



DATE: June 2, 2026
TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Director of Public Works
SUBJECT: Safe Streets Downtown Project (The Loop): Update and Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council receive an update on the Safe Streets Downtown Project, receive public comments, and provide feedback and direction on staff recommendations for moving forward and developing concepts and cost estimates.

SUMMARY

In 2014, the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 1 was completed that created a one-way loop street system in Hayward Downtown commonly referred to as *The Loop*. Since then, the Loop has been a source of serious concern for pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout downtown. In 2026, two fatal pedestrian collisions occurred on the Loop within a span of two weeks. On average, 1.5 people die or are seriously injured on the Loop every year.

The Safe Streets Downtown Plan (Project), a federal grant-funded planning project, has the goal of addressing these traffic safety concerns. The Project started in February 2025 and activities included background research, collection of traffic safety and operational data, technical analyses, and broad community outreach

The Project's Phase 1 Outreach started in May 2025 and was intended to understand the needs of the community. Details of the Phase 1 outreach are included as Attachment II. Phase 2 Outreach started in July 2025. One of the major events of the Phase 2 outreach was the community design charrette held on September 17, 2025, where participants had the opportunity to design the changes they wanted to see for the Loop. Almost all the ideas from those who attended the design charrette fit in a category of two visions, one that converted downtown into a grid layout and the other that kept a similar alignment to the Loop that is today, but introduced major traffic calming measures and lane reductions.

Based on the feedback, the project team identified four options as candidates for further study and outreach. These options were: (1) Baseline Project, (2) Reconnecting the Grid, (3) Current Alignment with Place Focus, (4) Current Alignment with Movement Focus for

Foothill Boulevard. Options 2 and 3 were generated by the community and stakeholders through the design charrette event. Feedback was received regarding the four proposed options from the Council Infrastructure and Airport Committee (CIAC) in October 2025 and two options were approved to move forward for further study and outreach. Those options were Option 2 and 3, which were renamed and renumbered to Downtown Grid (Option 1) and Civic Ave. (Option 2). Both the Downtown Grid and Civic Ave. options would convert the Loop’s one-way street configuration to two-way.

The project team conducted a Traffic Operations and Diversion Analysis and continued the Phase 2 round of public outreach to gather feedback on participants’ preferences to the two options, as well as preferences on the future direction of B Street and C Street. The options proposed for feedback are shown in Attachment V. The online survey, the main method of gathering feedback, was open from January 26, 2026 to April 30, 2026. Methods of outreach to notify residents and business owners included contacting previous participants through the project’s email contact list, focus group meetings, social media, and the City’s Stack newsletter. In addition, utility bill inserts with directions to take the project survey were sent electronically or mailed to the City residents. A total of 350 survey responses were received. Details of Phase 2 outreach are included as Attachment III.

Staff recommendations were made after a thorough review of the technical analyses with consideration of feedback received from outreach efforts. The Civic Ave. option with a continuous D Street was advantageous because it provides similar pedestrian and bicycle safety benefits compared to the Downtown Grid option, but with significantly less congestion impacts. At many downtown intersections proposed with the Civic Ave option, the congestion difference is multiple magnitudes less than the Downtown Grid option, although both options do increase congestion in comparison to the existing configuration. For B Street, staff recommends the Two-Way option, with a possibility of a temporary pedestrian plaza to be explored further in the future after additional analysis and evaluation is conducted. Lastly, staff recommend proceeding with the C Street proposal that includes a two-way cycle track between Mission Boulevard and Foothill Boulevard. The recommendations are summarized on the table below.

	Staff Recommendations
Downtown Loop	Civic Ave. Option
D Street Option	Continuous
B Street	Two-Way
C Street	Two-Way with Cycle Track between Mission Blvd. and Foothill Blvd.

After receiving feedback and approval from City Council on the options to move forward with, the project team will work on developing a more detailed concept with a cost estimate. A third and last round of outreach will be conducted to receive feedback on the concept, with expectation to have a final concept and cost estimate presented to City Council for approval in Q1 2027.

The recommendation of the Civic Ave. option provides direction to the vision of the Safe Streets Downtown project, culminating from the public outreach and technical analysis conducted. This direction will assist staff seek in seeking future funding for the project. There is still flexibility to evaluate different variations within this option and completing any other needed technical studies in future project phases. Staff would much appreciate City Council's comments and feedback on the breadth and depth of the current public outreach before embarking on the much more involved, rigorous, and costly next steps.

FISCAL IMPACT

This Project does not impact the General Fund or Measure C. It is funded by Safe Streets & Roads for All federal grant funds. Funding has not been secured for future environmental, design, and construction phases.

BACKGROUND

Alameda County, like many other counties in the San Francisco Bay Area, experienced high population growth in the second half of the 20th century. Driven by post-World War II suburbanization and demographic shifts, the City of Hayward population increased nearly ten-fold. Due to this increased growth and congestion in the region, a decades long initiative was started by Caltrans in 1961 to create a bypass freeway that would run parallel to Mission Boulevard and I-880. This bypass freeway was proposed to run through the City of Hayward and parts unincorporated Alameda County. This proposal generated community backlash mostly from those living in the hillside developments related to funneling regional traffic through the hillside, and in 1971, a lawsuit, *La Raza vs. Volpe*, was filed in federal court on behalf of residents that would be displaced by the freeway construction. After years of legal difficulties from multiple lawsuits, Caltrans abandoned plans for the bypass in 2003.

Without the freeway bypass project, solutions were sought to increase roadway capacity for handling the increased local and regional traffic demands. Through these efforts, the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project was created. Using funds from sold properties purchased with the intent of building the bypass, along with other local and regional funding, the City completed the first phase of the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project in 2014. The Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project Phase 1 featured large capital infrastructure changes, including changes in traffic circulation, lane directions, road alignments, and implementation of a one-way loop street system in Downtown Hayward. Comprised of segments from A Street, Mission Boulevard, and Foothill Boulevard, this one-way loop street system had the purpose of alleviating regional congestion by funneling traffic through Downtown Hayward. The one-way loop street system became known and is commonly referred to as *The Loop* by the community.

Shortly after the Loop was completed and opened to the public, the community expressed disdain for the project. The project brought in a large volume of regional traffic through Downtown Hayward, making it difficult to access shops and amenities by local residents

and visitors. Numerous City residents expressed that navigating the Loop is difficult for them, and for that reason, they are reluctant to visit the Downtown.

Although the Loop achieved its purpose in rerouting traffic to accommodate regional traffic demands, unintended negative impacts to transportation safety and the economic vitality of downtown were apparent.

On July 7, 2023, Staff applied for a U.S. Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All grant to develop a Speed Management Plan and a High Injury Network Safety Plan. Staff proposed a comprehensive safety evaluation and development of conceptual plans to improve traffic safety for many of the City's main arterials, including the streets that make up the Loop. On October 27, 2023, the City was awarded \$3,252,000 in funding with a requirement of \$813,000 in City matching funds. Of the \$4,065,000 total in grant and matching funds, only a portion of the funds would be used for the Downtown area of the High Injury Network Plan.

On October 18, 2024, Staff published a request for proposals for the first set of corridors to be studied for the High Injury Network Plan. After a review of the proposals received, staff recommended Fehr & Peers to be the City's consultant to prepare the Downtown Area portion of the High Injury Network Safety Plan. On January 21, 2025¹ City Council approved to execute a contract with Fehr & Peers consultants for a not-to-exceed amount of \$950,000. The contract was executed on February 20, 2025.

Initial Project Activities

Project activities began in February 2025. To establish consistency with other safety projects, the Project was renamed to Safe Streets Downtown.

The Project's Phase 1 Outreach started in May 2025. The project team employed multiple methods to gather community and stakeholder feedback. A project website was created to allow participation through an electronic survey. Participants of the survey could also select locations on an interactive map to comment on. Throughout downtown, 33 sidewalk decals were installed on the sidewalk. The sidewalk decals contained a QR code linked to the project website. By the time the survey closed in July, 397 survey responses and 181 map comments were collected.

A number of focus groups were held to get specific feedback from groups of interest. On May 14, 2025, business owners and the Chamber of Commerce were a part of a focus group. Other focus groups held were a City employee focus group, due to the City being the largest employer in Downtown Hayward and a senior citizen focus group with additional representation from Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL).

Project team staff also attended and tabled at various downtown events such as the Farmer's Market, Downtown Street Party, and the Hayward Public Library Community HUB

¹ <https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7096317&GUID=5B5E1ADD-C61F-411A-B463-7528C894906F&Options=&Search=>

opening ribbon cutting. An individual presentation was made to the Hayward Youth Commission to gather feedback from 24 Hayward Youth Commissioners.

There were four recurring themes commonly heard from outreach activities that confirmed what many have known about the loop:

- Unsafe driving behavior
- Driving is confusing
- Biking and walking feels unsafe
- Need for economic and placemaking support

Phase 2 of public outreach started in July 2025. One of the major events of the Phase 2 outreach was to host a community design charrette. Held on September 17, 2025 at the Hayward Public Library, community members and interested stakeholders participated in a hands-on workshop to redesign the downtown area. Throughout the event, participants generally showed a preference for converting Loop streets to two-way operation and maintaining intersections as 90-degree with traffic signals. While there was some concern that regional cut-through traffic would oppose a redesign, there was also strong support for placemaking and pedestrian-oriented improvements geared towards Hayward residents, businesses, and visitors that would contribute to a more vibrant downtown. Participants also noted the importance of maintaining on-street parking, paired with improved enforcement and parking management to support business activity.

Council Infrastructure and Airport Committee Review

The project team reviewed the ideas generated from the design charrette event and the results of the outreach and proposed four options to be studied further. The four options included a Baseline Project option, Reconnecting the Grid, Current Alignment with Place Focus, and Current Alignment with Movement Focus for Foothill Boulevard. The results of outreach were presented to CIAC for feedback and approval to study further. CIAC feedback eliminated Option 1 and Option 4, leaving Option 2 and 3 to be further studied. Below is a summary of the options presented to CIAC on October 22, 2025.

Option 1: Baseline Project

A baseline, near-term option that includes minimal changes to the Loop outside of systemic intersection safety improvements. Limited placemaking can be provided through parklets and planters in the right-of-way.

Option 2: Reconnecting the Grid (Community Generated)

Removal of segments of Foothill Boulevard from the circulation network. This option also includes a strong reconfiguration of travel lanes on Mission Boulevard, A Street, and the remaining segments of Foothill Boulevard.

Option 3: Current Alignment with Place Focus (Community Generated)

Maintain the current circulation network on the Loop and implement placemaking improvements on A Street, Mission Boulevard, and Foothill Boulevard. This option includes a strong reconfiguration of travel lanes for those streets.

Option 4: Current Alignment with Movement Focus for Foothill Boulevard

Maintains the current circulation network on the Loop and retains more capacity for Movement on Foothill Boulevard. This option includes reconfiguration of travel lanes on Mission Boulevard and A Street.

After recommendation from CIAC to study two options going forward, Option 2 “Reconnecting the Grid” was renamed to “Downtown Grid” and Option 3 “Current Alignment with Place Focus” was renamed to “Civic Ave.” Going forward, in all outreach and technical documentation, the Downtown Grid option was designated as Option 1 and the Civic Ave. option was designated as Option 2.

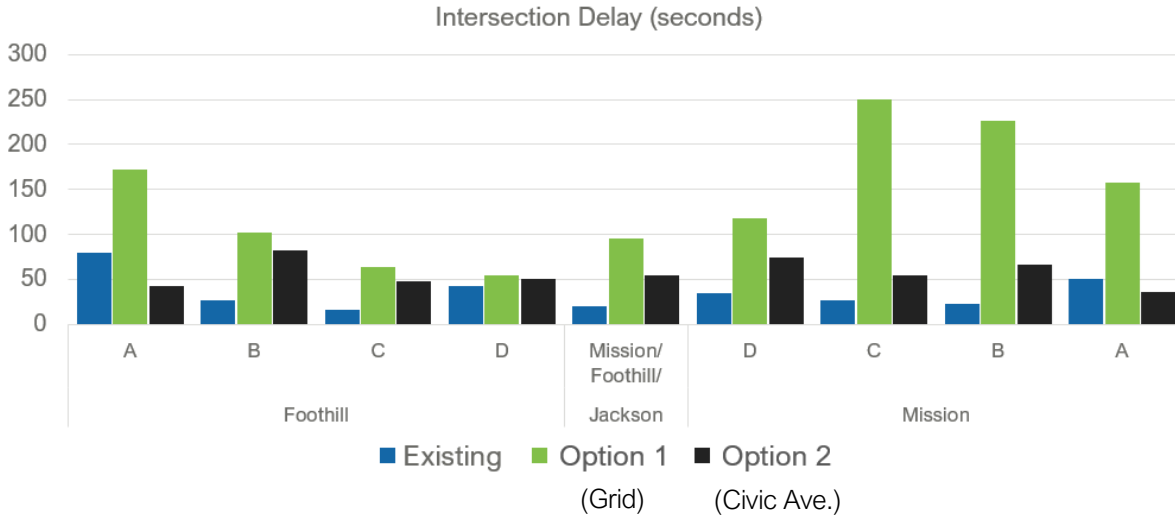
DISCUSSION

The next phase of the project involved completing additional technical analyses to better inform residents and stakeholders of the two remaining options. It also includes a continuation of the Phase 2 round outreach to obtain feedback on preferred long-term options preferred, including preferences for non-Loop streets like B Street and C Street.

Traffic Operations and Diversion Analysis

Technical analysis was conducted to better understand the traffic, congestion, and diversion effects the two proposed options would have. This required identifying and collecting traffic volume data at key points within the project area, calculating intersection metrics, analyzing origin-destination data, and routing traffic to likely patterns that account for changes in roadway capacity and other factors.

Intersection delay, often referred to as control delay, is defined as the additional travel time (in seconds) experienced by vehicles at an intersection. It is the most common metric for measuring travel time impacts at an intersection due to traffic control signals, stop signs, conflicting traffic, and other factors. The traffic operations analysis found that the Downtown Grid option will experience a greater amount of intersection delay compared to the Civic Ave. option, with some Downtown Grid intersections producing on the order of three or four times more intersection delay on Mission Boulevard than the Civic Ave. option. Both options compared to the current existing configuration will introduce more overall intersection delay with the Civic Ave. option being the less impactful of the two options. Below is chart of the existing condition, Option 1 (Downtown Grid), and Option 2 (Civic Ave.) compared by intersection delay.



The diversion analysis modeled existing afternoon peak hour traffic volumes and found that both options will divert traffic to other neighborhood streets. For the Downtown Grid option, traffic currently taking Foothill Boulevard will divert to E Street and 2nd Street. This is due to Foothill Boulevard no longer being continuous. For the Civic Ave. option, traffic currently taking Foothill Boulevard will likely divert to Grand Street or other parallel routes. This is due to the greatly reduced capacity of Foothill Boulevard as traffic approaches from Jackson Street. Another area of anticipated diversion is at Fletcher Lane & Walpert Street to 2nd Street, also due to the greatly reduced capacity of Foothill Boulevard.

More detailed documentation of the Traffic Operations and Diversion Analysis is provided as Attachment IV.

Public Outreach

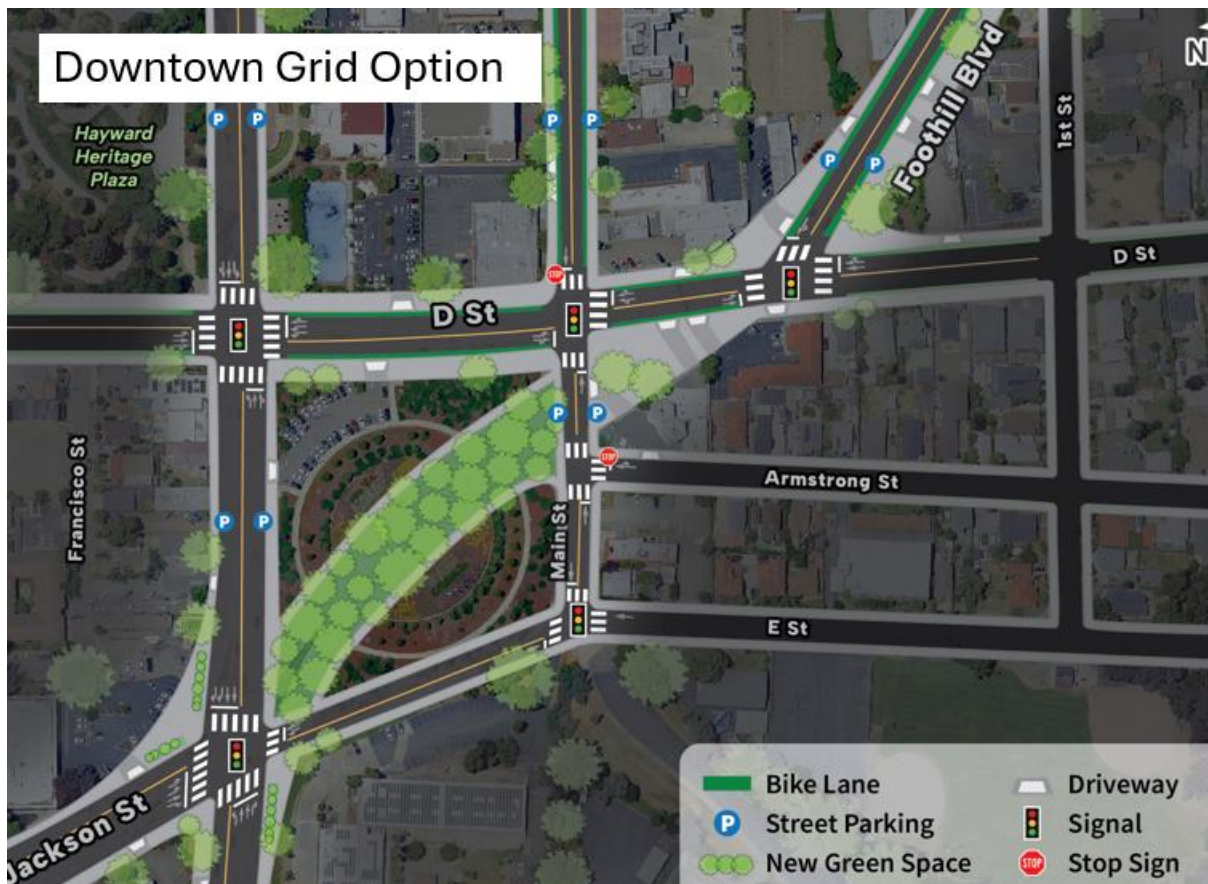
An online survey was created for residents and stakeholders to learn about and provide input on the multiple options. The survey consisted of six sections: Step 1: Goals, Step 2: Downtown Grid Option, Step 3: Civic Avenue Option, Step 4: Tell us what you think. Step 5: B Street, Step 6: C Street. The options that were available for consideration are shown in Attachment V.

The online survey was made available to the public on January 26, 2026, and remained open through April 30, 2026. The online survey included twelve different languages to select from. A total of 350 survey responses were received. The survey was complex and involved six steps with a variety of different questions and options to consider. After the first step of the survey, each of the five following steps operated like a separate survey. This allowed participants to give feedback according to their interest. Methods of outreach to notify residents and business owners included contacting previous participants through the project’s email contact list, focus group meetings, social media, and the City’s Stack newsletter. In addition, utility bill inserts with directions to take the project survey in were sent electronically or mailed to the City residents, depending on the method of how they receive their utility bill. The insert had an English and Spanish version.

Step 2 and 3 of the survey sought detailed feedback on the Downtown Grid and the Civic Ave. options. The main question of which option respondents showed a preference for, the Civic Avenue option was preferred over the Downtown Grid option, 58% vs 42% or 192 vs. 139 respondents, respectively.

Downtown Grid vs. Civic Ave Options: 331 Responses	
Downtown Grid	139 responses (42%)
Civic Ave.	192 responses (58%)

For the Downtown Grid option, the most common support identified the bike lanes on Foothill Boulevard and retaining four lanes on A Street. The most common concerns cited reduced capacity on Foothill Boulevard and removal of the Foothill Boulevard segment between Mission Boulevard and Main Street. Regarding Mission Boulevard containing four travel lanes, feedback was mixed with approximately half the comments supporting the capacity and the other half having concerns about more cut-through traffic and speeding.



For the Civic Avenue option, the most common support cited the bike lanes on Mission Boulevard and A Street, retaining Foothill Boulevard as a through street and adding a planted median, and more feasible and less disruptive to construct compared to the Downtown Grid option. The Civic Avenue option also received mixed feedback, approximately half in support and half against the reduction of travel lanes on Mission Boulevard and A Street and that Foothill Boulevard would still carry significant regional traffic cutting through the City. A small proportion of comments mentioned that the Civic Avenue option still prioritizes cars and would like to see more safety improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The survey also asked about the Civic Avenue option decision on whether to keep D Street continuous where it connects to Foothill Boulevard or to split the connection into two separate intersections. For this survey question, 303 responses were received and the option of D Street continuing straight through downtown had 51% support. The non-continuous D Street option received 28% while 21% cited no preference.



Split or Continuous D Street: 303 Responses	
Split	85 responses (28%)
Continuous	154 responses (51%)
No Preference	64 responses (21%)

The survey had four options to choose for B Street. The first option consisted of keeping B Street one-way and reducing it from two lanes to one lane. The second option converted B Street to two way. The third option proposed half a block of B Street to be converted into a pedestrian plaza with traffic calming features on car-traveled segments of B Street. This option may impact deliveries, loading/unloading, and buses routing. The Pedestrian Plaza received the most support with 43% of 317 responses. It was followed by the Two-Way Option with 30%, followed by 21% for the One-Way Option and 6% for Other/No Preference. Written feedback received included, concerns about maintenance and safety of a potential pedestrian plaza, concerns about food delivery drivers blocking travel lanes for the single-lane options, and desire to add bike lanes.

B Street Options – One Way



B Street Options – Two way



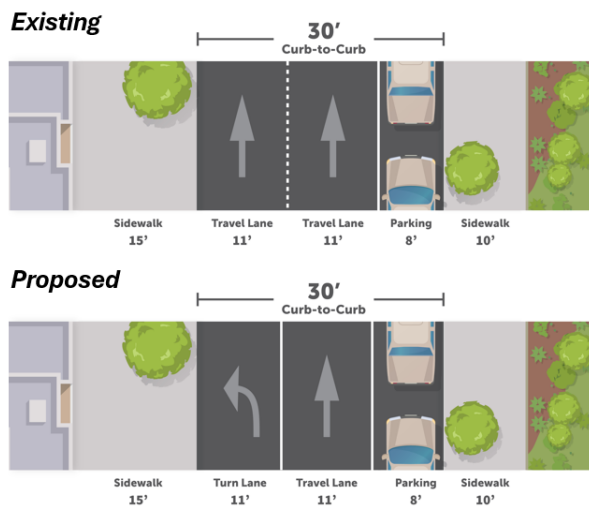
B Street Options – Pedestrian Plaza



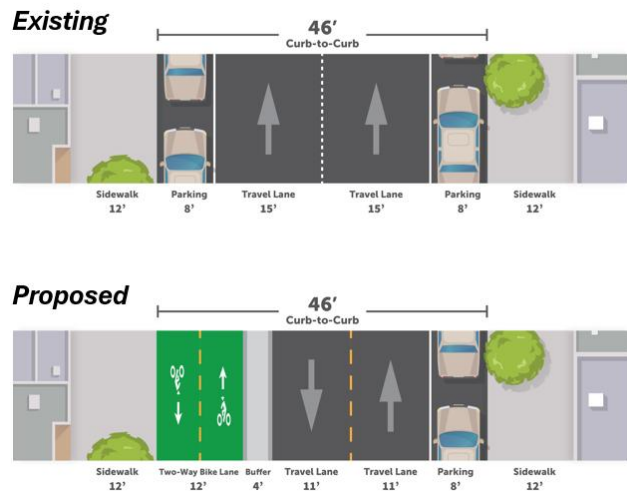
B Street Options: 317 Responses	
One-Way	67 responses (21%)
Two-Way	95 responses (30%)
Pedestrian Plaza	136 responses (43%)
Other/No Preference	19 responses (6%)

One concept was proposed for C Street. This concept proposed a twelve-foot two-way cycle track on the west side of C Street between Mission Boulevard and Foothill Boulevard. The proposal for C Street converts C Street from one-way to two-way from Mission Boulevard to 2nd Street. The survey results for this concept proposal are summarized below.

C Street – Watkins to Mission



C Street – Mission to Foothill



C Street Proposed Changes: 267 Responses	
Strongly Disagree	45 responses (17%)
Disagree	28 responses (10%)
Neutral	53 responses (20%)
Agree	80 responses (30%)
Strongly Agree	61 responses (23%)

Recommendation

	Staff Recommendations
Downtown Loop	Civic Ave. Option
D Street Option	Continuous
B Street	Two-Way with Pedestrian Plaza Pilot
C Street	Two-Way with Cycle Track between Mission Blvd. and Foothill Blvd.

Staff recommend the Civic Ave. option with a continuous D Street. Although both the Downtown Grid and Civic Ave. options would greatly increase traffic safety, the Civic Ave. option is able to do so with much less congestion and operational impacts. This recommendation also aligns with community feedback that favored this option. The recommendation of the Civic Ave. option provides direction to the vision of the Safe Streets Downtown project, is able to meet the projects safety, access, and economic vitality goals, and culminates from the technical analysis and public outreach conducted. There is still flexibility to evaluate different variations within this option and completing any other needed technical studies in future project phases. Staff seeks City Council comments and feedback on the breadth and depth of the current public outreach before embarking on the much more involved, rigorous, and costly next steps.

For B Street, staff recommend converting B Street to two-way operation, one lane in each direction. Recommending the two-way operation does not align with the majority of community feedback, which supported the pedestrian plaza option (43%) followed by the two-way concept (30%). After careful consideration, this recommendation was made with the understanding that many details and options still need to be considered on how a pedestrian plaza would be implemented, and what other evaluation and outreach is needed to demonstrate feasibility. The leaves the option open for the City to explore a possible pilot on a temporary basis in the future.

Staff recommend moving forward with the proposed C Street concept of conversion to two-way with a two-way cycle track on the west side of the street from Mission Boulevard to Foothill Boulevard. This recommendation provides increased safety benefit and high quality bicycle infrastructure. The recommendation aligns with community feedback, where the majority of participants selected “agree” (30%) and “strongly agree” (23%) with the proposed concept.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Safe Streets Downtown Plan will develop a design concept for the Downtown Area, which when implemented, will help reduce the likelihood of serious injuries and fatalities. Vehicle crashes have a significant economic cost, both to those directly impacted and to other users of the transportation system. The increased safety and access to the downtown area, as well as potential placemaking enhancements, will also help support the local economy.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

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

- Project N1: Continue to implement major corridor traffic calming initiatives
- Project N8: Evaluate safety enhancements for the Downtown Loop

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

This project includes safety improvements that would increase multimodal connectivity in Downtown Hayward's street network. Support of non-car modes of transportation will help reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public outreach for this project was conducted through various outreach events from May 2025 to September 2025. This includes focus groups, tabling at City events, hosting a design charrette, and an electronic survey accessible through the project website. Preliminary options were presented to CIAC on October 22, 2025. From January 2026 through April 2026, a second round of outreach was conducted which included a survey made available on the project's website. Methods of outreach included the use of previous email lists, social media posting, the STACK newsletter, and sending survey instructions to all residents through utility bill inserts.

NEXT STEPS

After receiving feedback and approval from City Council on the options to move forward with, the project team will work on developing a more detailed concept to get an understanding of full project costs. A third and last round of outreach for the planning phase will be conducted to receive feedback on the concept, with expectation to have a concept and cost estimate presented to City Council for approval in Q1 2027. There is still flexibility to evaluate different variations within this option and completing any other needed technical studies in future project phases. Staff seeks City Council comments and feedback on the breadth and depth of the current public outreach before embarking on the much more involved, rigorous, and costly next steps.

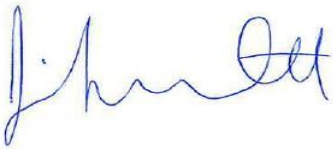
Table 1. Safe Streets Downtown Timeline

	(Expected) Completion Date
Phase 1 Outreach	August 2025
Select Alternatives for Further Study	October 2025
Phase 2 Outreach	April 2026
Selection of Preferred Alternative	June 2026
Phase 3 Outreach	October 2026
Conceptual Plan & Cost Estimates	Q1 2027

Prepared by: Byron Tang, Deputy Director of Public Works - Transportation

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Jennifer Ott, City Manager