidewalk improvements on the north side of LSF. The approximate construction cost to implement the full multiuse path for this alternative is an additional \$300,000. The design costs are assumed to be 25% of the construction cost to account for geotechnical work, wall design, construction details and additional drainage analysis.

If it is directed to implement any of the two design options for this segment, Staff will need to immediately contact and work closely with the adjacent property owners and Solana Beach School District to determine the most suitable design for this segment. The additional design cost is not included in the current design contract. The alternate option for this section working with the existing improvements and the current design proposal would accommodate an 11.5-foot wide sidewalk with no major impacts to the adjacent properties.

### **Project Status:**

The Project is the recipient of a SANDAG Active Transportation Planning Grant in the amount of \$616,050. Pursuant to the Grant Agreement, this Phase of the Project was originally expected to be completed in July 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SANDAG extended the due date for Grant recipients to April 2021. Staff believes with direction from the City Council, Staff can complete this Phase of the Project on time. Completion of the project by April 2021 as identified in the amendment to the Grant Agreement is subject to change if right-of-way acquisition is required or if major design changes are made.

Please note that Staff is also making application for Cycle Five of Active Transportation Grant funding offered by Caltrans. This grant application is due in mid-September and Staff, with assistance from the Consultant team, is preparing the application for the construction phase of the Project. In an effort to increase our chances for this highly competitive and statewide process, Staff is recommending that the City include a minimum of 5% of matching funds in the application which Staff currently estimates to be approximately \$600,000. If we are successful in this grant application, the matching funds could be provided by a combination of TransNet funds, Gas Tax, the City's Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) funds, the General Fund as directed by the City Council.

### **CEQA COMPLIANCE STATEMENT:**

Once the design components are finalized, the project will be evaluated for the appropriate level of environmental review. Environmental Review is included in the current SANDAG grant fund allocation.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Full funding for Phase III (final design) of the Project was identified as part of Resolution 2019-011, which was adopted on February 13, 2019. The funding sources for Phase III include a SANDAG Active Transportation Planning Grant in the amount of \$616,050 and City matching funds in the amount of \$68,450, which will be taken from the City's TransNet funds that were appropriated in the Fiscal Year 2020/21 Adopted Budget. The total amount of Phase III of the Project is \$684,500 and is already programmed in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program through SANDAG and the City's Capital Improvement Program section of the Fiscal Year 2019-20 and 2020-21 Adopted Budget.

If it is directed to implement any of the design options for implementation of the multiuse trail in the three segments as identified above, additional funding of approximately \$220,000 (excluding the NCTD bridge design) would be needed to complete the Phase III design. The funding source for this design work has not yet been identified.

**WORK PLAN:**

This project is consistent with Item B.6 of the Community Character Priorities of the FY 2020/21 Work Plan.

**OPTIONS:**

- Receive report.
- Provide additional direction.

**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council receive this report and provide input and direction on the Lomas Santa Fe Corridor Improvement Project.

**CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve Department Recommendation.



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Gregory Wade, City Manager