

# Capitola City Council

## Agenda Report



**Meeting:** September 8, 2022

**From:** Department of Public Works

**Subject:** Park Avenue Traffic Calming Report

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**Recommended Action:** 1) Provide feedback on traffic calming options for Park Avenue and 2) Direct Public Works staff to conduct public outreach on the proposed alternatives.

**Background:** Park Avenue is a principal arterial street that serves as a primary cross-town route for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians visiting and passing through the City. In addition to being designated by Caltrans as a principal arterial, this road is designated as part of the Pacific Coast Bike Route and a regional bicycle route by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission.

In January 2020, the Public Works Department, in coordination with the Police Department, completed an engineering and traffic study as required by California Vehicle Code. Based upon the results of this study City Council determined that efforts should be taken to evaluate options to reduce the observed speeds along Park Avenue. In January 2022 the Public Works Department began work with our on-call traffic engineering team, Kimley Horn, to review and evaluate alternatives to reduce speeds along Park Avenue.

**Discussion:** The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the alternatives considered to address vehicular speeds and improve safety along Park Avenue and to seek input from Council on the staff recommended implementation measures.

The scope of this evaluation includes the entire length of Park Avenue within Capitola City limits from the intersection at Monterey Avenue to Highway 1. For the purposes of this discussion, it is helpful to break this one-mile segment into three sections: 1) Monterey Avenue to Wesley Street, 2) Wesley Street to Coronado Street, and 3) Coronado Street to Highway 1.

The following measures were evaluated for reducing vehicular speeds and improving safety:

- *Vertical Deflections* - commonly referred to as speed bumps/humps which force drivers to reduce speeds to navigate the obstacle
- *Horizontal Deflections* - involves adding additional curves or chicanes to the road, which forces drivers to slow down to navigate the section of road
- *Physical Barriers* - features such as plastic delineators that provide a visual and physical separation between vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle traffic
- *Road Diets* – narrowing the width of travel lanes
- *Signage* – both speed feedback signs and standard road signs that highlight the allowed speeds on the section of road

The pros and cons of implementing a combination of the measures above were evaluated with our traffic engineering team and are shown as alternatives 1-3 in the attached technical memorandum, summarized below:

Alternative 1. Road Diet Striping: lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes and speed feedback signs

Alternative 2. Lateral Shift: lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes, horizontal lane deflections, speed feedback signs

Alternative 3. Median Shift: lane narrowing, buffered bike lanes, median deflections, speed feedback signs

Staff believes Alternative 1, which includes a combination of a road diet and speed feedback signage, achieves the best combination of speed reduction and safety measures. The rationale for excluding the other three measures is provided below. Vertical deflections, although effective were omitted from consideration as they are not recommended for our arterial streets which include 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Capitola Road, Park Avenue, Wharf Road, Bay Avenue, Cliff Drive, Capitola Avenue.

Horizontal deflections require additional road width to implement, and the required width is only available on segment 2 of Park Avenue from Wesley Street to Coronado Street. This measure does show a greater reduction in speeds as compared to the road diet; however this portion of Park Avenue does not have the greatest speed issue. Staff recommends this measure should be rejected due to the safety concerns posed by the combination of the reduced separation of vehicles and bicycles created by the additional turning movements combined with the potentially distracting views of the ocean.

Physical barriers were considered as an addition tool to provide separation from bicycles in both the horizontal deflection and the road diet alternatives. Staff recommends this measure should be omitted due to the inability to maintain a debris free roadway when physical barriers are installed. Adding physical barriers prevent cars from entering areas, but also prevents street sweepers from keeping those sections of road clear for safe use by bicyclists.

Staff recommends Public Works solicit feedback from the community before implementing alternative 1 and is seeking direction from Council to move forward with our public outreach. Planned outreach includes conducting one zoom meeting and one online survey to allow the greatest flexibility for the community to participate and provide feedback. After the outreach meetings, staff will finalize the recommended alternative and bring the final plans and specifications back to Council for approval to advertise bids.

Fiscal Impact: The total funding allocated to the CIP project was \$100,000. To date our traffic engineering team has been awarded \$19,500 to complete the design alternatives and conduct public outreach. The preparation of final construction documents is estimated to require an additional \$10,000-\$20,000. An engineer's estimate for the construction costs has not been prepared, but staff anticipates the remaining \$60,000-\$70,000 will cover construction costs.

Attachments:

1. Park Avenue Traffic Calming Technical Memorandum

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Reviewed By: Chloé Woodmansee, Assistant to the City Manager; Steve Jesberg, Public Works Director

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager