



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: September 10, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Aaron Kunz, Deputy Director of Transportation
Martha Eros, Transportation Planner

Subject: Public Outreach Options and Recommendations for the North Santa Monica Boulevard Reconstruction Project

Attachments:

1. Descriptions of Phase 1 and 2 of Project
2. Psomas

INTRODUCTION

The City Council approved an agreement with Psomas for design services for the North Santa Monica Boulevard (NSMB) reconstruction project on June 4, 2013. This report describes a proposed public outreach program for Phase 1 (Conceptual Design) of the project.

DISCUSSION

In 2005, the State of California relinquished ownership of NSMB to the City of Beverly Hills, including approximately 20-feet beyond the existing northern curb face. The pavement quality, drainage system and other physical elements have deteriorated to the extent that the roadway needs extensive reconstruction. The City retained Psomas, a Civil Engineering firm, to manage a project team to provide all design services needed for the project, including the conceptual design/public outreach process; preparing detailed plans, specifications and construction cost estimates; and providing support services for the construction and bidding phases. The design of the project includes two phases as described in Attachment 1—*Scope of Work*.

The agreement with Psomas includes a schedule with the City Council selecting a conceptual design for NSMB in early 2014. Upon City Council approval, Psomas will then proceed with Phase 2 (Project Design), with the goal of beginning construction in Spring 2015.

The primary goals of the public outreach program are to achieve the following:

- Obtain community input on any enhancements to be included along with the core reconstruction project, including consideration of bicycle lanes, landscaped medians, transit stop amenities and street lighting.
- Provide the community with information about the upcoming project and obtain input on construction mitigation and scheduling options.

Staff anticipates that initial community comments will involve the concepts for bicycle lanes and/or landscaped medians. Attachment 2–*Psomas Analysis* provides conceptual alternatives for options that staff and the consultant team propose presenting at the community outreach meetings.

Psomas' contract requires that the public outreach program be approved by the City Council at the outset of the project. Staff and the consultant team have identified the following public outreach approaches to help facilitate the City Council's selection of a conceptual design alternative in early 2014 as described below.

Commission or Committee

Staff recommends that a Commission or Committee be designated or appointed to receive public input at community outreach meetings, review public input received by mail and through the City's website, evaluate and assess the recommendations prepared by staff and the consultant team, and provide recommendations to the City Council.

Staff identified the proposed Commission or Committee structures listed below in order of staff's recommended priority. Considerations (potential advantages/disadvantages) are described relative to the recommended approach.

1. Traffic & Parking Commission (staff recommendation): The Commission has experience working together on public processes with their regular duties and for special projects, including the Sunset Boulevard intersection improvements and the pilot bicycle lane projects. As a standing Commission, public outreach meetings could begin in late September/early October, with recommendations developed for City Council consideration by January 2014. A disadvantage would be the possible oversight of projects from other Commissions or departments. The Traffic & Parking Commission Chair will provide a status report on the public outreach process and receive input from each Commission representative at the monthly Mayor's Cabinet meeting.
2. City Council/Traffic & Parking Commission Liaison Committee: As this Committee is already established, this Committee could develop a recommendation for City Council consideration within the same time frame as the Traffic & Parking Commission. Advantages include City Council members involved throughout the public outreach process. Disadvantages include increasing demands on City Council members serving on this Committee, need to coordinate schedules and calendars of attendees which will likely delay the process and fewer Commissioners and/or Community members involved than the other options evaluated. Project status can be shared at the monthly Mayor's Cabinet meeting and Commissioners input can be received.

3. **Multi-Commission Committee:** This Committee could be comprised of one member from the Traffic & Parking Commission, Public Works Commission, Recreation & Parking Commission, Planning Commission and the Cultural Heritage Commission. Two Council members could also serve on this Committee. The advantage of this structure is a wide range of input that would be provided in the recommendations. Disadvantages include a Committee that has not had prior experience working together and approximately a 1-month delay in developing recommendations for City Council due to the amount of time needed to appoint members to the Committee. The need to coordinate schedules and calendars of attendees will also likely delay the process
4. **Public Steering Committee:** With this approach, each Councilmember could appoint 2-3 members to serve on the Committee. Other communities have used this approach to have a broad representation of community members/stake holders serving on the Committee. These are typically projects with a wider variety of options than being considered for NSMB. The most recent example of the City using this approach was the Mass Transit Committee in 2007. The disadvantages of this approach are the Committee members may not have the same public process experience as trained Commissioners and it would likely take longer to develop recommendations for City Council consideration due to the time it would take to appoint and organize the Committee.

Public Outreach

Community Development/Transportation staff in coordination with the Communications and Marketing Office will encourage public input by e-mail, standard mail and through the City's web page. Options of how to provide input will be included in expanded noticing radius of the public meetings, including:

- residences between Santa Monica and Sunset Boulevards,
- residences within 500 feet south of NSMB, and
- property owners and businesses between Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards west of Maple Drive on the east and west sides of the City

Notices will also be provided through postings on the City's web page and social media accounts, and advertisements in the local newspapers. Additionally, updates will be provided to the City's Commissions, Mayor's Cabinet, and Homeowner group meetings. Input will also be requested as part of the City Survey planned to be conducted by the City's Communications and Marketing Office.

Community Outreach Meetings

Staff and the consultant team specifically propose the following meetings as part of the public outreach process:

1. Initial public outreach meeting (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Explain the project to the public and lay out the anticipated timeline for the study and the reconstruction effort; receive initial public comment/input.

2. Public outreach meeting – presentation of conceptual alternatives (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Present alternatives with drawings to illustrate the cross sections by segment in detail, including lane widths, sidewalk issues, median islands; receive public comment/input.
3. Walking tours (two separate tours will be offered, one on a Saturday morning, the other on a weekday late afternoon)
4. Preliminary evaluation of conceptual alternatives (evening meeting at City Hall)
 - Present preliminary analysis of the alternatives, identified project impacts, preliminary costs, and the mitigation plan to reduce construction impacts; receive public comment/input.
5. Status update to City Council at a regularly scheduled study session
6. Staff/consultant team preliminary recommendations to Traffic & Parking Commission (or designated Committee)
 - Proposed recommendations for Traffic & Parking and City Council consideration, including the preferred project description, mitigation measures and type of environmental document appropriate to clear the project.

The consultant team will facilitate the community outreach meetings and provide the necessary resource materials. City staff will coordinate meeting spaces, Public Noticing and advertising of the meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT

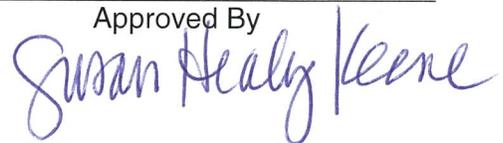
The agreement with Psomas includes funding to provide the necessary resource materials for the meetings. The cost of printing and mailing notices, and newspaper advertisements will cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council designate the Traffic & Parking Commission as the advisory body for the North Santa Monica Boulevard reconstruction project and to proceed with the public outreach program described in this report.

Susan Healy Keene

Approved By



Attachment 1

Attachment 1

Phase 1: Conceptual Design/Public Outreach

This phase includes the public outreach, geotechnical surveys, and necessary studies to accomplish the following tasks:

- Facilitate City Council decisions on any enhancements to be included along with the core reconstruction project, including consideration of bicycle lanes, landscaped medians, transit stop amenities and street lighting.
- Evaluation of existing conditions, including existing roadway and intersections, storm drains, pavement, and geotechnical field review. The scope also includes additional “infiltration testing” should the initial testing find the potential for shallower or deeper subsurface water than anticipated.
- Development of construction mitigation plan, schedule and work hours.
- Provide initial cost estimates for design options.
- Prepare the environmental documentation required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). While CEQA provides for a categorical exemption for projects that are determined not to have a significant effect on the environment (e.g., a street paving project), expansion of the roadway beyond the northern curb face for a bicycle and/or soil contamination issues could require a higher level of environmental review. To minimize any delays should a higher level of environmental review be required, “initial environmental consulting” has been incorporated into the base budget. At the beginning of Phase 1, Bon Terra, the environmental consultant, will begin to compile information that could be incorporated into an environmental document and support the City with proper noticing for public scoping meetings. Upon selection of a preferred concept, incorporated into the base budget is “initial environmental consulting”. To address this issue, approximately 90 days after commencement of Phase 1, the Psomas team will provide an evaluation of the level of environmental review that should be conducted. Upon receipt of the evaluation, the Community Development Department and City Attorney’s Office will determine if an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is needed. The recommended agreement includes the option of the Psomas team conducting an EIR if determined needed at a cost of \$285,000.

Upon completion of Phase 1 and City Council selection of a conceptual design for NSMB, staff would seek direction to proceed with Phase 2.

Phase 2: Project Design

This phase involves preparing details of the conceptual design approved by City Council during Phase I and support services for construction bidding and construction administration as described below:

- Preparing plans, specifications and estimates of probable construction costs (PS&E) including street improvement drawings, intersection plans, signing and striping plans, street lighting plans, landscape and street furniture plans, and drainage reconstruction.
- Permit and Agency Coordination, including the County of Los Angeles and/or the State of California as required.
- Construction bid and construction support.
- Survey and Investigations.
- Traffic Signal and Interconnect Plans (optional if traffic signals need to be relocated to accommodate a bicycle lane).
- Small Potholes (optional if needed) to identify location of utilities of the design concept selected as part of Phase 1.

Attachment 2

Attachment 2

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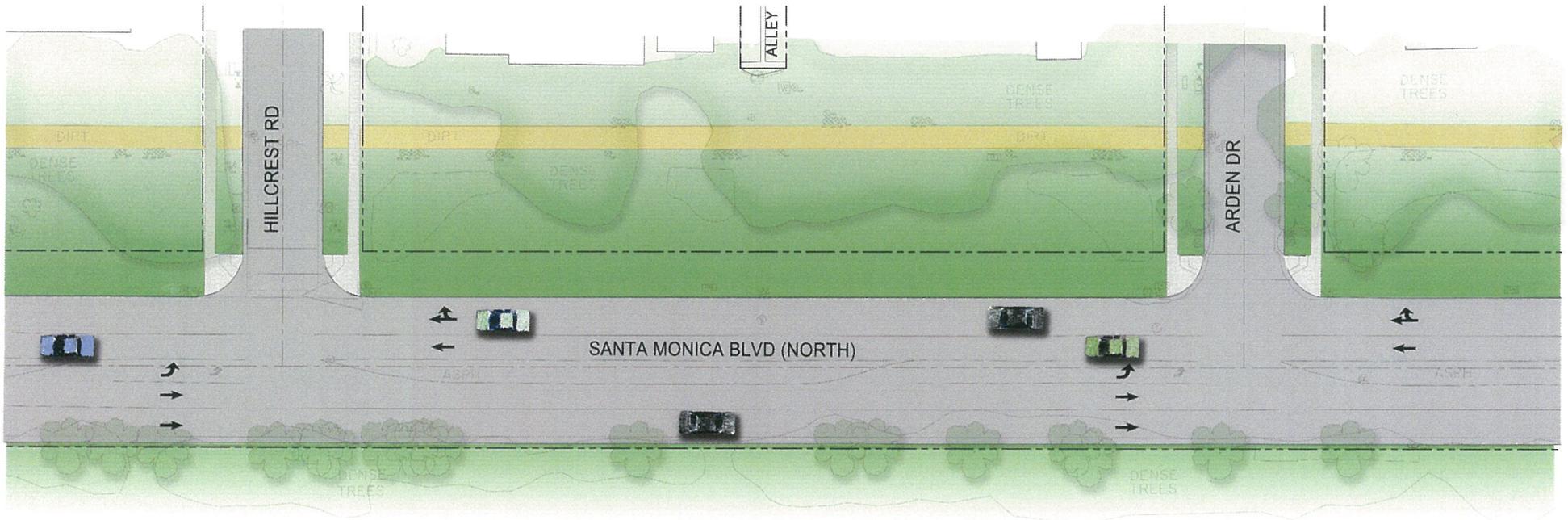
Goals of the North Santa Monica Boulevard Reconstruction Project

In addition to the originally stated project goal of rehabilitating the existing roadway and associated improvements within the corridor, City Council enumerated additional goals and considerations that staff and Psomas have compiled and presented below. These goals will guide the evaluation of concepts during the Phase I pre-design effort.

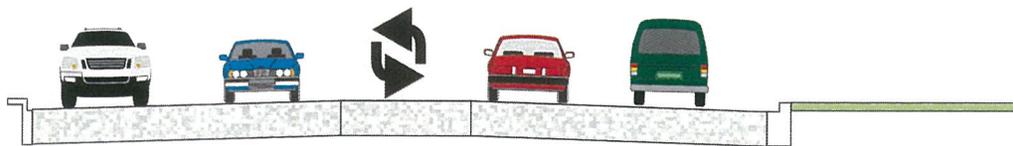
1. Rehabilitate the physical infrastructure along the corridor, including pavement, drainage, sewer and water lines, and street lighting.
2. Consider a “Complete Streets” policy to enhance safety and promote transit and non-motorized modes (bicycling and walking).
3. Respect the character of the corridor, including preservation of green space.
4. Maintain access to the Beverly Hills Business Triangle
5. Minimize construction impacts on businesses and residents
6. Maintain vehicular flow along the corridor

Illustrative Plan and Cross Section Graphics

City Council directed staff and the project team to simultaneously consider the principles of “Complete” or “Livable” streets concurrent with the mandate that the character of the corridor be respected. Prior to investing a significant effort detailing the combinations of potential features, the team considered the existing conditions alongside two major alternatives; 1) maintain the existing curb-to-curb width and 2) alter the existing curb-to-curb width (narrow or widen). The three graphics that follow illustrate that the two major alternatives may viably be considered to satisfy the Project Goals.

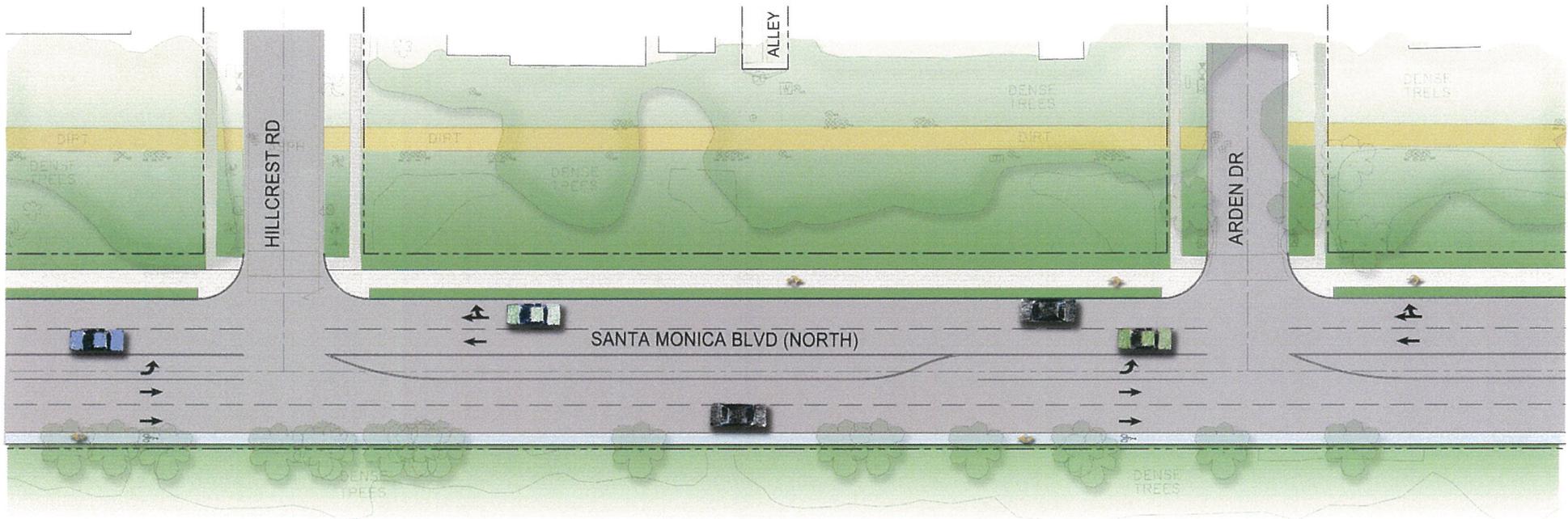


NORTH SANTA MONICA BLVD. - TYPICAL PLAN

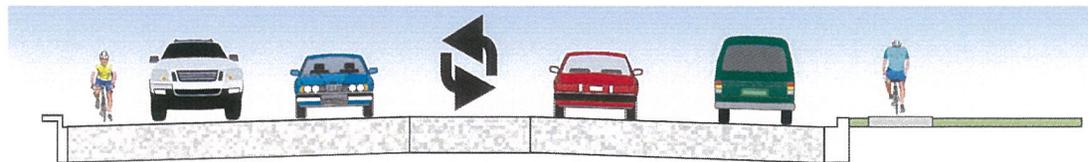


NORTH SANTA MONICA BLVD. - TYPICAL SECTION

EXISTING CONDITION



NORTH SANTA MONICA BLVD. - TYPICAL PLAN

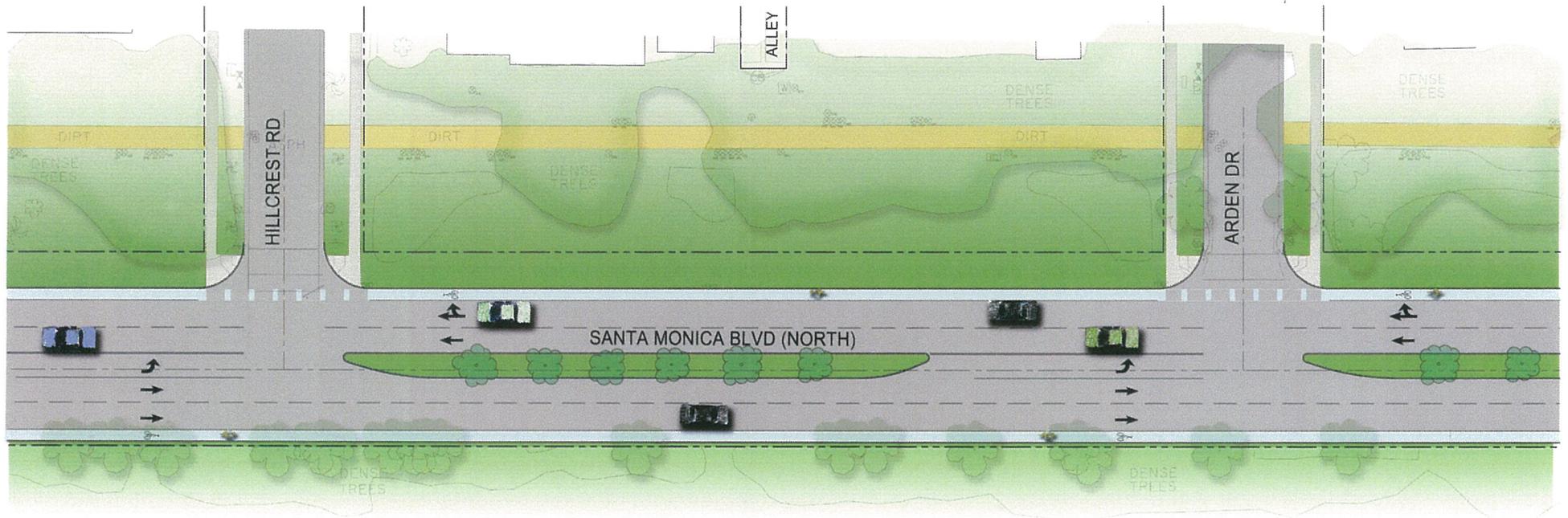


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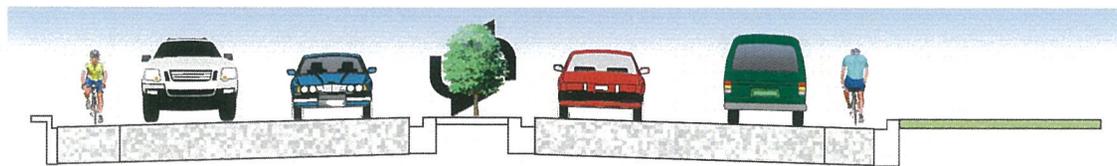
FEATURES

- (1) ON STREET (E/B) BIKE LANE
- (1) OFF STREET (W/B) BIKE LANE/SIDEWALK

MAINTAIN EXISTING CURB TO CURB WIDTH



NORTH SANTA MONICA BLVD. - TYPICAL PLAN



NORTH SANTA MONICA BLVD. - TYPICAL SECTION

FEATURES

- (2) ON STREET BIKE LANES
- URBAN GREENING / LANDSCAPED MEDIAN

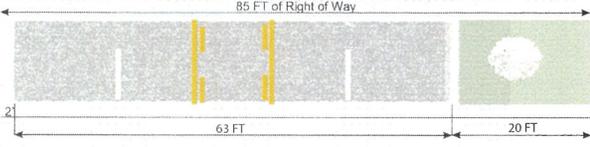
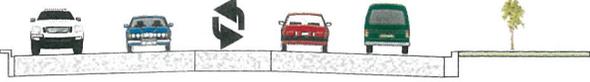
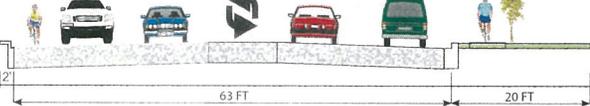
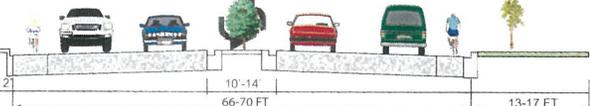
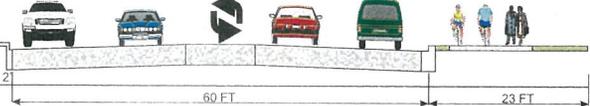
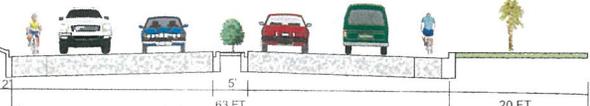
MODIFIED CURB TO CURB WIDTH

Initial Set of Concept Alternatives

After agreement that the two major alternatives; 1) maintain the existing curb-to-curb width and 2) alter the existing curb-to-curb width could be viably considered as a part of the Phase I effort, the team developed a matrix of “base” cross-section concepts that may further be evaluated and developed during Phase I.

This matrix is presented as a high-level, qualitative assessment of these “base” cross-section concepts’ consistency with the stated Project Goals. Phase I evaluation and study may result in election of one of these cross-section concepts or development of a unique concept that draws upon features of one or more of the “base” concepts.

After selection and development of a preferred “base” cross-section concept during Phase I, the team will evaluate the unique characteristics of the varied areas along the NSMB corridor such that existing character, constraints, and function are considered.

Alternative	Cross Section									
Existing			1. Rehabilitate Infrastructure	2. Consider Safe Complete Streets	3. Respect Character, Preserve Green Space	4. Maintain Access to Business Triangle	5. Minimize Construction Impacts	6. Maintain Vehicular Flow	Composite Score	Disposition
1. Existing Cross Section			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Consider
2. Eastbound Bike Lane Westbound Sidewalk			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Consider
3. Two Bike Lanes			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Consider
4. Two Bike Lanes with Median			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Consider (Refinement of Alt 3)
5. Off Street Bike/Ped Pathway			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Consider
6. Two Bike Lanes Eliminate Left Turns			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Drop

Legend

● - Satisfies Project Goal ● - Partially Satisfies Project Goal ● - Does Not Satisfy Project Goal