



**MEMORANDUM**  
**TOWN OF LOS GATOS**

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**To:** Historic Preservation Committee

**From:** Lisa Petersen, Town Engineer

**Subject:** Almond Grove Reconstruction Project

**Date:** January 28, 2014

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The Town is moving forward with the Almond Grove Reconstruction project, which is a reconstruction of ten concrete streets within the Almond Grove and Broadway Historic Districts, along with reconstruction of driveway approaches, sections of sidewalk and installation of current standard accessibility ramps. The first phase of the project has approximately \$4,000,000 in funding and is scheduled to reconstruct Broadway Avenue and Bachmann Avenue in the summer of 2015 and Tait Avenue in the summer of 2016. It is anticipated that the current funding allocated to the project would allow for construction of these three streets, but funding for the remaining seven streets has not yet been identified.

The Town has made a concerted effort to reach out to the Community regarding the Almond Grove Reconstruction Project. In addition to four meetings with the community and three community updates, Town staff also has provided three project updates to the HPC in August, September and October of 2014. Included in these updates was a layout of the current conceptual design that removed the traffic calming and minimally widened the park strip to meet the Town standard of four feet, helping to preserve trees and also minimizes future root damage to the new road improvements. The design also allowed for preserving the wider streets. Town staff had been moving the project forward as a concrete reconstruction project as was originally envisioned. Town historic codes for the Almond Grove and Broadway districts (#2165 and #2166) do not preclude the use of other paving materials, but do state if something other than concrete is used, the alternative should be reviewed by the HPC.

During the community engagement, a number of residents expressed a desire for asphalt as an alternative to concrete for paving the Almond Grove streets under consideration for reconstruction. In line with this request, Town staff conducted a third community meeting on October 28 and a fourth (repeat) community meeting on November 13, 2014 to discuss the project and review the pros and cons of both asphalt and concrete pavement materials. The PowerPoint presentation from these latest meetings and a report by Nichols Consulting on pavement options and costs are also available on the Almond Grove website for review at: [www.losgatosca.gov/AlmondGroveProject](http://www.losgatosca.gov/AlmondGroveProject)

For informational purposes, Town staff mailed a ballot to all property owners whose property fronted a street that is scheduled for reconstruction, either in the first phase or future phases of the project, in order to ascertain the neighborhood's preference regarding paving surface material. These streets included all or portions of Broadway, Tait, Bachman, Almendra, Wilder, Bean, Nicholson, Massol, Glen Ridge and Bayview. The results of this informational ballot showed that 60% of residents favored concrete pavement and 40% of residents favored asphalt pavement.

A brief summary of the pros and cons of concrete and asphalt are listed below:

### Concrete

- Pros: Longest lasting 40+ years, little future maintenance, cooler pavement.
- Cons: Higher initial cost, 5 to 7 days curing period, difficult to match color when replaced, more unforeseen costs when removing existing concrete pavement and excavating into subgrade, longer overall construction time frame.

### Asphalt

- Pros: Conventional pavement in California, can be rehabilitated, lower initial cost.
- Cons: Lasts 20 years before major rehabilitation is needed, requires routine maintenance at an early age (7 years), dark surface will be hotter, more unforeseen costs when removing concrete and excavating into subgrade (for asphalt reconstruction only not overlay), age related cracking comes back sooner.

Staff will provide this information to Council at the March 3, 2015 Town Council meeting and provide an option to Council for the project to be bid for both concrete and asphalt pavement in order to verify the cost differential. Staff will also move forward with preserving the historic stamped sections of concrete that currently exist in the neighborhood within the project design, if these sections of concrete are scheduled for removal. There has been a request from the family of the original contractor to allow family members to retain one removed stamped concrete section as a keepsake.

Staff welcomes input from the Historic Preservation Committee on this project, especially in the area of where and/or if it may make sense to pursue the lower cost option in order to allow for restoration of more streets in comparison with retaining concrete as a historic element of the neighborhoods.