



SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Department: Public Works

Prepared by: April Miller, Public Works Director

City Manager Approval: _____

TOPIC: B STREET TWO-WAY CONVERSION

SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL REPORT ON THE CONVERSION OF B STREET TO TWO-WAY FROM FIFTH AVENUE TO SECOND STREET

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the informational report.

BACKGROUND: San Rafael’s street network design has included one-way street couplets for many years. The one-way design concept can have advantages in urban centers. As the land use and transportation infrastructure evolve around a one-way street system, it generally can get harder and more expensive to revert to a two-way street because of the multiple design elements associated with roadway networks.

In 2020, with the construction of the Public Safety Center on C and D Streets, emergency access required the conversion of C and D Streets to two-way configuration. The main reason for the conversion was to facilitate improved response time for emergency vehicles. The City recognized other important benefits associated with the conversion such as improved retail access and visibility. The conversion left an orphan one-way design on B Street in the southbound direction without a match in the northbound direction.

With the major infrastructure investment in the rehabilitation of Third Street, the City has an opportunity to adjust the network and convert B Street to two-way, and realize the benefits a two-way street would bring to the community.

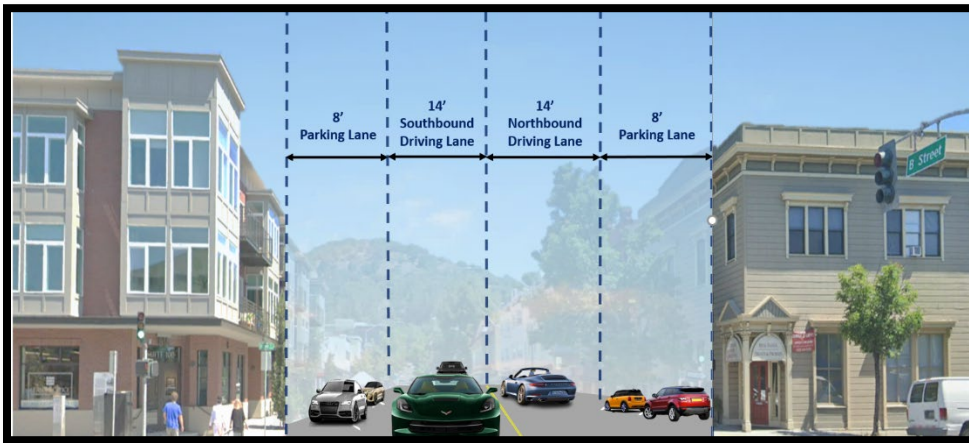
ANALYSIS: B Street is wide enough to accommodate two-way travel. The conversion design includes signing, striping, signal improvements and parking meters adjustments. The signing will bring all regulatory and guidance signage up to current standards. The striping plans include the creation of a dedicated left turn lane for eastbound traffic on Fourth Street and dedicated left turn lane for southbound B Street traffic at Second Street. These striping improvements are anticipated to not result in loss of parking. However, this does not preclude future minor adjustments depending on traffic demand which may result in some loss of parking. The signal improvements include the addition of several signal indications for the northbound approaches for all signalized intersections. The improvements on Third Street will include all upgraded indications and major improvements to the pedestrian environment as the

FOR CITY CLERK ONLY

Council Meeting: _____

Disposition: _____

curbs will be leveled with the street at four locations along Third Street. All parking meters will be adjusted to face the new northbound traffic.



The Streetaries on B Street may continue to exist under the new two-way operation of B Street. There may be changes that the owners will be required to make under the Streetaries Program. The conversion will not cause any immediate impacts.

During several community conversations some residents expressed concerns about additional pedestrians and vehicular conflicts as a result of the conversion to two-way flow. However, in a limited area like downtown San Rafael the demand for movement is limited. The uses may be shifted or relieved from one location to another. For example, while there will be increased vehicular traffic left turns from B Street to Fourth Street, heavy vehicular/pedestrian use at the southbound left turn at B Street and Second Street will be relieved. This shift in pedestrian and vehicular uses is expected, and the movements will balance out with time.

OUTREACH: This conversion is a change to the community who have been accustomed to the one-way operation for decades. We wanted to make sure we heard from stakeholders as we embark on such a change. The project concept was first introduced at the City Council meeting on February 7, 2021 as part of the Third Street Rehabilitation Project. Staff reported that the plans for Third Street are designed with the assumption of a two-way operation. The current design plans were presented at the monthly Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods meeting in January and at a virtual community meeting. The community meeting was not well attended despite hundreds of direct notices to stakeholders. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee will invite comments from the public at its February 1, 2023, meeting. In addition, after the City Council meeting, this item will be presented at the February 23, 2023, Economic Vitality Meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: As an informational report, there is no fiscal impact associated with this action. The construction cost is anticipated to be covered by contingency funds for the Third Street Rehabilitation Project contract which were already approved by the City Council. Staff has budgeted Gas Tax Fund 206 in the Capital Improvement Program for this project.

OPTIONS: The City Council has the following options to consider relating to this matter:

1. Accept the informational report as presented.

2. Accept the information report with comments and direction to staff with how to proceed with the project.
3. Do not accept the informational report and direct staff to return with more information before the project proceeds.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accept the informational report.