



Agenda Item #:



Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Montgomery and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager *GD*

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development *RT*
 Ana Stevenson, Management Analyst *AS*
 By: Erik Zandvliet, City Traffic Engineer *EZ*

DATE: August 5, 2008

SUBJECT: Consideration of a School Area Traffic Study Regarding Initial Recommendations for Meadows Elementary School

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council pass a motion to approve the Parking and Public Improvements Commission (PPIC) recommendation to implement the following school area traffic safety plan around the Meadows Elementary School campus for a six-month trial period (as amended in **bold**):

1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
2. Concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis.
4. Paint a white loading zone on the east side of the existing turnout along Meadows Avenue in front of the school during the **AM PM dismissal period on a trial basis.**
5. Install a new student loading zone on the east side of Meadows Avenue north of the main school entrance and modify parking restrictions on the west side of Meadows Avenue directly opposite the loading zone.
6. Pursue a capital project to construct an intersection bulb-out on the southeast corner of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street **and install a temporary bulb-out on a trial basis.**
7. Paint new school crosswalks at the stopped intersection of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street on the east and west legs.
8. Paint new school crosswalks at the intersection of Meadows Avenue and 12th Street on the west leg.
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.

12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.
13. Recommend the City Council have a dialogue with school administrators to coordinate a program to supervise school loading zones with police personnel or other volunteers.
14. Prohibit left turns into and out-of the school loading zone turnout along Meadows Avenue.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The recommended measures could be accomplished through existing Public Works programs and budgets with the exception of Measure No. 6, which would require appropriation of additional funding for a Public Works project to construct an intersection bulb-out on the southeast corner of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street. The approximate cost of design and construction of this bulb-out is \$40,000.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2002 the City Council approved the City-Wide Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). The Program established a set of procedures for evaluating neighborhoods in an effort to improve livability of neighborhood streets. In March 2003, the Council directed staff to conduct studies of traffic and parking conditions in the areas surrounding the schools in Manhattan Beach. Since each school area has unique conditions and issues, each school is being evaluated separately.

The NTMP Program has been followed in developing possible vehicular and pedestrian improvements for Meadows School. Staff met with school representatives on two occasions, the latest on May 13, 2008, to identify concerns and suggestions. In addition, staff met with area residents after the Northeast Area NTMP was initiated, asking them to provide input related to neighborhood impacts caused by the school. The information obtained was incorporated into an analysis that was presented to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission at a public meeting on July 10, 2008. At this meeting, a public workshop was held with school representatives, parents and neighbors to gather additional comments and concerns regarding the proposed plan.

DISCUSSION:

As described in the attached report the City Traffic Engineer identified concerns in the following areas:

- Need for Suggested Routes to School to show preferred pedestrian routes,
- Long vehicle queue lines at student loading areas create congestion on Meadows Avenue and Rowell Avenue,
- Need for a loading zone on Meadows Avenue on the school (east) side,
- Parking violations adjacent to school,
- Stop and speeding violations,
- Shortage of public (visitor) parking on Meadows Avenue,
- Need for better signs and markings at school and at crosswalks, and
- Need for more police enforcement.

To address these issues, the Traffic Engineer recommended the following program of 12 initial measures as identified in the recommendation. In addition, the local streets surrounding Meadows Elementary School were reviewed to determine if any were candidates for speed humps. Since recurrent speeding was not observed during school hours on any eligible local streets, this measure is not recommended at this time. It should be noted that Meadows Avenue, Rowell Avenue and 17th Street are considered primary emergency routes, and therefore would not be eligible for speed humps.

PPIC Meeting

On July 10, 2008, the PPIC discussed the findings and heard testimony from three area residents and the school Principal. The speakers described concerns related generally to speeding on Meadows Avenue and specifically about the benefits and potential impacts of adding loading zones along the Meadows Avenue school frontage as well as parked cars blocking their driveways. The Commission was supportive of all of the Traffic Engineer's recommended actions, and added two additional recommendations:

13. Recommend the City Council have a dialogue with school administrators to coordinate a program to supervise school loading zones with police personnel or other volunteers.
14. Prohibit left turns into and out-of the school loading zone turnout along Meadows Avenue.

During their discussion, the Commission felt it was important that the City become directly involved with creating an adult supervised loading zone assistance program, possibly in cooperation with the particular City Councilmember assigned to each elementary school. Depending on each school's ability and circumstances, supervision could be any combination of school staff, parent volunteers, police volunteers or extra crossing guards. The Commission voted unanimously to recommend implementation of all measures on a trial basis including the added items by a 5-0 vote.

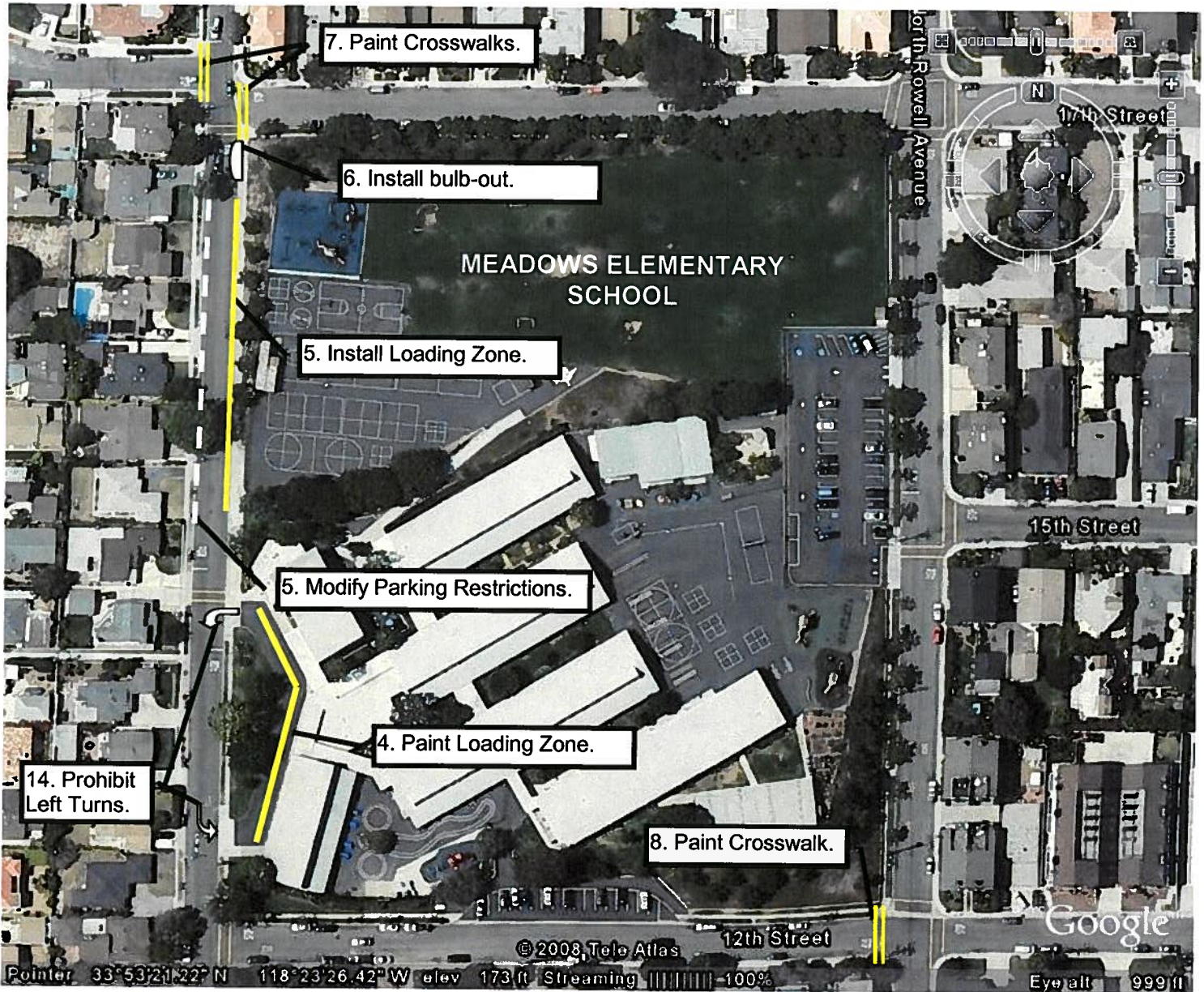
Once the initial traffic safety plan is approved, a follow-up evaluation will be conducted after implementation to determine if it has proven effective and/or needs to be modified. This evaluation will be presented to the PPIC at a future meeting, with notices sent to affected stakeholders.

Meeting notices for this meeting were sent to school and district representatives and to all properties surrounding the school campus.

- Exhibit:
- A. Sketch of Recommended Measures (Revised 7/15/07)
 - B. PPIC Report dated 7/10/08 with attachments
 - C. City Council Meeting Notice

EXHIBIT A

ROBINSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

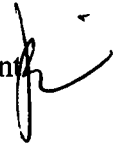
1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
2. Concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.
12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.
13. Recommend the City Council have a dialogue with school administrators to coordinate a program to supervise school loading zones with police personnel or other volunteers.

Revised 7/15/08

EXHIBIT
B

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TO: Parking and Public Improvements Commission

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
Ana Stevenson, Management Analyst 

BY: Erik Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer

DATE: July 10, 2008

SUBJECT: Meadows Elementary School Area Study
Initial Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission recommend implementation of the following initial mitigation measures:

1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
2. Concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis.
4. Paint a white loading zone on the east side of the existing turnout along Meadows Avenue in front of the school during the AM drop-off period.
5. Install a new student loading zone on the east side of Meadows Avenue north of the main school entrance and modify parking restrictions on the west side of Meadows Avenue directly opposite the loading zone.
6. Pursue a capital project to construct an intersection bulb-out on the southeast corner of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street.
7. Paint new school crosswalks at the stopped intersection of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street on the east and west legs.
8. Paint new school crosswalks at the intersection of Meadows Avenue and 12th Street on the west leg.
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.
12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.

BACKGROUND:

On November 19, 2002, the City Council approved the City-Wide Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). This Program established a set of procedures to evaluate neighborhoods in an effort to improve livability of neighborhood streets. The NTMP created a consistent way for the City to evaluate traffic requests, so that a comprehensive plan can be implemented that will minimize adverse impacts both before and after implementation of traffic calming measures. On March 18, 2003 and during the Work Plan discussions, the City Council prioritized several areas of the City for further analysis. At that meeting, the City Council identified the neighborhoods immediately around the elementary and middle schools as one of these priority areas. Since each school area has unique conditions and issues, each school is being evaluated separately.

The NTMP Program has been followed in developing possible vehicular and pedestrian improvements for each school area. This report is an evaluation of traffic circulation and pedestrian safety surrounding Meadows Elementary School. It presents a list of initial recommendations to begin addressing school and resident concerns in the neighborhood surrounding the school from a traffic engineering perspective. The recommendations made by the PPIC will be forwarded to the City Council for their approval on a trial basis.

DISCUSSION:

Meadows Elementary School is located on Meadows Avenue in the northeast quadrant of the city, just north of Manhattan Beach Boulevard. The school attendance boundary extends from Sepulveda Boulevard on the west, Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Aviation Boulevard to east as well as a segment north of 9th Street between Sepulveda Boulevard and Peck Avenue. There are approximately 500 students in Grades K through 5. School begins at 8:15am and 8:45am with two dismissals at approximately 2:05pm and 2:45pm. Kindergarten and minimum days have different schedules. There are 31 off-street parking spaces in the Rowell parking lot and 17 off-street parking spaces along 12th Street for a total of 48 staff spaces. The City shares use of the play fields after school hours and on weekends. Crossing guards are provided at crosswalks in front of the school, at Rowell Avenue/15th Street, and Manhattan Beach Boulevard/Meadows Avenue.

Circulation around Meadows School is primarily via Meadows Avenue in front of the school, 12th Street and Rowell Avenue along the rear of the school. Meadows Avenue and Rowell Avenue are generally congested at arrival and dismissal times on school days, often blocking local residential traffic. An on-campus loading zone is located in the Rowell Avenue parking lot. There are no pedestrian access gates along 17th Street to the north. Parking is prohibited along the east side of Meadows Avenue, and the other surrounding streets have street sweeping restrictions. Parking is also prohibited on the west side of Meadows Avenue between 8:30am and 2:30 pm on school days, apparently to prevent school related parking adjacent to residential homes.

The local neighborhood streets surrounding Meadows Elementary School are built in a grid network and served by local collector streets such as Meadows Avenue and Rowell Avenue. Meadows Avenue is signalized at Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Rowell Avenue is restricted to right turn access only. The streets surrounding the school are improved with curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Meadows Avenue north of 17th Street is narrower than the section in front of the

school. Some traffic calming measures have been implemented in the area in the past, including restricted turns at Rowell Avenue/Manhattan Beach Boulevard, and delayed signal phasing at Meadows Avenue/Manhattan Beach Boulevard. In addition, school circulation measures have been recently installed at the request of the school, such as No Left turn restrictions into and out of the Rowell Avenue parking lot/loading zone and red curb at certain intersections. One of the recommended traffic calming measures from the Northeast Area Traffic Management Plan is to install a student loading zone along the east side of Meadows Avenue adjacent to the school.

PUBLIC AND SCHOOL CONCERNS

City Staff met with Connie Harrington, Principal of Meadows Elementary School, and other school staff on two occasions, the latest on May 13, 2008, to listen and discuss school related traffic safety concerns. In addition, staff met with Meadows Avenue residents on June 13, 2006, to gather their concerns and suggestions. These comments have been incorporated into the evaluation. Notices of this meeting were mailed to the surrounding neighborhood, as well as to those who had previously expressed interest. The identified concerns have fallen into the following categories:

1. Need for Suggested Routes to School to show preferred pedestrian routes,
2. Long vehicle queue lines at student loading areas create congestion on Meadows Avenue and Rowell Avenue,
3. Need for a loading zone on Meadows Avenue on the school (east) side,
4. Parking violations adjacent to school,
5. Stop and speeding violations,
6. Shortage of public (visitor) parking on Meadows Avenue,
7. Need for better signs and markings at school and at crosswalks, and
8. Need for more police enforcement.

In addition to the above concerns, staff has inventoried existing school signs and markings in the area, and observed general traffic and parking conditions during both school and non-school days in preparation of this NTMP. Field observations during typical school days and non-school days were made to help determine the potential impact of any initial recommendations.

A review of the collision history within the neighborhood was conducted for the period between January 1, 2001 and September 30, 2004. The review reveals that there are no locations with elevated collision rates or pedestrian collisions within the neighborhood surrounding these school campuses.

FINDINGS:

1. Many existing school area signs and markings are outdated and/or missing.
2. Student loading occurs primarily on Meadows Avenue and Rowell Avenue, in a clockwise direction, which helps distribute traffic flow, but inefficient operation increases exposure between cars and pedestrians.
3. Illegal parking along Meadows Avenue and 12th Street causes unnecessary congestion and decreases pedestrian safety.
4. Additional loading supervision would improve the efficiency and safety of both pedestrians and motorists, as well as reduce the overall impact on residential streets.

5. Recurrent speeding during school times was not evident on any surrounding streets.
6. Additional ridesharing efforts by both staff and students would help alleviate some congestion issues.
7. Vehicles on Meadows Avenue generally increase speed in the wider street segment adjacent to the school.
8. School area congestion occurs for a limited time in the morning and afternoon of school days only. Therefore, permanent changes to traffic circulation should be implemented only after careful consideration of potential impacts during the summer and on weekends.
9. There is no current suggested routes to school plan for this school.
10. There appears to be sufficient parking for school staff in the school parking areas.
11. The number of designated visitor parking spaces in the school parking lot is insufficient and visitors often park in residential areas.
12. There is short term parking demand for some school users, particularly for sign-in/sign-out and attendance for individual classes.
13. Parking and right-of-way violations are common and cause additional congestion.
14. The existing loading zone in front of the school is an unused asset that can be used for student loading.
15. Several school crosswalks are missing at the corners of the school grounds.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a list of initial recommendations intended to improve traffic and pedestrian safety around the Meadows School campus. Some actions are to be initiated by the City, while others are recommendations for the school or School District to implement. All the actions are meant to work together as a system and complement each other.

Initial Recommendations

1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
This action will reinforce driver compliance of the rules-of-the-road, as well as raise awareness of pedestrians and discourage speeding in the school area. A high-visibility school sign would also be installed on the existing flashing beacon on Meadows Avenue.
2. Concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
This action will help reduce congestion by penalizing illegal speeding and parking practices such as blocking driveways, red curbs and double parking.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis.
This action will encourage compliance of pedestrian right-of-way rules and raise awareness of pedestrians in the school area.
4. Paint a white loading zone on the east side of the existing turnout along Meadows Avenue in front of the school during the AM drop-off period.
This measure would provide a safe loading zone for student to be dropped off in the morning. The Fire Department does not object to the use of the turnout if drivers do not leave their vehicles, and school representatives assist in the loading operation.

5. Install a new student loading zone on the east side of Meadows Avenue north of the main school entrance and modify parking restrictions on the west side of Meadows Avenue directly opposite the loading zone.
This action will greatly improve the amount of curb area available for student loading directly adjacent to the school. This measure will reduce the length of the loading zone queues, and discourage drop-offs and pick-ups in the rest of the neighborhood or on the opposite side of the street. This will require a slight modification to the existing parking restrictions on the west side of Meadows Avenue to provide sufficient street width for two-way traffic during morning and afternoon loading times. After school hours, parking would be prohibited on the east side and permitted on the west side. As an alternate, parking could be prohibited on the west side and allowed on the east side all the time.
6. Pursue a capital project to construct an intersection bulb-out on the southeast corner of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street.
This action will help define the student loading zone along the school frontage and act as a traffic calming measure in this street segment. It will also shorten the distance required to walk across the street at the intersection, thereby reducing pedestrian exposure to vehicles.
7. Paint new school crosswalks at the stopped intersection of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street on the east and west legs.
This action will provide a pedestrian connection north and west of the school and improve pedestrian safety at this intersection.
8. Paint new school crosswalks at the intersection of Meadows Avenue and 12th Street on the west leg.
This action will provide a pedestrian connection south of the school and improve pedestrian safety at this intersection.
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
This action will reduce the vehicle queue length, make loading operations more orderly and increase student safety on-campus. Congestion on city streets will also be reduced. Additional volunteers can call students names when parents are approaching the loading zone, and assist students entering/exiting their vehicles to speed up the loading process. Drivers should not be allowed to wait in line if their student is not immediately present, and should be directed to recirculate to the end of the loading queue line.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
This action will help reduce the number of vehicles near the school during drop-off/pick-up times. It will also reduce the time that drivers spent in the loading zone line.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.
This action will help educate parents and students of the preferred routes when walking or biking to school. It can be used to encourage more walking to school, thereby reducing traffic congestion on streets surrounding the school.

12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.

This action will remind school staff, students, parents and other users to follow the recommended driving, walking and parking practices in order to reduce potential residential impacts.

By way of mailed notices, the residents and affected parties surrounding the school campus have been invited to the PPIC meeting. Meadows School has also been encouraged to distribute the meeting notice to all school parents.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Commission conduct a public hearing and consider the above initial recommendations for the area surrounding the Meadows School campus.

EXHIBITS:

1. Proposed School Area Improvements Sketch
2. Area map
3. Meeting Notice for 7/10/08 PPIC meeting
4. Correspondence and E-mails

EXHIBIT 1

ROBINSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
2. concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.
12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.

EXHIBIT

2



Address **1200 N Meadows Ave**
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Get Google Maps on your phone
Text the word "GMAPS" to 466453

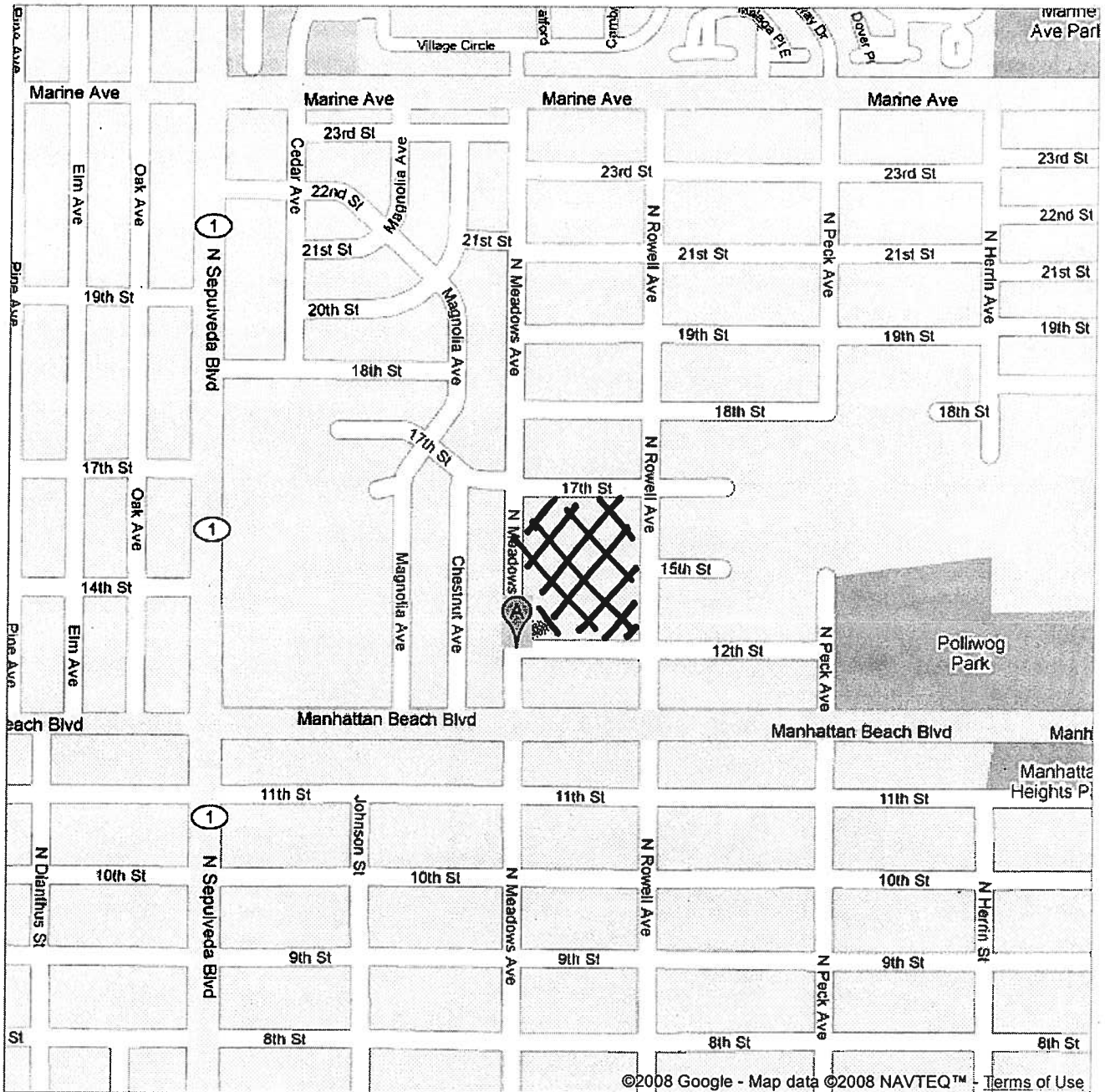


EXHIBIT 3



City Hall 1400 Highland Avenue

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Telephone (310) 802-5000

FAX (310) 802-5001

June 11, 2008

***** PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE *****

Re: Meadows Elementary School Traffic Study

Dear Property Owner/Resident:

The Manhattan Beach City Council has directed City staff to conduct a study of traffic and parking conditions in the area surrounding Meadows Elementary School. The City's Traffic Engineer has completed an analysis and will present findings and recommendations to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission at a public meeting on July 10, 2008.

The meeting will be held in the City Council Chamber, 1400 Highland Avenue, and will begin at 6:30 p.m. Interested parties are encouraged to attend the meeting and provide comments.

If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please call (310) 802-5540 or email astevenson@citymb.info.

Sincerely,

Ana Stevenson
Management Analyst
Community Development Department

Ana Stevenson

From: Rob Osborne [Rob.Osborne@redondo.org]
Sent: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 7:59 AM
To: Ana Stevenson
Subject: Fwd: Fw: [Me-info] FW: Special PPIC Meeting - MeadowsElementary SchoolTraffic

Hi Ana,

You probably didn't know this but my kids go to Meadows. When will Erik's report be available? I'd like to take a look at it.

Like with all our schools the pick-up and drop-off times are a little crazy. Erik, Connie and I once talked about the possibility of creating a loading zone on the east side of Meadows Ave between the school entrance and 17th Street. It's currently a red zone but the street is probably wide enough for parking on both sides. Do you know if Erik addressed that in the report? Some added loading area would really help out the situation.

Thanks,
Rob



EXHIBIT

C

City Hall

1400 Highland Avenue

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Telephone (310) 802-5000

FAX (310) 802-5001

July 18, 2008

******* PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE *******

Re: Meadows Elementary School Traffic and Parking Study

Dear Property Owner / Resident:

On July 10, 2007, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission (PPIC) reviewed the Meadows Elementary School Traffic and Parking Study. The PPIC voted to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed parking and traffic improvements.

The City Council will hold a public discussion and review these recommendations at a public meeting on Tuesday, August 5, 2008. The meeting will be held in the City Council Chamber, 1400 Highland Avenue, and will begin at 6:30 p.m. Any comments you might like to make at the meeting would be welcomed.

Staff report and recommendations will be available for review the week before the meeting. If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please call at (310) 802 5540 or email astevenson@citymb.info.

Sincerely,

Ana Stevenson
Management Analyst