

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: January 9, 2025

PREPARED BY: Randy Chavez, Deputy Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: DIRECTION ON MATERIALS FOR EL PASEO RAISED CROSSWALKS

RECOMMENDATION:

Request City Council direction on the preferred materials for raised crosswalks along El Paseo.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The City of Palm Desert (City) installed three raised crosswalks around El Paseo in 2019. The purpose of raised crosswalks is to improve pedestrian safety by forcing drivers to slow down and make pedestrians more visible. Following the crosswalk installation, staff was requested to evaluate additional locations in 2023. Kimely-Horn (Consultant) was hired to conduct the study.

In January 2024, the Consultant completed the study and staff presented the findings to the Active Transportation Program (ATP) Subcommittee. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the study, potential crosswalk materials and next steps. In March 2024, the City Council held a study session to discuss this study as well. Key topics and recommendations included:

- Construct two new raised crosswalks on El Paseo, located at Ocotillo and Sage, as well as Sage Lane and Lupine Lane.
- Reconstruct the raised crosswalk at Larkspur Lane to meet ADA compliance.
- Replace three rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) systems located at the existing raised crosswalks and add two RRFB systems at the new locations.
- Review material options for raised crosswalks, such as decorative asphalt or pavers.

Excluding material options, the proposed costs include:

Location	Council Direction	Cost
El Paseo (Ocotillo to Sage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construct new raised crosswalk• Install new RRFB system	\$470,000
El Paseo (Sage Lane to Lupine Lane)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construct new raised crosswalk• Install new RRFB system	\$470,000
Larkspur Lane (El Paseo to Shadow Mountain Drive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace RRFB system	\$240,000
El Paseo (San Pablo Avenue to Larkspur Lane)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace RRFB system	\$130,000
El Paseo (Larkspur Lane to San Luis Rey Avenue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace RRFB system	\$130,000
	Total:	\$1,440,000

On March 27, 2024, staff met with the ATP Subcommittee to review and clarify City Council comments coming from the study session. In addition, the City Council requested the ATP Subcommittee to review more decorative crosswalk design options.

On October 2, 2024, staff met with the ATP Subcommittee to discuss design options. The ATP Subcommittee did not reach a decision and requested additional design alternatives for further consideration. As construction planning advances, the ATP Subcommittee has requested revisiting the material options based on knowledge gained during the review process.

Staff is requesting the City Council's guidance on the preferred type of crosswalk materials. The overall project, encompassing additional planned enhancements along El Paseo, is anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2025. Based on the recommendation, staff would discuss with the ATP Subcommittee to identify the materials, which would also guide decisions for any future raised crosswalks in the area.

Material Types and Costs

The ATP Subcommittee considered two material options for the raised crosswalks along El Paseo. Each material presents advantages and challenges affecting maintenance and alignment with the overall design vision for El Paseo.

Asphalt with Decorative Pattern

This option features asphalt enhanced with a decorative pattern, offering benefits such as reduced maintenance at the junctions of asphalt and concrete and ease of construction. Its durability makes it a cost-effective and practical choice in the short term, while the flexibility to update or redesign the decorative pattern provides adaptability for future enhancements. However, each crosswalk is recommended to be repainted at least every five years based on best practices and its pavement maintenance schedule. In addition, each crosswalk should undergo power washing at least annually.

Pavers

This option provides a high-quality appearance and long-term durability, making it a visually appealing option for enhancing El Paseo's distinctive character. While pavers may have slightly higher upfront costs depending on the number of colors and pattern complexity, their installation on a mortar bed reduces maintenance needs related to wear and settling. Potential challenges include transitions between pavers and adjacent asphalt surfaces, where material differences could result in unevenness and additional maintenance requirements. Crosswalks using this material are typically evaluated for replacement every 20 to 30 years. In addition, each crosswalk should undergo power washing at least annually.

Lifecycle Costs

Over a 20-year period, the total costs of asphalt with a decorative pattern and pavers are comparable, with only minor differences. The primary distinction lies in the shorter lifecycle of asphalt with a decorative pattern, which necessitates resurfacing and repainting every five years,

resulting in higher maintenance expenses. In contrast, pavers have a longer lifecycle exceeding 20 years and require less intensive annual maintenance. The recurring need for asphalt resurfacing and repainting results in total lifecycle costs comparable to those of pavers.

The following chart provides a detailed comparison of lifecycle costs for asphalt with a decorative pattern and pavers over a 20-year period. It is important to note that these costs are presented in current values and do not account for potential inflation or future cost increases.

Material Type	Construction + Materials	Short-Term Maintenance	Medium-Term Maintenance	Lifecycle Cost
		Annually (16 times)	Every 5 Years (3 times)	20 Years
Asphalt w/Decorative Pattern	\$1,610,000	\$6,000 x 16	\$34,000 x 3	\$1,808,000
Pavers *	\$1,615,000	\$6,000 x 16	\$12,000 x 3	\$1,747,000

* Costs are based on a single color and subject to increase with the addition of multiple colors

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney’s Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact will depend on the materials chosen for the raised crosswalks. A total of \$1,700,000 has been allocated for this purpose in the approved Fiscal Year 2024-25 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) List under Gas Tax Account No. 2114134-4400200, Measure A Account No. 2134311-4332000, and Capital Bond Account No. 4514679-5000102. Therefore, there is no fiscal impact to the General Fund with this action.

The table below outlines the total budget and expenses for the project:

Account	Budget	Construction Estimated Cost	Balance
Gas Tax: 2114134-4400200	\$450,000		
Measure A: 2134311-4332000	\$1,000,000		
Capital Bond: 4514679-5000102	\$250,000		
Budget Total	\$1,700,000		
Construction Costs – Options			
Option A: Asphalt with Decorative Pattern		\$1,610,000	\$90,000
Option B: Pavers		\$1,615,000	\$85,000

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City Council Staff Report and Presentation (March 14, 2024)
2. ATP Subcommittee Presentation (March 24, 2024)
3. ATP Subcommittee Staff Report and Presentation (October 2, 2024)
4. Material Samples