



## CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Jacki Scott, Public Works Director/City Engineer

**DATE:** November 7, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Plans and Specifications for La Paz Road Long-Term Phase II Project, Cash Contract No. 23-17, and Authorization to Advertise the Project for Bids

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve the plans and specifications for the La Paz Road Long-Term Phase II Project, Cash Contract No. 23-17; and,
2. Authorize staff to advertise the project for bids.

### **BACKGROUND**

La Paz Road was constructed in the late 1960's with one lane in each direction, then subsequently widened to two lanes in each direction in the 1990's. Throughout the years, earth movement was noticed with distortions of the pavement, sidewalk, and parkway areas along the Laguna Niguel Regional Park interface near Rancho Niguel Road. To address the earth movement and minimize roadway distortion, nearly seventy 24-inch diameter caissons were installed within the travel lanes of La Paz Road in the 1990's and early 2000's, along with a crib wall at Laguna Niguel Regional Park.

Over time, the earth movement has caused substantial damage to the roadbed and sidewalk on the southbound side of La Paz Road between Rancho Niguel Road and Kings Road. Several attempts were made by the City to repair the damaged road, however, roadway movement continued.

On May 4, 2023, the City received a report on the conditions of the slope from its geotechnical consultant, GMU, who has overseen the on-going monitoring. The report indicated that the site showed increasing signs of vertical displacement and that new tension cracks were visible in the soil adjacent to the southbound sidewalk. The report further indicated that the movement has been creeping at depth, which is indicative of deep-seated landslide movement likely attributed to the heavy rainfall that the City

received this past winter. Out of an abundance of caution and at the recommendation of the City's geotechnical consultant GMU, the City determined that it was necessary to close both southbound lanes along La Paz Road between Rancho Niguel Road and Kings Road.

On May 17, 2023, the City Council's adopted Resolution No. 2023-1427 declaring a local emergency (the "Declaration of Emergency"). The City then implemented a new interim traffic control pattern called the Short-Term Phase I Plan on La Paz Road that closed the two southbound travel lanes at Rancho Niguel Road and detoured southbound La Paz Road traffic onto eastbound Rancho Niguel Road. The closure and detour were implemented as a temporary and precautionary measure to ensure public safety as the City prepared to implement the Long-Term Phase II Plan, a traffic switch allowing two-way traffic on the east side of the La Paz Road median.

On August 15, 2023, the City Council approved a contract with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. to provide engineering design services for the restoration of interim two-way traffic along La Paz Road (Long-Term Phase II).

At its November 7, 2023 meeting, the City Council will consider the adoption of Resolution No. 2023-1451 extending its Declaration of Emergency and delegating to the City Manager the emergency authority to award and execute the Agreement for Construction Services Long-Term Phase II Project, Cash Contract 23-17.

A map showing the vicinity and location of the project area along La Paz Road is provided as Attachment "A". This project supports City Council Goal 1 (Public Safety) and Goal 4 (Infrastructure and Technology) of the City's adopted Strategic Plan.

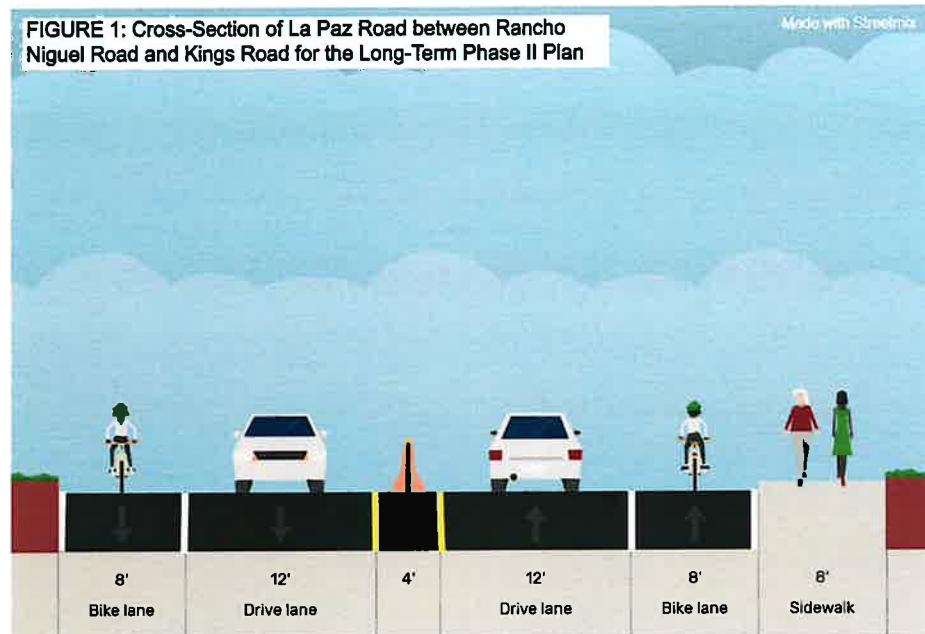
To keep the public informed, staff created a dedicated La Paz Road webpage on the City's website and is actively sharing information on social media platforms regarding project updates and changes in traffic patterns.

## **ANALYSIS**

The plans, specifications, and engineer's estimate for the La Paz Road Long-Term Phase II Project were completed by Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. The Long-Term Phase II design includes the following features (as illustrated in Figure 1 below):

- Removes the center median island along La Paz Road from Rancho Niguel Road to Kings Road and replaces it with new pavement.
- Converts the two northbound lanes of La Paz Road to one northbound lane and one southbound lane to allow two-way traffic circulation.
- Adds K-rail separation between the northbound and southbound travel lanes.
- Preserves the northbound bike lane and adds a southbound bike lane.
- Adds green paint to bike lanes and vertical delineation for protected bike lanes.
- Preserves the sidewalk on the easterly side of La Paz Road only.

- Preserves southbound La Paz Road left-turn access at the intersection of Rancho Niguel Road and La Paz Road and preserves northbound La Paz Road left-turn access at the SOCWA plant driveway and La Paz Road.
- Provides adequate roadway width to meet emergency access standards.
- Provides/restores street lighting to match the existing condition.
- Eliminates the current detour onto Rancho Niguel Road.



A copy of the plans and specifications is available at the City Clerk's Office for examination and review.

The Long-Term Phase II Project will serve two-way traffic for an estimated three to five years while Public Works staff continues to seek grant funding to design and construct permanent repairs to the roadway and earth movement. Construction of the Long-Term Phase II improvements needed to restore two-way traffic on La Paz Road is estimated to cost \$1,500,000. Construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2024 and is expected to be completed in Fall 2024.

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines – California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3 (Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA), Article 19 (Categorical Exemptions), Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), Subsection (c).

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The City Council could direct staff to defer the project to a future date. This alternative is not recommended as it will result in the detour onto Rancho Niguel Road remaining in place until grant funds are available to make permanent repairs to La Paz Road and the slope, which could be many years. The Short-Term Phase I detour was intended to be

temporary. Leaving the detour in its current condition, with temporary traffic control signage, for many years could be a significant liability for the City.

### **FISCAL REVIEW**

The engineer's estimate for the Long-Term Phase II project is \$1,500,000. There are sufficient funds available in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 adopted CIP budget to complete this project.

### **LEGAL REVIEW**

No legal review is required for this report.

### **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve the plans and specifications for the La Paz Road Long-Term Phase II Project, Cash Contract No. 23-17; and,
2. Authorize staff to advertise the project for bids.



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Tamara S. Letourneau  
City Manager



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Jacki Scott  
Public Works Director/City Engineer



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Kathy Nguyen  
Engineering Services Manager

Attachment:

- A. Vicinity and Location Map

# **ATTACHMENT A**

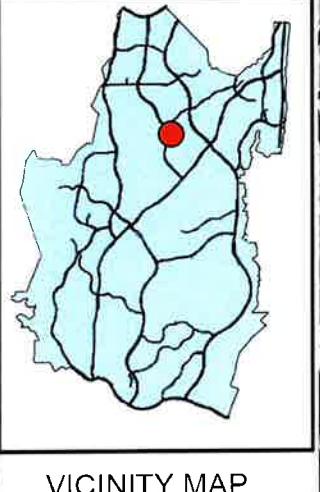
**Vicinity and Location Map**

LEGEND



Project Boundary

Aliso Creek Rd



VICINITY MAP

Rancho Niguel Rd

La Paz Rd

Kings Rd

Maxar



## Vicinity and Location Map

La Paz Road Long-Term Phase II Project

