

Cedar-Vine Connection Recommended To Council

By Sy Berg

Immediate city council action to initiate a Cedar-Vine street connection was recommended by the off-street parking commission yesterday.

Cost to a downtown assessment district was estimated at about \$45,000 per year for 30 years.

The connection, indicated on Williams and Mocine's preliminary downtown sketch plan, recently was proposed to the commission by ex-Mayor George Penniman as being economically feasible now.

Syd Williams, in his presentation to the Downtown Businessmen's association last night, termed the proposed artery essential to the fluid traffic flow necessary for a re-vitalized downtown business core.

In a report requested by the commission, Assistant City Clerk Ron Beach yesterday recommended that the project be financed by downtown property owners through formation of a downtown assessment district. It would have an assessed property valuation base of about \$4.6 million.

Beach recommended the use of serial bonds, which would be written to mature at varying intervals. The total interest cost, at an assumed rate of 5 per cent, would be about \$387,500 on an issue slightly in excess of \$500,000.

"Installment payments," includ-

ing principal and interest of about \$45,000 each year, would be made by downtown property owners, whose property presumably would gain enough in value, to more than compensate them.

The proposed extension would cut through The Sentinel, the Salinas Valley Savings building, and the former telephone company building, among others.

A preliminary cost estimate submitted to the commission yesterday indicated \$250,800 for land acquisition, \$204,150 for improvements, purchase, and \$100,000 for building demolition.

In another action, the commission resubmitted to the city council a recommendation to add parking meters to Center street from Union to Locust streets and from Church to Walnut streets.

The matter had been returned to the commission for a more complete report of its findings. Chairman J. T. Nittler expressed the plight of property owners in the Union-Locust block of Center street. "Traffic should be fluid there," he stated, noting that business buildings in the area might be suffering from blockade by all-day parkers.

Assistant Fire Chief Ted McEwen took a firm stand against unrestricted parking in the Walnut-Church block. "We have an awful problem and sometimes we can't get out," he stated. "The block below us has meters, the block above us has meters. Why can't we?" he asked the commission.

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