

Green light from panel for transit proposal

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / July 1, 2020

A \$7.8 million plan to improve pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety in downtown Valley Springs received unanimous support Thursday from the Calaveras County Planning Commission.

The so-called Valley Springs Town Center Connectivity Plan has been in the works for several years and now goes before the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors and Calaveras Council of Governments for approval.

However, implementation of the plan is questionable.

Adoption of the plan by the county and CCOG only provides “a competitive advantage in future grant applications to fund construction of those improvements,” according to the staff report to the planning commission. “It will also help the county and CCOG prioritize capital improvement projects in the area.”

Since many of the suggestions are along State Route 12 and 26, Caltrans will have the final say.

Major improvements in the proposal call for a traffic signal at State Route 12 entrance to the Valley Oaks Shopping Center and a left turn lane off eastbound SR 12 into Castle Rock Mobile Home Park.

Collisions along that stretch of the highway were identified in excess of statewide averages and are deemed safety features, according to Project Manager Todd Tregenza.

Whether the light will have an adverse impact on traffic at the intersection of State Routes 12 and 26 will come under a more rigorous technical evaluation by Caltrans in the future, he added.

Another pedestrian safety feature under the proposed plan is the addition of a pedestrian crossing with flashing lights at the intersection of State Route 26 and Nove Way. This will become especially important with further development along the west side of the highway, Tregenza added.

A number of improvements in the vicinity of Valley Springs Elementary School were outlined and they would not need Caltrans approval, but funding could be an obstacle and necessitating the acquisition of grants.