




MEETING DATE: 2/7/05  
ITEM NO. 9

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: February 3, 2005

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL 

FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER

SUBJECT: DISCUSS AND PROVIDE DIRECTION ON OPTIONS FOR SEQUENCING  
SAN JOSE WATER COMPANY PROJECT AND TOWN PAVING PROJECT  
ON SANTA CRUZ AVENUE

### RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and provide direction on options for sequencing San Jose Water Company project and Town paving project on Santa Cruz Avenue.

### BACKGROUND:

The North Santa Cruz Avenue Streetscape Reconstruction Project began with the first sidewalk reconstruction contract in summer, 2002. A second sidewalk contract was completed in 2003. Originally scheduled for 2004, the reconstruction of the street was postponed one year until the summer of 2005 to provide the downtown business community with a respite from construction that may affect their businesses.

Plans for reconstruction of the street were completed by the consulting engineers and the work was scheduled to be done between July 4<sup>th</sup> and Labor Day, 2005. The business and residential community was aware of this project and, for the most part, concurred with the project occurring over a four-week period with N. Santa Cruz Ave. being closed during this time. As these plans were being completed, San Jose Water Company notified staff that they would need to replace their water system in the street before the street was reconstructed. This is due to the shallow depth of the N. Santa Cruz Ave. water system and the degree of street reconstruction necessary. As the street reconstruction will require removal of the current roadway, there is a possibility that equipment could damage the 100-year-old water system posing a health and safety risk to the public. The water main on N. Santa Cruz Ave. is a high pressure line. If it were to fail during construction of the street, it could cause flooding and consequent damage to property. There is also a risk of personal injury with a high pressure pipeline failure.

PREPARED BY:

  
JOHN E. CURTIS  
Director of Parks and Public Works

Reviewed by: : PS Assistant Town Manager OK Town Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk Administrator  
\_\_\_\_\_ Finance \_\_\_\_\_ Community Development Revised: 2/3/05 3:10 pm

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The purpose of this report is to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of options for sequencing the reconstruction of North Santa Cruz Ave. and the replacement of the water system.

DISCUSSION:

The original Downtown Streetscape work plan approved by staff in 2002 included work on both North Santa Cruz Avenue and Main Street. The overall schedule is given below.

North Santa Cruz Avenue Streetscape Phase I	2002
North Santa Cruz Avenue Streetscape Phase II	2003
North Santa Cruz Street Reconstruction	2004
Main Street Streetscape and Street	2005

By agreeing to postpone the street reconstruction planned for 2004 for one year, the reconstruction was then scheduled for 2005 and the Main Street project was scheduled for 2006.

When told of the need to replace the water main on N. Santa Cruz Ave., staff considered the option of beginning this project in February, 2005, anticipating a completion in March based on the initial estimate provided by SJWC. After a detailed review of their schedule, SJWC indicated completion in May (a 12-week period), and requiring a complete closure of N. Santa Cruz. At the request of Town staff, SJWC revisited their plan and estimated that, with certain changes in approach to the work, they could complete their work in 5 ½ weeks, or by early April.

Staff reviewed this revised schedule, and in two subsequent meetings with Council liaisons, Mayor Wasserman and Vice Mayor McNutt and with the Downtown Focus Group discussed the options available to accomplish the work. These options are summarized below:

**Options**

1. **SJWC Project in Summer 2005 and Town Project in Summer 2006 or 2007.** Substitute the SJWC project with the Town street reconstruction project planned for the summer. Allow SJWC to begin their work July 11<sup>th</sup> and complete it by August 12<sup>th</sup>. The Town would then schedule the street project for the summer of 2006 or for the summer of 2007 ( a 5-week closure in 2005, and a 4-week closure in either 2006 or 2007). A consideration in this option is the impact on the Main St. project and whether the N. Santa Cruz and Main St. projects would be completed in reverse order or in the same year.
2. **SJWC Project in Spring 2005 and Town Project in Summer 2005.** Allow San Jose Water Company to begin their work on February 22nd and complete it by April 4<sup>th</sup>. This would result in a six-week water project. The Town would reconstruct North Santa Cruz Avenue

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during the summer season as planned, from July 11<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup> (a total 10 weeks of street closure during 2005).

3. **SJWC Project and Town Project in Summer 2005.** Allow San Jose Water Company to begin their work on June 20<sup>th</sup> and complete it by July 22<sup>nd</sup>. This would result in a five-week water project. The Town would begin the street project on July 25<sup>th</sup> and complete it by August 26<sup>th</sup> (a total of 9 weeks of consecutive street closure in 2005).

Several factors are common to all the options. All work described would involve Mondays through Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.. N. Santa Cruz Ave. would be closed to traffic from Main Street to Highway 9. Valet parking would be provided during all of the work. Drop off points for delivery and mail service would be established where the side streets intersect North Santa Cruz Avenue. The sidewalks would remain open and pedestrian crossings of North Santa Cruz Avenue would be provided at the current locations, except when work is occurring in the immediate area. Significant communication with the affected residents and businesses, and marketing efforts to encourage continued business in the Downtown would occur. Each option has advantages and disadvantages as discussed below:

**Option 1: SJWC Project in Summer 2005 and Town Project in Summer 2006 or 2007.**

Substitute the SJWC project with the Town street reconstruction project planned for the summer. Allow SJWC to begin their work July 11<sup>th</sup> and complete it by August 12<sup>th</sup>. The Town would then schedule the street project for the summer of 2006 or for the summer of 2007 (a 5-week closure in 2005, and a 4-week closure in either 2006 or 2007). A consideration in this option is the impact on the Main St. project and whether the N. Santa Cruz and Main St. projects would be completed in reverse order or in the same year.

*Advantages:*

- N. Santa Cruz Ave. would be closed to traffic for a 5-week period in 2005, rather than a 9- or 10- week period as required in the other options. This would likely have less impacts on the downtown business community, as business may be affected by the road closure due to the potential impacts on the customer base.
- Downtown merchants had already planned for a 4-week road closure in the summer of 2005 and could likely accommodate the additional week required by SJWC.
- Both projects occur in less weather sensitive time periods, and when school is not in session, which reduces some of the traffic on N. Santa Cruz.

*Disadvantages:*

- Postponing the street project until 2006 or 2007 will likely result in an increase in projected construction costs due to inflation. The costs are likely to be greater in 2007 than in 2006.
- The Downtown Streetscape project on N. Santa Cruz will be completed later than anticipated,

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with the downtown business and resident community experiencing road closures two years in a row.

- Delaying the street project may result in a delay in the Main St. project, unless these were completed simultaneously in 2006.

Option 2: SJWC Project in Spring 2005 and Town Project in Summer 2005. Allow San Jose Water Company to begin their work on February 22nd and complete it by April 4<sup>th</sup>. This would result in a six-week water project. The Town would reconstruct North Santa Cruz Avenue during the summer season as planned, from July 11<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup> (a total 10 weeks of street closure during 2005).

*Advantages:*

- Construction work would be completed on N. Santa Cruz Ave. in 2005, with no further complete road closures on N. Santa Cruz Ave. anticipated for many years.
- The three-month gap between the two road closures provides a brief respite for the merchants compared to Option 3.
- Construction costs for street reconstruction would be within the current projected costs.

*Disadvantages:*

- The merchants and residents have not prepared for a road closure in February. The merchants, in particular, may find it difficult to plan for the closure at such short notice.
- N. Santa Cruz Ave. would be closed for a total of 10 weeks during 2005, which may be challenging for the business community due to the potential impacts on their customer base.
- The 6-week SJWC project would take place in somewhat marginal weather (February and March). Weather delays are more likely to occur during this period than later in the year.
- With school is session during this period, approximately 30% more traffic will use the local streets as compared to the summer period.

Option 3: SJWC Project and Town Project in Summer 2005. Allow San Jose Water Company to begin their work on June 20<sup>th</sup> and complete it by July 22<sup>nd</sup>. This would result in a five-week water project. The Town would begin the street project on July 25<sup>th</sup> and complete it by August 26<sup>th</sup> (a total of 9 weeks of consecutive street closure in 2005).

*Advantages:*

- Construction work would be completed on N. Santa Cruz Ave. in 2005, with no further complete road closures on N. Santa Cruz Ave. anticipated for many years.
- Construction costs for street reconstruction would be within the current projected costs.
- Although there may be some potential time savings associated with the back-to-back work (potentially reducing the 9 weeks further), this area has not yet been explored by staff and SJWC.

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*Disadvantages:*

- The merchants and residents have not prepared for a 9-week closure, nor for a closure earlier than July 11<sup>th</sup>. . The merchants may find it difficult to do so.
- A 9-week back-to-back closure would likely be challenging for the business community due to the potential impacts on their customer base.
- Back-to-back projects may be difficult to coordinate, and leave no cushion for unexpected delays or problems.

Staff has scheduled a community meeting for Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 a.m. at the Los Gatos Theater to present the options to the residents and businesses in the downtown area (approximately 850 notices have been mailed to the merchants, building owners, and residents on Santa Cruz, Massol, Tait, University and Edelen Avenues, as well as the cross streets). Staff will invite a discussion and feedback on the options and the advantages and disadvantages of each, with the purpose of obtaining a greater sense of the community interests related to the timing of these projects. Staff will bring this feedback, and any further pertinent information from SJWC, with a recommendation to the Town Council at the regular meeting of February 22, 2005.

CONCLUSION:

The Town is faced with a challenging decision regarding the timing of two critical projects: the San Jose Water Company water system replacement on N. Santa Cruz Ave. and the Town street reconstruction project on N. Santa Cruz Ave. This staff report presents three options for scheduling these projects, as well as the advantages and disadvantages associated with each. Although staff will return to the Council on February 22<sup>nd</sup> for a decision on this matter, staff is seeking Council comments and any further direction regarding these options at the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Staff will share Council comments with the participants at the February 9<sup>th</sup> community meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS:

Discussion of options regarding project scheduling is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with discussion of options. There are no measurable differences in fiscal impacts of one option versus another, except to note that the projected costs of road construction is expected to increase at least by the cost of inflation as the project is delayed.

Distribution: Rich Pardini, San Jose Water Company