

SUBJECT: **UPDATE ON THE FOUNTAIN AVENUE PROTECTED BIKE
LANES PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND RELATED
CONTRACT APPROVAL**

PREPARED BY: **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**
(Francisco J. Contreras, AICP, Acting Director)
(Bob Cheung, Long Range Planning, Senior Transportation
Planner)

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will receive a project update and consider approving a contract and Amendment No. 1 with Fehr and Peers to provide transportation planning and design services for the installation of protected bike lanes on Fountain Avenue. The project is exempt under CEQA under a Categorical Exemption 15301 (c), as it consists of improvements on existing highways and streets where there is negligible or no expansion of use and the addition of bicycle facilities, including bicycle lanes, enhanced sidewalks and crosswalks, street trees and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes. Further, the project qualifies for a statutory exemption under PRC Section 21080.25, as it includes the installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which include bike lanes, either as separate bike lanes or shared bike lanes. The project also meets the additional criteria required to assert the exemption under PRC Section 21080.25, as it is located in an urbanized area, is situated in the existing public right-of-way, does not add physical infrastructure that increases automobile capacity, does not require demolition of affordable housing units, and will be carried out by a skilled and trained workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Receive and file a project update.
- 2) Approve Phases 1 and 2 of the Project.
- 3) Approve a contract with Fehr and Peers to provide transportation planning and design services for Phase 1 installation for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$493,502.
- 4) Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute documents incident to the Agreement as amended.
- 5) Authorized the Director of Finance & Technology Services to allocate \$493,502 (Phase 1) from Prop A funds for the transportation planning and design services of protected bike lanes on Fountain Avenue.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

On March 1, 2021, the City Council directed staff to initiate a feasibility study for Fountain Avenue Protected Bike Lanes. ATTACHMENT A provides a copy of the City Council staff report.

On November 21, 2022, staff presented to the City Council the initial findings of the Feasibility Study. ATTACHMENT B provides a copy of the City Council staff report. At that meeting, the City Council approved proceeding with the Fountain Avenue protected bike lane project and directed staff to:

1. Develop a Phase 1 installation engineering package that includes Planning, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E). This will consist of design and construction plans to install the project's Phase 1. This phase contains roadway modifications that reduce travel lanes to two lanes and remove on-street parking on the north side. This does not include sidewalk widening, which will be addressed in the Phase 2 permanent installation.

2. Develop a Phase 2 permanent installation PS&E. This will include the permanent buildout design and construction plans, including final roadway designs and widening of sidewalks.

This staff report provides 1) an update on the progress of the Fountain Avenue project, 2) includes an overview of how and why the work is separated into two phases, 3) provides the contracts for approval to begin the detailed planning, design, and engineering work to advance the work on the protected bike lanes on Fountain Avenue, and 4) presents very preliminary estimates of the total construction cost. This report also describes, at a high level, ideas for measuring the project's impact on the community and the plan for community engagement on the project.

Staff is separating the contract and amendment into two components for timing and funding purposes:

1. Contract (\$493,502) for the Phase 1 PS&E will be funded by the City, and work will commence immediately upon City Council approval.
2. Amendment No. 1 (\$2,108,862) for the Phase 2 PS&E will be funded mainly by Metro. West Hollywood is expected to receive \$1,785,160 from Metro's Measure M Subregional Program (MSP) administered through the Westside Cities Council of Government (COG). The COG has approved the funds, and Metro Board approval is expected in late October this year. This phase of the study is expected to begin in early 2024. West Hollywood will supplement the remaining \$323,702. City staff will return with a consent item for approval of Amendment No. 1 after Metro approves the \$1,785,160.

Scope of Work

ATTACHMENT C is the proposed contract and scope of work for Phase 1 PS&E, which includes:

- Develop signing and striping plans,
- Research material selection,

- Develop cost estimates for construction,
- Provide construction and bid support,
- Traffic signal design,
- Community engagement, and
- Reports and documentation.

Staff will return with the scope and contract amendment for Phase 2 after Metro approves grant funding. The scope of work for phase 2 will include the following:

- Conduct survey and utility mapping,
- Develop streetscape PS&E,
- Develop signing and striping plans,
- Prepare traffic signal design plans,
- Prepare street lighting design plans,
- Prepare landscape and irrigation design plans,
- Identify and design a north/south connection between Fountain Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard,
- Prepare civil design plans,
- Community engagement, and
- Provide bid support and grant support.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the various tasks within the proposed contract and amendment, along with a preliminary schedule and costs.

Phase 1 PS&E includes the design of the protected bike lanes along with the reduction of travel lanes from four lanes to two lanes and the removal of all on-street parking (approximately 150 spaces) on the north side of Fountain Avenue. During this phase of the study, staff and consultant will also address potential access impacts such as deliveries, street sweeping, trash pickup, and potential parking impacts. This phase of the study is expected to take 11 months. At the conclusion of the Phase 1 PS&E study (expected July of 2024), staff will return to the City Council with the findings and a more accurate cost estimated to construct Phase 1 improvements.

Table 1
Preliminary Schedule and Costs

	Duration (months)	Cost	2023				2024												2025												2026		
			Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Citywide Outreach	On-going																																
Phase 1 PS&E	11	\$ 493,500																															
- Reduce 4 lanes to 2 lanes																																	
- Remove on-street parking on north side																																	
- Design bike lanes																																	
- Potential relocation of loop detectors																																	
- Potential signal modifications																																	
- Access impacts - trash, deliveries, street cleaning, emergency access, and transit																																	
- Cost estimate																																	
Phase 1 Analysis																																	
- Before construction																																	
- After construction/Impact analysis & mitigation	6																																
Phase 1 Bid/Construction		\$5M-10M [a]																															
Bid/Procurement	3																																
Construction	4-6																																
Phase 2 PS&E	16	\$ 2,697,000																															
- Sidewalks widening - ADA																																	
- Utility relocation																																	
- Landscape design																																	
- Survey and utility mapping																																	
- Traffic signal design																																	
- Street lighting																																	
- Signing, striping, irrigation																																	
- Civil - demo, grading, utility, paving, catch basin, etc																																	
- Access impacts - trash pickup, deliveries, street cleaning, emergency access, and transit																																	
- Cost estimate																																	
Phase 2 Bid/Construction	TBD	\$30M-35M [a]																															

[a] High-level estimation. PS&E task will provide more accurate costs.

Based on high-level estimates, the preliminary cost of construction is estimated to be between \$5 million and \$10 million for Phase 1.

The Phase 1 PS&E study also includes a “before and after” analysis to identify potential impacts resulting from the Phase 1 construction. The construction phase is expected to begin in early 2025 and is expected to take 4-6 months. This task includes a collection of various metrics to assess Phase 1 effectiveness and impact on the community. Important metrics to consider include:

- Pedestrian Usage and Safety: Evaluate the impact on pedestrian activity and safety.
- Bike Usage and Safety: Measure the increase in bicycle usage along the protected bike lane and assess the overall safety of the lane for cyclists.
- Traffic Flow and Congestion: Analyze traffic flow data to determine if reducing the number of traffic lanes has affected congestion levels and travel times for motorists. This analysis will identify potential shifts in traffic patterns as a result of the reduced roadway capacity on Fountain Avenue, including potential traffic increase along Sunset Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, and residential streets within the study area.
- Accident Data: Compare accident data before and after the installation to determine if the new design has reduced the number of accidents and collisions, both for cyclists and motorists.
- Parking Utilization: Evaluate the impact on parking availability and usage along Fountain Avenue and neighboring streets. Measure any changes in parking demand and turnover. Accessibility and Inclusivity: Consider how the new design has affected accessibility for individuals with disabilities and people of all ages. Assess if the street improvements have made it easier and safer for everyone to navigate the area.

- **Mode Shift:** Assess whether the project has encouraged a mode shift from driving to cycling or walking. Measure any changes in the proportion of trips made by different transportation modes.
- **Environmental Benefits:** Calculate the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions due to increased cycling and walking, contributing to the city's environmental goals.

These metrics can provide a comprehensive understanding of the project's success and its impact on the community's safety, accessibility, and quality of life. Regular monitoring and feedback from residents will be essential to identify areas for improvement and make data-driven decisions for Phase 2 implementation. At the conclusion of this task, staff will return to the City Council and present the findings, potential impacts and propose mitigation measures to offset any impacts. At that time, the City Council will have the opportunity to decide to keep Phase 1 improvements and proceed with Implementation of Phase 2. Approved mitigation measures will be incorporated into the Phase 2 PS&E. Phase 2 PS&E focuses on the redesign of the sidewalks along the entire length of Fountain Avenue within the City. This phase of the study is expected to take 16 months with a start date of January 2024. Currently, most of the sidewalks along Fountain Avenue do not meet standards set forth by the American with Disability Act (ADA). The widening of the sidewalks includes survey/mapping of the corridor, utility relocations, traffic signal design, street lighting design, signing and striping, grading, paving, catch basin design and other technical considerations. Based on high-level estimates, the construction of Phase 2 is estimated to be between \$30 million and \$35 million. The PS&E will provide a much more accurate cost estimate. At the conclusion of this phase of the study, staff will return to the City Council with findings and recommendations. If approved, Phase 2 construction could potentially begin Q1 or Q2 of 2026.

The Long Range Planning Division will continue to oversee and manage the project. The day-to-day oversight of the PS&E tasks will be the responsibility of the Engineering Division as design and engineering is under their purview. If approve, the Engineering Division will also oversee the construction and implementation of both phases.

Transportation & Mobility Commission Feedback

Staff will present a project update to the Transportation & Mobility Commission with findings from the Phase 1 analysis in Q4 of 2025. A memorandum of its feedback will be submitted to Council prior to the Council meeting.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020 AND THE GOALS OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN:

This item is consistent with the Primary Strategic Goal(s) (PSG) and/or Ongoing Strategic Program(s) (OSP) of:

- OSP-4: Transportation System Improvement.
- PSG-1: Maintain the City's Unique Urban Balance with Emphasis on Residential Neighborhood Livability.

In addition, this item is compliant with the following goal(s) of the West Hollywood General Plan:

- M-3: Maintain and enhance a pedestrian-oriented City.
- M-5: Create an environmentally and financially sustainable transportation network that provides for the mobility and livability needs of West Hollywood residents, businesses, and visitors.

EVALUATION PROCESSES:

Safety, transportation, and mobility impacts of this project will be evaluated during the Phase 1 buildout phase. Various metrics to assess Phase 1 effectiveness and impact on the community will be considered, including: Pedestrian Usage and Safety; Bike Usage and Safety; Traffic Flow and Congestion; Accident Data; Parking Utilization; Accessibility and Inclusivity; Mode Shift; and Environmental Benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH:

The project has been environmentally reviewed pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Sections 21000, et seq.,

and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000, et seq.). The project's scope of work consists of installing pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The project meets the criteria under a Categorical Exemption 15301 (c), as it consists of improvements on existing highways and streets where there is negligible or no expansion of use and the addition of bicycle facilities, including bicycle lanes, enhanced sidewalks and crosswalks, street trees and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes. Further, the project qualifies for a statutory exemption under PRC Section 21080.25, as it includes the installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which include bike lanes, either as separated bike lanes or shared bike lanes. The project also meets the additional criteria required to assert the exemption under PRC Section 21080.25, as it is located in an urbanized area, is situated in the existing public right-of-way, does not add physical infrastructure that increases automobile capacity, does not require demolition of affordable housing units, and will be carried out by a skilled and trained workforce. Other requirements for projects greater than \$100,000,000 do not apply in this case because the project cost does not exceed that threshold.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

To date, community engagement has included an online survey in the Fall of 2022 with participation by 1,439 stakeholders. Of those surveyed, 62% expressed support for protected bike lanes. In addition, 13,000 mailers were sent out to residents/businesses within 500 feet of the Fountain Avenue corridor.

The scope of work for the Phase 1 and 2 PS&E and construction includes conducting extensive outreach to the City's residents and businesses. As shown in Table 1, the outreach effort will be ongoing for the duration of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study. In addition to community workshops, staff will develop a dedicated project page where stakeholders can access the latest information on the status of the project, an assistance hotline, and opportunities to provide feedback.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT / LONG RANGE PLANNING – Project Management

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS / ENGINEERING – PS&E and Construction

FISCAL IMPACT:

To move forward with the vision of a more livable Fountain Avenue, the City must invest \$2.6 million in City and Metro funds for the design and engineering of Phase 1 and Phase 2 work. Of this, over \$800,000, 31% is the City's direct contribution, and approximately \$1.785 million, 69%, are Metro funds.

The preliminary estimated total construction cost for the Fountain Avenue project is between \$35 to \$45 million. Based on high-level estimates, the preliminary construction is between \$5 million and \$10 million for Phase 1. The construction of Phase 2 is estimated to be between \$30 million and \$35 million. The PS&E will provide a much more accurate cost estimate.

	PS&E	Construction
Phase 1	\$493,502	\$5-10 million
Phase 2	\$2,108,862	30-35 million
Total	\$2,602,364	\$35-45 million

In its current configuration, Fountain does not meet West Hollywood's high standards for the safety and well-being of its residential neighborhoods. The Phase 1 program is the first step in transforming Fountain Avenue from an automobile traffic thoroughfare into a modern, walkable, bikeable amenity that is safe and comfortable for all users. Delaying this effort may add more cost to a situation that must be addressed sooner rather than later. As described in the Background section of this staff report, West Hollywood is expecting to receive a \$1,785,160 grant from Metro. The remaining \$817,204 will be funded from Prop A funds.

AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
\$493,502	Phase 1 PS&E (seeking approval)
\$2,108,862	Phase 2 PS&E (will return with Amendment)
-\$1,785,160	Funding from Metro's MSP Grant – Phase 2 PS&E. (Expected approval in October 2023).
\$323,702	Net Phase 2 cost – staff to return in November with Amendment No. 1.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – March 1, 2021, City Council Directed Staff Report

Attachment B – November 21, 2022, City Council Staff Report

Attachment C – Contract – Phase 1