



DATE: February 26, 2025

TO: City Council Infrastructure and Airport Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Update on the Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study, Project No. 05217

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council Infrastructure and Airport Committee (CIAC) reviews and comments on proposed improvements for the Hayward Boulevard corridor to be implemented as part of the City's repaving program in 2025.

SUMMARY

In response to feedback from the public and City Council direction to address speeding and safety issues along Hayward Boulevard, in 2019 the City launched the Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study¹. The street has various horizontal and vertical curves, limited space outside of the public right-of-way, steep grades at various locations along the corridor, deteriorated sidewalks and missing sidewalk connections.

After conducting outreach during 2020 and 2021, the project was put on hold in late 2021 due to a staffing shortage and the need for continued evaluation of improvements. During the last public meeting in 2021, several residents raised concerns about the impact of protected bike lanes and reduced road capacity on potential emergency evacuation needs. In Summer 2024, staff resumed the project, with a focus on short term improvements that could be made as part of repaving of a portion of the street that is planned for 2025.

The project team developed a short-term striping plan and smaller scale improvements focused primarily on safer crossings of the road (Attachment II). These improvements would involve restriping the road to add bicycle lanes and adding new crosswalks, flashing beacons, and associated curb ramps in select locations along the corridor. Consistent with feedback from public meetings, the bicycle lanes would be protected in the uphill direction, with separation from vehicles, but only buffered in the downhill direction. This would enable that space to be used for evacuation during a fire or other emergency, if needed.

¹ <https://www.hayward-ca.gov/your-government/departments/transportation-division/hayward-boulevard-feasibility-study>

BACKGROUND

Over the years, staff has received numerous Access Hayward requests and emails from residents concerning the Hayward Boulevard corridor. The Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study was created to address community concerns that include, but are not limited to, speeding, safety, and connectivity. Hayward Boulevard is an arterial with a mix of land uses with significant geometric challenges. It is designed to carry much higher volumes of traffic than use the street. It has extreme horizontal and vertical curves, limited space outside of the public right-of-way, steep grades at various locations along the corridor, missing sidewalk connections, and few marked pedestrian crossings.

Based on the community concerns and the unique geometric challenges, the Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study identified, evaluated and designed feasible traffic calming and safety improvements. Traffic calming is a term used to describe a full range of methods to slow cars traveling through neighborhoods, making the street work for all users.

Over the years, City Council has taken several actions to develop policy that ensures the City builds streets that are safe and convenient for all modes of travel, regardless of age or ability. The Mobility Element in the Hayward 2040 General Plan and the Complete Streets Policy adopted in 2013 establish a priority to accommodate all road users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The Vision Zero policy, adopted in 2023, establishes safety as the primary factor for designing City streets.

DISCUSSION

In January 2021, the team presented three alternatives to the CIAC that included a variety of traffic calming, sidewalk, and crossing improvements.² Each of these alternatives had construction costs exceeding \$20 million due to inclusion of physical medians, new roundabouts, and significant sidewalk segments. Some of the improvements, especially new sidewalk improvements, would have required extensive grading and possible retaining walls.

In April 2021, staff presented two options at a public meeting that varied the type of bicycle facility and whether or not a lane reduction would be included. During that meeting, participants raised concerns about potential evacuation concerns. Further action was not taken in 2021 and the project was put on hold due to the departure of key staff.

In 2024, the City identified the need to repave Hayward Boulevard within 2 to 3 years. The Transportation Division, with several staff positions filled, was able to restart the project, taking into consideration two key changes:

- Project extents. The initial iteration of the Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study identified multiple improvement options for the corridor, from Campus Drive to Fairview Avenue. For the current work, staff are focused on the portion between Carlos Bee Boulevard and Farm Hill Road, which is the extent proposed to be repaved in 2025.

² <https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4762286&GUID=B885B56E-216B-4330-AF3F-7625E042924A&Options=&Search=>

- **Funding:** In 2021, staff were targeting funding from a competitive grant from the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) to advance this project. In reviewing the project in 2024, staff identified that the proposed project did not align well with the criteria used for Alameda CTC grants or other regional, State or Federal grants. As such, a more scaled or phased project would likely be needed.

To address these constraints, staff developed an approach to the potential implementation of the project that included three phases:

1. **Short-term improvements through repaving.** Repaving projects provide an excellent opportunity to reconfigure streets to enhance safety for all users. Repaving generally does not include significant civil improvements (e.g., a new median), but can reconfigure lanes, lane widths, crosswalks, available bicycle facilities, and similar improvements.
2. **Short-term civil improvements.** Staff sought to prioritize the most critical safety and multimodal connectivity improvements identified by the project. This includes several short sidewalk segments and new or enhanced pedestrian crossings with flashing beacons.
3. **Long-term improvements.** The third phase would be to implement the preferred alternative over time. Given the likely funding challenges for the full, this may include select improvements that could be implemented over time.

Attachment II summarizes the first two phases of work for the project and includes the full restriping plans in Phase 1 and proposed crossing improvement plan sheets in Phase 2. Phase 1 would be implemented in 2025 along with street repaving and includes the following elements:

- Reduce through travel lanes to one in each direction, consistent with the preferred alternative identified in 2021. As noted, the project is not expected to increase congestion, with trips adding at most a few seconds to total travel time.
- Add turn lane pockets and a center turn lane where appropriate.
- Add a protected bicycle lane (Class IV) in the uphill (east) direction. In this direction, bicyclists generally travel much slower speed than vehicles, and separation will help ensure safer travel
- Add a buffered bicycle lane (Class II) in the downhill (west) direction. In this direction, bicyclists can travel closer to the speed of vehicles making separators less necessary. Some bicyclists would be negatively impacted by separators that narrow the available space. Further, a buffered lane would be available to vehicles if evacuation was necessary, addressing the most significant comment received during outreach.
- Add speed markings on the downhill direction between Parkside Dr and Spencer Ln. These markings get closer together as the vehicle travels downhill, creating the perception of increased speed. They have been shown to have a modest reduction of speeding.
- Upgrade existing crosswalks to high visibility.

Phase 2 would be implemented within the next 2 to 3 years, with design beginning in the current year. The elements of Phase 2 include the following elements:

- Close the sidewalk gap on the north side of Hayward Boulevard near Civic Avenue. This short segment of sidewalk creates the most significant gap for people attempting to walk from various residential areas to a crossing of Hayward Boulevard.
- Add new crosswalks and flashing beacons at Parkside Drive (the end near California State University East Bay, [CSUEB]), Spencer Lane (near College Heights Park), and Farm Hill Drive. These are all locations with regular pedestrian crossings that enable the existing sidewalks to connect residents to many destinations on and off Hayward Boulevard.

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 costs 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.

FISCAL IMPACT

City Council has previously allocated \$2 million to Project 05310 (Hayward Boulevard Safety Improvements) from Fund 212 (Measure BB Local Transportation) to implement Project 05217 (Hayward Boulevard Feasibility Study). The Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) includes a placeholder of \$800,000 of the amount for construction to come from the proposed Alameda CTC grant, which was not pursued at the time. As noted above, staff recommend pursuing funding for other projects that are a better fit with Alameda CTC, regional, State, and Federal funding sources.

Staff are proposing to reduce the total construction cost for Project 05310 to \$500,000, which will cover the cost of Phase 1 and 2. Staff are finalizing the cost estimate and will provide an update on the total construction cost as the project moves forward. Any remaining funding in this Project could be used for future phases or returned to Fund 212 to be allocated to other projects.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item supports the Strategic Priority of Invest in Infrastructure. Specifically, this project relates to the implementation of the following projects:

Invest in Multimodal Transportation

Project N1: Continue to implement major corridor traffic calming initiatives.

Project N6: Continue to add approximate 10 miles of bike lanes annually, with a focus on protected bike lanes and intersections that have high traffic/incidents.

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.

PUBLIC CONTACT

This project has included significant community outreach since its inception, including public meetings, multiple presentations to the City Council Infrastructure Committee, and two community surveys. For this meeting, notifications were sent to all residents that use Hayward Blvd for their daily travel, including residents of all of the streets that feed into Hayward Boulevard for access to areas to the west.

Staff also coordinated with CSUEB to ensure that students, faculty, and staff were aware of the project and notified of the opportunities to provide input.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will use Committee feedback to finalize the design of the proposed changes to Hayward Boulevard. The City annual repaving program will commence in summer 2025 with all updated striping completed by fall. Additional notifications will be provided to residents of Hayward Boulevard and all streets with repaving projects once the schedule for that project has been prepared.

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Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Dr. Ana M. Alvarez, City Manager