



CITY OF SALINAS

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 2018

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC DIVISION

FROM: ANDREW EASTERLING, TRAFFIC ENGINEER

TITLE: DOWNTOWN VIBRANCY PLAN:
MAIN STREET STREETScape PROJECT UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

There is no recommended motion. The Traffic and Transportation Commission is requested to receive a project update on the Main Street Streetscape Project and provide comments.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Traffic and Transportation Commission is requested to receive a project update on the Main Street Streetscape Project and provide comments.

BACKGROUND:

The Salinas City Council adopted the Downtown Vibrancy Plan (Attachment 1) in 2015 and approved the Main Street Master Plan (Attachment 2) in October 2017. Both plans were developed with the community input throughout the planning process. Several well-publicized community meetings were held with the goal to receive comments from stakeholders. There was an expression of public support for these plans at the community meetings.

With the Main Street Master Plan completed, the Council allocated \$1.1 million in measure X funds towards the administration, design and engineering support for the Main Street Streetscape Project. Kimley-Horn and Associates, transportation consultants, assisted the City in developing the Main Street Master Plan.

On April 4, 2018 after receiving the first draft plans, staff conducted another check-in with the community through a Main Street Community Open House event. The Open House event was held at the CSUMB at Salinas City Center (formerly known as the Steinbeck Center and included four presentations:

- 1) A Vibrant Downtown from Marco LiMadri (New City America),
- 2) Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Background, by Don Reynolds (Public Works),
- 3) Design Review, Dave Sorenson (Kiley-Horn), and
- 4) Next Steps, by Andrew Easterling (Public Works).

Staff received mixed support at this public feedback for the proposed design and took note of concerns specifically related to the landscape and public amenity design. Coordinating with Community Development staff, Public Works decided to bring a qualified and experienced landscape architect firm to the Main Street Streetscape team to assist with the predominant issues of landscape and public amenity design.

Joni L Janecki & Associates Inc. (JLJA) was selected as the most qualified applicant by a committee consisting of staff members from the Community Development Department and Public Works, joined by representatives from the Salinas City Center Improvement Association (SCCIA) representatives. JLJA facilitated two additional community outreach events to gather public input to incorporate into the design review that would improve support for the Main Streetscape design.

JLJA held the first community outreach on Friday, September 7, 2018, during a First Friday Art Walk event, where the focus was encouraging input from patrons of downtown. The second community outreach effort included meetings held on each of the three blocks of Main Street on Wednesday, September 15th, and these meetings were focused on downtown merchants and stakeholders. JLJA also met with representatives from SCCIA to gather input on the long-term needs of SCCIA to own and maintain amenities proposed in the Main Street Plan. JLJA conducted a review of draft plans and made recommendations regarding the proposed trees, planting, waste receptacles, bike racks, bollards, benches, furniture and other amenities (Attachment 3).

City staff has scheduled the next community meeting for November 15. The community meeting will provide an overview of the updates to the landscape and public amenity design recommended by JLJA. The community meetings will also discuss next steps including a discussion of potential construction management strategies. This discussion will help understand how construction activity will affect downtown businesses and operations. City staff is preparing to provide the City Council with an update on the Main Street project in December.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Main Street Improvements Project is an implementation of the Downtown Vibrancy Plan, an objective of the City's Strategic Plan. At the approval of the Downtown Vibrancy Plan, stakeholders deemed it important that the City implement the Downtown Vibrancy Plan.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Public Works staff and Community Development staff have collaborated for the design update of the Main Street Streetscape Project. The plan review summary provided by JLJA received multiple department review during the September 24, 2018 design review committee meeting.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The adopted budget for the Main St Streetscape project design phase was \$1.1 million. Kimley-Horn was hired with a contract not to exceed \$904,750. The additional services by JLJA that provide feedback on landscaping and public amenities is approximately \$40,000. Staff deemed the additional work necessary to improve acceptance of the Main Street project and the costs can be absorbed at this time. However, additional work during the design phase may reduce the availability of consultants for support during the construction phase.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Downtown Vibrancy Plans
Attachment 2: Main Street Master Plan
Attachment 3: JLJA Main Street Recommendations