



Legislation Text

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TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Bruce Moe, City Manager

FROM:

Carrie Tai, AICP, Community Development Director
Stephanie Katsouleas, P.E., Public Works Director
Erik Zandvliet, T.E., City Traffic Engineer

SUBJECT:

Consider Approving the Parking and Public Improvements Commission's Recommendation to Incorporate Proposed Crosswalk Enhancements into New or Ongoing Projects as Part of the City's Capital Improvements Plan and Pursue Funding Opportunities (Community Development Director Tai and Public Works Director Katsouleas).

APPROVE

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council consider the Parking and Public Improvements Commission recommendation to incorporate proposed crosswalk enhancements into new or ongoing projects as part of the City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and direct staff to pursue funding opportunities as they become available.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Staff has identified 14 Phase 1 crosswalk enhancements that can be implemented for approximately \$100,000. These projects can be funded through the City's Non-Motorized Transportation project budget, which reserves \$100,000 per year for various pedestrian and bicycle-related capital projects. In addition, \$79,748 that was earmarked for the Veterans Parkway Pedestrian Access Master Plan in the CIP Fund could be re-appropriated toward design and construction costs for pedestrian improvements.

There are 24 Phase 2 crosswalk enhancements that will require additional outreach and evaluation, as well as separate engineering design and construction contracts. Some of these enhancements can be incorporated into planned capital projects, while others would be stand-alone capital projects.

Staff will bring both Phase 1 and Phase 2 pedestrian projects forward for discussion as part of the CIP review and budget adoption process.

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's goal is to eliminate traffic-related pedestrian accidents and fatalities. The City's efforts include reviewing existing policy documents such as the Downtown Specific Plan and Mobility Plan, and conducting a citywide pedestrian safety study to determine which locations should be prioritized to reduce the potential for collisions involving pedestrians.

At the May 30, 2017, CIP/budget workshop, 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 existing crossings and enhance others with flashing beacons, in-roadway warning lights, and special signal timing. The Council also emphasized the need to come up with a crosswalk policy, identify funding, and address high priority locations.

On March 20, 2018, City Council discussed the background and status of the crosswalk enhancement evaluation. The Council gave direction to continue moving forward with previously approved grant funded pedestrian improvements (detailed below), review potential crossing locations in the City, and prioritize additional locations for potential inclusion in the CIP.

On September 26, 2019, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission (Commission) discussed the attached staff report prepared by the City Traffic Engineer and heard public testimony from four residents. The minutes from this meeting are also attached. The Commission supported staff's methodology and prioritization. The Commission also suggested that pedestrian volume be considered as a ranking criterion, and that the improvements be constructed in phases so that interim low cost measures could be completed sooner.

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. Some of the primary guidance documents are summarized below, and the related goals or policies are excerpted in Exhibit 1 of the attached PPIC report.

City General Plan: The General Plan was adopted in 2003, which included an Infrastructure Element with several related chapters: Circulation, Neighborhood Traffic Intrusion, Parking, Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks. While it was a primarily 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, but repealed on September 4, 2018. However, the City Council directed staff to implement many of the Plans' goals and concepts for improved pedestrian circulation and non-motorized use of the public realm, as highlighted in Chapters 5 and 7. A figure with proposed pedestrian improvements is included as Exhibit 2 of the attached PPIC report.

Mobility Plan: The 2018 Mobility Plan, adopted on May 15, 2018, evaluated the existing condition of the City's various transportation modes, and proposed a vision of Complete Streets to provide a balanced network for all users - pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and those with special needs. The Plan has 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 walk streets and crossings to encourage walking.

The Mobility Plan includes an appendix, found in Exhibit 3 of the attached PPIC report, that proposes a “Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy.” The document contains a toolbox of potential crossing treatments that would be appropriate for various conditions, such as uncontrolled, stop-controlled, and signal-controlled crossings.

The Fiscal Year 2016-2017 adopted CIP included a project to conduct a Veterans Parkway Pedestrian Access Master Plan. This Plan would identify appropriate connections between the Veterans Parkway path and adjacent neighborhoods, as well as propose consistent crossing protection measures on Valley Drive and Ardmere Avenue. The Plan has been incorporated into this evaluation.

It should also be noted that the 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 (ROW), but the areas alongside the vehicle lanes are either unimproved or improved with 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 due to insufficient or narrow ROW. The Sand Section features many walk streets, 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 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 consistent crossing policy and prioritize where crossing improvements should be made, it is important to know what improvements have already been completed, what other infrastructure may be required (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act compliance), and where crossing projects are currently planned.

Recently Completed Crossing Improvements

In the last four years, the City has completed a large number of enhanced pedestrian crossings throughout the City as part of capital projects, neighborhood traffic calming plans or specific citizen requests. A map of these locations is included as Exhibit 4 of the attached PPIC report. The City was 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. These grant projects have recently been completed. A map of these locations is included as Exhibit 5 of the attached PPIC report.

Crossing Evaluation Methodology

As part of the Mobility Plan Update, a guide was created to help select appropriate treatments for various crossing conditions, 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 best practices used throughout the nation, which have been shown to reduce pedestrian collisions.

While the Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy helps determine the most appropriate crossing treatments for particular intersections, other factors also need to be considered when prioritizing those locations competing for limited funding and other resources. Important criteria to help rate the potential benefit to the community include the proximity to schools, collision history, pedestrian path continuity, visibility of pedestrians, and availability of outside funding. Some of these factors are included in Exhibit 6 of the attached PPIC report, the City's Non-Motorized Project Evaluation Form, which was used to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle projects to be funded by the Non-Motorized Transportation Fund of the CIP.

To evaluate all the candidate crossing locations, the City Traffic Engineer combined both guidelines, and established the following 12 criteria to compare the locations against each other:

- Existing Traffic Controls
- Existing Signs/Markings
- Number of Lanes
- Crossing Traffic Volume
- Recurring Speeding
- School Routes
- High Pedestrian Zones
- Nearby Transit Stops
- Pedestrian Collision History
- Driver-Pedestrian Visibility
- Proximity to Existing Crossings
- Accessible Path Connection

Estimated pedestrian volume was added as an additional criteria pursuant to the PPIC's recommendation. Each criterion has three point levels based on the potential for the recommended enhancements to reduce vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and achieve other best practice methodologies. Candidate locations are evaluated and ranked based on the existing conditions and the potential safety benefit that would result given that particular criteria. For example, in-roadway warning lights would have more relative benefit to pedestrians at a high traffic volume location than one with a lower volume. The point values of all 13 criteria for each candidate location are then totaled and sorted from highest to lowest overall point value.

Candidate Locations

For several years, staff has received requests from citizens and other stakeholders for crossing enhancements at various locations to be considered in future CIP projects. These requests have been included as Exhibit 7 of the attached PPIC report. To this list, the City Traffic Engineer has added locations that were identified in the 2017 Downtown Specific Plan, as well as potential connections to Veteran's Parkway across Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue. The full list of candidate crossing locations and treatments is summarized below:

1. Highland Avenue at 41st Street - relocate to 43rd Street, RRFB's, IRWLs, bulb-outs
2. Highland Avenue at 20th Street - new crosswalk, signs, pedestrian ramps and IRWLs
3. Highland Avenue at 16th Street - new crosswalk, signs, pedestrian ramps and IRWLs
4. Highland Avenue at 14th Street - high visibility signs
5. Highland Avenue at 13th Street - high visibility signs
6. Highland Avenue at 12th Street - high visibility signs
7. Highland Avenue at 11th Street - high visibility signs
8. Manhattan Avenue at 15th Street - continental crosswalks and high visibility signs
9. Manhattan Avenue at 12th Street - signs, IRWLs, ped. ramps, new crosswalk on S. leg
10. Manhattan Avenue at 11th Street - RRFB's and IRWLs
11. Manhattan Avenue at 8th Street - IRWLs
12. Ardmore Avenue at Elm Avenue - new crosswalk, signs, bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk
13. Ardmore Avenue at 30th Street - new crosswalk, signs, ped. ramps, sidewalk
14. Ardmore Avenue at 27th St - new crosswalks, ped. ramps, sidewalk connections
15. Ardmore Avenue at Flournoy Road - corner bulb-out, ped. ramps
16. Ardmore Avenue at 19th Street - flashing stop signs, corner bulb-out, ped. ramps
17. Ardmore Avenue at 18th Street - IRWLs, corner bulb-out, ped. ramps
18. Ardmore Avenue at 17th St - IRWLs, ped. ramps
19. Ardmore Avenue at 15th Street - new crosswalks (east/south), ped. ramps, sidewalks
20. Ardmore Avenue at 9th Street - new crosswalk (north), signs, corner bulb-out, ramps
21. Ardmore Avenue at 6th Street - new crosswalk, corner bulb out, ped. ramps, sidewalk
22. Valley Drive at Elm Avenue - new crosswalk, signs, bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk
23. Valley Drive at Walnut Avenue - new crosswalk, signs, bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk
24. Valley Drive at 27th Street - new crosswalks, corner bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalks
25. Valley Drive at Flournoy Road - new crosswalk, corner bulb-out, ped. ramp to path
26. Valley Drive at Blanche Road - corner bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk
27. Valley Drive at 20th Place - corner bulb-out, sidewalk to path
28. Valley Drive at 19th Street - new crosswalk, bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk, -6 spaces
29. Valley Drive at 18th Street - high visibility signs and IRWLs, ped. ramp, sidewalk
30. Valley Drive at 17th Street - high visibility signs and IRWLs, ped. ramp, sidewalk
31. Valley Drive at 10th Street - new crosswalk, curb bulb-out, ped. ramps, sidewalk, -2 pkg
32. Valley Drive at 6th Place - new crosswalk, signs, ped. ramps, sidewalk connection
33. Valley Drive at Francisco Street - ped. ramp to path, corner bulb-out
34. Pacific Avenue at 18th Street - in-roadway signs, IRWLs
35. Peck Avenue at Voorhees Avenue - IRWLs, corner bulb-out, ped. ramps
36. Ocean Drive at 27th Street - new crosswalks and high visibility signs
37. Manhattan Beach Bl. at The Strand - new crosswalks and high visibility signs
38. Manhattan Beach Bl. at Manhattan Avenue - all pedestrian signal phase (Summer)

Candidate Location Ranking

Using the crossing evaluation methodology, the City Traffic Engineer assigned point values to the various criteria and ranked the candidate locations for consideration. The specific crossing enhancements were determined using the Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements Policy and professional engineering judgement and are included in the Candidate Location Ranking attachment.

The recommended crossing enhancements are primarily one or more of the following measures:

- Signs
- Crosswalk Markings
- In-Pavement Warning Lights (IRWLs)
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)

- Bulb-Outs
- Pedestrian Ramps
- Sidewalk Connections
- Flashing Stop Signs

Some crossing measures were not considered for candidate locations because they are on lower speed and lower volume streets. However, it should be noted that construction of crosswalks typically requires the addition of new pedestrian ramps, unless ADA-compliant ramps already exist at both ends of the crosswalk. Also, national or state codes typically require dual pedestrian ramps at the corner (one for each side of the crosswalk) and minimum clearance widths around sidewalk obstructions, both of which may require bulb-outs and new sidewalk construction to achieve an ADA-compliant pedestrian path that meets slope and width requirements. These improvements help accomplish the City's Complete Street goals and policies, but can substantially increase the construction cost of the recommended enhancements.

Phasing

Pursuant to the Commission's suggestion, the specific improvements were divided into two phases where feasible. Phase I enhancements are low cost, easily constructed projects that consist primarily of signs, striping, pedestrian ramps and basic in-roadway warning light systems. These projects require minimal design, and can be completed quickly.

Phase 2 enhancement projects are typically over \$20,000 each, will require engineering design, and are more complicated to construct. Some of these Phase 2 projects can be incorporated into current capital projects to realize cost savings by designing and bidding a combined project, while other locations would need to remain as stand-alone projects because of the project's scope. (See Candidate Location Phasing attachment).

Funding

Since Fiscal Year 2012-2013, the City Council has appropriated funds in the CIP for non-motorized transportation projects, which are dedicated to constructing various pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. Each year, \$100,000 is reserved in the CIP Fund to be used on the City Council's highest priority projects that are not included in other projects or funded through regional, state or federal programs. Some of the recently completed and planned crossing improvements in the City have been funded this way. In addition, \$79,748 in remaining funds for the Veterans Parkway Pedestrian Access Master Plan may be reallocated toward other pedestrian improvements.

Other qualifying funding sources may include competitive federal, state and regional grants, and regional and sub-regional discretionary funds, (e.g, Active Transportation Plan funding).

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

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

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The City has reviewed proposed Phase 1 crossing enhancements for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the

State CEQA Guidelines the activity is not subject to CEQA. Thus, no environmental review is necessary. Compliance with CEQA for Phase 2 crossing enhancement projects will be evaluated pursuant to standard capital project procedures upon incorporation into the CIP.

LEGAL REVIEW:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

1. PPIC Staff Report and Attachments - September 26, 2019
2. PPIC Minutes - September 26, 2019
3. Candidate Location Ranking List
4. Candidate Location Phasing List