



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



Special Council Meeting Date: November 16, 2007

Staff Report #: 07-197

Agenda Item #: B1

REGULAR BUSINESS: Reconsideration of the Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Submit a Joint Application with San Mateo County and the Town of Atherton for a Safe Routes to School Grant for the Improvement of Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety for Safe Routes to Laurel School, and Consider Action to Authorize the Laurel Safe Routes to School Council Subcommittee to Continue Work on Determining a Process and Potential Solution for Improving Pedestrian and Bicycling Safety on Coleman Avenue in Unincorporated San Mateo County.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council:

- 1) Reconsider the approval of resolution #5768 (see Attachment C) authorizing the City Manager to submit a join application with San Mateo County and the Town of Atherton for a Safe Routes to School grant for the improvement of pedestrian and bicycle safety on Ringwood Avenue, Edge Road, Bay Road, Gilbert Avenue, Willow Road, and Middlefield Road and Coleman for the Safe Routes to Laurel School, and
- 2) Consider authorization of the Laurel Safe Routes to School Council sub-committee of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to continue work on determining a process and potential solution for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety on Coleman Avenue in unincorporated San Mateo County

BACKGROUND

The Council considered this item at its November 6, 2007 meeting and the staff report is attached. (See Attachment C). At that meeting the Council discussed the improvements for inclusion in a Safe Routes to School grant application. The improvements, as proposed, did not include improvements to Coleman Avenue due to a lack of consensus for the improvements from residents in the area. The Council decided to add the alternative of a detached pedestrian/bicycle pathway along Coleman to the grant application.

Also, at the meeting, the Council created a sub-committee consisting of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to work with the County Supervisors, Atherton Councilmembers, and the Menlo Park and Sequoia School Boards to seek support for the Coleman improvements.

ANALYSIS

Subsequent to the November 6, 2007 Council meeting, the Council sub-committee has had several meetings with elected officials from the other agencies. The sub-committee has prepared a memo (see Attachment B) outlining its findings and recommendations.

The recommendations of the sub-committee include the following:

- 1) Submit an application to the California Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Grant based on the November 6, 2007 staff report. This application should not include any proposed improvements other than those outlined in the staff report. Specifically, no improvements to Coleman Avenue, other than those already in the November 6 staff recommendations, should be included.
- 2) Request that the County of San Mateo and the Town of Atherton formally support the grant application as co-applicants. In addition, seek letters of support for the application from the Menlo Park City School District and Sequoia Union High School District.
- 3) Authorize the Laurel Safe Routes sub-committee of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to continue working with residents, staff and neighboring jurisdictions in developing a plan for improving the safety of Coleman Avenue. Specifically, Supervisor Rich Gordon has proposed a meeting where elected and staff representatives from the effected jurisdictions would review previous proposals and develop a process for creating safety improvements to Coleman Avenue. The Laurel Safe Routes sub-committee would be active in organizing and participating in this meeting and follow-up actions.

The Safe Routes to School grant application is due to Caltrans in Oakland on November 16th by the close of business. In order to submit the grant application by that time, further changes, with the exception of the removal of Coleman Avenue, could not be accommodated.

If Council decides to reconsider the resolution adopted on November 6, 2007, staff has prepared a new resolution as Attachment A. The new resolution refers to improvements to the roads near Laurel School with the exception of Coleman. These improvements are shown Attachment B of the November 6, 2007 staff report.

Also the resolution removed the language related to a joint application, since official support from San Mateo County and Atherton will not be possible in the short time frame to submit the grant. Staff will continue to work with the County, Atherton and the School Districts after the grant deadline to obtain their support for the plan and submit

these letters after the grant application due date and with future grant applications, namely the Federal Safe Routes to School grant.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The total construction cost of the project proposed in the grant application is \$300,000. The local matching share is \$30,000 — 10 percent of the total cost. If Caltrans approves the grant funds, staff will return to Council with a budget amendment at the time of contract award in order to budget the grant revenues and appropriate the local matching share as well as the project design costs in the amount of \$45,000 from the City's Measure A Fund. Staff will know at that time what, if any, matching funds have been committed by Atherton and San Mateo County.

POLICY ISSUES

This project is consistent with several policies in the 1994 General Plan Circulation and Transportation Element. These policies seek to enhance the safety of school children who walk and bicycle to school.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt under Class 1 of the current California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. Class 1 allows for minor alterations of existing facilities, including existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian access, and similar facilities, as long as there is a negligible or no expansion of use.

Charles Taylor
Transportation Manager

Kent Steffens
Public Works Director

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Resolution of the City Council of the City of Menlo Park Authorizing the City Manager to Submit an Application for a Safe Routes to School Grant for the Improvement of Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety for Safe Routes to Laurel School.
- B. Memo from Laurel Safe Routes to School Council Sub-Committee
- C. [November 6, 2007 Safe Routes to Laurel staff report with attachments](#)

ATTACHMENT A

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR A SAFE
ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PEDESTRIAN AND
BICYCLE SAFETY FOR SAFE ROUTES TO LAUREL SCHOOL**

The City of Menlo Park, acting by and through its City Council, having considered and been fully advised in the matter and good cause appearing therefor,

BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Menlo Park that the City Council does hereby authorize the City Manager to submit an application for Safe Routes to School (SR2S) grant funds to the California Department of Transportation to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety for safe routes to Laurel Elementary School;

BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Menlo Park that the improvements will be made as needed on Ringwood Avenue, Edge Road, Bay Road, Gilbert Avenue, Willow Road, and Middlefield Road; and

BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Menlo Park that the City Council does authorize and direct the City Manager to execute any and all agreements to obtain said funds on behalf of the City and the City Clerk to attest thereto.

I, SILVIA M. VONDERLINDEN, City Clerk of the City of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said Council on _____, by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members:

NOES: Council Members:

ABSENT: Council Members:

ABSTAIN: Council Members:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this _____ day of _____, 2007.

SILVIA M. VONDERLINDEN, City Clerk

ATTACHMENT B

Memo

To: Glen Rojas

From: Laurel Safe Routes to School Sub-Committee (Heyward Robinson and Kelly Fergusson)

Date: November 12, 2007

The sub-committee for Laurel Safe routes to school has had discussions with Menlo Park and County residents, two San Mateo County Supervisors, Atherton City Council members, MPCSD and SUHSD trustees and superintendents, and Menlo Park, Atherton and County staff. Additional meetings with supervisors are scheduled this week. Based on the discussions to date, the sub-committee makes the following preliminary findings:

- 1) Improving the safety of routes to Laurel School for school children, their families, and the broader community. The recommendations in the November 6 staff report are sound and should be submitted to the state of California for funding under the state's Safe Routes to School program.
- 2) Coleman Avenue is a heavily used route for both pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles getting to and from Laurel, Menlo-Atherton, and Encinal Schools. Pedestrians and bicyclists currently share the road with automobiles, creating an unsafe situation. Separating cars from pedestrians/cyclists will significantly improve the safety of Coleman.
- 3) Conceptual plans for safety improvements on Coleman have been proposed. These plans require further development and vetting before they are ready for funding and implementation.
- 4) Any plan for Coleman should meet the following criteria:
 - a. Significantly improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists using Coleman
 - b. Be compatible with other improvements in the surrounding area
 - c. Preserve the rural nature of the street.
 - d. Minimize the disruption of landscaping, trees, fences, etc.
 - e. Provide an appropriate level of on-street parking
 - f. Improve drainage
 - g. Enhance the overall appearance and value of the neighborhood

Therefore, the subcommittee recommends that the city council meet in a Special Session and direct staff to:

- 1) submit an application to the California Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Grant based on the November 6, 2007 staff report. This application should not include any proposed improvements other than those outlined in the staff report. **Specifically, no improvements to Coleman Avenue, other than those already in the Nov. 6 staff recommendations, should be included.**

- 2) request that the County of San Mateo and the Town of Atherton formally support the grant application as co-applicants. In addition, seek letters of support for the application from the MPCSD and SUHSD.
- 3) authorize the Laurel Safe Routes sub-committee of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to continue working with residents, staff and neighboring jurisdictions in developing a plan for improving the safety of Coleman Avenue. Specifically, Supervisor Rich Gordon has proposed a meeting where elected and staff representatives from the affected jurisdictions would review previous proposals and develop a process for creating safety improvements to Coleman Avenue. The Laurel Safe Routes sub-committee would be active in organizing and participating in this meeting and follow-up actions.