

# INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## January 30, 2025



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**To:** City Council  
**From:** Public Works Department  
**Prepared by:** Ken Seumalo, Public Works Director  
**Subject:** **Review Design Recommendations for the Completion of Safer Streets Along Fairway and Eldorado Drive (Phase I)**

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Council **EVALUATES** and **ADOPTS** the recommended improvements for Fairway Drive and Eldorado Drive recommended by the Planning Commission; and

**FINDS** the project to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17

### BACKGROUND:

Both Fairway and Eldorado Drive are streets that have been identified to need re-paving as part of the City's commitment to maintaining quality streets in the community. Prior to re-paving these streets, the Council determined it to be fiscally responsible to first examine infrastructure improvements for Safer Streets prior to re-paving Fairway and Eldorado Drive.

Over the past few years, the City Council has prioritized the completion of Safer Streets as a City Council Goal at its Annual Strategic Planning Sessions and in the Capital Improvement Projects list approved in the City Annual Budget. This project entails the installation of various infrastructure improvements designed to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, golf carts, and motor vehicles along Eldorado Drive and Fairway Drive (Phase I) and Cook Street and Rancho Palomeras (Phase II). The project is also designed to reduce vehicle speeds along these streets and deter vehicle traffic from diverting from Highway 111 into the residential neighborhoods. Although the outreach received comments supporting the status quo, the recommended improvements resulting from the Safer Streets process is a response to resident concerns about safety for residents and other users of specific corridors of the community and the desire to provide areas for residents to safely walk in the community for health and recreation, and for access to local shopping.

In May of 2023, the Council advanced both Phase I and Phase II of Safer Streets, which are two of the several projects approved in the City's \$43.4 million dollar Capital

Improvement Program. The City branded our project Safer Streets to avoid confusion with the terminology commonly found in State and federal projects for Complete Streets projects.

Beginning in October of 2024, Staff held two public engagement meetings conducted by the Planning Commission to address safety concerns expressed by residents along Fairway Drive and Eldorado Drive. Two meetings were held to receive information and to evaluate proposed improvements along each roadway. Based on feedback from these meetings and online comments, there is community support for pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart safety improvements along Fairway Drive and Eldorado Drive. There is also a desire to reduce vehicle speeds and volumes on both streets. A summary of the second community meeting survey results is attached (Attachment No. 3).

The culmination of the public engagement process for Phase I was at the December 12<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting where staff presented proposed infrastructure improvements to both Fairway Drive and Eldorado Drive based upon the community engagement process. The Planning Commission evaluated additional community feedback, reviewed and expanded on the proposed mitigation improvements, made a finding of CEQA exemption for the options described in the City-Wide Traffic Safety Study, and made recommendations to the City Council. Below is a summary of the proposed infrastructure improvements and Planning Commission recommendations to the City Council for its consideration.

#### Fairway Drive (Exhibit 1):

**Pedestrian safety:** The Planning Commission recommended an eight-foot-wide meandering sidewalk be installed on the south side of Fairway Drive extending from Eldorado Drive to Cook Street. In addition to the sidewalk, landscaping is to be added to soften the sidewalk's appearance along the curb and to beautify the neighborhood. The Planning Commission requested the Council examine alternatives to concrete for the sidewalk. In addition, the exhibits show modified "bulb-outs" at the crosswalk locations to avoid intrusion into resident front/side yards.

Exhibit 1 highlights a meandering sidewalk and landscaping along Fairway Drive. The City has an average of 10 feet of right-of-way available to construct the sidewalk and landscaping along Fairway Drive. Additional right-of-way is desired to provide the meandering sidewalk and a greater level of enhanced landscaping throughout the entirety of the street. This is subject to approval by the Eldorado Country Club and the Vintage Club. Both communities have expressed a willingness to support the City, subject to design review.

**Bicycle/golf cart safety:** The Planning Commission recommended an eight-foot wide painted, joint-use bicycle/golf cart lane installed on the north and south side of Fairway Drive. A parking lane on the north side of Fairway Drive is to remain.

**Traffic mitigation:** The Planning Commission recommended stripping Fairway Drive with 10-foot travel lanes. It was also recommended to install "Stop" signs at the intersections along Fairway Drive where warranted. Staff has initiated studies called "Stop Warrant

Studies” to evaluate and legally justify installing new stop signs, consistent with standards adopted by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans).

#### Eldorado Drive (Exhibit 2):

The Planning Commission recommended the City Council examine multiple pedestrian safety options for Eldorado Drive.

#### Sidewalk Options:

The Planning Commission did not recommend to the City Council a sidewalk adjacent to the curb on the east and west side of Eldorado Drive. Residents adjacent to Eldorado Drive expressed concern about privacy and security having a sidewalk behind their properties. Reducing Eldorado Drive from two lanes to one lane in each direction is recommended to provide sufficient space to accommodate the sidewalk and bike/golf cart facilities and create a larger buffer between pedestrians and adjacent homes.

As an alternative, the Planning Commission recommended the City Council evaluate widening the Eldorado Drive median to facilitate a meandering sidewalk down the middle of Eldorado Drive. For clarity, the median does not serve the entire length of Eldorado Drive. Sidewalks will still be needed on a portion of the northern and southern sections of the roadway.

Bicycle/golf cart safety: The Planning Commission recommended an eight-foot wide joint-use bicycle/golf cart lane installed on the east and west side of Eldorado Drive.

Traffic mitigation: The Planning Commission is recommending to stripe Eldorado Drive with 11-foot travel lanes and providing a painted buffer between vehicles and bicyclists/golf carts. It was also recommended to perform the Stop Warrant study at the intersection of Eldorado Drive and Osage Trail for a potential installation of all-way stop control.

**City Council Strategic Goal:** This Safer Streets project is consistent with the City Council Strategic Goal to increase pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle safety along these corridors. This effort focuses on multi-modal transportation safety.

#### **OPTIONS:**

The City Council has the following options available:

1. Provide staff direction on various design components to be incorporated into the final design for both Fairway and Eldorado Drive, and instruct staff to move forward with the designs of both Fairway and Eldorado Drive;
2. Provide staff direction on design components to be incorporated into the final design for both Fairway and Eldorado Drive and instruct staff to bring back those concepts for further discussion, before moving forward with the designs of both Fairway and Eldorado Drive;

3. Not move forward with the project; or
4. Provide alternative direction.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impact depends on the Council direction and incorporation of the various design elements presented for the streets. The City's Capital Improvement Budget includes \$4.5 million in funding for Phase I & II. This includes \$1.6 million in grant funding that has been secured for Phase I. Once the specific improvements are identified and incorporated into the final design, staff will report back to the Council on the Engineer's Cost Estimate. Staff will continue to seek additional grants and other funding for both Phase I and II of Safer Streets, as long as both projects remain on the City's Capital Improvement Project list.

It is important to note that grant funding for this project that has been secured is by reimbursement. If the Council decides not to move forward, the City will notify the grantor that the project is not moving forward so those funds can be allocated to another agency. There is no penalty to the City for not accepting these grant funds.

In addition, if the project does not move forward, re-pavement projects for both Fairway and Eldorado will be added to the upcoming budget discussion in May 2025.

### **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):**

This project has been assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State and local CEQA Guidelines, and the environmental regulations of the City. The City acting as Lead Agency, has determined the Safer Streets Phase I project qualifies as being Categorical Exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080.17.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Fairway Drive Exhibit
2. Eldorado Drive Exhibit
3. Community Survey Results