

**DATE:** July 28, 2021

**TO:** Council Infrastructure Committee

**FROM:** Director of Public Works

**SUBJECT:** Recommend Council Approval of Proposed Changes to Patrick Ave Safety Improvement Project

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC) recommends Council approval of the proposed changes to the Patrick Avenue Safety Improvement Project.

## **SUMMARY**

The Patrick Avenue Safety Improvement Project (Project), located along Patrick Avenue between Tennyson Road and Schafer Road, was approved by Council on October 6, 2020<sup>1</sup> as part of the City's annual Pavement Management project, based on complete street improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP). The purpose of the project was to improve the safety of Patrick Avenue given the high concentration of schools in the neighborhood, requests for additional crosswalks and traffic calming due to speeding, and implementation of the City's complete street goals and policies. The first phase of the Project was implemented in October 2020 and consisted of the addition of separated bike lanes next to the curb, the upgrade of ten crosswalks, on-street parking moved further into the street along the bike lane, and a reduction of lanes from four lanes to three, among other changes.

While initial notices about the proposed changes were sent to local residents, community members expressed significant concerns with the initial improvements once the changes were implemented. A detailed summary of feedback can be found in Attachment II. As a result, City staff paused any further improvements and sought additional community feedback before proceeding with any further changes to Patrick Avenue.

In response to the extensive feedback received, staff recommends numerous changes to the street design, which were presented and shared with the community at the July 19<sup>th</sup> community meeting. A summary of the key proposed changes are as follows and are further depicted in this staff report:

- Return the on-street parking back along the curb;
- Convert the separated bikeway to buffered bike lanes;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4656511&GUID=4D8DACAF-9E2C-4EFF-9036-AF924D119EEF&Options=&Search=>

- Return two lanes northbound along Patrick Avenue from the left turn from Tennyson and start the merge to one lane after Roosevelt Avenue;
- Add a student and parishioner drop-off at St. Bede's School and Church;
- Add red curb near St. Bede's exiting driveway to improve visibility;
- Add a commercial loading zone near Yeyo's market; and
- Add Rapid Flashing Beacons (RFBs) at all uncontrolled intersections for safer pedestrian crossing.

The recommended changes were generally well-received by the community at the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, although some members preferred returning the street back to way it was originally, and Bike East Bay prefers completing the project and maintaining the separated bikeway along the curb or finding another separated bikeway alternative. These additional alternatives were also considered, but are not recommended: (1) returning the street back to the way it was before the Project was implemented eliminates all of the safety improvements and benefits; and (2) completing the project by keeping the separated bike lanes along the curb, adding green paint, RFBs, and additional demarcation between the bike lanes and parking would not be responsive to community concerns.

As a result, staff proposes progressing with the recommended design as outlined above as it best balances the needs and desires of the community with the important safety, traffic calming, and complete street goals that were approved by Council last year.

## BACKGROUND

Prior to the first phase of improvements in October 2020, Patrick Avenue was a four-lane roadway with no bicycle facilities. Patrick Avenue serves residential, religious institutions, several public schools, a couple private schools, the Weekes Community Center Park, and the Weekes Branch Public Library.



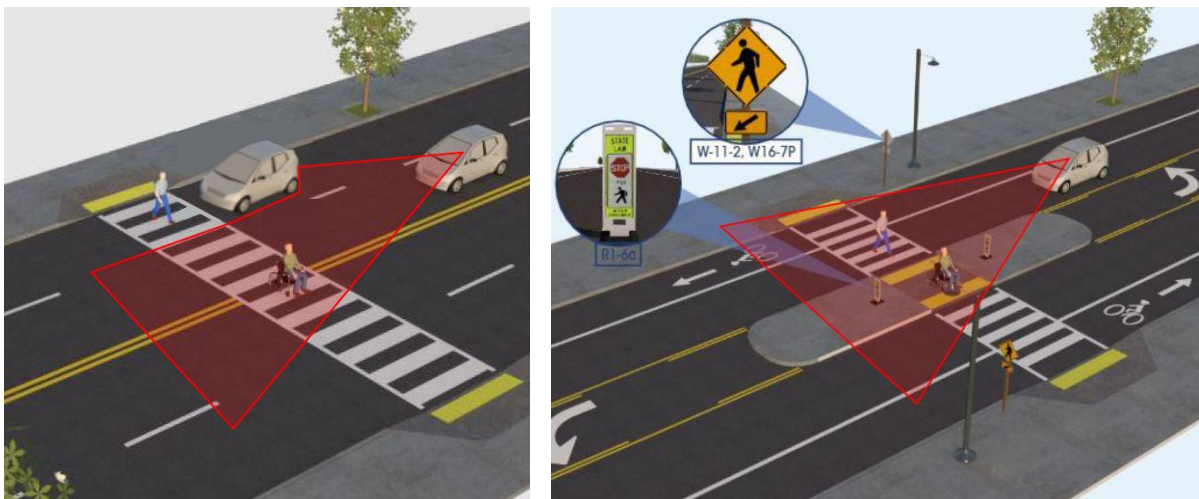
*Pictured left: The map of schools off Patrick Avenue served as one of the main factors in selecting the Patrick Avenue corridor for complete streets and safety improvements.*

Following Council's approval on October 6, 2020, staff implemented the first phase of the Patrick Avenue improvements which included:

- Installation of curb-side Class IV Separated Bike Lanes, including a painted buffer separating the bike lane from the vehicular parking lane; and
- Reduction from a four-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway to lower speeds, shorten pedestrian crossings, and improve pedestrian visibility in crosswalks

A typical street conversion from an existing four-lane, undivided roadway to two through lanes and one center, two-way left turn lane, similar to the initial improvements to Patrick Avenue, provides the following safety benefits:

- Allows left-turning drivers to exit the traffic stream while waiting for a gap to complete their turn;
- Frees up space that can be relocated to other uses for a complete street, such as bicycle lanes;
- Improves local access since motorists making left turns from the side streets will only need to scan for a break in traffic in two lanes as opposed to four lanes;
- Reduces vehicular travel speeds (i.e., the changes to Patrick Avenue have already resulted in up to a five mile per hour (5 MPH) reduction in speed since implementation);
- Reduces the occurrence and severity of collisions. These types of street conversions have been proven to reduce collisions on average by 19% in urban areas and 47% in suburban areas (i.e., initial data suggests collisions on Patrick Avenue have also been reduced); and
- Improves pedestrian visibility because when vehicles closest to the curb stop and yield for a pedestrian crossing the street, they inadvertently obstruct visibility for the vehicle traveling further from the curb (refer to image below).

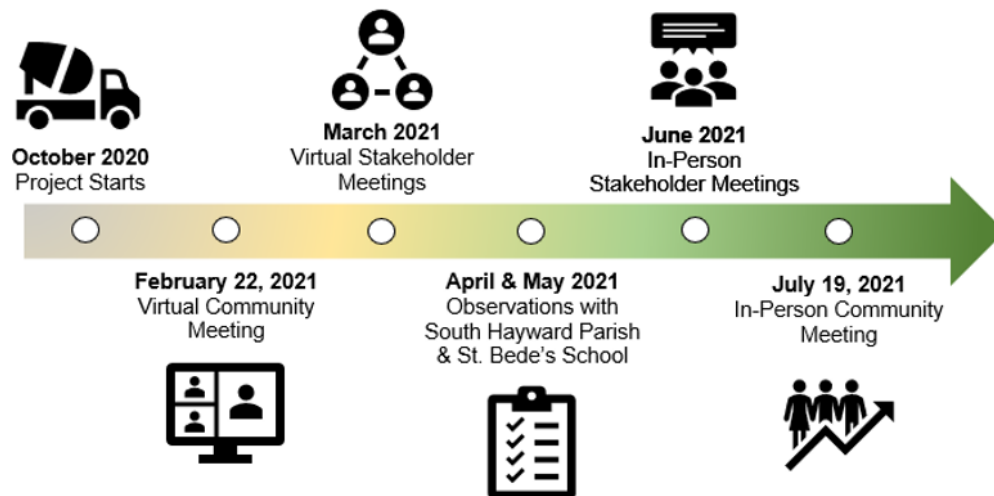


While initial notices about the proposed changes were sent to local residents, community members expressed significant concerns with the initial improvements, once the changes

were implemented, such as: back-up and merge confusion after the left turn from Tennyson; confusion with the perception that parking is “in the middle of the street;” site visibility from driveways and side streets; drop-off issues at St Bede’s school and Church; pedestrian visibility at the crosswalk closest to St. Bede’s school; and double parked trucks in and around Yeyo’s Market, among other issues.

As a result, City staff paused any further improvements and sought additional community feedback before proceeding with any further changes to Patrick Avenue. Staff hosted a series of virtual and on-site meetings with the community and local stakeholders over the past five months as summarized in the following schedule:

- A virtual community meeting on February 22, 2021;
- A round of virtual stakeholder meetings in March 2021;
- Consultations with the South Hayward Parish and St. Bede’s Parochial School in April 2021;
- A round of in-person on-site stakeholder meetings in June 2021; and
- An in-person community meeting at the Weekes Recreation Center on July 19, 2021.



During several community and stakeholder meetings over the past five months, many attendees have expressed their discomfort with the current placement of parking. However, in contrast, some other attendees have expressed a strong approval of the decision to install protected bike lanes, noting that it increases safety for bicyclists and pedestrians who frequent the corridor. A more detailed summary of the feedback is provided below and in Attachment II.

## DISCUSSION

Following extensive discussions with the community and significant deliberation, staff have developed a recommended solution that is intended to balance the concerns of community members with accomplishing the project’s goal of calming traffic and maximizing safety for

all who live, go to school, work, or travel on Patrick Avenue. The following discussion summarizes community feedback, staff's recommended changes, and alternatives that were considered, but are not recommended.

## **I. Summary of Community Feedback**

The following provides a summary of the feedback received from community members regarding the Project:

- Left turns from Tennyson Road cause a backup because of the lane assignments upstream;
- The left turn lane on Tennyson that leads to the through lane on Patrick Ave was highly preferred over the left turn lane leading to the left turn lane from Patrick Ave to Rieger Ave;
- Discomfort and confusion with parking in "the middle of the street" instead of along the curb;
- Difficulty seeing oncoming traffic when turning from side streets and exiting driveways;
- South Hayward Parish Food Drive queues back up along Patrick Ave for one block between Roosevelt Ave and Gomer Street;
- Confusion with St. Bede's student and parishioner drop-off areas and discomfort of dropping off in the parking area located in "the middle of the street;"
- Pedestrian visibility at uncontrolled crosswalks needs improvement, especially at the crosswalk near St. Bede's School;
- Trucks are double parking or parking in the residential neighborhoods near Yeyo's Market;
- The left turn from Gading Rd onto Patrick Ave is too tight and difficult to maneuver without crossing the double yellow lines;
- Increased congestion is anticipated;
- Requests for the pre-existing condition configuration of four lanes, parking along, the curb and no bike lanes;
- Support for bike lanes, especially for students;
- Support for adding RFBs to enhance pedestrian safety;
- Requests to keep and enhance the protected bike lane along the curb;

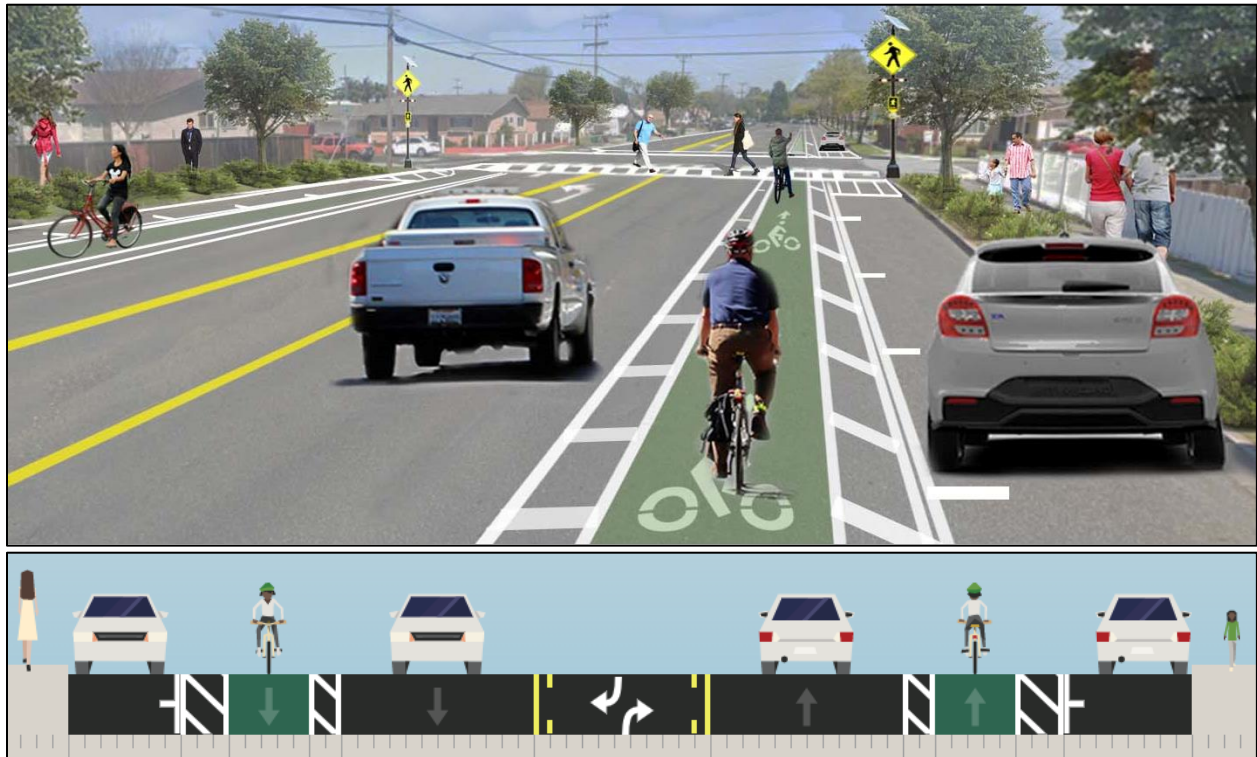
## **II. Recommended Design Changes in Response to Community Feedback**

Staff proposes numerous changes to address community comments. The major change that will address much of the feedback received is returning parking back along the curb, which addresses the following:

- Difficulties seeing oncoming traffic when turning from side streets and exiting driveways;
- Discomfort and confusion regarding parking "in the middle of the street" instead of along the curb;
- Student and parishioner drop-off and pick-up operations;

- Trucks double parking near Yeyo's Market;
- The tight left turn from Gading Road;
- Motorists parking their vehicles incorrectly along the curb in the bike lane; and
- Vehicles parking halfway into the buffer to be further away from the travel lane.

Placing the parking back along the curb reflects a more traditional complete street design with the bicycle lanes set between parking and the vehicular lane as shown in the following cross-section and rendering.



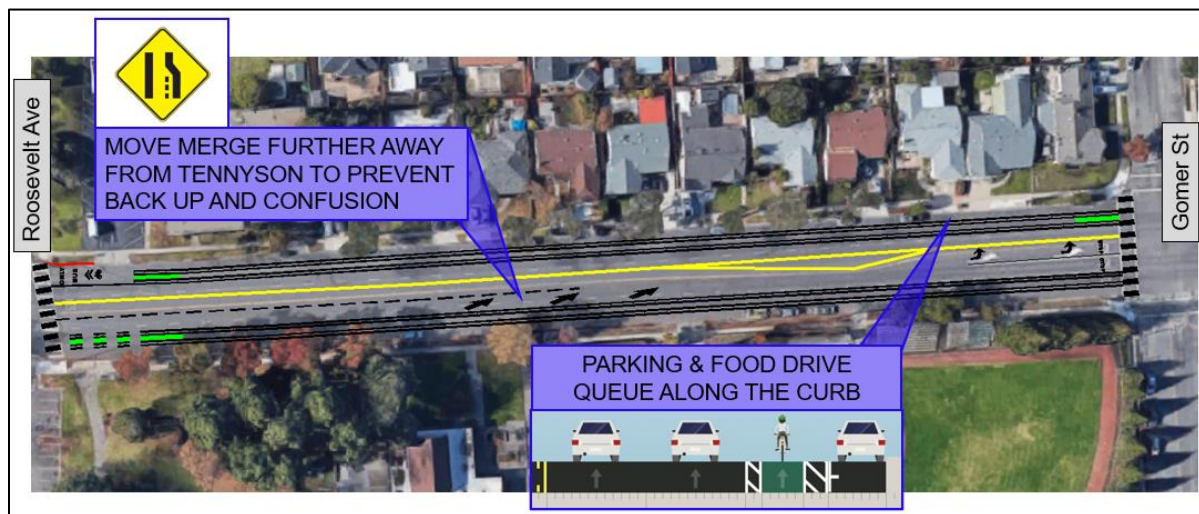
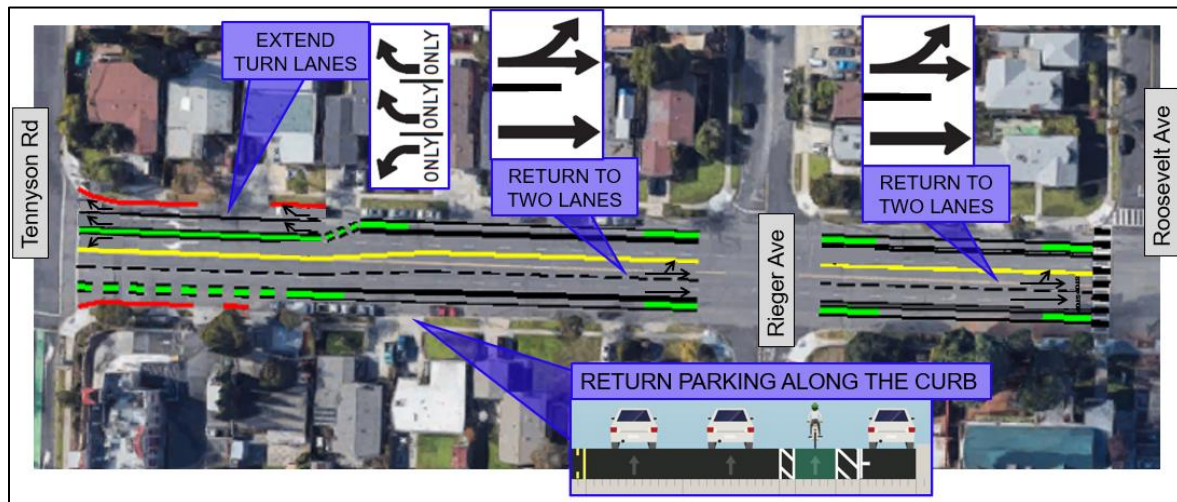
The following sections provide a more detailed summary of staff's recommended changes by each segment of Patrick Avenue:

#### A. Segment #1 – From Tennyson Road to Gomer Street

The major changes proposed for the first segment of the project between Tennyson Road and Gomer Street, in addition to returning the parking along the curb, as shown in the below two images, includes:

- Returning the two through lanes on Patrick Avenue for the first two blocks from Tennyson Road to Roosevelt Ave to resolve the Tennyson left turn backups, the need to change lanes, and motorists unlawfully driving straight through the left turn only lane at Rieger;

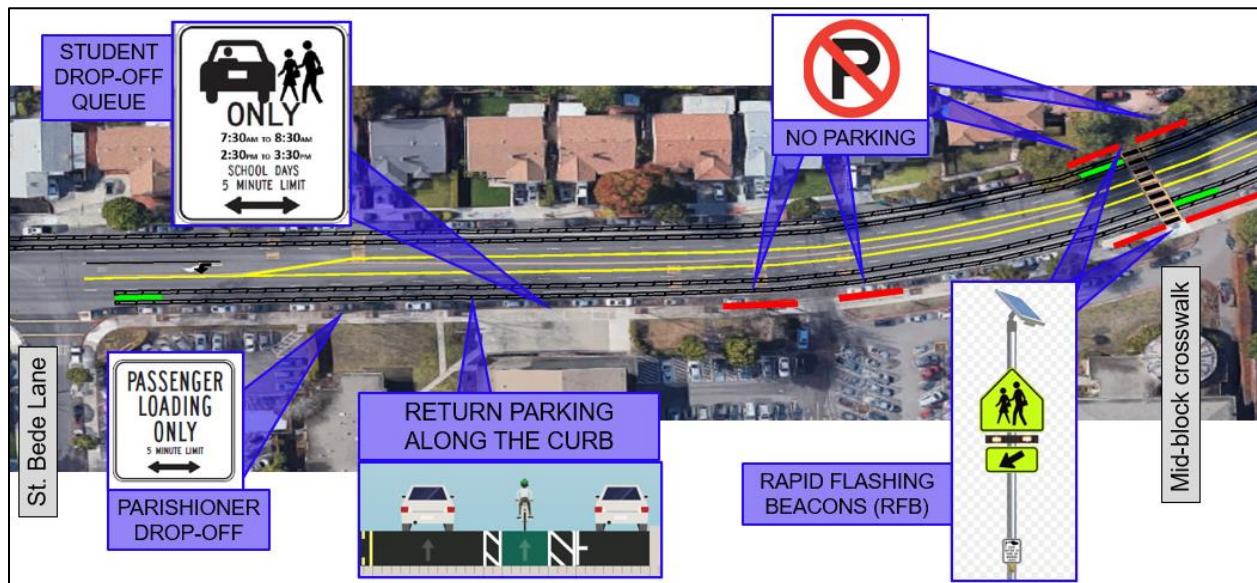
- Extending the turn lanes by an additional 100 feet, which provides an increase in intersection capacity by 18 vehicles; and
- Relocating the unofficial merge that occurred on the first block to the third block of the project between Roosevelt Avenue and Gomer Street, which is much longer in length to accommodate a merge more comfortably for motorists.



## B. Segment #2 – From Gomer Street to Mid-Block Crosswalk

The next segment of the project between Gomer Street and the mid-block crosswalk just north of St. Bede's School contains all of the corridors three uncontrolled crosswalks located at Westwood Street, St. Bede's Lane, and the mid-block crosswalk. The proposed changes in this segment, shown in the next image, include:

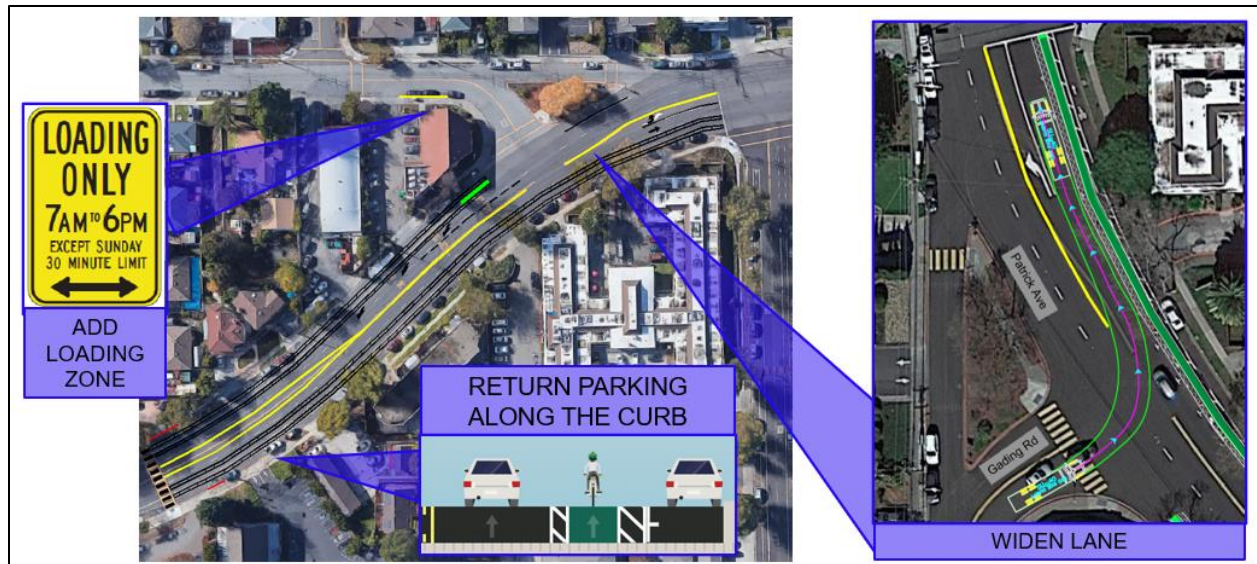
- Dedicating a passenger loading zone for parishioner drop-off in front of St. Bede's Church to address the discomfort of loading in the current parking area in the middle of the street;
- Dedicating an area during drop-off and pick-up times only for vehicles to queue to the administration office to drop off students;
- Returning parking along the curb and installing red curb near the driveways and crosswalks to improve visibility at crosswalks and driveways; and
- Installing pedestrian rapid flashing beacons at both ends of all three uncontrolled crosswalks to alert motorists from a further distance of the presence of pedestrians.



### C. Segment #3 – From Mid-Block Crosswalk to Schafer Road

The last segment of the project is between the mid-block crosswalk just north of St. Bede's School and the end of the corridor at Schafer Road as shown in the next image. The proposed improvements consist of:

- Installing a dedicated truck loading zone for the market and local businesses to address the truck double parking and trucks parking in the residential areas; and
- Widening the receiving lane for those making a left turn from Gading Road to facilitate safer left turns from Gading Road.



#### D. Alternative Next Steps—Not Recommended

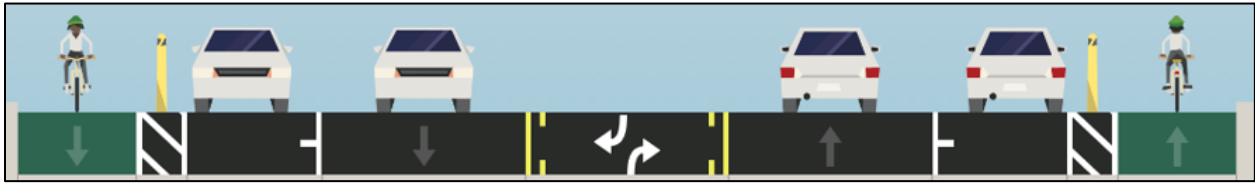
The recommended changes were generally well-received by the community at the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, although some members preferred returning the street back to way it was originally, and Bike East Bay prefers completing the project and maintaining the separated bikeway along the curb. These additional alternatives were also considered, but are not recommended:

1. **Revert to Original:** This option would involve removing all improvements installed during the first phase of the project and returning Patrick Avenue to a four-lane street with no bike facilities (as shown below). This option is not recommended because safety and traffic calming measures would be eliminated. Speeds would rise again, and safety benefits would not be realized. Additionally, pedestrian crossing distances would increase with the expanded number of travel lanes, and safety concerns about left hand turns would return with the elimination of the turn lane.



2. **Complete the Project as Previously Envisioned:** This option would involve leaving the initial improvements and completing the project as previously envisioned, which would include painting the bike lanes green and installing safe-hit delineator posts for vertical separation, pedestrian rapid-flashing beacons at three uncontrolled school crosswalks, parking end caps at each intersection, and other lane striping improvements (as shown below). This option is not recommended

because community concerns would not be addressed, especially regarding the placement of the parking lanes “in the middle of the street.”



As a result, staff proposes progressing with the new recommended design as outlined above as it best balances the needs and desires of the community with the important safety, traffic calming and complete street goals that were approved by Council last year.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Active transportation options like bicycling and walking foster economic health by creating dynamic, connected communities with a high quality of life that helps support small business development, decreases transportation and healthcare cost, and increases property values, employment, and tourism. Providing alternate modes of travel reduces single lane occupancy vehicles, reduces congestion and costs related to automobile-oriented infrastructure maintenance and construction. The overall transportation system will be more efficient; thus, reducing travel time. Moreover, the City will become a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly community, thus creating positive economic and health benefits and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The first phase of the project was completed in conjunction with the Pavement Improvement Project with no additional fiscal impact to the City. The rough cost estimate for the recommended changes is expected to cost around \$300,000. Once final design is approved by the CIC, funding will be determined prior to presenting to Council for implementation.

## STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item supports the Strategic Priority of Improve Infrastructure. Specifically, this item relates to the implementation of the following project(s):

- |                     |                                                                                             |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project 8, Part 8b. | Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; Add 10 lane miles of bike lanes per year. |
| Project 8, Part 8c. | Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; Assess Safe Routes to School              |

Project 8, Part 8d. Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; Implement Safe Routes to School

## SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

The action taken for this agenda report will result in supporting mobility goals established as part of the City's 2040 General Plan, providing for a balanced multi-modal system of transportation facilities and services in Hayward.

The plan will be a comprehensive effort that will guide, prioritize, and implement a network of quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities to improve mobility, connectivity, public health, physical activity, and recreational opportunities. By applying best practices, the plan will increase transportation options, reduce environmental impacts of the transportation system, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents. The goal of the project is to develop convenient transportation alternatives to motor vehicles for residents, visitors, shoppers, and commuters. The resulting reduction in single occupancy vehicles will reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases.

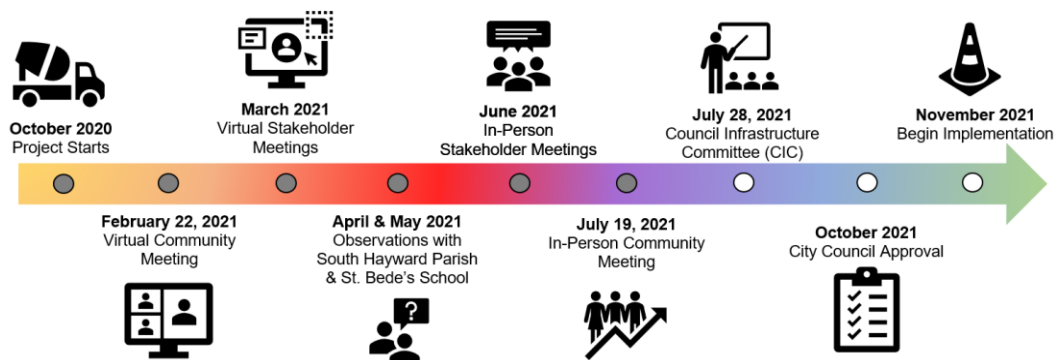
## PUBLIC CONTACT

Public engagement has been a top priority of the Project, with online, direct mail, virtual, and on-site communication efforts deployed including:

- A virtual community meeting on February 22, 2021;
- A round of virtual stakeholder meetings in March 2021;
- Consultations with the South Hayward Parish and St. Bede's Parochial School in April 2021;
- A round of in-person on-site stakeholder meetings in June 2021; and
- An in-person community meeting at the Weekes Recreation Center on July 19, 2021.

## NEXT STEPS

If approved, staff is recommending the revised design to Council in late September/early October and anticipate beginning implementation in November.



*Prepared by:*

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Kathy Garcia, Deputy Director of Public Works

*Recommended by:*

Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written in a cursive style.

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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager