AGENCY:	**City Council**
MEETING DATE:	**August 27, 2012**
DEPARTMENT:	**Comm. Dev. Dept.**
PREPARED BY:	**Teresa Spade**
PRESENTED BY:	**Teresa Spade**

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

TITLE:
RECEIVE REPORT AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING PREFERRED CHESTNUT STREET CORRIDOR TREATMENT, AND THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN AND RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION FEASIBILITY STUDY

ISSUE:
Chestnut Street was studied by Fehr & Peers as one of the four focal roadways in the 2010 Residential Streets Safety Plan (2010 RSSP) and a conceptual plan for traffic calming and enhanced bike/pedestrian infrastructure was developed (see Figure 1). Chestnut is a busy major collector roadway leading to Fort Bragg High School, the C.V. Starr Community Center, two elementary schools and a large residential area. As such, it receives heavy pedestrian, bicycle and automobile traffic.

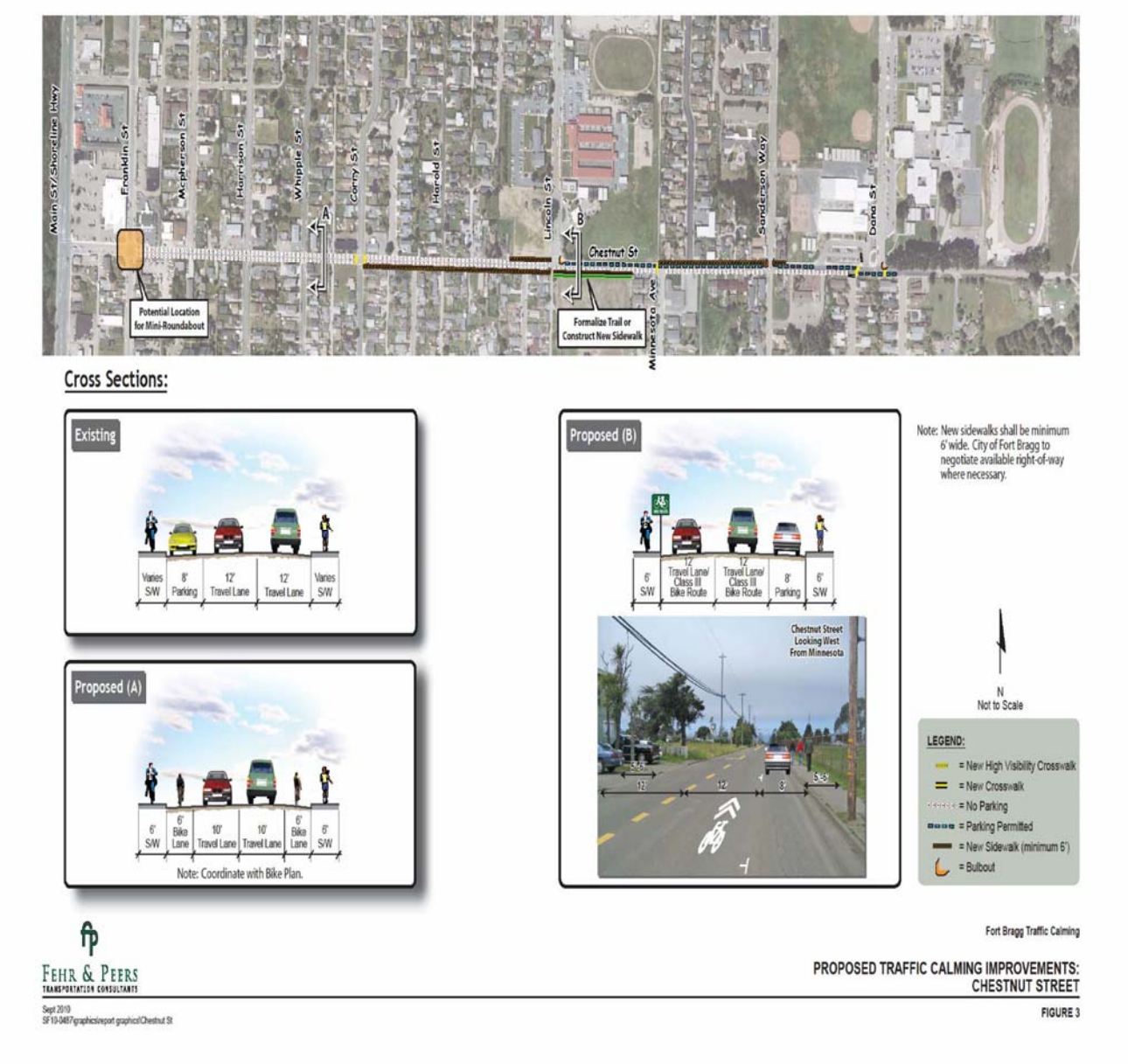
Because of Chestnut Street's level of use and importance in accessing neighborhoods, recreational facilities and schools, City Council directed staff to further develop the Chestnut Street conceptual plan from the 2010 Residential Streets Safety Plan by: 1) obtaining additional community input about alternatives for the corridor; 2) researching the Right of Way and identifying obstacles and opportunities for implementation; 3) investigating feasibility of various cost and design solutions. As a result of the effort, a number of alternative design solutions were developed and Staff obtained community input regarding community acceptance of: 1) the potential elimination of on-street parking in order to facilitate enhanced pedestrian/bike infrastructure; and 2) the feasibility of acquiring an additional 8 feet of right of way, to allow for the retention of parking while accomplishing pedestrian and bicycle safety goals.

A request for proposals was released in February of 2012 and KASL Engineering was selected as the consultant in April of 2012. Green Valley Engineering was subcontracted for the public outreach effort, and Cliff Zimmerman was subcontracted for right of way research and land survey services. The Scope of Work associated with the contract is included as **Attachment 1**.

In May of 2012, the existing legal limits of the right of way were surveyed, and detailed maps were produced, showing the location of sidewalks, telephone poles, fences, driveways and structures etc. near the corridor (**Attachment 2**). Numerous corridor alternatives were produced, and vetted by Public Works and Community Development staff. Four potentially feasible options were selected and presented at a public outreach meeting. City Council attended a workshop on June 25 where KASL Engineering presented some preliminary design options for their input. The item is back before Council, with construction cost estimates and revised corridor options that encompass all received public and Council input.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5A

Figure 1. Corridor options from the 2010 Residential Street Safety Plan.



RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Discuss and provide direction to staff regarding preferred Chestnut Street Corridor treatment, and the Conceptual Plan and Right of Way Acquisition Feasibility Study

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):
Continue the item, requesting further information or revised design options.

ANALYSIS:
Project Challenges

Challenges to achieving improved safety along this busy corridor include: 1) inadequate existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, 2) inconsistent and inadequate right of way; and 3) the presence of above-ground electrical poles, hydrants, mailboxes, lighting poles and other structures, which will need to be relocated or placed underground. Each potential obstacle is discussed in turn below:

Inadequate Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

There are currently no bicycle facilities on Chestnut Street. Pedestrian facilities vary widely, averaging a width of 3 ½ feet. Near schools and near Franklin Street, sidewalks are wider – as wide as eight to nine feet in front of Dana Gray Elementary, 5 ½ feet adjacent to Redwood School, and 4 ½ to 5 feet just east of Franklin Street. Sidewalks are absent or significantly constrained by fencing, vegetation, utility poles, hydrants, mailboxes and other structures on both sides of the street much of the corridor length.

Inconsistent and Inadequate Right of Way

Presently, the right of way width is constrained to 40 feet for over half of the length of the corridor. As shown in **Figure 1** (Proposed A), a standard corridor, including adequate bicycle and sidewalk improvements (eliminating parking), requires a 44-foot wide corridor. This standard option proposed by Fehr and Peers in 2010 is not possible without significant right of way acquisition. Acquisition of four additional feet of right of way for a length of around ½ mile is not feasible should alternatives exist since residential structures would need to be relocated, off-street parking would be reduced, and the process would be time consuming and costly.

On-street parking is currently available on the south side of the street where it utilizes a significant portion of a constrained right of way. For Option A, parking would be relocated to the north side of the street, and would be eliminated for two blocks, just past Susie Court and Harold, due to residential structures abutting the right of way and constraining the corridor to less than 40 feet. For Option B, parking would be eliminated between Whipple and Sanderson in order to provide pedestrian and bicycle access. Elimination of parking may inconvenience some residents; however, underutilization of on-street parking makes the road appear wide, which encourages high vehicle speeds and reduces safety for all users. Option C retains parking from Franklin to Dana Street.

Staff visited Chestnut Street numerous times over the course of the summer to evaluate current on-street parking use, and found on-street parking to be widely underutilized in areas where proposed options would eliminate parking in favor of pedestrian improvements. Additionally, most residents utilizing on-street parking have off-street parking available.

Above ground structures

The most costly of the above ground structures in the right of way that would need to be relocated are on the south side of the street. The cost to relocate a joint utility pole is estimated at around $40,000, while the cost to move a service pole is estimated at around $5,000. These costs are significantly less than the cost to underground utilities, as discussed later in this report. Table 1 summarizes numbers of above ground structures to be relocated, by side of street.

Table 1. Above ground structures to be relocated.

	North Side	South Side
Joint Utility Poles	6	30
Utility Service Poles	10	0
Fire Hydrants	0	6
Street Signs	26	13

Design Alternatives

Three design options have been developed in response to input from Council and the community. The options are described below and illustrated in **Attachment 3**. **Table 2** summarizes pros and cons of each option.

Option A focuses safety improvements on the north side of the road by providing a wide bicycle and pedestrian "multi-use" path on the north side, leaving the south side "as is" to reduce costs. Parking is relocated from the south side to the north side, and acts as a safety buffer between the multi-use path and the road. This option provides a safe pathway for bikes and pedestrians, retains parking and two-way vehicle travel, and is significantly lower in cost than Option B or C. Assuming utility poles are moved to a utility easement outside of the right of way, and not placed underground,[1] this option will cost an estimated $895,000 to implement.

Option B maximizes pedestrian and bicycle safety, utilizing both sides of the street for bikes/pedestrians, and eliminates parking. This option retains two-way vehicle traffic, calming traffic with a narrowed roadway. Safety is maximized by placing the bike path on the south side, effectively separating bikes and pedestrians. A raised separation area between the bicycle path and roadway keeps bicyclists safe from vehicles and provides a place for utility poles, streetlights and hydrants. This option is fairly costly, at an estimated $2,959,151 to implement, if utilities are left above ground and moved into the raised separation area between the bike path and roadway. Undergrounding of utilities utilizing Rule 20A funds would increase City costs to an estimated $4,157,396, assuming the full $995,861 available is utilized for this option.

Option C retains parking and provides for separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways, reducing the roadway to "one-way" for a majority of the corridor length. Safety would be improved both by wider and separate infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians, and also by significantly reducing traffic on Chestnut Street to one direction. This option would require additional studies to assure roadways that would receive additional traffic as a result are able to accommodate the demand. This option is the most costly, at an estimated $3,076,194 to implement. This cost does not include the cost of additional studies needed. Should utilities be undergrounded, the cost of the project to the City (assuming Rule 20A funds are used), is estimated at $4,314,439.

[1] Undergrounding of utilities would not be compatible with this option since most utility poles are on the south side of the road, which would remain as-is.

Table 2. Summary Chestnut Street Design Options

	Option A	Option B	Option C
Pros	Multi-use path increases pedestrian and bike safety on north side	Wide sidewalk on north and multi use path on south increase bicycle and pedestrian safety on both sides, separating bikes and peds	Increases pedestrian and bicycle safety on both sides, and separates bikes and peds
	Narrows travel lanes by four feet to calm traffic	Allows for two way vehicle traffic	One way will reduce traffic on Chestnut Street, and road narrowed three feet to calm traffic
	Retains on-street parking but shifts it to the other side of the street, and allows for two way vehicle traffic	Eliminates on-street parking and narrows travel lanes to calm traffic (best traffic calming option - narrows roadway by 10 feet)	Retains on-street parking.
	Lowest cost	Features a safety separation area between bikes and vehicles, that can also accommodate above ground items, such as fire hydrants, light poles and utility poles (best option to accommodate utilities)	Retains parking in current configuration
Cons	Does not improve pedestrian safety on the south side	Eliminates on-street parking	Inconveniences residents driving to or from home; potentially increases greenhouse gas emissions from additional vehicle travel. May result in increasing traffic in other neighborhoods.
	Parking would be across the street from where it currently is	Higher cost	Highest cost
	Parking area will increase the visual size of the street when parking is not utilized, and this will work against traffic calming		Future studies and consultations needed to determine feasibility
Estimated total project cost	894,938	2,959,151	3,076,194

Analysis of Construction Costs

As shown in **Attachment 4**, construction costs for each option are broken down by side of street, and further broken down by block. These costs include a 25% contingency, and assume utility poles will be moved rather than placed underground. As discussed below (under the heading "PG&E Funding") the estimated cost for undergrounding utilities far exceeds the Rule 20A credit available.

Construction costs were lowered for Options A and B by leaving the second half of the adequate existing sidewalk in front of Dana Grey School unchanged. It may be possible to lower costs for Option B further by allowing for areas with 5+ foot sidewalks to remain as-is, instead of increasing them to 6 feet on the north side. Sidewalks between Franklin and McPherson are currently 5 feet wide. Leaving the sidewalks as-is would save around $33,000; however, traffic studies may warrant an increase in length (stacking distance) for the right turn lane onto Franklin, in which case new sidewalks would need to be constructed anyway. Sidewalks are 5 ½ feet wide near Redwood School. Retaining this section of sidewalk as-is for Option B could save around $70,000. Similarly, the first half of sidewalk in front of Dana Gray, and existing sidewalk adjacent is 5+ feet wide and could be left as-is for a savings of $20,000.

Potential Funding Sources

PG&E funding. Approximately $995,861 has been set aside as Rule 20A credit for the City of Fort Bragg, for undergrounding PG&E electrical poles. Staff received an estimated cost from PG&E of $2,784,106 for undergrounding utilities along this project corridor. The cost estimate includes the cost of 4,670 linear feet of main trench, 3,269 linear feet of service laterals, 49 residential and 21 commercial panel conversions. Since only $995,861 is available as Rule 20A funds, the City would bear the additional $1,788,245 needed to underground electrical utilities.

There are other areas in town that have been considered in the past by Council for the utilization of these funds, including: undergrounding electrical poles in the Central Business District, along Oak Street, and/or Alder Street. It may make more sense to save Rule 20A funds for one of these more centrally located projects.

PG&E has indicated that at least a portion of the cost to relocate poles outside of the right of way would be paid by them, so long as poles are to be relocated within our right of way or a utility easement. The City would need to establish a utility easement for the poles and overhead wires for Option C, and possibly for service poles on the north side for Option B. The cost to relocate a PG&E service pole (rather than underground it) is estimated by the consulting engineer at approximately $5,000. The cost to relocate a joint pole, a pole with PG&E service as well as cable TV, telephone, etc., would be approximately $40,000, with PG& E only paying a portion of that cost. If PG&E pays $5,000 per pole to be relocated, project costs could potentially be reduced by as much as $80,000 for Option A, $200,000 for Option B, or $225,000 for Option C.

State Safe Routes to School. Up to $450,000 may be available for projects that improve safety for children traveling to school by foot or bicycle.

Federal Safe Routes to School. Up to $1,000,000 may be available for school related safety projects.

Transportation Enhancement Activities. Varying amounts of funding may be available for pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

AB 2766 Funds. These funds come from registered motor vehicle fees. $30,000 to $40,000 a year may be available at the discretion of the Air Quality Management District.

Settlement Funds. $10,000 to $100,000 may be available as determined by the Air Quality Management District.

Bicycle Transportation Account. Up to 25% of available funds (usual award is $200,000 to $300,000) may be available for bikeway improvements.

City Sales Tax. An amount estimated at $750,000 may be available as a local match for state or federal funds.

California Office of Traffic Safety. Up to $500,000 may be available for safety activities.

Community Development Block Grant. Up to $800,000 may be available for transportation projects.

Transportation Development Act. This Caltrans funding is mainly for transit projects, however some funds may be available for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

FISCAL IMPACT:
This project is funded with a Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) grant and the funding covers both consultant costs and staff time. Project implementation may be covered with a combination of grants, general fund revenues and the street sales tax.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:
Funding will need to be acquired for the design, engineering and construction of the project once a conceptual design is approved by City Council.

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Scope of Work
2. Right of Way Maps
3. Corridor Options
4. Cost Estimates

NOTIFICATION:
1. KASL, Jack Scroggs
2. Green Valley Engineers, Liz Ellis;
3. Workshop Attendees List

City Clerk's Office Use Only

Agency Action ☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Approved as Amended

Resolution No.: _____ Ordinance No.: _____

Moved by: _____ Seconded by: _____

Vote: _____

☐ Deferred/Continued to meeting of: _____

☐ Referred to: _____