



Shell Beach Road Streetscape

Frequently asked Questions

General

What is the Shell Beach Road Streetscape Improvements Project?

The overall goal of the Shell Beach Road Streetscape Improvement project is to make Shell Beach Road a safe, efficient, and enjoyable street for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, business people, shoppers and visitors. Likewise, the roadway design must balance the needs and functions of the street as a transportation thoroughfare, a healthy commercial district, respectful neighborhood & social gathering place.

The main components of the Streetscape Project include establishing a continuous multiuse path from Cliff Ave to Terrace Ave, undergrounding of the existing overhead utilities, sidewalk upgrades and new sidewalks with ADA accessibility upgrades, improvements to the drainage and pavement of the actual roadway, and upgrading the City waterline. In addition, Streetscape improvements will include new crosswalks, parking spaces, and enhanced landscaping with new trees. Decorative features such as lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and public art will be added throughout the village.

We are excited about this time of redevelopment in our great City. Living and working in downtown Shell Beach will mean watching our neighborhood transform into a more vibrant community.

How did we get here?

The City of Pismo Beach General Plan identifies the Shell Beach Road (SBR) corridor through the “village” of Shell Beach as an important resource in the city that “embodies much of the historic ambiance and flavor of small California beach towns.” General Plan Policy LU-H-3 identified the need for a Specific Plan to be prepared for the SBR commercial corridor with specific recommendations for revitalization, including upgrades to signage, street tree type and locations, sidewalks, parking and building massing.

The Shell Beach Improvement Group (SBIG) was formed by Shell Beach residents and business owners to further the efforts toward preparing a concise Master Plan for these types of revitalizing improvements. SBIG began working toward a Master Plan for the SBR corridor in 2005. City staff, working closely with SBIG, hired a consultant team to begin formal work on the Master Plan for the streetscape in the SBR corridor in 2007.

The current project spans from Cliff Avenue, at Dinosaur Caves Park, to Terrace Avenue, at Shell Beach Elementary School, and will completely transform the business district of Shell Beach as identified in the Master Plan which was adopted by the City Council in April of 2009. Working closely with SBIG and building upon the work of several advisory committees and community input, staff has held over twenty (20) public workshops, including information tables at the Art in the Park event and Pacific Breezes Concerts, and a bus tour, to solicit input from the community on how this project should take shape.

Input was received on every aspect of this project including but not limited to:

- Design and placement of street furniture
- Design and placement of trash and recycle bins
- Design, placement and length of bulb-outs
- Design and placement of the multi-use trail
- Type of landscaping
- Sidewalk treatments
- Bollard lighting

Since its adoption, the Project has been refined based on detailed engineering design; a detailed design catalogue identifying design for streetlights, cross walk materials and street furnishings; a project-level environmental review; and funding strategy/budgetary review. Most recently, on December 1, 2015, City Council approved the final plans and authorized City Staff to continue moving forward developing construction plans and the construction contracts for the Project. The City anticipates awarding the construction contract in September of 2017 and breaking ground in October of 2017.

Improvements and Amenities

Is there a drawing of how the Streetscape Project will look when completed?

There are renderings of the Streetscape project that can give a preview of how the completed project will look, and these can be seen on our website (www.pismobeach.org) under the engineering/current projects tab.

What kind of trees will be planted?

Queen Palms will be the predominant plantings throughout the streetscape area. New Zealand Christmas trees and Evergreen Pear trees will also be placed around the village. Shrubs and groundcover will also be planted. There are renderings of the plant types and planting areas that can give an impression of how the completed project will look on our City website.

Will the sidewalks remain the same width?

The project has been designed to maximize sidewalks within the existing City right of way to 8 feet wide. Pedestrian friendly streets will emphasize the pedestrian experience over the automobile. Sidewalks will consist of concrete with paver accents along the landscaped bulb outs and meet ADA accessibility standards.

What new elements will be added to the Village area?

New elements being added will include new sidewalks, pedestrian crossings made from decorative stamped concrete or pavers, "bulb outs" containing new trees, plantings, street furniture, and opportunities for public art.

What will the streetlights and lighted bollards look like?

The streetlights chosen for this redevelopment was based on a lower pedestrian scale height, decorative style and ability to mount banners. There are renderings of the streetlights and lighted bollards on our City website.

Will there be sidewalk benches, trash cans, and bike racks?

Yes. New benches, trash cans, and bike racks will be conveniently located at the bulb-outs and throughout the downtown area. The City is considering expanding its adopt a bench program to include trash cans, bike racks, trees, and streetlights in the SBR corridor.

Parking

Does the Streetscape Project include more parking?

The loss of parking along Shell Beach Road is a huge concern for the City. Currently there are 181 marked parking spaces along Shell Beach Road between Cliff Ave and Terrace Ave. After the Streetscape project there will be 172 on-street parking spaces creating 9 lost parking spaces along Shell Beach Road. To help mitigate and offset the lost spaces the City has purchased a property on Shell Beach Road and will construct a new parking lot with 16 spaces. Parking and the businesses along Shell Beach Road are a priority for the City.

Access

How will construction affect my business?

The City's contractor will work very hard to minimize inconveniences to businesses due to construction. Businesses and residents will receive construction information through public meetings, one-on-one meetings, small group and organizational meetings, news media, email updates and the City website. We will work with downtown merchants to have alternate plans in place prior to construction and to make sure that merchants and patrons are given notice of when and where construction will take place. The contractor will provide business access signs for buildings/businesses in the construction zone.

Will I always have access to my business?

Access to businesses will be provided at all times for customers and deliveries. The contractor will provide early warning before any work or disruptions are planned in front of your business.

Will I always have vehicular access?

As the construction progresses, some streets in the Village will be temporarily inaccessible to vehicles. However, the construction crew will work closely with business owners to address concerns about access. Business access signs will direct motorists to temporary business entrances.

Will I always have pedestrian access?

Pedestrian access will be maintained during construction. Temporary sidewalks will be placed between buildings and fences bordering the construction area. Access may be delayed during the installation of temporary sidewalks while crews remove the old sidewalks and lay the temporary sidewalks. You may be detoured, delayed or asked to use an alternate entrance when the permanent sidewalks are being poured and to allow the concrete to cure and harden.

Will I always have parking?

If you currently have parking in a designated area that will be in a construction zone, we will work with you to find another parking option. Construction may require temporary loss of parking for short periods of time in the immediate area.

Will I always have curbside waste collection bins?

Please continue to put out your garbage, recycling and green bins as per your normal schedule. If required, the contractor will temporarily move bins to an appropriate location and return them promptly. Please write your address number in large print on the bins to ensure they are returned to the proper unit.

What about my items on City Property?

Property owners in the work area are reminded to remove any privately owned items from the sidewalk area and the City Right of Way. The City will not be responsible for damage to any privately owned items installed on City property.

Water Shut-Offs

Will our utilities be shut off during the construction?

Utility interruptions will be unavoidable. You will experience several planned water shut-offs usually lasting less than four hours at any one time. To minimize inconveniences, most planned water shut-offs are scheduled mid-week and after 9am.

How will I know if my water will be shut-off?

You will receive advance notification of any planned water shut-offs via a flyer that will be placed on your door.

I have not received a water shut off notice and I do not have water. What do I do?

Call the Water Division customer service at (805) 773-4656 to report your outage. Most likely you are experiencing an emergency water shut-off due to an unscheduled water line break. If you are a restaurant, hair salon or medical office, it is suggested that you keep several five gallon bottles of water on the premises in case of a water line break or an emergency water shut off.

Utilities

Utilities Replacement – What is the construction process?

Initially, new water mains, and drainage structures will be installed. Installation of electrical and communication conduits will follow. Once these services are installed, water lines will be inspected and tested and finally connected to private properties. Once the new services are operational, existing water lines will be demolished and removed, and the roadbed will be prepared for asphalt or concrete depending on the location. Construction workers will demolish existing roadway and sidewalks. Temporary pedestrian access will be provided as needed. Sidewalk curbing will be installed and the new sidewalk poured.

Why is the City replacing the water line?

The existing water infrastructure is a mixture of different materials from different time periods. This project will abandon and consolidate the water system into one uniform pipeline. In addition, the City's 2004 Water Master Plan identified the need to upsize the existing waterline to meet current fire protection demands.

Is it true that Shell Beach will have underground wire utilities as a part of this project?

It is preferred to move all electrical, cable and fiber optics services underground at one time. This City is currently working towards securing all the necessary backyard easements. Once the easements have been obtained, the conduit will be installed underground for the wire services such as electric, telephone, cable, fiber optics, etc. along the SBR corridor.

Construction

What kind of disruptions can I expect?

As with all construction projects, there will be noise and temporary inconveniences.

In order to complete the work effectively and in a safe manner, some pedestrian and traffic restrictions will be necessary. This includes lane closures during construction, which may reduce traffic to one lane. The contractor will further notify you of any temporary disruptions. Every effort will be made to reduce the inconveniences. Emergency (police, fire and medical response) and local access will be maintained at all times. On-site signage will be posted to advise of detours, lane closures and pedestrian crossings.

Will it be noisy and dusty in the neighborhood?

With any construction project, some dust and noise is inevitable. The contractor will be responsible for ensuring the work area is kept clean with daily sweeping. Every effort will be made to reduce inconveniences to the community.

What are the construction work hours?

The Contractor shall only work between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and holidays. Deviation from these hours is not permitted without the prior consent of the City Engineer, except in emergencies involving immediate hazard to persons or property. In addition, no work or street closures will be allowed on the weekday before or weekday after City Special Events or Holidays without the prior consent of the City Engineer.

What is the construction schedule?

Moving toward construction after years of planning, budgeting and engineering, the City of Pismo Beach anticipates awarding a construction contract in September 2017 and breaking ground in October 2017.

Once the contract is awarded, the Contractor will develop a tentative schedule to inform the project team and the public. This schedule may vary depending on things like the weather, and delivery of materials and equipment. Unforeseen issues such as archaeological or historical findings may require extra time to ensure their protection during construction. Underground utilities not shown on construction plans may also require extra time to determine their source. The City will update the Project Schedule page on the website which shows the project phasing, estimated start dates and actual completion dates.

When will the work begin and how long will construction take?

Construction is expected to begin in October 2017 and be completed by October 2018 (12 months).

Why does the City want to start during the Fall?

The timing of the start of this project was not an oversight. Construction of this project is expected to take 12 months. Regardless of when the project started, the Shell Beach Road corridor would be impacted by construction during at least one summer season. The City realizes that traffic patterns in the corridor may be affected during the following summer, however the majority of the work within the roadway will be completed, so we don't expect to have any significant traffic delays during the summer months in 2018. To minimize the impact to the community during the summer, additional striping, signage and pavement delineators will be added to increase the efficiency of traffic flowing through the construction zone. The City will also increase the presence of police in the surrounding neighborhoods in order to provide additional enforcement to reduce cut-through vehicle traffic and to slow down vehicles.

The project team's approach was to complete the construction work within one rainy season. Rain delay is the most common reason for construction delays and added costs. Additionally, storm water issues for construction projects are a critical factor for a project of this nature located so close to the beach. By avoiding construction during a second rainy season, we are minimizing the impact of stormwater related issues and avoiding potential delays due to rainy days. This project also involves significant stormwater conveyance infrastructure improvements. This work needs to be completed during the non-rainy season period so that the stormwater runoff can be properly disposed of in compliance with strict environmental regulations. There is no perfect time to start a project of this magnitude. Regardless of the starting date, there will be some inconveniences to residents, business owners, and commuters. We will strive to keep these to a minimum.

Why can't the work be done at night to avoid lane closures during the day? Why can't traffic control be removed during the evening and weekends when no construction is going on?

Throughout the construction of the project, the traffic lanes will be adjusted several times to accommodate various phases of the proposed construction work. During this first phase of the project, the medians and vehicle lanes adjacent to the medians will be removed to allow for construction of underground utilities and the new medians. Currently, there is only enough remaining pavement for one lane in each direction plus associated left turn lanes, so it would not matter whether the work is done during the day or the evening, mornings, or on weekends, the removed pavement and medians preclude the possibility of any additional traffic lanes. Even if this was not the case, and the work was performed only in the evenings, the construction lighting and noise would cause additional inconveniences to nearby residents.

How is the City addressing construction impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods such as increased volume of traffic and speeding/stop sign violations?

In order to minimize the impacts of the project additional informational signs will be added to the Shell Beach Road corridor and additional law enforcement will be in place during the morning and afternoon commuting times.

Why didn't residents get notice the project was starting?

Although the City will not mail out individual letters to each property owner, there will be an extensive effort to provide advance notice of the project before construction starts. Information will be provided at City Council meetings, the City's web-based E-blast notification system, on informational signs along Shell Beach Road and on the City's website. Additional project information can be found on the City's website at www.pismo-beach.org.

Who is paying for the project?

The City received a \$400,000 state grant (STIP) for the design and permitting of the multiuse path, \$3,200,000 in funding is available through PG&E rule 20A program for undergrounding existing overhead utilities, and the new waterline is funded by the City's Water Enterprise Fund.

One of the anticipated funding sources for this project was the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Active Transportation Program (ATP) Grant. Recently, the City was informed that the Shell Beach Streetscape Improvement Project is not being recommended by the California Transportation Commission staff for funding. Only one project was funded in all of San Luis Obispo County. The City's request was for \$5.3 million and this funding was critical to make up our funding gap for the project. The City Council has authorized the General Fund and the Half-Cent Sales Tax Revenue as sources to fill the funding gap left by the unsuccessful ATP Grant application.

Contact Information

Who can I contact to get information about the Shell Beach Road Streetscape Improvements Project?

For more information about the project, please contact the City of Pismo Beach Public Works Department at (805) 773-4656. You may also use the "Citizen Requests" link on the City's homepage (www.pismo-beach.org).