



DATE: September 17, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Adopt a Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications and Call for Bids for the Orchard Avenue Traffic Calming Quick-Build Pilot Project, Project No. 05312

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council adopts a resolution (Attachment II) approving the plans and specifications for the construction of the Orchard Avenue Traffic Calming Quick-Build Pilot Project, Project No. 05312.

SUMMARY

The construction documents are completed, and staff seeks Council approval of the plans and specifications and to proceed to the call for bids.

BACKGROUND

Orchard Avenue is a minor arterial roadway. From Soto Road heading east, it consists of one lane in each direction for approximately 1,300 feet until Joyce Street, where it opens up to two lanes in each direction for approximately 1,450 feet ending at Mission Boulevard. The surrounding area is residential with some businesses closer to Mission Boulevard.

Orchard Avenue has a history of traffic calming efforts. In 1992, the City extended Hayward Boulevard to directly connect to Carlos Bee Boulevard, making it easier to use Carlos Bee Boulevard and Orchard Avenue to access Jackson St through Soto Rd, and other areas in the City. In September 1999, City staff held a neighborhood meeting to discuss proposed improvements to reduce the speeding on Orchard Avenue and Soto Road. At the meeting, a roundabout was proposed with an even split of residents who favored and opposed the idea. After the meeting, staff researched potential traffic-calming strategies and developed a traffic calming plan that consisted of a roundabout at Orchard Avenue & Joyce Street and two raised intersections along Orchard Avenue at Muir Street and Thomas Avenue. The plan to construct a temporary roundabout was approved by Council on February 15, 2000, and installed the same month. Staff confirmed after the installation of the roundabout that

the average speed along Orchard Avenue decreased from 33 to 26 miles per hour. City Council approved the design and construction of a permanent roundabout on September 19, 2000.

Although the roundabout led to a significant reduction in the average speed, residents have identified other issues of concern on Orchard Avenue. The roundabout was not centered along the centerline of the western approach; therefore, it was less effective for eastbound traffic. Increased new and used car dealers along Mission Boulevard along with increased traffic brought more heavy vehicles and trucks along Orchard Avenue. Recently, City staff received feedback that the raised intersections were not effective and caused excessive noise. As speeding has generally increased in the Bay Area and in the State post-pandemic, recent data collected in 2023 on Orchard Avenue between Joyce Street and Oneil Avenue confirmed high average speeds of 36 to 37 miles per hour.

On January 22, 2024, City staff held a neighborhood meeting to discuss plans to improve Orchard Avenue and receive feedback. The plans discussed at the meeting focused on improving the operation of the roundabout and removing the raised intersections. In addition, the police department discussed its enforcement strategy for Orchard Avenue. Over 50 residents attended the meeting and provided feedback about various issues including the roundabout, increased speeding, truck traffic, parking issues, and desire for more crosswalks. Residents also requested that something be done in the short-term.

In the following months, staff developed a short-term traffic calming plan that would target an earlier construction date than the proposed plans discussed in the neighborhood meeting. The short-term plan includes striping and delineation devices to improve the operation of the roundabout and remove a traffic lane in each direction on Orchard Ave between Joyce Street and Mission Boulevard. The plan also includes changes to the lane configurations at Mission Boulevard. City staff presented the short-term plan to the neighborhood during an online meeting held on May 9, 2024. Sixteen residents attended the meeting and feedback was mostly positive with some concerns about the effectiveness of the proposed plan.

At the June 26, 2024 Council Infrastructure & Airport Committee (CIAC) meeting, staff presented the short-term plans to the Committee and to receive further feedback. City staff spent the months of July and August revising the plans and developing specifications to prepare for the City's bid solicitation process.

DISCUSSION

City staff developed the Orchard Avenue Traffic Calming short-term plans in response to the feedback received for improvements to be made quickly. The proposed short-term plans consist of:

- Adding painted islands with vertical delineation at the roundabout and its approaches.

- Restriping of the north crosswalk across Joyce Street approaching the roundabout from standard transverse style to high-visibility ladder.
- Removing one travel lane in each direction from Joyce Street to Mission Boulevard using vertical delineation and edge lines.
- Extending the length of the median using striping near the Orchard Avenue & Oneil Avenue intersection.
- Removing one eastbound left-turn lane and one westbound right-turn lane at the Orchard Avenue/Carlos Bee Boulevard & Mission Boulevard intersection.
- Installing additional no truck-signage near Mission Boulevard & Orchard Avenue, Orchard Avenue & Soto Road, and Jackson Street & Soto Road.

The benefits of using a short-term, or quick-build, approach derive from the use of materials that can be quickly installed. By using such materials, the City can reduce the overall implementation time and costs to install traffic calming countermeasures. The short-term plan also allows for an iterative approach and it gives staff the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the effects of the improvements before making future decisions on more permanent changes. It also makes it easier to revert back the changes if anticipated improvements are not realized.

One challenge with using quick build materials is that they may require more maintenance due to vehicles coming in contact with traffic devices. The short-term plan is not intended to address all of the concerns that have been voiced by residents. Staff will continue to refine the comprehensive long-term plan that was developed for the January public meeting, informed by the implementation of the short-term project. The short-term project will allow staff to evaluate the changes before evaluating and implementing long-term improvements. Future long-term plans may require additional funding.

The City has recently experienced success in projects using quick build materials on the Campus Drive Traffic Calming Project, which achieved increased safety and reduced speeds at a low cost with the use of similar improvements. Now named the “Quick-Build Pilot Project”, staff recommends that Council approve the final plans and specifications so the Orchard Avenue Traffic Calming Quick-Build Pilot Project can proceed to the call to bids. Staff will return to Council at a future date when a contractor has been selected for approval.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

This item has no direct impact.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item will not impact the General Fund. Funding for this project is associated with Measure BB - Pedestrian & Bicycle (Fund 213).

The estimated project costs are as follows:

	Estimated Costs (Fund 213)
Construction	\$160,240
Construction Contingency	\$24,036
Total	\$184,276

Updated project costs will be provided when construction bids are received and at the time of award.

The quick-build pilot project is not intended to address all issues on Orchard Avenue. Future long-term plans may require additional funding to implement.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

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

Project N1: Continue to implement major corridor traffic calming initiatives

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

This project will include safety improvements that will benefit pedestrian and bicycle modes of travel, which may facilitate increased use of these modes of transportation.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public outreach for this project was first conducted through an in-person neighborhood meeting on January 22, 2024. A second neighborhood meeting with the purpose of providing an update and introducing the short-term traffic calming plan was held online on May 9, 2024. For both meetings, approximately 1,500 notices were mailed in both English and Spanish. A recording of the meeting was made available on the City’s project website.

NEXT STEPS

Approval of plans and specifications would allow staff to release a call for bids in September. Staff will then look to select a contractor in October with anticipated request for approval of the contractor on the October 22nd council meeting. Construction would then kickoff with a goal of completion by the end of the year.

Prepared by: Byron Tang, Senior Transportation Engineer
Hugh Louch, Deputy Director of Public Works – Transportation

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Dustin Claussen, Interim City Manager