



**Town of Atherton
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DATE: MAY 24, 2023

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: RADHA HAYAGREEV, SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: General Plan consistency determination for the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2023/24 – 2027/28

CEQA: The proposal is **not a project** pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to CEQA Chapter 2.5 Definition, Section 21065. Project.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission find that the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2023/2024 –2027/2028 and the projects included in that program are consistent with the Atherton General Plan for the reasons noted in the Staff Report. It is further recommended that the Planning Commission report its findings to the City Council.

INTRODUCTION

The Public Works Department has prepared the draft Capital Improvement (CIP) Program for fiscal years 2023/2024- 2027/2028. The CIP is a five-year planning tool that identifies anticipated capital improvements and their funding sources from fiscal years 2023/2024 through 2027/2028.

The Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a five-year program that proposes projects to analyze, repair or improve Town infrastructure, and the funding for those projects. With the completion of the Town Center, focus is shifting to other capital projects needs in the Town.

The Holbrook Palmer Park Circulation Project is set to begin in the coming months along with priority projects. The General Fund will provide new capacity in the next several years for project priorities within several CIP Master Plans. Such priorities include projects in the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, Drainage Master Plan, Green Infrastructure Plan, and Road Improvement Plan.

The CIP program consists of seven (7) capital improvement fund sources that the Town uses for capital improvement/infrastructure needs. The Facility Building Fund will no longer be a capital

improvement fund as the Town Center is completed but will instead shift to a Facilities Maintenance and Improvement Fund. The capital improvement fund sources include:

- Atherton General Fund
- Measure M – County Congestion Management Fee on vehicle registration
- Measure A – County ½-cent Transportation Sales Tax
- Measure W- County ½-cent tax Congestion Relief Plan
- Gas Tax
- Atherton Channel Fund
- Measure S – Special Parcel Tax (Remaining Residual Funds)

The CIP is updated annually to reflect the latest infrastructure master plans, completed projects, updated project cost estimates and available revenue sources. It does not appropriate funds, but rather, it functions as a budgeting and planning tool which supports appropriations that are made through adoption of the annual budget.

The City Council reviewed the draft CIP at its May 3rd, 2023, study session and is scheduled to formally consider the CIP program at its June 15th 2023, meeting. The attached CIP list is comprehensive, and the City Council may choose not to fund certain projects (Attachment 1).

The State Law, Government Code Section 65401 requires that the local Planning Commission review the proposed Capital Improvement Program for consistency with the Town's General Plan.

This report provides an analysis of the Capital Improvement Program's consistency with the Atherton General Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The Council feedback on the Draft CIP at the May 3, 2023, Study Session was as follows:

Park Master Plan Implementation Program #56063 –

- Park Playground Improvements: increase FY 24/25 look ahead budget from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.

Drainage Improvement Program #56034

- El Camino Real Long-Term Solutions: moved up by one fiscal year – initiate study/design in FY 2023/24 (\$250,000) with implementation to follow in FY 2024/25 (\$2,275,000)

Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan Implementation Program - #56059

- Add HAWK Beacon/Signal at Stockbridge/Alameda Intersection (RRFB installation at Stockbridge Avenue/Alameda de las Pulgas outlined in the CIP would be implemented as an interim measure, with HAWK/Signal as a potential long-term improvement) - initiate study/design in FY 2023/24 (\$100,000) with implementation to follow in FY 2024/25 (\$750,000)

ANALYSIS:

The first year (FY 2023/2024) of the CIP is incorporated into the Town's Budget and is the **only year** for which the City Council applies available funding. The remaining four (4) years of the CIP reflect proposed projects and funding. These "out years" are revised annually to reflect changes in City Council priorities, direction, needs and funding availability.

The draft Capital Improvement Program for fiscal year 2023/2024 through 2027/2028 includes the following projects, identified by City Council priorities, residents, staff, and adopted Master Plans. As such, the programs and projects enclosed in the draft CIP are dedicated to enhancing accessibility, safety, and the built environment throughout the Town by targeting various streets and transportation, drainage, park, and facilities improvements.

1. Streets and Transportation

A. Traffic Control Devices Program: Ongoing repair and replacement of regulatory, warning and advisory street signage, striping, cross walks, and markings, and other traffic control devices, including installation of additional signage as necessary, to maintain safe and efficient roadways throughout Town.

B. Traffic Safety Improvement Program: Traffic/engineering studies and data collection, such as traffic counts, speed surveys, and traffic signal warrant studies. It also includes traffic control measures and roadway improvements to improve vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian safety items such as solar powered radar speed indicators, and flashing LED pedestrian activity crossing signs. Priority projects identified include:

- Alameda de las Pulgas Safety Improvements, funded over multiple Fiscal years.
- Purchase fixed solar powered radar speed indicators estimate.
- Traffic Counts and Speed Surveys.

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Implementation Program: This program funds various projects and improvements to the routes identified in the 2014 adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Priority projects identified include:

- Opportunities to improve safety and awareness on heavily used routes servicing schools and parks.
- Seek grant funding and partnership opportunities to implement improvements identified in the Town of Atherton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Watkins Avenue Pedestrian Improvements, Middlefield Road to McCormick Lane.
- Selby Lane bicycle lane improvements.
- Fair Oaks Lane at Lloyd Drive Pedestrian Improvements.
- El Camino Real Complete Streets Gap Closure projects – Planning study funded by SMCTA grant
- Stockbridge Avenue at Alameda de las Pulgas Pedestrian crossing improvements
- Future planned projects
 - Watkins Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Study – Dinkelspiel Station Lane to

- El Camino Real
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update
 - El Camino Real Complete Streets Gap Closure (Project approval and Environmental Documentation)
 - Atherton Avenue Bicycle Lanes

D. Road Maintenance Program: Annual program for patching, sealing, maintenance dig-outs, and overlays to maintain roads in Town. Specific streets are identified utilizing a pavement condition index (PCI) with special attention to Town’s roadside drainage systems to ensure that the edges of pavement do not impede drainage and become hazardous to pedestrians.

E. Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP): This is a new program to address concerns regarding increased traffic volumes and vehicular speeds in residential neighborhoods. Currently, the NTMP is being reviewed by the Transportation Committee and will be presented to the City Council for adoption as a blueprint for addressing neighborhood traffic concerns.

Staff review

Atherton’s General Plan 2019 Circulation Element includes several goals for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the context of the General Plan. Specific goals of the General Plan are listed below to highlight the consistency of the Streets and Transportation programs with the Town’s General Plan.

Goal CIR-1	To develop a circulation system that is compatible with the needs of various land uses planned within the Town of Atherton
Policy CIR-1.14	Streetlights and signs shall be kept to a minimum.
Goal CIR – 4.0	The projects listed above involves maintenance and/or improvement of the existing roadway network to enhance conditions for all users (vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists) and does not include new street construction.
Objective CIR - 4.1	To incorporate, over time and where feasible, the principles of Complete Streets in future roadway projects. Complete Streets are streets and facilities that accommodate all users including bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.
Policy CIR - 4.1	Bicycle paths separating bicycles from vehicular traffic are considered desirable.
Goal CIR-5	To achieve a high quality of roadway operation on all Atherton streets.
Policy CIR - 5.2	Limit cut-through and pass through traffic on local streets by supporting Towns’ efforts using the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program described in this Element.

The projects listed above involves maintenance and/or improvement of the existing roadway network to enhance conditions for all users (vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists) and does not include new street construction.

The projects listed above are found to be consistent with proposed new goals and policies of the adopted General Plan related to implementation of the Town's adopted Pavement Management Program Update, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Neighborhood Traffic Management Program and Street Light Inventory.

2. Drainage Improvements/Atherton Channel

- A. Drainage Improvement Program: This program identifies projects of highest needs based on improving safety, reducing flooding, and mitigating environmental degradation. It also includes the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Plan, or Municipal Regional stormwater Permit issued by Regional Water Quality Board. Projects include:
- Atherton Channel Assessment and redlining upstream of Alameda de las Pulgas
 - Green Infrastructure Plan Implementation
 - Atherton Channel Culvert and detention system improvements at Alameda de las Pulgas and Las Lomitas Elementary School.
 - Long Term projects – El Camino Real Long-Term Solutions
- B. Upper Atherton Channel Monitoring: The Upper Channel Phase 2 project that was completed in December 2011 requires the monitoring of the Channel as part of the permit requirements over a 10-year monitoring period to assess the health and habitat for the red-legged frog population and plants installed to provide an adequate frog habitat. The completion of the Belbrook Culvert Repair and Slope Stabilization project requires a 5-year monitoring period for plant establishment. It is anticipated that additional monitoring will be required as the Atherton Channel and associated drainage is improved.

Staff review

The General Plan does discuss the objectives and prioritized tiered approach of storm drainage improvements identified in the Town Wide Drainage Study, as well as noting the importance of its improvements providing habitat and controlling erosion. Specific goals of the General Plan are listed below to highlight the consistency of the Drainage Improvements/Atherton Channel programs with the Town's General Plan.

Goal CS-4	Support any Town Green Infrastructure programs that address stormwater infrastructure that may use natural processes to manage water and create healthier urban environments.
Goal OSC-1	Protect both publicly and privately held open space lands from deterioration of their semi-rural charm, scenic value and environmental equilibrium.
Objective OSC-1.1	Preserve presently existing open space, wildlife and vegetation.
Goal CIR-1	To develop a circulation system that is compatible with the needs of various land uses planned within the Town of Atherton.
Policy CIR-1.3	Where possible within the constraints of other policies, promote the use of and implement Green Streets techniques and practices in order to reduce flooding, treat stormwater at its source, and to reduce stormwater pollution.
Goal OSC-3	Minimize the impacts of flooding on health, safety and property damage.

Policy OSC-3.2 The Town will assure that opportunities for green infrastructure are routinely considered by all Town departments.

The projects listed above are found to be consistent with proposed new goals and policies of the adopted 2019 General Plan.

3. Town Buildings, Park and Facilities

A. Accessibility Improvements Program: Design and implement improvements necessary to make Town's existing facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. Some examples may include projects such as the installation of new ADA compliant ramps and access improvements to Town facilities.

B. Civic Center Master Plan Implementation Program: The construction of the Town Center Complex, including Administration offices, Community Services, Police Station, new Atherton Library and Civic Court was completed in FY 2022-23. Master Plan implementation is moving into its next phase in accommodating uses of the Town Center complex. Minor upgrades and enhancements to the Town Center Complex is expected this Fiscal Year which includes improvement of the Atherton Rail Station Building and grounds for integration into the new Civic Center.

C. Park Master Plan Improvement Program: Implement number of projects at Holbrook – Palmer Park listed in the 2015 Park Facilities Master Plan with several projects funded in 2022/23 and carry over to this fiscal year.

- Park Circulation and Pedestrian Circulation improvements – Construct the Park entrance including the entry and exit driveways, pedestrian entry and exit pathways, Main House loop, decomposed granite pathways, focal point plaza spaces, and crosswalks.
- Fencing Improvements along Watkins Avenue.
- Parking Lot Repairs in the front lot.
- Park Playground improvements
- General assessment and miscellaneous repairs.
- Solar and Energy Resiliency improvements

Staff review of the programs with the General Plan Goals:

Specific goals of the General Plan are listed below to highlight the consistency of the Town Building, Park and Facilities programs with the Town's General Plan.

Goal LU-2	Build a Town Center that will serve as a cohesive grouping of public buildings to meet the needs of 21st Century governance.
Goal OSC-1	Protect both publicly and privately held open space lands from deterioration of their semi-rural charm, scenic value and environmental equilibrium.
Policy OSC-1.3	Holbrook-Palmer Park shall serve as the Town's primary outdoor recreational facility subject to the following conditions: A. The property shall not be used, occupied or operated for commercial

or housing purposes except those which are strictly incidental and appropriate to its use as a public recreational park.

B. The Park is to be used for the benefit of the citizens of Atherton.

C. The Park may not be used for political purposes except those which involve the public affairs of the Town of Atherton as a whole.

D. The Park may be rented for use by others in accordance with the standards established by the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Policy OSC-1.4

Maintain Holbrook-Palmer Park so that the Park retains its utility for community activities and events while remaining a tranquil haven for Park visitors, which balances the needs of the community.

The proposed improvements to the park are consistent with the goals for the use of the Park as an outdoor recreational facility for the benefit of Atherton citizens. It is noted the projects listed above would be consistent with the General Plan Update related to implementation of the adopted Holbrook-Palmer Park Master Plan and Civic Center Master Plan.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the review of programs and the goals of the General Plan as listed above, staff finds that the proposed capital improvement projects for FY2023/24 - FY2027/28 are consistent with the adopted 2019 General Plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Commission could suggest the City Council consider modifications to the draft Capital Improvement Program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Capital Improvement Program was prepared by the Public Works Department and has been reviewed by the Finance Director and City Manager. The sources of funds for each project are included in the Capital Improvement Program. The Town of Atherton's Capital Projects contained in this CIP are financed through a variety of funding and revenue sources as identified in Attachment 1, with the four major sources of these funds being the Library, Facilities Construction, Measure A and Gas Tax. The City Council will consider the Capital Improvement Program at a future meeting in June 2023 meeting and may decide not to fund certain projects.

FORMAL MOTION:

I move that the Planning Commission find that the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2023/2024 –2027/2028 and the projects included in that program is not a project under CEQA and is consistent with the Atherton General Plan for the reasons noted in the Staff Report.

Attachment:

1. Proposed Capital Improvement Program - 2023/2024 –2027/2028