



Legislation Text

File #: 20-378, **Version:** 1

Staff Report for a City of San Leandro City Council Recommendation Regarding Class IV Protected Bicycle Lanes on Hesperian Boulevard and Fairmont Drive

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

San Leandro arterial streets Hesperian Boulevard between I-238 and Thornally Drive and Fairmont Drive from Hesperian Boulevard to East 14th Street both have three travel lanes in each direction for motor vehicles. Class IV protected bicycle lanes are on-street bicycle facilities that are separated from vehicle traffic by a physical separation such as a buffer zone with vertical delineator posts that improve the usability, safety, and comfort of bicyclist of all skill levels. Staff has evaluated the potential of installing protected bicycle lanes on these streets by reducing the number of travel lanes from three to two.

Staff recommends that no changes be made to the number of vehicle travel lanes on Hesperian Boulevard due to the traffic impacts and that the vehicle travel lanes on Fairmont Drive be reduced from three to two in each direction to accommodate Class IV protected bicycle lanes.

BACKGROUND

This item is being considered by the Planning Commission in their capacity as the City's Traffic Advisory Commission.

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 Council in February 2013 approved a Complete Streets policy that guides our City to improve the usability of our streets for all users and to meet the requirements of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) for Measure B/BB, Vehicle Registration Fee and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) One Bay Area Grant funding. 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 our Climate Action Plan (CAP) goals.

Both Hesperian Boulevard between I-238 and Thornally Drive and Fairmont Drive between Hesperian Boulevard and East 14th Street are listed in the City's 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as study corridors for the implementation of Class IV protected bicycle lanes. A study corridor is a location where improved bicycle facilities are desired; however, additional analysis is needed to determine how they should be built, their impact on traffic and whether they will fit within the existing roadway. Both streets are scheduled for pavement resurfacing which creates a cost effective opportunity for Complete Streets improvements such as changing the roadway markings, lane

configuration and striping to enhance bicycle access and safety. The pavement resurfacing work is limited to the existing roadway width; roadway widening is beyond the scope and budget of the current project.

Hesperian Boulevard is currently configured with three travel lanes in each direction, a concrete median island, parking lanes, and Class II bicycle lanes from Thornally Drive to Drew Street. Class II bicycle lanes are 5 to 6 foot travel lanes that 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.

The Alameda County Transportation Commission has designated transit as the highest priority user of Hesperian Boulevard followed by trucks, pedestrians, bicycles, and finally autos. Hesperian Boulevard has a speed limit of 40 mph; bicycling next to vehicles traveling at that speed can be uncomfortable in the existing Class II bike lane. Nonetheless, Hesperian Boulevard is a necessary route for bicyclists who wish to cross the flood control canal, a Union Pacific Railroad track, and I-238. The closest alternative routes across these barriers is Washington Ave to the west and Ashland Ave to the east. Hesperian Boulevard is also frequently used to access the Bayfair BART station.

Fairmont Drive is currently configured with three travel lanes each direction and a concrete median from Hesperian Boulevard to East 14th Street; the speed limit on this street is 35 mph. East of the project limit at East 14th Street, and outside City limits, Fairmont Drive is configured with two travel lanes in each direction and bike lanes. West of the project limit at Hesperian Boulevard the road is named Halcyon Drive; Halcyon Drive is configured with two travel lanes in each direction and intermittent bike lanes. The Alameda County Transportation Commission has designated pedestrians as the highest priority user of Fairmont Drive followed by bicycles, transit, trucks, and finally autos.

With the help of a transportation consultant, a potential road diet or reduction of vehicle travel lanes to make room for improved bicycle facilities was evaluated. A public meeting was held at Bayfair Mall at which the results of the evaluation were discussed and the attendees were asked to vote on preferred alternatives. The public was also asked to vote on preferred alternatives at the Cherry Festival in 2018 and given the opportunity to vote online. In total approximately 250 responses were received.

When asked about Hesperian Boulevard, 37% of respondents said to leave the road in its current configuration; 44% preferred the road diet; and 19% chose an intermediate option consisting of three narrowed vehicle lanes leaving more room for bike lanes where they exist but no additional bike lanes.

When asked about Fairmont Drive 38% of respondents said to leave the road in its current configuration and 62% preferred the road diet option with protected bicycle lanes.

Analysis

Implementation of a road diet on the Hesperian Boulevard segment will likely result in a significant deterioration in the level of service (LOS) of the traffic operations along the corridor. The intersection of Hesperian Boulevard with Thornally Drive receives the most impact. The existing peak demand level of service at this intersection is rated F. Implementing a road diet will increase delay at the Thornally intersection by 25%. Increases in traffic such as are expected due to the Bayfair transit-

oriented development plan when combined with a road diet will increase delay by 60% over the existing condition.

Class IV or protected bike lanes could be installed without reducing the travel lanes if either street parking was eliminated, the width of the landscaped median was reduced, or the road was widened. Of these options, only elimination of street parking falls within the scope and budget of the current paving project. Removal of street parking at any location can be contentious, as it is a benefit enjoyed by local residents and businesses.

The highest priority user of Hesperian Boulevard is transit and implementing a road diet would have significant negative impacts on transit operations. Staff recommends retaining 3 travel lanes in each direction on the subject segment of Hesperian Boulevard and not eliminating the parking lanes at this time.

Implementation of a road diet on the Fairmont Drive segment will not reduce the level of service to unacceptable levels. The intersection of Fairmont Drive with Hesperian Boulevard receives the most impact. The existing peak demand level of service at this intersection is D. Implementing a road diet will not significantly increase the delay at the Hesperian intersection. Increases in traffic, such as are expected due to the Bayfair Transit-Oriented Development Plan when combined with a road diet, will increase delay by 100% over the existing condition and the expected level of service will drop to E. However, a similar reduction in level of service in the cumulative condition is expected with or without the project.

The highest priority uses of Fairmont Drive are pedestrians and then bicycles. Implementing a road diet on the subject segment of Fairmont Drive such that the travel lanes are reduced from 3 to 2 in each direction will make it safer for pedestrians to cross the street and improve the comfort of bicyclists. Staff recommends implementation of a road diet on this road segment.

Environmental Review

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

Resolution No. 2013-018 Complete Street Policy for Regional and County Funding Requirement - February 4, 2013

Attachments to Staff Report

- Hesperian Boulevard Bike Installation Technical Memorandum
- Fairmont Drive Bike Installation Technical Memorandum

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