



Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Cohen and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
 Esteban Danna, Assistant Planner
 Erik Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer

DATE: August 4, 2009

SUBJECT: Review of Pending Traffic Engineering Studies

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council review traffic engineering study items, discuss, and provide direction.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The currently scheduled studies are proposed to be funded through existing Department operating budgets. The adopted 2009-2010 budget includes funds for contract traffic engineering services. Along with ongoing traffic engineering duties, these funds must cover traffic studies and implementation of measures. There are no funds allocated for additional studies. Staff believes that the current budget can be sufficient to fund the existing studies already in progress without significantly compromising the ongoing duties of the Traffic Engineer if the funds are distributed evenly over the entire year. Any additional studies will require City Council to allocate supplemental funds to authorize additional work.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council prepares and adopts a Citywide Work Plan that focuses the City's efforts on certain improvements to the City's policies, programs and infrastructure. The 2008-2009 Work Plan includes traffic engineering related items, which are handled by the Community Development Department. This report is intended to provide a status of studies that have already been authorized by City Council, propose a tentative schedule for completion, and to prioritize the workload to make best use of the Traffic Engineering contract services.

DISCUSSION:

Traffic Engineer On-going Duties and Responsibilities

Beyond traffic engineering studies, the City's Traffic Engineer is also responsible for numerous regular duties, including handling citizen requests, conducting field inspections, reviewing and updating traffic signal timing, conducting parking studies, performing technical evaluations and

warrant studies, preparing and presenting staff reports for PPIC and City Council, analyzing and commenting on traffic studies and circulation plans for development projects, attending Planning Commission meetings as needed, preparing construction sketches and work orders for traffic improvements, implementing and monitoring approved traffic measures, working with other departments on traffic related items, providing support for Public Works projects, responding to traffic safety issues, analyzing collision rates, reviewing striping and traffic control plans for construction projects, representing the City at special meetings, as well as fielding telephone calls and emails from residents.

Existing Studies/Projects Already in Progress

School Area Studies

City Staff has completed the implementation of initial measures for the school area studies for the following schools: Grandview Elementary, Pacific Elementary, Robinson Elementary, Meadows Elementary, Pennekamp Elementary, and American Martyrs School. The Parking and Public Improvements Commission (PPIC) and City Council reviewed the performance of the aforementioned initial measures for all the schools except Pennekamp Elementary and American Martyrs School. Staff expects to present the results of the initial measures for these two schools to PPIC on September 24, 2009 and to City Council on October 20, 2009.

Northeast Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan

The Northeast Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan initial measures were approved by City Council on November 1, 2005. Most of the initial measures have been implemented, however, several studies at particular locations within this area still need to be brought back to PPIC and City Council. A follow-up evaluation of all initial measures including the results of the studies has not been scheduled at this time.

Downtown Parking Management Plan

The City's Traffic Engineer will discuss the Downtown Parking Management Plan Initial Strategies with the Downtown Business and Professional Association (DPBA) in the coming weeks. Staff will present a full review of the initial measures to the PPIC on October 22, 2009 and to the City Council on November 17, 2009. If additional parking data collection studies are necessary, Staff will make a recommendation for City Council consideration at that time.

Downtown Parking Sign Plan

As part of the Downtown Parking Management Plan, a sign task force was established to evaluate the style and placement of parking directional signs throughout Downtown. New reflectorized signs will be posted with \$20,000 allocated for this purpose, however, no funding is authorized for lighted signs at this time. The proposed signs will be reviewed by the PPIC and City Council at the time that the Downtown Parking Management Plan is reviewed.

Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor Parking Study

As a result of the Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor Parking Study, City Council has directed Staff to study parking restrictions for the intersections of Sepulveda Boulevard at Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard at Marine Avenue. Pending City Council direction, Staff anticipates presenting these studies to the PPIC in the Spring of 2010 and to the City Council shortly thereafter.

Aviation Boulevard Left Turn Restrictions

On September 2, 2008, the City Council approved left turn restrictions on Aviation Boulevard at 12th Street and Aviation Boulevard at 19th Street. A follow-up study of this action is in progress and will be reviewed by the PPIC and City Council. Staff plans to present this study to the PPIC on August 27, 2009 and to the City Council on October 6, 2009.

Current Studies/Projects Requiring Additional Funding

El Porto Beach Parking Lot Preliminary Circulation Study

At City Council's request, on September 1, 2009, the City's Traffic Engineer will present the El Porto Beach Parking Lot Preliminary Circulation Study. Subsequent study and analysis will depend on City Council action. The implementation of such action will also require additional Staff and Traffic Engineer time.

Sand Dune Park Metered Parking Study

At City Council's request, on August 4, 2009, Staff will present a proposed procedure to address the Sand Dune Park Parking Study. Subsequent study and analysis will depend on City Council action. The implementation of such action will also require additional Staff and Traffic Engineer time.

Future Projects Not Funded

Pending Traffic Engineering Studies

There is a number of pending unfunded studies/projects that require City Council direction and additional traffic engineering services. These include:

- Sand Section, including 6th Street petition
- Sepulveda Corridor Neighborhoods, including Oak Avenue
- Uniform Crosswalk Policy (Traffic Engineering and Public Works collaboration)
- Speed Awareness Sign Policy
- Construction Related Parking Policy

CONCLUSION:

The traffic engineering services contract authorizes the Traffic Engineer to work approximately eleven (11) hours per week. Given its limitation, service levels to residents would be expected to decrease as the number of studies being conducted increase with out any adjustment in the current budget or completion time. Therefore, additional studies cannot be initiated with out allocating additional funds.

As a result of the increased emphasis on traffic related studies, response time for citizen requests has decreased this year when compared to 2008. The average number of resolved requests in 2008 was 12 per month (including implementation). The average for 2009 (January to July) was 6 per month. Furthermore, it took an average of 36 days to complete a request in 2008. Thus far in 2009, requests take an average of 55 days to complete.

Staff recommends that the City Council review traffic engineering study items, discuss, and provide direction.