



January 13, 2015

**Subject: Farm Hill Boulevard Street Improvement Pilot Project**

Dear Resident and/or Interested Party,

At its January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the City Council of Redwood City will consider whether to proceed with a pilot project to increase safety on Farm Hill Boulevard and Jefferson Avenue. The pilot project will reconfigure the traffic lanes on Farm Hill Boulevard and Jefferson Avenue, from the city's western limit to Alameda de las Pulgas, from four to three lanes. The January 26<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting starts at 7:00 PM at City Hall (1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City)<sup>1</sup>. You are invited to comment at the meeting or to provide written comments in advance as noted below.

**Project Background**

A series of workshops in 2012 was used to gather input for a potential "Complete Streets" project to piggy-back on a resurfacing project. A conceptual design was refined through that process which included one community meeting, two community open houses, and a City Council meeting. The plan was met with a mixed reaction, with particular concerns raised about the impact (on motorists) of a reduction in travel lanes. In October 2012, Council accepted staff's analysis of the project and directed staff to pursue alternative measures that did not change the lane configuration.

As part of roadway resurfacing projects in summer 2013, the following changes were made on Farm Hill Boulevard and Jefferson Avenues to increase safety for various roadway users:

- Marked crosswalks at unsignalized intersections had yield markings added in advance of the high-visibility crosswalks, to increase driver awareness of these crossings,
- Shared roadway markings ("sharrows") were added along the corridor (from Woodhill to El Camino Real) to indicate where bicyclists can ride outside of the "door zone" of parked vehicles,
- Outside edge lines were added, which narrowed the travel lanes and provided more space for parked vehicles, and
- A high friction surface was added around the Jefferson Avenue curve to reduce the likelihood of vehicles skidding.

Speed and volume data were collected in August 2014 to compare with data from May 2012. Since 2012, traffic volumes have generally increased (by 500 to 900 vehicles per day on average) and speeding continues to be widespread (60-90% of people drive faster than the posted speed limit and 2-9% drive faster than 10 miles per hour over the speed limit). In 2014, there were eight collisions where speed was a primary collision factor, including one collision with two major injuries. The City continues to receive complaints about safety and property damage due to speeding and reckless driving.

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<sup>1</sup> You may also watch the meeting on cable TV or stream it online at: [www.redwoodcity.org/government/council/meeting\\_live.html](http://www.redwoodcity.org/government/council/meeting_live.html). Council meetings are televised live on Astound Cable Channel 26, Comcast channel 27, and U-Verse channel 99.

## Project Description

The proposed design generally converts the existing 4-lane roadway (two lanes in each direction) into a 3-lane roadway (one lane in each direction with a two-way center turn lane). As the characteristics of the road (grade, curves, adjacent land uses, etc.) and its width change, the proposed design varies somewhat too.

The proposed pilot design maintains some existing feature to minimize additional delays for drivers:

- Both travel lanes on the upper part of Farm Hill, going towards Cañada College and I-280, remain the same to keep cars from being trapped behind slower moving vehicles such as SamTrans buses.
- All travel lanes remain at the intersection with Emerald Hill to maintain the existing capacity.

Even with the increase in traffic volumes that were observed last year, a three-lane road will provide sufficient capacity for vehicular traffic in the peak periods. More importantly, a three-lane configuration will reduce the existing, excess capacity during off-peak times which currently facilitates unsafe driving. Additionally, once installed, signal timings along the corridor can be adjusted to minimize delays at traffic signals.

## Pilot Evaluation

A key component of the pilot will be its evaluation. Through the community process, participants identified livability and safety as top priorities and concerns. Therefore, the pilot evaluation will reflect the project's ability to achieve these community priorities. Factors previously identified for evaluation include: additional delay, ease of crossing the street (people driving and walking), speeding, collisions, traffic diversion, accommodation for people riding bicycles, and ease of exiting driveways and cross-streets. During the January 26<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, staff expects to receive Council feedback on the contents of the evaluation, and we are interested in your feedback as well. A final evaluation plan will be presented to City Council when the construction contract is awarded.

## Draft Schedule

At the January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the City Council will consider whether to proceed with the pilot project. If Council decides to proceed with the pilot, staff will be directed to advertise the project for construction and to finalize a plan to evaluate and monitor the project's performance.

Implementing the project could follow this general schedule:

- January 26, 2015 Council decision on pilot project
- February Project advertised for construction
- March Construction contract awarded and evaluation plan adopted
- April Collection of "pre" pilot data
- May – July Construction
- July 2015 Pilot starts
- April 2016 Collection of "post" pilot data
- July 2016 Pilot ends
- August 2016 Council receives pilot evaluation and potentially decides whether to end pilot or to make it permanent

Additional information is available on the project's website at [www.redwoodcity.org/FarmHill](http://www.redwoodcity.org/FarmHill). If you have any questions or suggestions regarding these changes, please contact Jessica Manzi, Senior Transportation Coordinator at (650) 780-7372 or by email at [jmanzi@redwoodcity.org](mailto:jmanzi@redwoodcity.org). If you would like to provide official comments on the item for Council's consideration, please do so in writing to Jessica via email or letter.

Sincerely,



Aaron Aknin  
Community Development Director

cc: Saber Sarwary, P.E., City Engineer