



# City of Santa Barbara

## Transportation & Circulation Committee

### Staff Report

**MEETING DATE:** March 24, 2016

**TO:** Transportation and Circulation Committee

**FROM:** Public Works Department  
Ashleigh Shue, Supervising Civil Engineer, and  
Jessica W. Grant, Project Planner

**SUBJECT:** Las Positas/Modoc Road Multiuse Path Project (MST2014-00055)

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#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Transportation Circulation Committee receive an overview of the Las Positas/Modoc Road Multiuse Path Project and provide comments.

#### **BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The Las Positas/Modoc Road Multiuse Path Project (Project) has been in various City planning documents since 1974, primarily as a Class I Bike Path. The Project is identified in the City's Six Year Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2014-2019, Bicycle Master Plan, and the Pedestrian Master Plan. In 2014, the Public Works Department submitted a Pre-Application (PRT) to the City's Development Application Review Team (DART) to better understand project scoping, feasibility and budget considerations. The PRT comment letter was issued on March 20, 2014, and outlined the permitting process and environmental/technical reports needed for the DART application.

In May 2014, the Public Works Department submitted an Active Transportation Program (ATP) Grant application for the Project. On September 27, 2014, the City was awarded \$1,372,000 in ATP funds for the environmental and final design phases of the Project. The purpose of the ATP Program is to increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking, increase the safety of non-motorized users, achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals, enhance public health, and benefit disadvantaged (minority and low income) communities. On May 19, 2015, the Public Works Department contracted with RRM Design Group for preliminary design services.

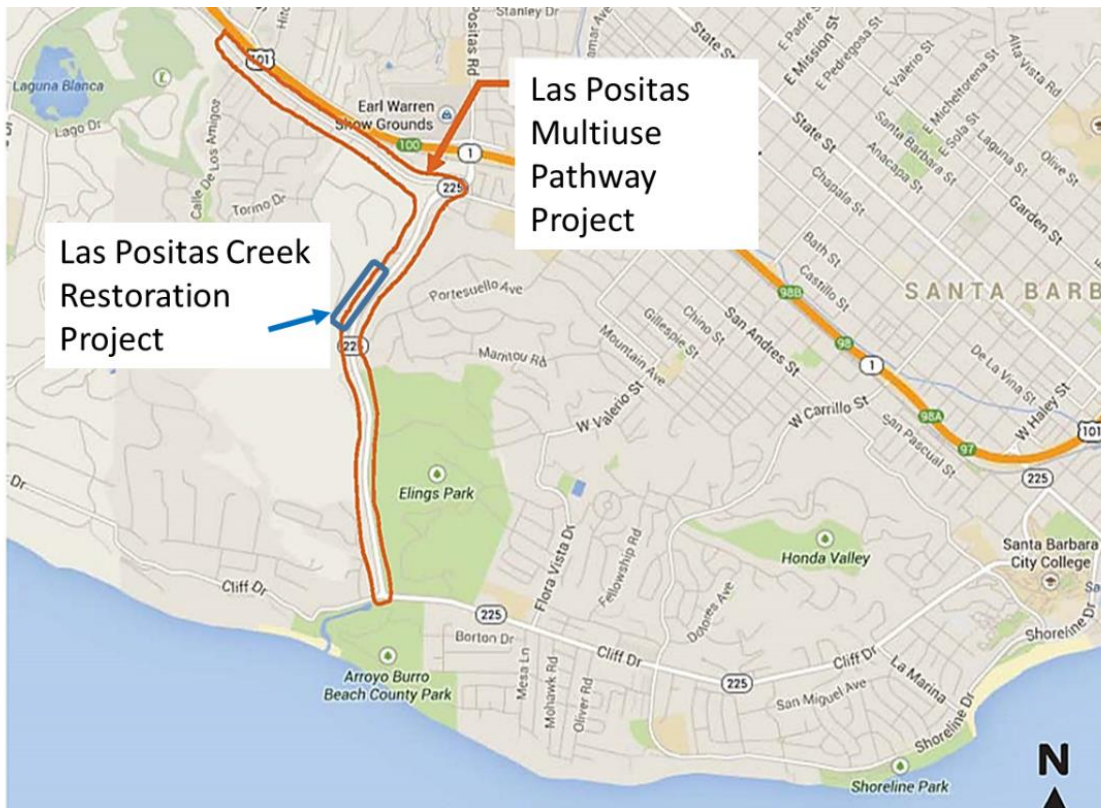
The Project includes the planning, environmental review, and design phases for a separated pathway for bicyclists, runners, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities along Las Positas and Modoc Roads. The Project begins on Modoc Road at the western City limits (Calle de los Amigos) and continues east for approximately one mile toward the intersection of Modoc and Las Positas Roads, then continues south for approximately 1.6 miles along Las Positas Road to Cliff Drive.

The Project will provide key connections among Santa Barbara's regional Cross-town and Coastal Bike Routes, the neighborhoods adjacent to the path, Elings Park, Arroyo Burro Beach County Park, and the Douglas Family Preserve. In addition to the multiuse path itself, the Project will include connection points to other bikeways and adjacent neighborhood sidewalks, which may include intersection improvements, as necessary, to enhance the multiuse path. The path will also tie into the roundabout at the intersection of Las Positas Road and Cliff Drive that is planned for construction in fall 2016.

The Project is adjacent to Las Positas and Arroyo Burro Creeks. The Project will be outside of the 100-year floodplain except for a couple of segments along Modoc Road. The Project's proposed land clearing, grubbing, excavation, paving, and cut and fill associated with retaining walls will be focused within and adjacent to the existing roadway and avoid natural habitat to the extent practicable. The Project team's biologist, AMEC, is in the process of evaluating potential impacts and providing recommendations of avoidance and minimization measures to be incorporated into the Project's design and construction phase. Preliminary Project plans are included in the Exhibit. The Transportation Circulation Committee will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the plans at the meeting.

*Project Connection to the Las Positas Creek Restoration Project*

A portion of the proposed multiuse path on Las Positas Road, between Veronica Springs Road and Las Positas Place, is immediately adjacent to the Las Positas Creek Restoration Project, which is a concurrent City project led by the Creeks Division. Public Works has been coordinating and collaborating with Creeks Division staff in order to achieve staff's goal of designing mutually beneficial projects along this corridor. The Las Positas Creek Restoration Project is currently in the final design phase and is pending FEMA approval for the proposed naturalized creek alignment and flood conveyance. The Project is designed outside of the proposed 100 year floodplain adjacent to the Las Positas Creek Restoration Project.



### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Community outreach is an important component in the planning and design for the Project. The Project has been in various City planning documents for several decades that have gone through extensive community-based participation. Since 2012, City staff have attended three neighborhood meetings regarding traffic conditions on Cliff Drive and Las Positas Road. At the meetings, those present expressed a desire for the City to move forward with this Project to improve commuting conditions and recreational opportunities.

On January 20, 2016, the Public Works Department held a community open house to review the Project's concept design. A notice of this meeting was mailed to property owners and tenants within 500 feet of either side of Las Positas and Modoc Roads in the Project limits. The open house was posted electronically via Nextdoor (all City neighborhoods), the City News in Brief, and emailed to stakeholders, neighborhood groups for posting on their listserves, and to about fifty individuals on the interested party list. The open house was well attended with about 40 active participants. The majority of the comment cards received at the open house were positive. In addition, the public can review additional information and provide feedback at <http://santabarbaraca.gov/bikepath>.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Project design is federally funded and requires environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act and California Environmental Quality Act. A portion of the path is located in the City's Coastal Zone and will require a Coastal Development Permit from the Planning Commission. Design review and approval is required from the Architectural Board of Review. The public can participate throughout the entire design and permitting process. A formal Development Review Application and Coastal Development Permit Application is anticipated to be submitted in April 2016.

Construction funding for the Project has not yet been identified. Construction costs for the Project are estimated to be \$10 – 15 million. City staff plans to apply for construction funding through the next ATP grant cycle in mid-2016. Due to the size and scale of this Project, it may have to be constructed in phases. The City's Draft Bicycle Master Plan anticipates the project to be completed between 2020 and 2025.

Exhibit:

Las Positas Road Multiuse Path Project Preliminary Design

AS/JWG/sk

cc: Brian D'Amour, City Engineer  
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