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Community News

Caltrans to pay for retention basin at Los Lomitas School

City Council agrees to \$13.6 million deal at meeting on Wednesday



Sign in front of Atherton City Council Chambers, Nov. 29, 2016. (John Orr / Daily News)

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The town of Atherton will get one of its pricier master plan projects built with an influx of cash from Caltrans.

The town had been looking to put a storm water retention basin either in Holbook-Palmer Park or an athletic field at Los Lomitas School.

Then along came Caltrans, which has its own legally required need to do something with storm water from El Camino Real and other highways. Caltrans liked the Los Lomitas School plan, and offered \$13.6 million to pay for it.

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On Wednesday, the city council voted to instruct City Manager George Rodericks to sign a cooperative implementation agreement with Caltrans to get the job done.

The first city council meetings of each month are usually study sessions only, but the city council agreed to this one action item.

Rodericks said the council knew about the deal in April, but “couldn’t get the language completed on time.” It was necessary to deal with it on Wednesday to move the project along, he said.

Construction of the retention basin will be done concurrently with a major remodeling project at the school, which is rebuilding its front building at 299 Alameda de las Pulgas.

The retention basin will have underground “sand dry wells,” explained Rodericks on Tuesday, that will filter storm water and release it into the aquifer.

While the project will not cost the town any money initially, the town will eventually be responsible for operation and maintenance, projected to cost about \$25,000 a year.

The town will also have to agree with a memorandum of understanding with the school on the project.



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John Orr John Orr edits and writes for Daily News feature pages, including arts and entertainment. He also reports on the Town of Atherton and some other communities.

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