



## Legislation Text

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Staff Report for a City of San Leandro City Council Resolution to Approve a Reduction in the Number of Vehicle Travel Lanes from Six to Four and Installation of Class IV Bicycle Lanes on Hesperian Boulevard from Fairmont Drive to Springlake Drive.

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Hesperian Boulevard is scheduled for pavement maintenance work. The City, as a part of its implementation of its Complete Streets Policy, regularly makes improvements to the roadway during maintenance to accommodate the needs of all users of the roadways. This action authorizes changes to the configuration of Hesperian Boulevard from Fairmont Drive to Springlake Drive such that vehicle travel lanes are reduced from six to four and protective buffers are added to bicycle lanes.

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize staff to implement this “Complete Streets” improvements that will change the configuration of Hesperian Boulevard from Fairmont Drive to Springlake Drive such that vehicle travel lanes are reduced from six to four and buffers are added to bicycle lanes and acknowledge the future potential need to modify the roadway to meet the County’s Congestion Management Plan requirements.

### **BACKGROUND**

In February 2013, the City Council approved a Complete Streets policy that guides the City as it improves the usability of San Leandro’s streets for all users and to meet the requirements of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) for Measure B and BB, Vehicle Registration Fee, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission One Bay Area Grant funding. Complete Streets describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure that allows for safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, public transportation, seniors, youth and families. The City of San Leandro recognizes that the planning and coordinated development of Complete Street infrastructure provides benefits for the City in the areas of infrastructure cost savings, public health, environmental sustainability and meeting the City’s Climate Action Plan goals.

Hesperian Boulevard is scheduled for pavement maintenance and thus a complete streets review was performed. Staff used the Central County Complete Streets Guidelines to evaluate and document potential improvements to make the street suitable for all users. Improvements to address identified needs will be included in the project to the extent that they overlap or closely align with the planned paving maintenance work. Any improvements that require widening the roadway, installation of landscaping, significant median or sidewalk modifications, and/or traffic signal replacement will be submitted for funding under a future separate capital improvement project and will not be included in the paving project.

Hesperian Boulevard is currently configured with three travel lanes in each direction, a concrete median island, and Class II bicycle lanes from Fairmont Drive to approximately 235 feet north of the Union Pacific Railroad Niles Subdivision; much of this length also has parking lanes. Class II bicycle lanes are approximately five feet wide and are adjacent to the vehicle travel lanes with no physical separation, a common feature on many roads. South of Drew Street, the road narrows such that only the three travel lanes in each direction remain without parking lanes or bike lanes.

Hesperian Boulevard has a speed limit of 40 mph and is a necessary route for both motorists and bicyclists who wish to cross the flood control canal, two Union Pacific Railroad tracks, and I-238. The closest alternative routes across these barriers is Washington Ave a half mile to the west and Ashland Ave a half mile to the east. Hesperian Boulevard is also frequently used to access the Bayfair BART station.

ACTC designated transit as the highest priority user of Hesperian Boulevard followed by trucks, pedestrians, bicycles, and finally, autos. Hesperian Boulevard is also listed in the ACTC Congestion Management Plan (CMP), which states that the City must operate the road at a level of service (LOS) "E" or better. Failure to meet this LOS will result in a demand from ACTC that the City remedy the situation within 90 days or face a reduction in gas tax revenue delivered to the City.

Hesperian Boulevard is listed in the City's 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as a study corridor for the implementation of Class IV protected bicycle lanes. Additionally, the Bay Fair Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) specific plan includes a vision for Hesperian Blvd with two travel lanes and class IV bike lanes in each direction. Reducing the road from three to two lanes in each direction is commonly referred to as a road diet. The EIR prepared for the specific plan evaluates the road diet only for the cumulative condition, which is traffic volume in the year 2035, and not the current condition. In the cumulative condition the EIR states that LOS with the road diet will be F. The Bay Fair TOD specific plan was adopted by the City Council in 2018 along with a statement of overriding considerations stating that the impact to traffic on Hesperian is significant and unavoidable and declaring that the benefits of the specific plan including the road diet outweigh the impacts.

In 2018 the City hired a traffic consultant to study the impacts of a road diet on this segment of Hesperian Blvd. The consultant found that in the hypothetical ideal condition the existing LOS is C and that reducing the number of travel lanes would decrease the LOS to D. They also found that the actual existing LOS is E.

## **Analysis**

Implementation of complete streets features on existing roadways frequently requires compromise. On Hesperian Boulevard, a choice must be made between LOS for traffic or improved bicycle features.

A road diet will reduce traffic capacity and increase congestion along the route which will increase delay for motor vehicles, including transit. This is at odds with the ACTC designation that transit is the top priority for this corridor in the County. The road diet will also reduce the LOS to below the CMP minimum at some point in the future. It may be that by retiming the traffic signals an acceptable LOS can be maintained for the current traffic volume. However, when traffic increases and LOS drops below E the City may need to reinstate 3 travel lanes to remedy the situation or gas tax revenues may be forfeited.

Within the current project, a road diet is the only way that bicycle lanes can be extended south of Drew Street and is the only way that the existing bicycle lanes can be separated from traffic. Alternatively, the road could be widened, or in some locations the median could be reduced to make room for both protected bike lanes and three vehicle lanes. Either option would need to be done as a separate project and would require significant funding and several years for implementation. The current project has funds to restripe the road with a buffer for bike lanes. Where parking exists, the bike facilities can be located between the parking lane and the curb thereby creating a class IV bike lane. The buffers can be enhanced by including elements with vertical dimensions such as delineators, rubber curb, concrete medians, or landscaped medians. Class II bike lanes with buffers become class IV bike lanes when these enhancements are installed. The project has sufficient funding to install delineators, or rubber curbs. Installation of concrete or landscaped medians will require \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 of additional funding and will make it more difficult and expensive to restore 3 lanes of traffic, if necessary.

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize staff to implement Complete Streets improvements that will change the configuration of Hesperian Boulevard from Fairmont Drive to Springlake Drive such that vehicle travel lanes are reduced from three to two and buffers are added to bicycle lanes and acknowledge the future potential need to modify the roadway to meet the County's Congestion Management Plan requirements.

### **Current Agency Policies**

- Maintain and enhance San Leandro's infrastructure

### **Previous Actions**

- On March 19, 2018, by Resolution No. 2018-021, the City Council Approved and Adopted the 2018 Update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- On February 20, 2018, by Resolution No. 2018-009, the City Council Approved the Bay Fair TOD specific plan.
- On February 20, 2018, by Resolution No. 2018-008, the City Council Adopted Overriding considerations regarding the impacts of the Bay Fair TOD specific plan.
- On February 4, 2013, by Resolution No. 2013-018, the City Council approved a Complete Street Policy to be in compliance with future regional and County funding requirements.

### **Committee Review and Actions**

The Facilities and Transportation Committee reviewed this item at the December 2, 2020 meeting and recommended its implementation. The committee also requested that staff explore options to improve durability and aesthetics for installation of buffers between the vehicle and bicycle lanes.

### **Applicable General Plan Policies**

- Land Use: LU-2.1.A Retrofitting Neighborhood Form  
Identify opportunities and pursue grants to "retrofit" neighborhoods that were originally designed for auto access and convenience in a manner that facilitates walking and bicycling

and reduces dependence on motorized vehicles for short trips.

### **Environmental Review**

Roadway alterations that add bicycle facilities and do not create additional automobile lanes are categorically exempt from environmental impact analysis per CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c).

### **Board/Commission Review and Actions**

The Planning Commission voted at its September 3, 2020 regular meeting to recommend implementation of a road diet on Hesperian Boulevard.

### **Summary of Public Outreach Efforts**

A Community Advisory Committee reviewed the Bay Fair TOD specific plan three times in 2016 and 2017. Multiple Community workshops related to adoption of the Bay Fair TOD specific plan were also held during this time period.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee reviewed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2018 update at several meetings. The Plan was also presented at two community open houses and was the subject of social media outreach that netted over 1300 responses.

The road diet on Hesperian was the subject of surveys at the Cherry Festival on June 2, 2018 and a community meeting that was held at the Bay Fair Center on July 10, 2018. In all approximately 250 responses were received with 37% of respondents choosing to leave the road in its current configuration; 44% preferring the road diet; and 19% choosing an intermediate option consisting of three narrowed vehicle lanes leaving more room for bike lanes where they exist but no additional bike lanes.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

Re-striping Hesperian Boulevard either as currently configured, or with a road diet, is included in the Annual Street Overlay and Rehabilitation 2019-21, Project No. 2020.0050.

### **Budget Authority**

The Annual Street Overlay and Rehabilitation 2019-21 project is funded as follows:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Reso, Appropriation Dates &amp; Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
210-38-419	FY 2020-21 Budget, General Fund	\$2,140,000
142-38-419	FY 2020-21 Budget, Gas Tax	\$1,000,000
141-39-403	FY 2020-21 Budget, Measure BB Grant	\$7,000,000
141-38-419	FY 2020-21 Budget, Measure B	\$1,200,000
Total Appropriation		\$11,340,000

### **Attachments to Staff Report**

- Planning and Board of Zoning Adjustments Commission Minutes September 2020
- Hesperian Boulevard Road Diet Traffic Study

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