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Report regarding a resolution recommending the City Council to adopt the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. (Christopher Espiritu, Senior Transportation Planner)

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution recommending that the City Council adopt the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

In 2011 and 2014, the City of South San Francisco (City) adopted a Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan, respectively. The two plans outlined infrastructure improvement projects to make walking and biking throughout South San Francisco safer and easier. Many of the projects outlined in those plans have been completed or require further evaluation and funding.

During its June 20, 2018, meeting, the City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a consulting services agreement with Alta Planning for the preparation of a citywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in an amount not to exceed \$270,000 and adopting budget amendment 18.032 appropriating an additional \$40,000 from the General Plan Maintenance Reserve in the Developer Deposit Fund for Capital Improvement Project 1705. Funding was allocated from the General Plan Maintenance Reserve because the new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will service as an important component of the Transportation Element of the forthcoming, new General Plan. The analysis conducted and goals and projects generated by the new Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will be utilized when drafting the new General Plan.

During this time, City Staff and the Alta Planning Team collaborated on public outreach, working with partners in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the community on creating Active South City's Vision and Goals. Then, the COVID-19 pandemic created a major challenge. The transportation sector was disrupted, and commute patterns changed significantly starting in March 2020. Further, in 2020 through 2021, the

ShapeSSF General Plan Update Process began community engagement on the vision and guiding principles for the City in 2040. Active South City needed to account for the outcomes of this process to maintain conformance with the mobility goals of ShapeSSF and the City.

Today, Active South City is an update to the City of South San Francisco's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans. This Plan integrates walking, bicycling, and other active transportation modes into a single plan that prioritizes project and program recommendations that are designed to increase safety and comfort for people bicycling and walking in South San Francisco, also commonly referred to as South City. With a planning horizon of 20 years, Active South City guides current and future decision-makers toward a seamless and integrated active transportation network inclusive of all citizens, needs, and destinations.

The Plan was borne out of a methodology that included utilizing a mixed method of quantitative data analysis and qualitative analysis to develop comprehensive recommendations. This included assessing travel demand, trip destinations, key transit points, and assessing local needs through community engagement activities and surveys, as well as developing the high-injury network of the City. Also, the Plan ensures alignment with the ShapeSSF General Plan Update's Mobility Element, and recent policy directions such as the City's Vision Zero and Local Road Safety Plan, were considered.

The purpose of the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is to establish and improve the quality, footprint, and impact of non-automobile modes for South San Francisco residents and employees. Active South City makes recommendations which will be used as a resource for guiding future operations, priorities, and the development and location of bicycle and pedestrian improvements and traffic safety infrastructure plans. In making recommendations, the Plan envisions an environment that enables people of all ages and abilities to comfortably access jobs, schools, recreation, shopping, and transit by walking, biking, or using a mobility device, as part of daily life.

The following aims to realize those purpose and vision set forth by the Active South City Plan through the following goals:

- Promote citywide and regional sustainability goals through investments in active transportation that create a culture of walking and bicycling that enables them to become an increasing part of everyday life
- Improve access and connectivity to major transit stops including Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations, Caltrain stations, and the ferry terminal
- Improve connectivity within and across neighborhoods with low-stress facilities
- Improve safety, eliminate traffic deaths and serious injury collisions, and lower the traffic stress of people walking and biking in South City
- Link community destinations (parks, schools, libraries, and community centers) together through low-stress networks
- Improve connections across I-280, El Camino Real (SR-82), and US-101

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Bicycles:

- **At full buildout, the proposed bicycle network would nearly double the existing mileage of bicycle facilities (up to 50 miles) and add just over 20 miles of Class IV Separated Bikeways.** This is done through a combination of establishing new facilities on roadways and improvements to existing bikeways that will be upgraded to more comfortable and/or separated bikeways.

- To ensure a safe and enjoyable trip from beginning to end, **supporting infrastructure is needed at intersections to make crossing easier and safer, wayfinding signs** along the way to help guide people to their destinations, and appropriate and **secure parking** once you reach your destination to park your bicycle.

Pedestrians/Mobility Devices:

- **Identified Pedestrian Priority Areas** highlight important corridors in the city that support walking and are currently considered high stress.
- This plan identifies **spot improvements for 40 intersection crossings** and other locations, primarily within the Pedestrian Priority Areas. Each location has recommendations that will improve the comfort and safety of pedestrians.

In addition to specific physical improvements, Active South City also outlines recommendations with regards to citywide programs and policies that the City can implement to further support active transportation in the City.

These include Programs:

- Expanding safe routes to school programming
- Senior walking programs
- Online Bicycle Map
- Open Street Events
- League of American Cities - Bicycle Friendly Community Evaluation
- Shared Mobility Policy Framework
- Tactical Urbanism Projects
- Bicycle Parking
- Green Infrastructure and Urban Cooling
- Walking and Biking Supportive Facilities

Policies:

- Vision Zero (adopted 2021)
- Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines
- TDM Ordinance Update
- Developer Impact Fee Updates
- Crosswalk and Pedestrian Signal Policies
- Bikeway and Pedestrian Facility Maintenance
- Repaving Policy

Implementation of the nearly 50 miles of bikeways and over 40 pedestrian spot improvements recommended in this plan will occur through a combination of ongoing development and upgrade/maintenance of the roadway network, as well as through targeted implementation of specific projects. Funding for active transportation projects is limited and often competitive, and it is important for the City to prioritize projects based on need and benefit, as well as on how those projects align with the key criteria from major funding sources such as the Active Transportation Program. The following prioritization strategy reflects an approach that scores each project's community benefit, as well as assesses the feasibility and complexity of project construction. Projects are sorted into four implementation categories based on the combined results of two evaluations: project priority and project feasibility.

To conclude, the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan arrives at a time of possibility and

change. In addition to new development in the East of 101, significant projects in the Downtown and the El Camino Corridor provide opportunities to shift new development projects towards a greater amount of non-automobile travel. Also, significant federal, state, county, and local funds will continue to be available through the next few years and beyond, as funding for active transportation improvements are also meant to address climate change in California. Further, the shift away from level of service and analysis of transportation through the lens of vehicular roadway capacity only, provides opportunities to prioritize other non-automobile modes on City streets.

CEQA Analysis

Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines provides a statutory exemption for projects involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions where the City has not approved, adopted, or funded. The Active South City Plan only makes recommendations which will serve as guides for future potential pedestrian and bicycle projects but does not obligate or bound the City to adhere to such recommendations. Identified locations for bicycle and pedestrian improvements are subject to alteration by subsequent analyses, or decisions, and would only then obligate the City to fund or construct any improvements or projects. Subsequent projects constructed based on the recommendations of the Active South City Plan would be required to undergo separate environmental analyses.

Further, the Active South City Plan is intended to make recommendations that would encourage active transportation/pedestrian improvements to address climate change and promote alternate means of transportation, which further contributes to avoiding significant environmental effects. Thus, the Active South City Plan is analyzed to be statutorily exempt under Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines.

In addition, Sections 15162 and 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines include standards for the preparation of a subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR), where a previous EIR has been certified or adopted, or the preparation of a Program EIR. The 2011 Bicycle Master Plan and 2014 Pedestrian Master Plan were developed to satisfy the 1999 General Plan EIR Mitigation Measures 4.3-G-1 through 4.3-I-7 which required the preparation and adoption of a Bikeways Master Plan and to undertake a program to improve pedestrian connections, among others. The Active South City Plan updates those two previous plans with the same intent of providing the framework for expanding and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle routes, amenities, and connections in the City.

The Active South City Plan would not result substantial changes which will require major revisions of the previous General Plan EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. As such, the Active South City Plan remains a policy that would reduce General Plan EIR Impact 4.3-c to less than significant levels, and no subsequent EIR or additional environmental analysis need be prepared given that the standards for Sections 15162 and 15168 have not been met.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution recommending that the City Council approve the Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which is designed to improve access, connectivity, and safety of people walking, biking, or traveling on mobility devices, in the City of South San Francisco.

Attachment 1: Active South City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

