



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: April 13, 2017
AGENDA DATE: April 20, 2017
PROJECT ADDRESS: Citywide - Cota Street Bike Lane Implementation
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Transportation Planning Division, (805) 564.5385 extension x2669
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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) consists of implementing a new and improved bicycle network throughout the City of Santa Barbara.

II. RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission receive a report and presentation on this summer's implementation of the Cota Street bike lanes, as well as similar Class II bike lane implementation for one block of Haley Street and two blocks of Rancheria Street.

III. BACKGROUND

In July of 2016, per recommendations from the Planning Commission and the Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC), the Council adopted the 2016 Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) which includes a wide range of bicycle improvements totaling 35 new projects. A few of those projects are relatively low-cost roadway restriping efforts. This is the case along six blocks of Cota Street, as well as two blocks of Rancheria Street, and one block on Haley Street. In each case, on-street parking lanes on one side of the street will be converted to bike lanes. On Cota and Haley Streets, the bike lane will be on one side of the street only. On Rancheria Street, bike lanes will be on both sides of the street. The new Class II bike lanes are slated to be implemented in the summer and fall of 2017.

At the time of the BMP adoption, staff had not completed the evaluation of a community proposal to convert Cota Street to a one-way street in order to be able to add new Class II bike lanes without removing any on-street parking spaces along the Cota corridor. Last year, staff hired Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants to conduct a one-way feasibility study of Cota Street in order to predict how travel patterns and behaviors would change. Haley and Gutierrez Streets currently function as one way couplets from the Eastside to Downtown. The study was performed to understand if a traffic circulation impact would occur to adjacent corridors and to the Eastside neighborhood.

The results of the Fehr and Peers one-way study show that rerouting and circulation issues caused by the one-way conversion create congestion on surrounding streets and intersections. Of

particular concern, with Cota as a one-way street in the west-bound direction, are the P.M. peak hour conditions at the Garden Street intersections with both Haley and Gutierrez Streets. Additionally, drivers connecting to the Riviera neighborhood via the Eastside street network will be concentrated and will add trips through residential streets in a neighborhood where residents are already appealing to City staff regarding speeding and cut-through traffic issues. For these reasons, the Traffic Engineering Division cannot support converting Cota to a one-way street.

Staff took this BMP update item to TCC on March 23, 2017 as an information item. Staff also noticed the neighborhoods where the bike lanes will be implemented and the March TCC meetings served as an opportunity for the public to discuss pending changes with the TCC.

In 2016, the City was awarded \$2.7 million in Active Transportation Program funds for the Eastside Bike Boulevard and Green Lane Connections. These include the Cota and Haley Street Green Lane Project and the Alisos Bike Boulevard. Staff has been contacted by the grant administrator (Caltrans) regarding their concerns with project scheduling and delivery. The main issue is that program funds won't become available until 2019 for design, and 2020 for construction, yet all funds must be expended within 24 months. This leaves very little time for beginning design and completing construction work. As a result of this concern, staff has agreed to begin the design work ahead of schedule and implement low-cost improvements such as the Cota Street bike lanes this summer, in order to get the project underway and increase the City's chances of making the timely use of fund deadlines. Accordingly, the bike lanes on Cota Street will be installed ahead of the green lane treatments on Cota and Haley Streets.

In order to save costs and take advantage of economy of scale with regard to grinding, repainting, signage and striping, the Public Works Department will also implement the Haley and Rancheria Streets bike lanes. There is also the possibility of adding the Ortega (eastbound) Class II bike lanes between Chapala and Salsipuedes Streets. Staff anticipates that the new bikes lanes will be in place during the summer and fall of 2017.

Rancheria Street is another bike lane project in the BMP. This project was identified because of the number of bikes already using this two block route as well as the number of collisions in this location. Parking on one side of the street will be removed in order to complete bike lanes in each direction for two blocks. This is a primary route for Westside residents to Santa Barbara City College and the Waterfront.