



# City of Culver City

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## Staff Report Details (With Text)

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### Update on the La Ballona Elementary School Safe Routes to School Project

**Meeting Date:** August 15, 2019

**Contact Person/Dept:** Gabe Garcia/PW

**Phone Number:** 310-253-5633

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**Public Hearing:** ☐      **Action Item:** ☐      **Attachments:** ☒

**Commission Action Required:** Yes ☐ No ☐      **Date:**

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council ();

**Department Approval:** Charles D. Herbertson - 8/12/2019

### RECOMMENDATION

Provide the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) with an update on the project progress and planned schedule to seek Council approval and proceed with construction.

### BACKGROUND

On May 5, 2019, staff provided a presentation on the La Ballona Elementary School Safe Routes to School project during a special meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Attached is the staff report regarding the May 5<sup>th</sup> BPAC meeting, which summarizes the project activities and community consultation since the project inception in 2014 until the May 2019 meeting. Issues and concerns were raised by the community during the meeting, and consequently staff proceeded to make changes to the project to address the community's concerns.

This report is to update BPAC on the revisions made to the plans since the special meeting earlier this year and provide a tentative timeline for project implementation. The report focuses on describing changes made at specific locations with reported concerns.

## **DISCUSSION**

The 90% design plans that the BPAC reviewed during the special May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting have been modified as follows in response to community's input:

1. Length of the curb extension on the south side of Matteson Avenue at College Boulevard was reduced to the width of the proposed raised crosswalk across Matteson Avenue. The purpose of the reduction is to return the very successful students' drop-off/pick-up zone to the west of College Boulevard.

The decision to avoid a long curb extension was made after a two-week trial demonstration of shifting the students' drop-off/pick-up zone to the east of College Boulevard. Several problems were observed that were detrimental to the operation of the drop-off activities, the safety of the children, and the efficiency of traffic circulation on Matteson Avenue. This is because some parents continued to drop-off students at the old location, but from the travel lane despite of the presence of traffic control and signage guiding them to the temporary location. This in turn caused drivers behind these stopped vehicles to veer onto the westbound side of opposing traffic to bypass them creating an undesirable and unsafe condition. When such unsafe drop-off activities occurred close to the intersection, vehicles turning from southbound College Boulevard onto westbound Matteson Avenue would be head-to-head while pedestrians were crossing the street. Also because of the situation devolving momentarily into disorder, some drivers continued through the marked school crosswalk without yielding to pedestrians and at times driving very close to pedestrians in the crosswalk with near misses.

Consequently, the students' drop-off/pick-up zone was moved back to its original location. Since drivers exiting this zone need space to merge back into traffic, the curb extension on the south side of Matteson Avenue was shortened. However, the footprint of the segment of the curb extension being removed from the design is still proposed to be painted combined with the placement of K71 delineators (white in color approximately 18 inches in height and about 8 inches in diameter). This will provide the look of a curb extension and will demark the space so that drivers don't pull into what otherwise would be a vacant space to drop-off in the morning or to wait for a child in the afternoon. It should be noted that this will offer some separation between the vehicles stopping and the pedestrian crosswalk.

2. At the southwest corner of the T-intersection of Matteson Avenue/Girard Avenue, section of the curb extension on the south side of Matteson Avenue was removed while retaining the section

on the west side of Girard Avenue. This is to facilitate the eastbound right-turn movement and avoid causing potential delays, while shortening the crossing distance and enhancing visibility of pedestrians crossing Gerard Avenue.

On the east side of Girard Avenue, two stormwater curb extensions were proposed just to the north and south of Matteson Avenue. These were not part of the school safety plan and were causing the removal of 30 feet of parking area, each. These two stormwater curb extensions have been deleted and replaced with curb extensions at the intersection to further enhance the pedestrian crossing locations.

3. At the intersection of Girard Avenue/Washington Boulevard, the stormwater curb extensions were removed. This is to avoid creating congestion and the potential queuing of turning vehicles into the crosswalk that could hinder the movement of pedestrians and adversely impact safety conditions.
4. On westbound Washington Boulevard, west of Girard Avenue, the curb extension at the intersection was removed, but preserved throughout the intersection of Washington Boulevard/Elenda Street. The loss of the curb extension on the north side of Washington Boulevard was made up by a new approximately 120-foot long curb extension on the south side of Washington Boulevard, from Elenda Street to the terminus of the intersection with Girard Avenue.
5. On Washington Place at Bentley Avenue, the originally proposed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) was upgraded in the design to a High-Intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK). The HAWK signal displays solid red indication thereby requiring drivers to stop and giving the right-of-way to crossing pedestrians.
6. Similarly, on Washington Boulevard at Huron Avenue, the originally proposed RRFB was upgraded to a HAWK. It should be noted that the HAWK installation has more stringent warrants identified in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) that must be met. The warrants take into account pedestrian and vehicular traffic volumes, visibility conditions, and collisions data.
7. Revisions were also made at several locations near intersections where reconstruction of the corners was necessitated to accommodate the provision of ADA compliant curb ramps. The reconstruction segments unnecessarily extended more than 20 feet, each, beyond the new curb ramps which would have resulted in paving landscaped strips and removal of trees. The reconstruction boundary has been shortened to avoid the loss of parkway segments and trees.

## Project Schedule

With regards to the project timeline, staff anticipates going before the City Council this September in order to request approval of the design plans, and associated specifications and engineering cost estimates. Staff will request authorization to advertise for construction bids in early fall. After bids are received and evaluated, staff anticipates returning to the City Council to request they award a construction contract prior to the end of December 2019.

## **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

As previously presented to BPAC on May 5, 2019, the La Ballona Elementary School SRTS project was awarded a grant in the amount of \$2.8 million to fund the design and construction. It should be noted however that upgrading the two RRFB locations to the installation of two HAWK signals is expected to increase the project costs by \$200,000 to \$400,000 in excess of the grant funding available. The project consultant is currently in the process of finalizing the design plans and cost estimates that will become available within the next few weeks.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Staff report of the May 5, 2019 BPAC meeting.

## **MOTION**

This report is for updating BPAC on the project, and no motion is necessary.