



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 18, 2012

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: General Plan Implementation – Public Works Priorities

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council provide direction on priorities for Public Works Department resources regarding implementation of the General Plan and other interests in Neighborhood Transportation Management Plans to address pedestrian and traffic safety.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Council adopted the newly updated General Plan on December 1, 2011. Public Works staff is working with Community Development staff to implement the General Plan. In February 2012, at a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, Council prioritized staff's efforts for implementation. Subsequently, in May of 2012, Council also indicated an interest in placing a high priority on a plan for the Eastside Neighborhood to address transportation management and safety issues in the wake of the death of Sergio Romero on Milpas Street last October. Prioritization of an Eastside Neighborhood plan should be considered within the context of other potential transportation priorities, such as the planned Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis, other neighborhoods that have expressed interest in transportation management and safety improvements, and the increasing cost of maintaining existing City streets. The Transportation Division of Public Works is seeking Council guidance on priorities for resource allocation.

DISCUSSION:

Recently, Public Works Traffic Engineering staff created a plan to improve safety at two Milpas Street Intersections (Ortega and Yanonali Streets) following the tragic death of Sergio Romero, who was struck in a crosswalk at Ortega Street. During the decision making process, Council indicated interest in placing a high priority on a transportation planning effort focused on the Eastside area, including Salinas Street, Milpas Street, and the cross streets in between. Staff indicated that we would bring this back to Council as part of the follow up discussion for General Plan implementation efforts related to Transportation Planning.

GENERAL PLAN PRIORITIES

At the joint meeting with the Planning Commission in February 2012, Council prioritized staff efforts to implement the recently adopted General Plan. Attachment 1 shows the timing of the initial implementation efforts that are lead by Community Development. Public Works Transportation Division participation is also highlighted. Item 13 on the attachment, Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis, is the only effort listed in which Public Works has the lead, and is expected to perform most of the work. This would be a significant allocation of Transportation Division resources.

Assessing the current and future demand of alternative modes of transportation is the initial step of Policy C1 in the Circulation section of the General Plan. The Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis effort would require consultant services and new, innovative tools to measure Santa Barbara's current and future need to use alternative modes of transportation. The outcome would be used to prioritize alternative transportation projects in the Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan. Over the past decade, most of alternative transportation projects have been construction projects from the Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan. This effort would provide a reassessment of the current pulse of the community with respect to alternative modes of transportation. Community Outreach efforts are anticipated to cost approximately \$50,000 to \$150,000 for consultant services.

If Council wishes to revisit the prioritization of this project, another option for implementing this effort would be to evaluate each alternative mode individually. For example, the current and future demand for bicycling is typically evaluated when updating the Bike Master Plan, which has been discussed as a possible next effort.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

In determining the priority to be assigned to transportation planning efforts on the Eastside, it should be noted that several other neighborhoods have also expressed interest in review of transportation impacts. One request is the Mesa neighborhood that has expressed interest in a Transportation Management Improvement Plan for Cliff Drive. The Mesa Architects have been working with the neighborhood to develop a plan for Cliff Drive to be studied upon Caltrans relinquishment of State Route 225. The relinquishment process will likely take a year or so to complete. Working with the Mesa neighborhood could be another option for Transportation Division resources once the relinquishment is completed.

Safe Passage is a neighborhood effort to improve pedestrian safety on Mission Canyon Road/Los Olivos Street between the Mission and the Natural History Museum. Mayor Schnieder and Councilmember Francisco have placed an item on the Council's agenda for September 25, 2012 to hear from the stakeholders of Safe Passage. This is another example of current community concerns that deal with transportation safety.

Requests for traffic calming have come from residents on the following streets: Crestline Drive, Meigs Road, Westmont Road, Calle Noguera, Alston Road, Los Olivos

Street, Dover Road, Wentworth Avenue, Flora Vista Drive, Voluntario Street, Peach Grove Lane, and Santa Fe Place. A crash analysis was performed with each request to discover any existing safety issues. Only in the case of Meigs Road was such a safety issue discovered and engineering standard practices applied. Although those streets were found to be within safety standards, residents commonly want to slow travel speeds further through neighborhoods, usually to increase the quality of the pedestrian experience. Decreasing travel speeds can be accomplished through various types of traffic calming devices, many have which have been tested on Santa Barbara streets. Traffic calming devices can be expensive to install and maintain.

POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE EASTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

Two options can be considered for the Eastside should the Council make it the priority: either a Traffic Safety Improvement Plan or a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan. A Traffic Safety Improvement Plan would focus on crash reductions and is similar to what has been done for the Milpas and Salinas corridors. The Traffic Engineer would conduct an analysis of all the intersections of the cross streets between Milpas and Salinas to determine what intersection adjustments are needed. Improvements would be done based on standard traffic engineering standards and requirements, and would not involve neighborhood consensus. It may also involve the addition, removal, or direction change of stop signs. On-street parking is also commonly removed at intersections to increase sight lines. This approach would not address neighborhood pedestrian quality or comfort perceptions.

Neighborhood Transportation Management Plans include the steps taken in a Traffic Safety Improvement Plan, but also attempt to address the quality of the pedestrian experience. This is accomplished primarily with capital improvements that increase the quality of the pedestrian experience at intersections and decrease the design speed of the roads through traffic calming devices. Neighborhoods routinely ask to lower speed limits, but this is neither effective nor legally enforceable. Working with neighborhoods to build consensus on a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan involves significant staff resources and ultimately, capital investment in the community solutions that are developed. Short and long-term budgets should be developed at funding levels that are compensatory with the size of the plan. Focusing on a single street corridor, such as Salinas Street, or a single cross street such as Cacique Street, involves less staff time and fiscal resources.

Staff has included a list and map of Eastside Improvements that were constructed from 2002 through 2012, and some still being completed, for more background on the Eastside (Attachment 2).

COMPETITION FOR STREET FUNDING

Also important for Council's consideration is the increasing need and cost of maintaining existing City streets. As has been reported in other Council Agenda Reports this year, Public Works has estimated that the ability to maintain the City's road surfaces at a

standard level of care is slipping. As the overall road surface quality deteriorates over time, the cost of maintenance increases exponentially. A recent study of the City's Pavement Condition Index, which measures average road surface quality, shows that it has further declined.

Any funding for Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan improvements will directly compete for road maintenance funding. Currently, the City spends approximately \$2 million annually on pavement maintenance efforts. Based on the current Pavement Condition Index, maintaining the pavement condition at a standard level of care is estimated to cost approximately \$7 million annually.

CONCLUSION

Possible Options for an Eastside Plan include:

- A. Conduct a Traffic Safety Improvement Plan on the Eastside between Milpas and Salinas Streets including a neighborhood hearing at the Transportation Circulation Committee to listen to Eastside traffic safety concerns. The plan will implement standard engineering solutions to address the safety issues discovered.
- B. Work with staff at a follow-up workshop to identify the boundaries and objectives for an Eastside Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan.

Public Works staff continue to assist Community Development with General Plan implementation efforts as shown in Attachment 1. Staff could move forward next year on the Eastside with a Traffic Safety Improvement Plan as a part of its current budget and staff resources. However, any direction for staff to conduct a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan on the Eastside will require reprioritizing the Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis. Other potential priorities, such as the interests of other neighborhoods and maintaining existing streets, should also be considered.

Implementing a neighborhood planning effort in the Eastside will require a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan followed by significant capital budget commitment in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2014 budget process. If a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan is selected, staff further recommends that Council hold a work session to focus on the objectives and expected outcomes of any Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan effort and establish benchmarks before the project begins so that progress in meeting those objectives can be measured.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis cost would range from \$50,000 to \$150,000, depending on the Community Outreach strategy. Planning and conducting Community Outreach for a Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan could cost from \$50,000 to \$200,000, depending on size and complexity of the subject streets and number of stakeholders. Staff has budgeted the funds required either for the

Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis or for working with a neighborhood on a Transportation Management Plan.

Implementing capital improvements that are part of Council adopted Transportation Plans can cost from \$500,000 to \$5,000,000 (and more) depending on the complexity of the area and the chosen solutions. For example, the Cliff Drive improvements recommended by the Mesa Architects could cost upwards of \$10,000,000. There are no funds identified yet for any capital improvements that would be recommended in a future Transportation Management Plan.

In contrast, most Traffic Safety Improvement Plans can be accomplished with staff resources, generally require \$20,000 to \$150,000 to implement, and could be completed with funds already allocated for this type of project.

As an alternative to using Streets Capital Funds, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds could be an appropriate alternative funding mechanism for traffic or transportation planning solutions on the Eastside, if eligible.

ATTACHMENTS: 1. General Plan - Draft Implementation Program: Phase 1
 2. 2002-2012 Eastside Improvements



PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/RD/kts

SUBMITTED BY: Christine F. Andersen, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

General Plan
Draft Implementation Program: Phase 1 Schedule

Project Ranking	Project Description	FY12/13 2012-2013 ¹	FY14 2013-2014	FY15 2014-2015	FY16 2015-2016
1	Housing Element Certification by HCD	X			
2	Historic Resources Element	X			
3	Average Unit Size Density Program	X	X		
4	Non-Residential/Growth Management	X			
5	Zoning and LCP Map Amendments	X	X	X	
6	Highway 101 Air Quality Setback	X	X	X	
7	SB 375/Housing Element Update	X	X	X	
8	Climate Action Plan	X	X		
9	Safety Element	X	X		
10	Adaptive Management Program	X	X	X	X
11	Emergency Shelter Zoning	X			
12	Building Height Over 45 Feet	X			
13	Alternative Transportation Demand Analysis	X			
14	Arts Master Plan	X			
15					
16					
17					

-  Efforts with Public Works support
-  Effort led by Public Works

¹ Fiscal Year is from July 1 to June 31st.

EASTSIDE IMPROVEMENTS (APS/Salinas/101/Calle Cesar Chavez/Anapamu)

STREETS CAPITAL FUNDS






2002-2012

Completed Projects*	Total Project Cost	% of Project in Eastside	Project Cost in Eastside
CDBG 2010-11 Access Ramps (2010-2011)	\$93,123	100%	\$93,123
Eastside Sidewalk & Access Ramps (2010-2011)	\$141,658	100%	\$141,658
Alisos Access Ramps (2010-2011)	\$205,918	100%	\$205,918
ARRA Access Ramp & Sidewalk Maintenance Project (2010-2011)	\$869,377	15%	\$130,407
Alisos St Access Ramps (2008-2009)	\$89,997	100%	\$89,997
Montecito Street Lighting (2007-2008)	\$203,167	100%	\$203,167
Mason St Pedestrian Bridge (2007-2008)	\$643,502	100%	\$643,502
Sidewalk Infill (2007-2008)	\$570,503	85%	\$484,928
Punta Gorda Voluntario St Improvements (2006-2007)	\$456,514	100%	\$456,514
Milpas St Beautification (2006-2007)	\$1,192,323	100%	\$1,192,323
Punta Gorda South Sidewalk (2006-2007)	\$185,317	100%	\$185,317
Sidewalk Infill FY04 (2003-2004)	\$534,750	25%	\$133,688
Sidewalk Infill FY 2002 (2003-2004)	\$694,194	5%	\$34,710
		TOTAL	\$3,995,250

*Excludes routine pavement, watermain, and sewermain maintenance.

Projects in Progress	Expected Completion Date	Project Cost in Eastside
Cacique Undercrossing	Summer 2012	> \$1,000,000
Milpas Pedestrian Improvements	Fall 2012	\$230,000
Punta Gorda Bridge	Summer 2014	\$2,000,000
Sycamore Channel	Summer 2014	\$1,000,000
Safe Routes to School Cleveland	Summer 2014	\$290,000

LEGEND: ATTACHMENT 2

-  SIDEWALK AND/OR ACCESS RAMP PROJECT COMPLETED 2004-2012
-  LIGHTING PROJECT COMPLETED 2004-2012
-  SIDEWALK AND/OR ACCESS RAMP PROJECT IN PROGRESS
-  PEDESTRIAN FLASHING BEACON PROJECT IN PROGRESS
-  CACIQUE UNDERCROSSING



EASTSIDE IMPROVEMENTS

NOT TO SCALE

DESIGN	MR
DRAWN	MR
CHECKED	BD
PROJ. NO.	N/A