



Watsonville
CALIFORNIA

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 2025
TO: CITY COUNCIL
WRITTEN BY: PATRICE THERIOT, PRINCIPAL ENGINEER
RECOMMENDED BY: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR LINDBERG
APPROVED BY: TAMARA VIDES, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND CALLING FOR BIDS
FOR THE SAFER ACCESS TO PAJARO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL AND
BEYOND PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution approving the plans and specifications and calling for bids for the Safer Access to Pajaro Valley High School and Beyond Project, No. ST-25-14859 and finding the project Categorically Exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (c), CE Class 1.

BACKGROUND:

In 2020, the city was awarded a \$11.7 million Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant for the Harkins Slough Road (and PVHS feeder schools) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements. The grant includes \$10,541,000 for the construction of the improvements. The Council accepted this funding on April 21, 2025 by directing the City Manager to execute the Program Supplemental for the project.

The ATP grant application named the project *“Safer Access to Pajaro Valley High School and Beyond,”* but it may alternatively be referred to as *“Harkins Slough Rd. Bridge Widening,”* or *“Harkins Slough Rd. Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvements.”* These are one and the same.

Pajaro Valley High School opened to a full 9-12 grade student body for the 2007-08 school year, serving 1500 students. As a large percentage of these students walk to school, it became apparent that the sidewalk did not have the capacity to accommodate the number of students using it every day. The City has been working with Caltrans to reach a solution. The City entered a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to design upgraded pedestrian and bicycle facilities where Harkins Slough Rd crosses Highway 1. The plans before you are a result of the years of planning by the City and Caltrans.

DISCUSSION:

This project includes a number of components, including:

- Widening the Harkins Slough Rd. overpass over Highway 1 to accommodate bike lanes and a wider pedestrian sidewalk that are separated from vehicular traffic;
- Relocation of the sanitary sewer force main that serves Pajaro Valley High School;
- Restriping Green Valley Rd. to include Class 4 bike lanes;
- Reconstructing curb ramps at seven schools to comply with current ADA requirements;
- Striping high-visibility crosswalks at the new ramp locations.

Bid opening is tentatively scheduled for July 16, 2025, and the plans and specifications are on file in the City Clerk's Office. The project is estimated to begin construction in late 2025 or early 2026 with a duration of approximately twelve months.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DETERMINATION:

The project qualifies as Categorical Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1, example (c):

Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), and other alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes);

Public Works staff have filed a Notice of Exemption with the Santa Cruz County Clerk.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The project is consistent with the following Strategic Plan goals:

Infrastructure & Environment

Public Safety

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The engineer's estimated construction cost for this project is \$11,700,000. The Council has accepted an Active Transportation Program grant in the amount of \$10,541,000. The remainder will be funded with East Highway 1 Impact Fees and Sewer Fund. Specific fund allocations will be provided at the construction contract award.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

No reasonable alternatives are known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Location Map