



Item No. 10 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

FROM: ROBERT OVADIA, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2022

**SUBJECT: ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE EL CAMINO REAL
COMPLETE STREETS GAP CLOSURE PROJECT AND
SUBMITTING A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SAN MATEO
COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY FOR PROJECT
PLANNING FUNDS**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopt a resolution of local support for the El Camino Real Gap Complete Streets Closure Project grant application to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for project planning funds.

BACKGROUND

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) released its 2022 Cycle 6 Pedestrian & Bicycle Program Call for Projects on August 4, 2022, with applications due September 23, 2022. The TA has allocated \$16.74 million towards capital improvement projects, with approximately \$11.2 million towards large projects (total project costs > \$1 million). The goal of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Program is to fund projects that improve bicycling and walking accessibility and safety in San Mateo County, helping to encourage more residents to participate in active transportation in lieu of driving.

The scoring rubric outlined in the grant application materials are generally as follows:

Project Readiness:	15
Funding Leverage:	10
Project Need:	19
Effectiveness:	42
Sustainability:	14
Total	100

The application materials further state that evaluators may take other factors into consideration

when scoring applications, such as the overall application quality, project context, and project readiness.

The TA is also offering technical assistance through the use of its on-call consultants and project management support teams to assist in the development and implementation of projects funded through the program. Funds for these services would be part of any TA grant award to a local jurisdiction.

ANALYSIS

In reviewing the grant funding criteria, and the identified needs within the Town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the evaluation and improvement of El Camino Real is an ideal fit for the TA's Bike and Ped Program. The Town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan includes the study and improvement of El Camino Real through the Town, ("Grand Boulevard Greenway") from Redwood City to Menlo Park, as a priority project due to its lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, prevailing speeds and associated safety concerns.

This 1.5-mile portion of El Camino Real, from north of Selby Lane to Valparaiso Avenue, connects Redwood City, the North Fair Oaks community of San Mateo County, the Town of Atherton, and the City of Menlo Park. With its lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, the need for improvement has been outlined in various state and regional plans in addition to the Town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, including: the San Mateo County City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Caltrans District 4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Reimagine SamTrans initiative, and the Grand Boulevard Initiative. El Camino Real is a State highway, a route of significance to the County and the region, and serves the highest ridership bus route in the County.

As the roadway segment is under Caltrans' jurisdiction, this multi-jurisdictional infrastructure project will be of significant cost and is not a project that the Town can address or fund on its own. The TA Pedestrian & Bicycle Grant is an opportunity to fund the initial planning efforts including the Project Study Report/Project Development Support (PSR/ PDS) and initial environmental review associated with the repurposing of the outside travel lanes or on-street parking on El Camino Real in each direction between Selby Lane and Valparaiso Avenue for pedestrian walkways/sidewalks, dedicated bicycle facilities, transit access improvements, drainage and stormwater treatment improvements, and lighting and signage amenities. The project would also include a HAWK safety beacon crossing at Selby Lane to help connect the North Fair Oaks neighborhoods to Adelante-Selby Immersion School in the event that these improvements do not receive funding through OBAG 3 grant program (currently under consideration and recommended by C/CAG).

This project would provide active transportation alternatives to equity focus areas in Redwood City and Unincorporated San Mateo County and would complement parallel active transportation investments being made in three adjacent jurisdictions, including Caltrans' bike/ped safety improvements in Redwood City on El Camino from Brewster to Selby Lane, the County's efforts to improve mobility in the North Fair Oaks neighborhood, and Menlo Park's Complete Streets program. This phase of project development would set the stage for future engineering

development of the project's design plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E).

As noted above, due to El Camino Real being a State highway, Caltrans support in the development and review of the planning documents for the project is required. The estimated cost of the planning and environmental effort, including Caltrans support costs is \$1.6M. The grant request is \$1.425M with a local match of \$175,000, which is 10.9 percent of total project costs. Additionally, due to the complex nature of the project and multi-jurisdictional coordination needed, technical assistance has been requested from the TA to support the development of the project. TA staff costs associated with the project would be augmented to the project funding by the TA.

FISCAL IMPACT

If the requested \$1,425,000 in grant funds are awarded, local matching funds in the amount \$175,000 will be required to support the planning phase. Staff will continue to seek grant funds to support further development of the project as opportunities become available.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal Area A – Maintain Fiscal Responsibility
- Goal Area B – Preserve Small Town Character and Quality of Life
- Goal Area D – Manage Circulation and Improve Safety
- Goal Area F – Be Forward-Thinking, Well-Managed, and Well-Planned

POLICY FOCUS

The Council policy focus should be on implementing the Town's Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan utilizing available grant opportunities. Implementing the Bike Pedestrian Master Plan is a key program in the Town's 2016 Climate Action Plan, accounting for 233 metric tons of greenhouse gas emission reductions, the fourth most effective means of achieving its sustainability objectives.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders –to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item has not been before a Town Committee or Commission

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution supporting the El Camino Real Complete Streets Gap Closure project and submitting a grant application to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority