



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: PUBLIC WORKS

File #: 19-765

Board Meeting Date: 7/23/2019

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: James C. Porter, Director of Public Works

Subject: Authorizing the Establishment of a Contraflow Bike Lane on Altschul Avenue, in Unincorporated Menlo Park

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution for the establishment of a Contraflow Bike Lane on Altschul Avenue in the unincorporated area of Menlo Park.

BACKGROUND:

Your Board has adopted similar resolutions designating bike lanes. This will be the County of San Mateo's first contraflow bike lane. Contraflow bike lanes parallels vehicular traffic lanes where cyclists are permitted to ride and have a designated bicycle lane adjacent to the opposing flow of traffic.

Section 21207 et seq. of the California Vehicle Code and Section 7.80.010 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code provides that local authorities may establish bicycle lanes by resolution or ordinance.

The Department of Public Works (Department) and the City of Menlo Park (City) jointly held a public meeting in 2017 to discuss general access improvements to schools located along Altschul and Avy Avenues.

Among the issues identified included children routinely riding their bicycles on Altschul Avenue to and from local schools. Many of the children ride their bicycles on the one way section of Altschul Avenue in the afternoons, a direction opposing the vehicular flow of traffic.

The concept of a contraflow bicycle lane was introduced to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) on December 12, 2018 after the Department reviewed the available pavement areas on Altschul Avenue and confirmed there is adequate space to accommodate separate bicycle lanes, vehicle lanes and on-street parking. The BPAC provided formal written support for the project on March 12, 2019 with the caveat of exploring eliminating on-street parking with adjacent property owners to allow for designated bike lanes in both northbound and southbound directions.

The Department sent two questionnaires to residents where the bicycle lanes would be considered. The first questionnaire asked residents along the one-way section of Altschul Avenue if they preferred bike lanes in both directions and no on-street parking, or one contraflow bike lane and share the road markings with on-street parking. A majority of the responses received were in favor of keeping on-street parking.

The second questionnaire asked residents, including residents on the neighboring streets, if they had any concerns about having a contraflow bike lane on Altschul Avenue. While the majority (18 out of 30 respondents) were in favor of bike lanes, some had reservations about the safety of the contraflow lane and expressed concerns that a contraflow bike lane would encourage additional bicycle traffic. The results of the questionnaires are summarized in 'Attachment A'.

DISCUSSION:

Department staff reviewed the survey results and determined that the contraflow bike lane would be a safety improvement to Altschul Avenue without creating a new safety issue with increased bicycle traffic. The contraflow bike lane would provide designated areas for both bicyclists and motor vehicles, thus creating narrow traffic lanes which generally results in reduced vehicle speeds.

Altschul Avenue is currently the preferred bicycle route for students traveling home from school who live north of the schools at Avy and Altschul Avenues. The proposal is consistent with the County's Complete Streets policy, which reviews opportunities to encourage and improve alternative modes of transportation on its roadway system.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Bicycle lane improvements are estimated to cost approximately \$50,000. Costs are included in the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget. There is no impact to the General Fund.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Bike Lane Configuration and Public Input Summary