



Legislation Text

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TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Bruce Moe, City Manager

FROM:

Anne McIntosh, Community Development Director
Erik Zandvliet, T.E., City Traffic Engineer

SUBJECT:

Citywide Pedestrian Crossing Enhancement Evaluation (Community Development Director McIntosh).

DISCUSS AND PROVIDE DIRECTION

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council discuss and provide direction on the Citywide Crosswalk Enhancement Evaluation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council has made pedestrian safety and crossing enhancements a high priority in its overall Work Plan. During the May 3, 2017 City Council retreat, a Plan Zero Pedestrian Improvement Plan was proposed. Plan Zero would review existing policy documents, such as the Downtown Specific Plan and Mobility Plan, and conduct a citywide pedestrian safety study to determine which locations should be prioritized to reduce the potential for collisions.

At the May 30, 2017, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)/Budget workshop, the City Council gave staff direction to explore various crosswalk enhancement opportunities that could be incorporated into planned CIP projects.

At the January 16, 2018 City Council meeting, several Councilmembers spoke on the need to improve the condition of our existing crosswalks and enhance many others with flashing beacons, in-roadway warning lights and special signal timing. The City Council also emphasized the need to come up with a crosswalk policy and funding, and complete high priority locations immediately.

This staff report is intended to provide an overall summary of the City's pedestrian related policies, as well as an update of current and planned pedestrian improvements throughout the City. Finally, this report will offer a method to prioritize pedestrian safety measures going forward.

DISCUSSION:

Pedestrian safety and crossings are identified in several policy-level documents previously approved by the City Council or currently being studied by the City, including the City's overall Work Plan. Some of the primary guiding documents and the related goals or policies (Attachment 1) are summarized below:

City General Plan Circulation Element: The Infrastructure Element of the General Plan was adopted in 2003. While it was primarily a vehicle-oriented plan, some of the pedestrian-related goals and policies emphasize multi-modal transportation needs and pedestrian safety.

Downtown Specific Plan: The Downtown Specific Plan was approved by City Council on February 21, 2017. The Plan contains many goals and concepts for improved pedestrian circulation and non-motorized use of the public realm as highlighted in Chapters 5 and 7.

Mobility Plan: The Draft Mobility Plan evaluates the existing condition of the City's various transportation modes and proposes a vision of "Complete Streets," which seek to provide a balanced transportation network for all user needs, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists and those with special needs. There are a number of goals and policies that emphasize the pursuit of projects and programs that will improve pedestrian conditions, support Safe Routes to School, develop pedestrian-oriented design and enhance walkstreets and crossings to encourage walking.

The Mobility Plan includes an appendix that proposes a "Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy" (Attachment 2). This draft document contains a toolbox of potential crossing treatments that would be appropriate for various conditions, such as uncontrolled, stop-controlled, and signal-controlled crossings.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): The CIP includes a project to conduct a Veterans Parkway Pedestrian Access Master Plan. This Plan would identify appropriate connections between the Veterans Parkway path and the adjacent neighborhoods and propose consistent crossing protection measures on Valley Drive and Ardmere Avenue. This plan has not been initiated yet.

It should also be noted that Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) and School Area Safety studies include many measures that enhance crossing safety, including stop signs, new crosswalks, pedestrian warning signs, etc.

Existing Pedestrian Conditions

The City is comprised of several distinct neighborhoods, some of which have traditional sidewalks and others where sidewalks are not provided or are incomplete. For example, in the Tree Section, there are wide public rights-of-way, but the areas alongside the vehicle lanes are improved with a variety of landscaping, private encroachments and parking pads. Many streets in El Porto and along the beach are very narrow, and pedestrians have to share the public right-of-way with vehicles. The Sand Section features many walkstreets, which are public walkways for the exclusive use of pedestrians. Because of this varied fabric of street types, a single pedestrian crossing style or solution will not apply everywhere.

The City does have a standard crosswalk design standard, which is called the Continental, or "ladder" style crosswalk. This type of crosswalk has been proven to have the highest visibility and driver awareness.

In order to develop a crossing policy and prioritize where crossing improvements should be made, it is important to know what improvements have already been completed, and where crossing projects are currently planned.

Recently Completed Crossing Improvements

In the last three years, the City has completed a number of enhanced crossings across the City (Attachment 3). These locations include the following:

- Pier Flashing Beacons
- Manhattan Beach Bl. at Highland Ave. - leading pedestrian signal phase (when pedestrian crossing signals precede the green light to increase visibility)
- Manhattan Beach Bl. at Manhattan Ave. - leading pedestrian signal phase
- Ardmore Ave. at Flournoy Rd. - crossing signs and speed awareness sign
- Highland Ave. at 38th St. - flashing beacons and in-pavement lights
- Manhattan Beach Bl. from Sepulveda Blvd. to Aviation Blvd. - high-visibility crosswalks
- Manhattan Beach Bl. at Target driveway - new pedestrian signalized crosswalk
- Manhattan Ave. from 15th Street to Rosecrans Ave. - high visibility crosswalks and signs
- Aviation Blvd. at Marine Ave. - 2 high-visibility crosswalks
- Ocean Drive at 26th St. - new crosswalk
- Oak Ave. at Valley Dr. - 2 new crosswalks
- Redondo Ave. at 10th St. - 4 new crosswalks
- Curtis Ave. at Rowell Ave. - new crosswalk

Planned Crossing Improvements

The City has been awarded several federal and state grants to construct a variety of crossing enhancements throughout the City, such as flashing beacons, flashing stop signs, corner curb bulb-outs, high visibility crosswalks, and countdown pedestrian signals (Attachment 4). The grants received by the City include the following:

- Federal Cycle 3 Safe Routes to School (SRTS)
- State Cycle 10 Safe Routes to School (SR2S)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) - 22 Locations

In addition, the City has several planned CIP and Neighborhood Traffic Management Program projects that will incorporate enhanced crossing treatments and pedestrian access (Attachment 5). They will be at the following locations throughout the City:

- Manhattan Ave at 34th St.-36th St. - flashing beacons and in-pavement lights
- Manhattan Ave. from 1st St. to 8th St.- high visibility crosswalks and signs at walkstreets
- Highland Ave. from Homer St to 8th St.- high visibility crosswalks and signs at walkstreets
- Parkview Ave Sidewalk and Crosswalks
- Marine Avenue from Sepulveda Blvd. to Aviation Blvd. - high visibility crosswalks and ramps
- Marine Ave. from Grandview Ave. to 25th St - new edgeline for pedestrian path
- Marine Ave. at Flournoy Rd. and Blanche Rd. - new crosswalk and signs

- 21st St., Bell Ave, Flourney Rd. and 25th St. at Valley Drive - new crosswalks
- Laurel Ave. at 14th St. - new crosswalk

Proposed Pedestrian Enhancements Policy

As part of the Mobility Plan Update, a guide has been created to determine the appropriate crossing treatments, called the Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy. The selection criteria include the type of crossing control, traffic volume, speeds, number of lanes, and geometrics. This Policy is based on the best practices throughout the nation, which have been shown to reduce collisions.

The proposed Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy does not, however, consider other factors, such as proximity to schools, collision history, pedestrian path continuity, visibility of pedestrians and availability of outside funding. These factors can be used to help prioritize which locations should be funded and completed first. The City has already established an evaluation criteria to prioritize Non-Motorized Transportation funding that can be used as a basis for prioritizing pedestrian crossing locations (Attachment 6).

Funding

In FY 2012-13, the City Council appropriated funds in the CIP towards Non-Motorized Transportation projects, which are dedicated to constructing various pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. \$100,000 per year is reserved in this fund to be used for the City Council's highest priority projects that are not included in other projects or funded through regional, state or federal funds. Some of the recently completed and planned crossing improvements mentioned in this report have been funded this way.

Other funding sources include competitive federal, state and regional grants, as well as regional and sub-regional discretionary funds, including Measure R, SB-1, Gas Tax, Measure M, Active Transportation Plan (ATP), etc.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST:

The public has been informed of this agenda item through direct email invitation to those who have expressed prior interest in this subject and through general noticing via public bulletin boards, the City's website, and social media.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The City has reviewed the proposed project for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the project qualifies for a Class 1 categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15301 Existing Facilities of the State CEQA Guidelines since any crosswalk improvements would be a considered a minor alteration to an existing facility. Thus, no further environmental review is necessary.

LEGAL REVIEW

The City Attorney has reviewed this report and determined that no additional legal analysis is necessary.

Attachments:

1. Excerpts of City Goals and Policies
2. Draft Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy

- 3. Recently Completed Crossing Improvements Map
- 4. Planned Grant-Funded Crossing Improvements Map
- 5. Planned CIP Crossing Improvements Map
- 6. Non-Motorized Project Evaluation Form