



Clay Street Bridge Replacement Project

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The project is located in downtown Placerville on Clay Street between US Highway 50 and Main Street and Cedar Ravine Road. The proposed project will replace the existing one-lane bridge on Clay Street over Hangtown Creek with a two-lane bridge with sidewalks and bike lanes. The project will also realign Clay Street between US Highway 50 and Main Street, to intersect Main Street at a four-way stop or sign control at Cedar Ravine Road. There are questions about the project being circulated within the community, and the City of Placerville would like to take this opportunity to respond to those questions.

Will the project increase traffic on Clay Street?

Answer: No. The existing volume (number of vehicles per day) of traffic on Clay Street will still be the same traffic on Clay Street once the bridge is replaced. However, the project will improve traffic circulation (traffic movement in the area) at the intersections of Main Street, Cedar Ravine Road, and Clay Street consistent with the City's General Plan Policies. **This is not a capacity increasing project; this is a bridge replacement project.** Per recent traffic counts and the project traffic analysis, Clay Street currently carries a traffic volume of approximately 1,200 vehicles per day with a peak hour volume of approximately 102 vehicles. **Per the table below, traffic counts since 2006 have actually shown a decline in traffic on Clay Street.**

Clay Street Realignment and Bridge Replacement Project

Traffic Count History Summary Table

Street	Direction	2006 Weekday PM Peak Hour	2014 Weekday PM Peak Hour	2018 Weekday PM Peak Hour	2018 Saturday PM Peak Hour
Main Street - West of Clay Street	Eastbound	616	530	512	403
	Westbound	605	496	486	393
Cedar Ravine Road - South of Main Street	Northbound	528	374	404	254
	Southbound	380	342	366	259
Main Street - East of Cedar Ravine Rd	Eastbound	404	432	427	364
	Westbound	493	392	411	640 *
Clay Street - North of Highway 50 Undercrossing	Northbound	86	77	61	45
	Southbound	47	44	41	38

* Note - this peak hour occurred on a Sunday afternoon at 12:45 pm after a snow storm.

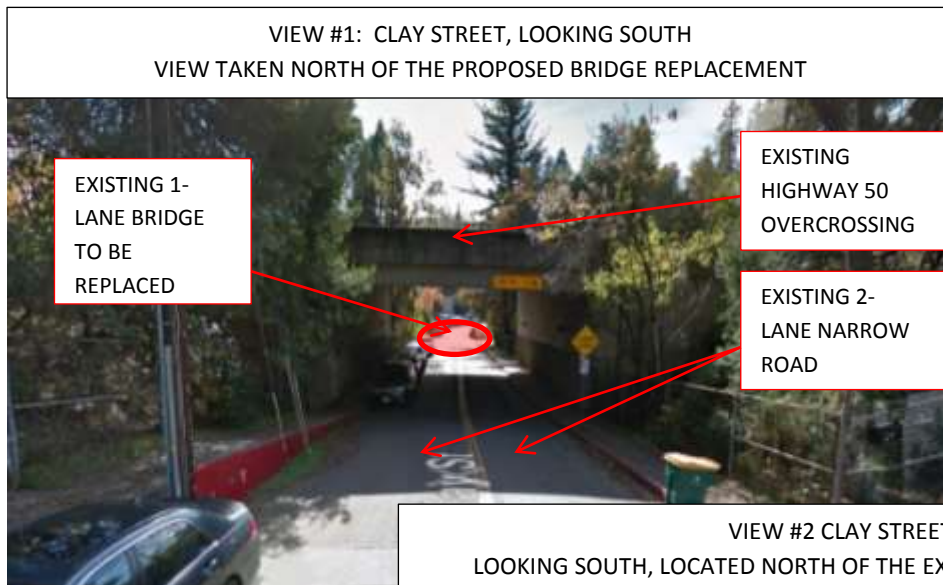
The project traffic report studied existing traffic volume and circulation along with anticipated growth in the area, consistent with the General Plan Policies. In 2016 to 2017, Placerville has experienced a population growth rate of 0.6% compared to a reported growth rate of Rocklin at 4.5% in 2017 or Rancho Cordova at 2.2%. (Source: California Department of Finance, Tables of January 2017 City Population Ranked by Size, Numeric, and Percent Change: <http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-1>) Any increase in traffic volume on Clay Street is a direct result of City and County growth, not because the bridge was replaced.

Will the project create a major artery and easy “cut-through” route to Highway 50?

Answer: **No. Clay Street is currently classified as a local road, and this classification will not change with the bridge replacement or realignment.** Clay Street *already* intersects with Main Street and the realignment will shift the intersection less than 150-feet to the east. Per the detailed traffic analysis, travel patterns between Cedar Ravine Road and Highway 50 are not expected to change due to the realignment of Clay Street. Any “cut-through” traffic behavior that currently exists (and there is some) will likely still exist once the bridge is replaced because that is related to driver habit. Narrow roads provoke a psychological sense of enclosure to the driver and that sense discourages speeding. (Source: Effective Application of Traffic Calming Techniques, Caltrans Division of Research and Innovation: www.dot.ca.gov/newtech/researchreports/preliminary_investigations/docs/traffic_calming_preliminary_investigation_9-28-11.pdf) This narrowing effect is why the use of bulb-outs (like Main Street), center island narrowing, and curb extensions are used as effective traffic calming measures throughout the nation. Given the total length of Clay Street, the presence of multiple stop signs, and the existing narrow roadway, the typical driver psychological reflex is to slow-down, making Clay Street an undesirable cut through route to Highway 50.



Please see views on the next page of existing Clay Street.



As it is shown in the views and photos, Clay Street will remain a narrow 2-lane local roadway primarily serving access to residential areas north of Highway 50.

Any current “cut-through” traffic received on Clay Street from Highway 50 detour (weekend) traffic is a result of the lack of capacity of Highway 50 and driver impatience. The City is working with Caltrans to begin public outreach for a community supported viable solution to the existing congestion on Highway 50 that impacts City streets. **Any existing Highway 50 detour traffic will not be reduced or eliminated until a solution for Highway 50 is built and operational.**

Will this project make it unsafe for bicycles and pedestrians because of the increased traffic at the new four-way intersection?

Answer: No. This project will not be increasing traffic at the intersection, but will bring **substantial improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access in the area, making it a safer space for the community!** The project will be providing dedicated space and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists at a stop-controlled intersection where none currently exist. In

addition, the access to the Bike Trail from Main Street will be significantly improved. Please see the photos below.

EXISTING CEDAR RAVINE/MAIN INTERSECTION – NO PED/BIKE FACILITIES AT STOP CONTROL MEASURES



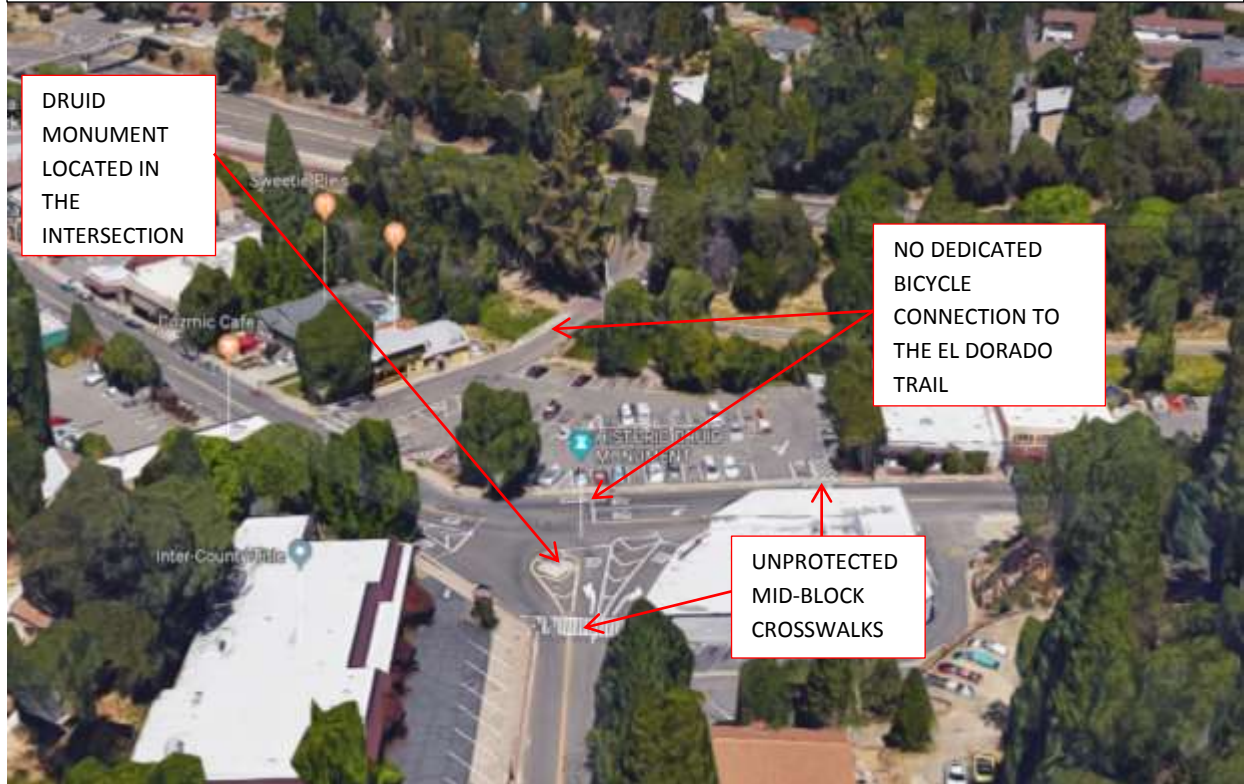
EXISTING CLAY STREET/MAIN INTERSECTION – NO BIKE FACILITIES



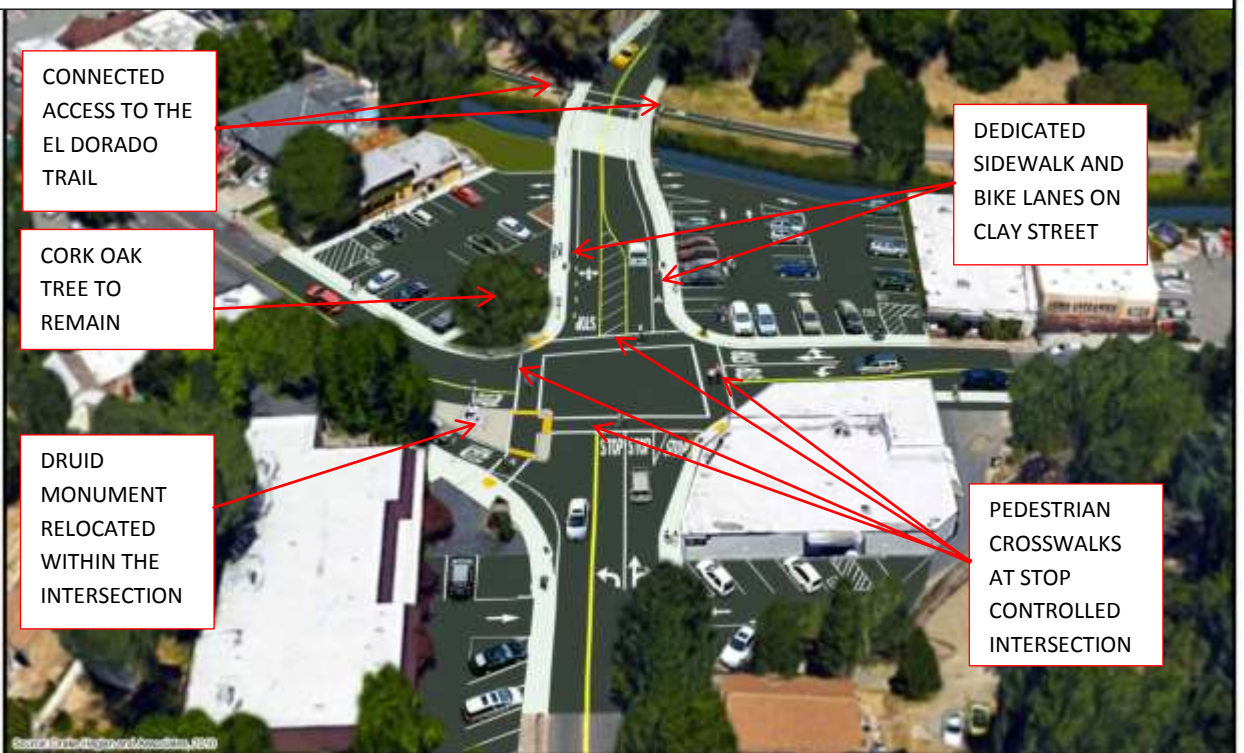
EXISTING
SIDEWALK, ONE
SIDE ONLY

The project proposes to add crosswalks at the stop controlled intersection of Clay/Main/Cedar Ravine, new sidewalks on both sides of Clay Street, and dedicated bike lanes built to today's safety standards on Clay Street up to the connection at the El Dorado Trail. Although not shown in these renderings, the City will also consider the use of decorative crosswalks, similar to lower Main Street, within the project if the community desires it. Please see the photo below provided in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (circulated 3/2/18, closing public comment period on 4/18/18).

EXISTING CEDAR RAVINE ROAD AND MAIN STREET INTERSECTION

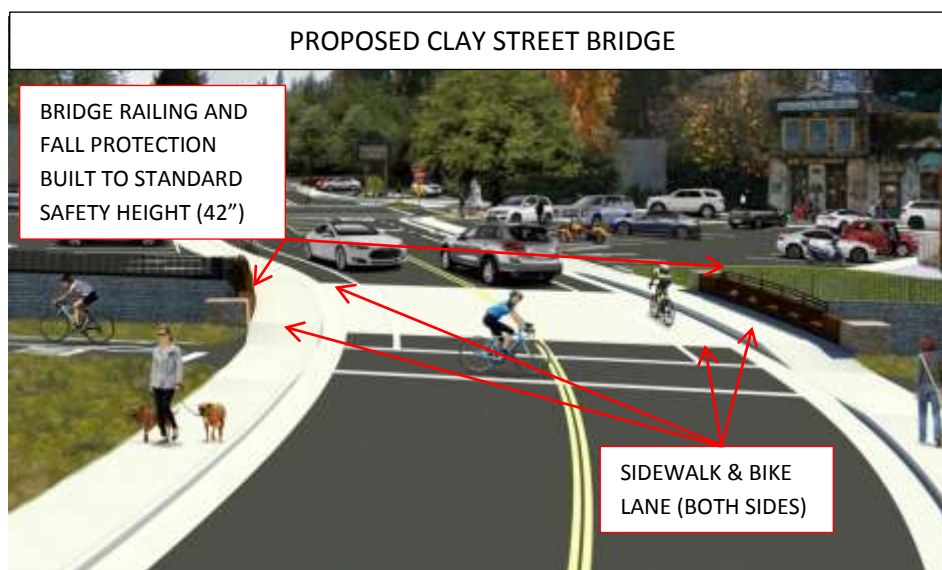
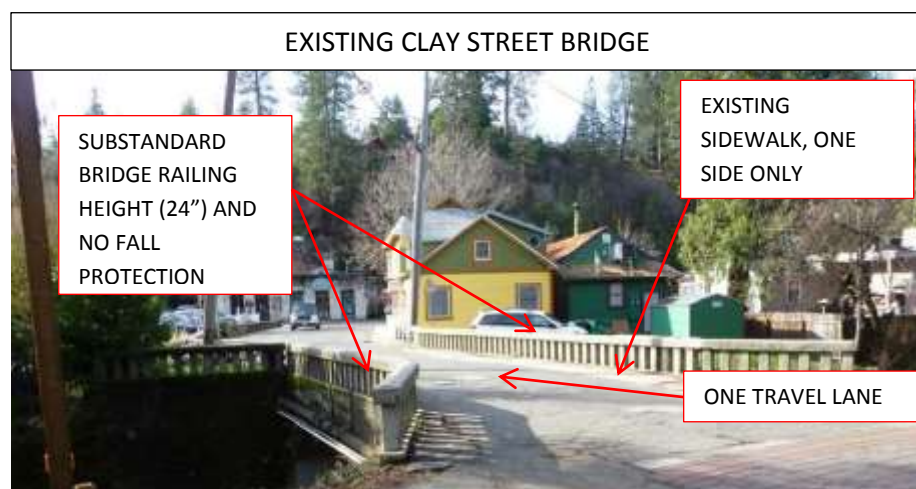


PROPOSED CEDAR RAVINE ROAD AND MAIN STREET INTERSECTION



The new crosswalks at the proposed Main Street/Clay Street/Cedar Ravine intersection will be properly marked and the project will be constructing new ADA-compliant curb ramps. Currently there are 3 mid-block unprotected crosswalks in the project vicinity. Those unprotected crosswalks would be relocated to the intersection for safety reasons as pedestrian/vehicle accidents have occurred in those locations. Please see **Attachment A: Collision Maps**.

Additionally, the new bridge would include concrete barrier railings and raised sidewalks to allow pedestrians to safely cross the bridge, out of the travel lanes. Currently, pedestrians are often forced to walk in the roadway, which poses a serious public health and safety risk in the event of pedestrian/bicyclist conflicts (accidents) with vehicles. The project is consistent with the City's goals to make the downtown Placerville area a more walkable, accessible, and safe community for pedestrians and bicyclists. The City has various planning documents citing the necessity for this project dating back to 1978 and remains a top priority due to public health and safety in project vicinity. Please see photos below of existing and proposed conditions.



Can the City use this project funding on more important street improvement projects or maintenance of existing roads?

Answer: No. The Clay Street project is being funded primarily through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Bridge Program. **The funds for the Clay Street Project are project specific and cannot be used on repairing any other street in the City.** If the Clay Street Bridge is not replaced, the funds will be returned to the Highway Bridge Program and will be re-programmed on another project anywhere in the State (i.e. Bay Area, Los Angeles, etc.). The City will not retain any of those funds if they are not used on this specific project.

Is the existing Clay Street Bridge Historical?

Answer: No. The existing Clay Street Bridge, designed in 1928 and built in the 1940's, replaced an earlier wooden crossing at the same location. No information on the architect or contractor could be located in the City records or at local historical archives. While other concrete bridges from this period have been noted for their historical significance, such as the Orangevale Bridge and the Rainbow Bridge, both located in Folsom, the Clay Street Bridge is a simple arch bridge and lacks significant architectural elements, lacks association with any significant event, movement, era (built post gold rush era and post railroad era) or person noted in both state or local history. While it does represent a type of bridge construction that was a style commonly found in the Motherlode and elsewhere in the early twentieth century. The project Historical Resources Evaluation Report identified that this bridge does not rise to the level of being considered individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under all criteria listed (Criterion A through D). Additionally, the bridge has some minor damage to the concrete on the northern approach, including the loss of a section of wall cap and also the addition of the concrete-filled sandbags shoring up the abutment against erosion in the streambed. **In summary, lacking significance under any criteria and exhibiting compromised integrity, the Clay Street Bridge is recommended as not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).**

Is this project tied to the next phase of the Cottonwood project?

Answer: No. As noted above, the City has planning documents citing the necessity for this project dated as far back as 1978. These planning documents gave the supporting reason for conditioning the Cottonwood project to pay towards the City's Traffic Impact Mitigation program specifically for the Clay Street Bridge Replacement project. **Thus, this project was already planned and identified as necessary prior to development of Cottonwood. This project is a bridge replacement project not driven by any phase of development.**

Will the Druid Monument be relocated?

Answer: Possibly. The Draft EIR presents several project alternatives, with the preferred alternative including replacement of the bridge, realignment of Clay Street, and relocation of the Druid Monument within the intersection. In this alternative, the monument would be relocated approximately 45-feet to the west and would be situated on a pedestrian refuge island between the through lane and right turn lane on the eastbound leg of Main Street at the intersection. **The potential new location of the monument would still be in the intersection and would allow the monument to be accessed by pedestrians safely where they can stand in the island and read the plaque on the monument without danger of being hit by a vehicle.** The pedestrian refuge island will also protect the monument from being hit by turning vehicles. In its current location, the monument has already been hit and damaged several times by vehicles. The new location will preserve the monument's historic intent as traffic will continue to circulate around the monument, and it will remain in the same line of sight from Main Street. **The United Ancient Order of the Druids has provided their support of the relocation. It is also important to note that none of the proposed alternatives remove the Druid Monument from the intersection. Please see Attachment B: Project Layout.**

What has the City done to keep the citizens informed of long range planning?

Answer: The City cannot and will not approve planning documents without the solicitation of public input in the form of public meetings. These meetings often come in the form of publicly noticed Planning Commission and City Council meetings. Planning documents were reviewed and heard at both of these meeting forums (Planning and Council meetings) and took place over several years of meetings and public notices. The agendas for these meetings are also publicly posted. Why? Because the City wants community involvement, input, and welcomes the opportunity for information sharing.

Additionally, the City goes through great lengths to include the public and inform them of any developments, often highlighting them in Planning Commission and City Council meetings as well. The City has hosted many public meetings for this project, starting with CIP creation through Council approval in 2006 and the first public workshop taking place on November 29, 2007. Additional meetings took place in the form of City Council meetings in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014 and a Planning Commission Meeting in October of 2010. More recent public meetings include City Council meetings in December 2015, June and October 2016, and October 2017. Additionally, project focused public meetings were also held on January 6, 2016 and March 2, 2016. The March 2, 2016 meeting was held onsite, with the proposed improvements marked with temporary spray paint in the existing lot to allow those attending to see the project layout. **This represents a total of 13 public meetings the City has sponsored on this project alone.** The City allowed for public comment, and posted an informational handout with answers to the questions that were raised at the public meetings. Additionally, the City released the Draft EIR on March 2, 2018 and is requesting written public comments on that document with the review period closing on April 18, 2018.

What is the best way for me to be informed and provide my input on the project:

Through April 18, 2018, please review the Environmental Impact Report and provide **WRITTEN** comments to the City. In addition, you can provide contact information to the City requesting to receive information on this project when public meetings are held. Finally, watch the City's Website or become a friend on our Facebook Page. Regular updates will be posted on this project as well as others. Thank you for your Input and interest in making Placerville a better place for all of us to live.