

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

Erik Zandvliet, City Traffic Engineer

DATE: September 1, 2009

SUBJECT: Review Vehicle Access and Circulation Alternatives for El Porto Beach

Parking Lot

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file this report. No further action is recommended at this time.

Any changes to the El Porto Beach parking lot configuration or circulation would cause significant traffic and parking impacts to different parts of the neighborhood. Resident opposition would be expected with any alternative. It would require the review and approval of the California Coastal Commission and County of Los Angeles, who may have other concerns. Emergency access could be affected. An environmental impact study may be required for some options. There would be extensive design and construction costs that would compete against other pending capital improvement projects. Before any alternative is selected, extensive additional study and public comment would be necessary to fully identify all of the concerns and potential impacts.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The current study was completed with existing Community Development budget. Additional study and/or engineering design for a particular alternative would require substantial extra professional consultant costs which are not included in the current Fiscal Year budget.

BACKGROUND:

On April 21, 2009, the City Council discussed the North Manhattan Beach (El Porto) Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP) and approved numerous traffic calming measures on a trial basis. After extensive discussion, the City Council decided not to change the existing circulation or turn restrictions at the parking lot exit on 40th Street at Ocean Drive. During the same meeting, the Council asked staff to investigate the feasibility of reconfiguring the parking lot to provide an alternate access. This staff report is a preliminary review of some possible parking lot modifications for comparison and consideration.

In October 1983, the Public Works Department presented a report to the Public Works Commission on parking and traffic conditions in the El Porto area in response to requests by the public to abandon the 40th Street exit to the El Porto beach parking lot and relocate it to Rosecrans Avenue. A concept plan was prepared, with the construction costs estimated at \$300,000 (1983 costs). Staff contacted the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors to assist in the funding. They were generally supportive of the plan, but did not have the funds at that time.

In November 1987 the Public Works and Police Departments conducted the "El Porto Traffic and Circulation and Parking Lot Ramp Study" in response to renewed public requests to move the El Porto parking lot exit ramp from 40th Street to Rosecrans Avenue (residents of Rosecrans were opposed to this plan). The study concluded that the benefits might not justify the cost (up to \$515,000 in 1987 dollars), and the traffic would only be shifted from one place to another.

DISCUSSION:

Existing Conditions

The County of Los Angeles El Porto beach parking lot is located along the west side of The Strand between 36th Street and 45th Street. It contains 237 parking spaces along a single aisle, with angled parking on both sides north of 40th Street and perpendicular (90 degree) parking south of 40th Street. An entrance only gate is located at 45th Street, and the exit is at the west end of 40th Street. The circulation is southbound only between 45th and 40th Streets, and two-way south of 40th Street. 40th Street between The Strand and Ocean Drive is eastbound only. The North Manhattan Beach NTMP study found that the parking lot generates approximately 2,000 inbound trips and 2,000 outbound trips on a typical summer day.

All traffic leaving the beach parking lot must currently exit at the 40th Street driveway. As a way to give some relief to residents on 40th Street, there are "No Thru or Right Turn" restrictions in the eastbound direction from 3pm to 8pm weekdays at the intersection of Ocean Drive. This restriction requires all exiting drivers to turn left (northbound) onto Ocean Drive during those hours. This intersection also has a southbound "No Thru" restriction, which requires all southbound drivers to make a left turn onto 40th Street during those same hours. These restrictions redirect traffic through the neighborhood, in effect distributing beach oriented traffic on different streets during different times of the day. A police Community Services Officer is assigned to place and remove supplemental signs on barricades every weekday to reinforce the restrictions.

The greatest use of the parking lot is in off-season mornings and all day during the summer months, when all spaces are occupied. Traffic often backs up through the parking lot and up 45th Street waiting to find an open parking space. Due to the current circulation pattern, drivers must travel one-way southbound to 40th Street and exit at 40th Street if no spaces are found. Then, beachgoers either hunt for parking in the neighborhood or return to the parking lot entrance at 45th Street via Ocean Drive to try again. The resulting congestion and neighborhood traffic intrusion often requires additional Police enforcement in order to keep the roadway clear for local resident access.

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The County of Los Angeles operates a beach maintenance yard and reserves several parking spaces at the south end of the County parking lot in a gated area between Rosecrans Avenue and 36th Street. This reserved area has a driveway and gate at the west end of 36th Street and another gate at the south end of the public lot. There is a large double staircase at the west end of Rosecrans Avenue for pedestrian access to the beach.

Alternatives

A number of alternatives have been investigated to compare the benefits and impacts of changing the parking lot circulation and/or layout on the surrounding neighborhood.

Reversed Parking Lot Circulation

This alternative would reverse the direction of the parking aisle north of 40th Street, and maintain all existing parking spaces. Traffic circulation would enter via 40th Street, and exit onto 45th Street. Both streets are signalized, so traffic diversion to parallel streets would not change substantially. Traffic volumes on 40th Street would increase by about 500 vehicles per day, but cut-through traffic on Ocean Drive and parallel streets would likely decrease. Traffic volumes on 45th Street would decrease by about 500 vehicles per day. A long back-up of waiting cars would be expected, similar to the current conditions on 45th Street, which would make it difficult for residents on 40th Street to enter/exit their driveways, as well as cause congestion at Ocean Drive. Circulation within the parking lot would be more difficult because traffic making a right turn upon entering the lot from 40th Street would be not be able to access the southerly spaces without returning through the neighborhood and re-entering the lot to make a left turn, similar to the existing circulation on Ocean Drive, but in the opposite direction.

Challenges: This alternative would likely be opposed by residents on 40th Street, and possibly residents on 45th Street near Highland Avenue, who would experience increased traffic volumes and lines of waiting cars. Residents on Ocean Drive may oppose the changes in circulation if beach traffic increases on their street segment. The expected neighborhood circulation flow has not been studied, and may cause additional unexpected adverse impacts. The County of Los Angeles would also have to approve the parking lot changes.

Cost: This alternative would require the restriping the angled spaces in the northerly half of the parking lot, and posting directional signs. The estimated implementation cost would be at least \$10,000 or more.

Two-Way Driveway at 45th Street

One alternative to provide an additional parking lot exit is to widen the existing entrance only ramp at 45th Street for two-way traffic. This would require the construction of a retaining wall along the east side of the ramp near The Strand Walkway. This alternative has the benefit of exiting to a street with an existing traffic signal at Highland Avenue, and impacts fewer homes than other streets, since there are homes on one side only. It also has a low potential for cut-through traffic in the neighborhood. The circulation is simplified for unfamiliar beach visitors, since the exit location is the same as the entrance.

This configuration would require the conversion of the angled parking along the east side of the lot to parallel parking, which would reduce the available parking by 18 spaces. It should be

noted that exiting vehicles might have to drive the entire length of the parking lot in order to return to the 45th Street exit unless a turn around (traffic circle) was built at 40th Street. The exit at 40th Street could remain open, be closed during certain hours or seasons, or be permanently closed except for emergency access, at the option of the City/County.

An alternative to parallel parking along the east side could be considered by relocating the stackblock wall along the east side of the lot easterly by eight (8) feet and widen the pavement so that angle parking could be maintained on both sides of a two-way aisle. This option would at least double the cost of the project. Of course this would reduce the landscaping between the lot and Strand walkway by the same width.

Challenges: This alternative would likely be opposed by residents on 45th Street, who would experience a significant increase in traffic volumes and lines of gridlocked cars. If the 40th Street driveway were closed to the public, special gates or alternative means of access may be required by the Fire Department to provide equal or better evacuation and emergency response. This alternative would have to be reviewed and approved by the Coastal Commission and County of Los Angeles, who might object to a potential reduction in parking spaces. Residents along the Strand may oppose any loss in landscaping buffer between the El Porto Parking lot and the Strand Walkway if the parking lot were widened.

Cost: This alternative would require widening of the existing driveway ramp at 45th Street, modification to the Strand walkway, retaining walls, and relocation of guardrails. The estimated implementation cost would be at least \$75,000 or more, depending on structural requirements, and an additional \$100,000 to \$300,000 to widen the parking lot for additional parking spaces.

Exit Driveway at 36th Street

The existing vehicle ramp at 36th Street could be converted to a public exit driveway, but this alternative has several undesirable impacts. While this option has the benefit of adding 34 new spaces by allowing diagonal parking on both sides, the bike path and parking around County beach maintenance yard would be compromised if public vehicles were allowed to drive through the gated area. The maintenance parking lot could be relocated to the beach side of the bike path at additional cost. In addition, a substantial increase in traffic would be expected on 36th Street and Ocean Drive by beach visitors. Both streets are under 25 feet wide, and are not designed for through traffic. This change in parking lot circulation would introduce new traffic conflicts and bypass traffic through the neighborhood south of Rosecrans Avenue. New turn restrictions would probably be required to reduce such impacts, further impacting residential access and increasing the need for enforcement.

Challenges: This alternative would likely be opposed by residents on and near 36th Street, who would experience a significant increase in traffic volumes and lines of gridlocked cars. If the 40th Street driveway were closed, special gates or alternative means of access may be required by the Fire Department to provide equal or better evacuation and emergency response. This alternative would have to be reviewed and approved by the Coastal Commission and County of Los Angeles, who might object to traffic through the maintenance yard area and relocation of facilities. Residents and walkers may oppose high traffic volumes crossing The Strand walkway at 36th Street.

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Cost: This alternative would require restriping the parking lot for additional parking spaces, reconstruction of the maintenance yard parking area, and a new barrier wall along the bike path. The estimated implementation cost would be at least \$200,000 or more.

Exit Ramp at Rosecrans Avenue

In 1983 and 1987, the City developed conceptual plans for an exit ramp at Rosecrans, and determined that it was feasible but expensive due to the 20-foot difference in elevation that would require large retaining walls and soil stabilization. This alternative would exit vehicles on a street that is designed for through traffic, and is signalized at Highland Drive. Rosecrans Avenue is 40 feet wide, whereas 40th Street is 26 feet wide. There would also be fewer homes impacted than 40th Street, because more commercial businesses face Rosecrans Avenue. This alternative would add approximately 14 spaces to the parking lot because all circulation would be one-way, however, up to 6 spaces might be removed on Rosecrans Avenue to accommodate the ramp alignment.

Challenges: This alternative would likely be opposed by residents on Rosecrans Avenue, who would experience a significant increase in traffic volumes and lines of exiting cars. If the 40th Street driveway were closed, special gates or alternative means of access may be required by the Fire Department to provide equal or better evacuation and emergency response. This alternative would have to be reviewed and approved by the Coastal Commission and County of Los Angeles who might object to aesthetic, circulation, and/or public safety concerns. Residents and walkers may oppose high traffic volumes crossing The Strand walkway at Rosecrans Avenue.

Cost: This alternative would require a substantial engineering design, construction of retaining walls, new vehicle ramp, reconstruction of the main staircase, restriping the parking lot for additional parking spaces, reconstruction, and realignment of the maintenance yard access. The estimated implementation cost would be at least \$2 million or more.

Other Alternatives Not Considered

Alternate access driveways on the streets between Rosecrans Avenue and 45th Street were not considered due to the narrow streets, absence of signalized control at Highland Avenue and high potential for cut-through traffic in the neighborhood. An entry or exit driveway at any of these streets would impact significantly more homes than the existing configuration.

CONCLUSION:

This preliminary report was initiated pursuant to an extensive traffic study, public meetings and discussions conducted earlier this year for the North Manhattan Beach Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan. On April 21, 2009, the Council decided to make no changes to existing traffic patterns for the El Porto Beach parking lot, but requested Staff prepare some preliminary design alternatives to reconfigure the parking lot circulation and/or driveways, as well as the associated costs for future consideration. The existing parking lot generates approximately 4,000 inbound or outbound vehicle trips per day during summer months.

Any changes to the parking lot configuration or circulation will have significant traffic and parking impacts as well as require extensive further design and approval from numerous

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agencies. Before any action is taken, some major considerations should be addressed, including:

- Resident opposition would be expected due to different impacts for each option.
- Universal support is not anticipated for any one solution.
- Traffic impacts would likely be shifted to different areas of the neighborhood that do not currently experience such issues.
- New impacts to residents may occur that have not yet been identified.
- The parking supply may be reduced under some options.
- Emergency access to the parking lot and beach could be affected.
- An environmental impact study may be required for some options.
- The County of Los Angeles must review and approve proposed changes, and may have additional concerns or conditions.
- The California Coastal Commission must approve any proposed changes and may have additional concerns.
- Most options have significant design and construction costs that would have to compete against other capital projects for funding.
- Extensive staff time and professional consultant work would be required to pursue most options any further.
- Additional study costs are not currently budgeted.

Before any alternative is selected, extensive additional study and public comment would be necessary to fully identify all of the concerns and potential impacts. For the above reasons, no further action is recommended at this time. Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file this report.

A summary of the main differences between the alternatives discussed is shown below:

Summary of Parking Lot Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE	BENEFITS	IMPACTS	SPACES	RELATIVE
				COST
Existing	No new impacts	Some cut-thru traffic	237	\$ 0
Reverse Circulation	Same # of spaces Less traffic on 45 th St. Less cut-thru traffic Fewer turn restrictions	More traffic on 40 th St. Harder to access spaces Back-up queue on 40 th St.	237	\$10,000+
45 th St. Two-Way with Parallel Parking	Simplified circulation Less cut-thru traffic Less traffic on 40 th St.	18 fewer parking spaces More traffic on 45 th St.	219	\$ 75,000+
45 th St. Two-Way with Diagonal Parking	Simplified Circulation Less cut-thru traffic Less traffic on 40 th St.	More traffic on 45 th St. Less landscaping buffer	237	\$ 300,000+
36 th St. Exit	34 more parking spaces Less traffic on 40 th St. Optional 40 th St. closure	No way to turn around in parking lot. More traffic on 36 th /Ocean New cut-thru traffic	271	\$200,000+
Rosecrans Exit Ramp	14 more parking spaces Less traffic on 40 th St. Optional 40 th St. closure Signalized exit access. Less cut-thru traffic	High cost More traffic on Rosecrans Smaller staircase	251	\$2,000,000+

Attachments: A. Conceptual Layouts

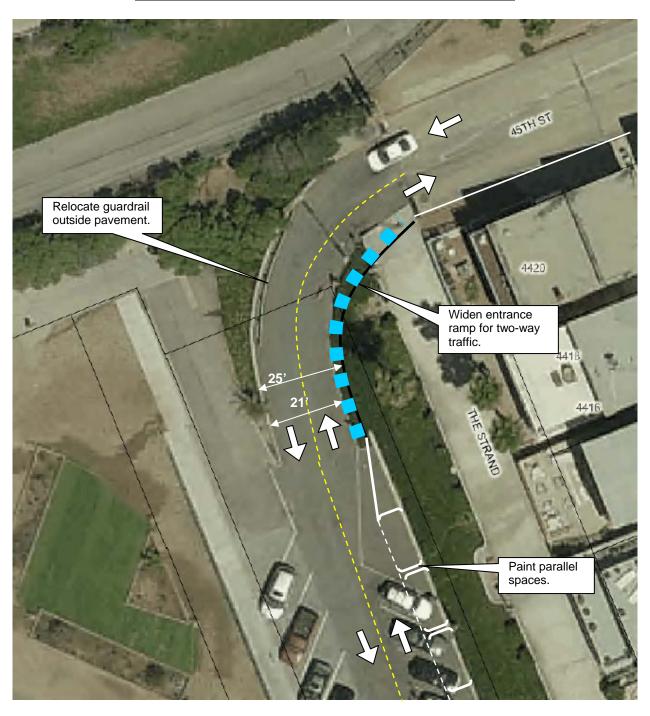
B. Existing Parking Lot Configuration

C. Correspondence

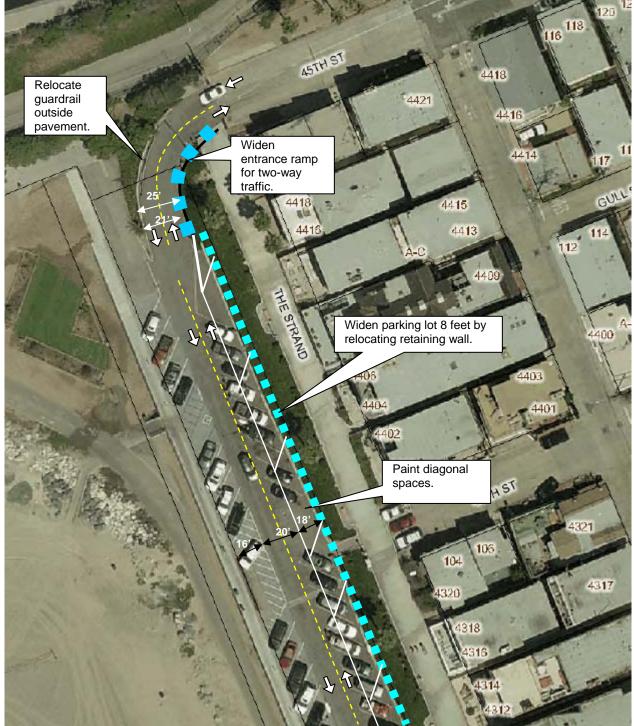
Alternative 1 Reversed Parking Lot Circulation



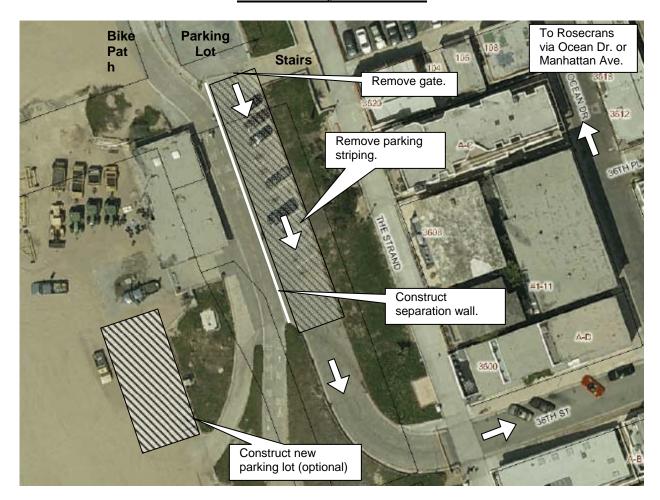
Alternative 2
Two-Way Driveway at 45th Street with Parallel Parking



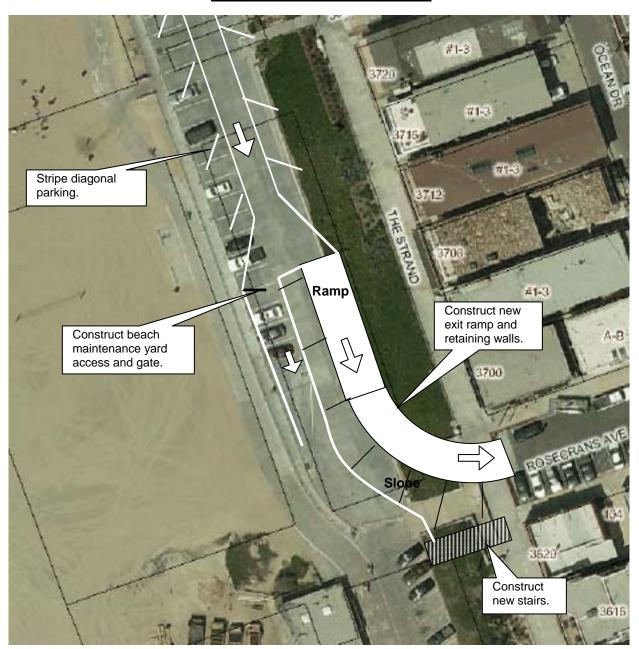
Alternative 3
Two-Way Driveway at 45th Street with Angle Parking 4418



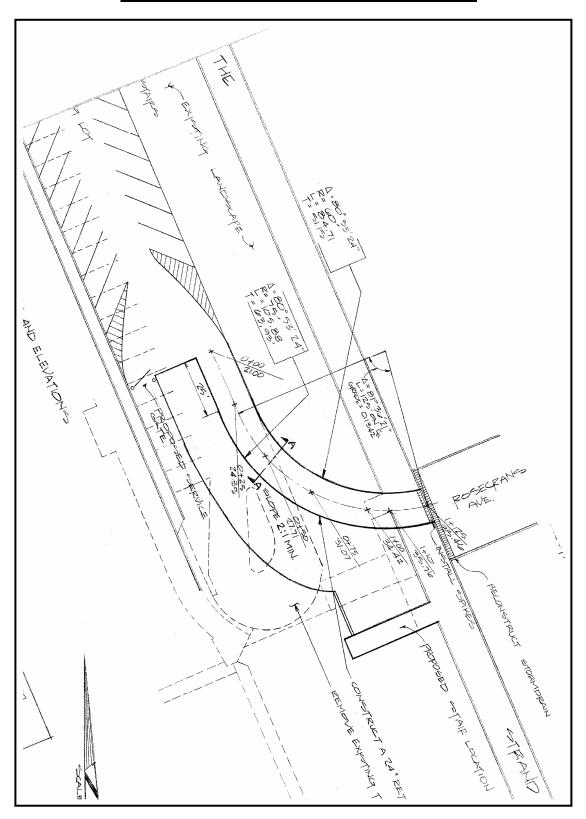
Alternative 4
Exit Driveway at 36th Street



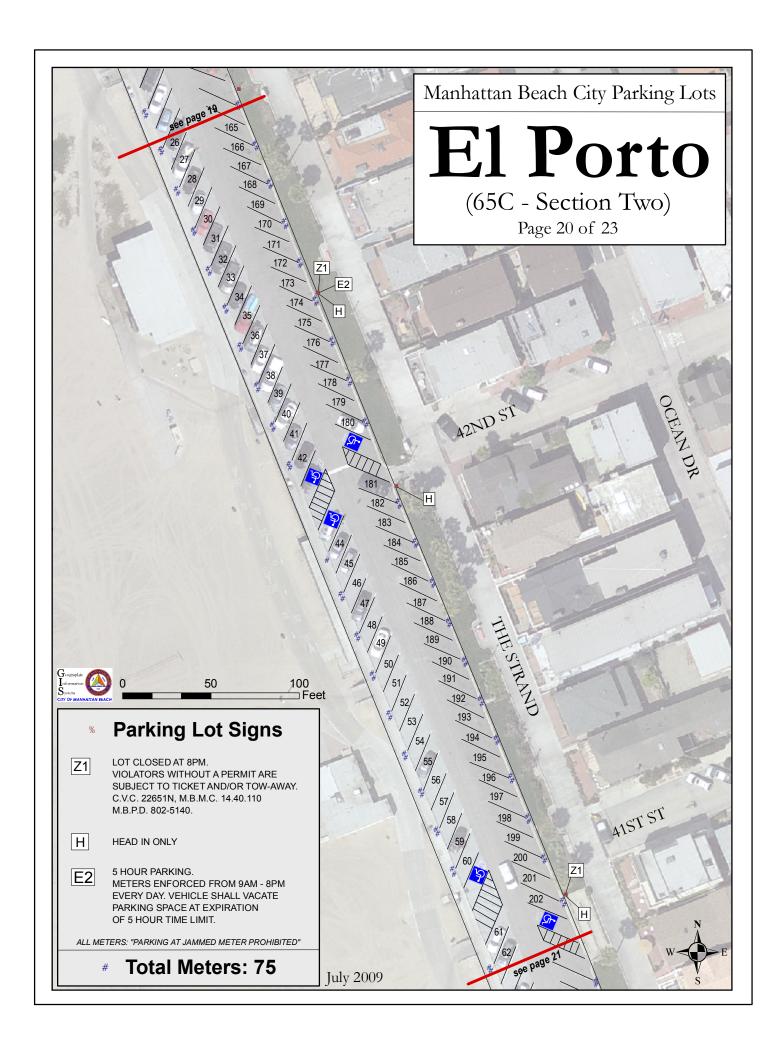
Alternative 5
Exit Ramp at Rosecrans Avenue



Exit Ramp at Rosecrans Avenue - Original Concept







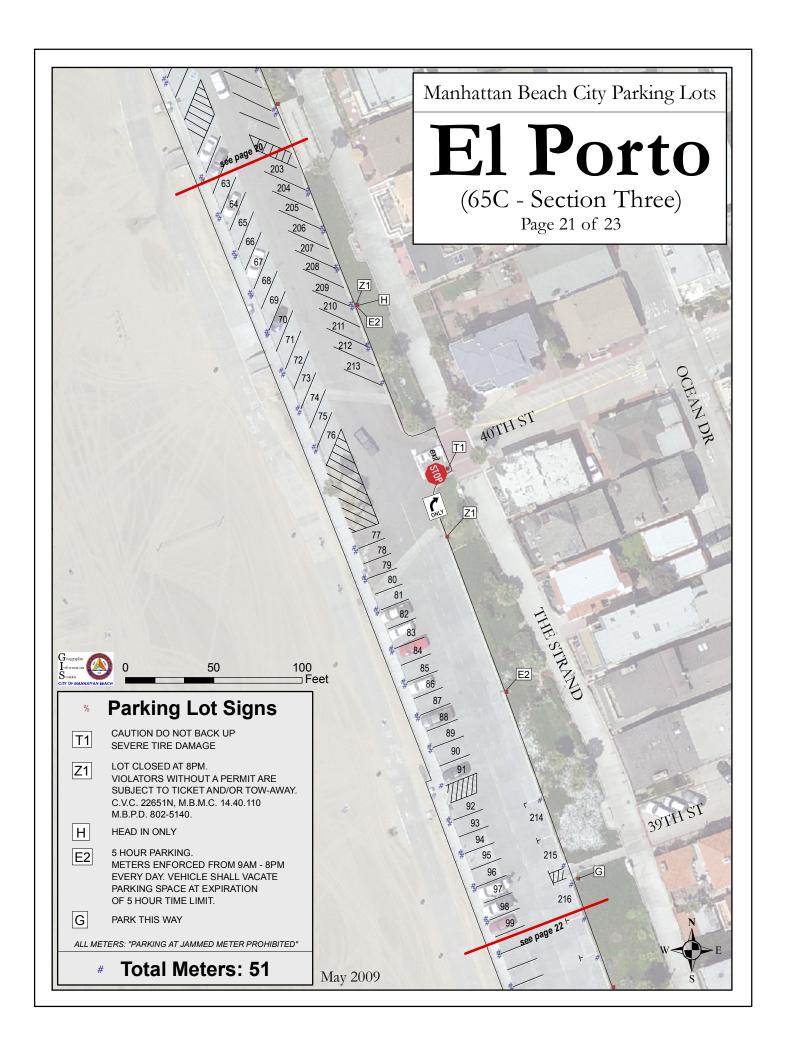






EXHIBIT 3 CORRESPONDENCE

--- On Mon, 8/3/09, Shawn Papazian <shawn@papazianbroz.com> wrote:

From: Shawn Papazian <shawn@papazianbroz.com>
Subject: 45th Street entrance--a way out of the problem!

To: pcohen@citymb.info, mward@citymb.info, rmontgomery@citymb.info, ntell@citymb.info, wpowell@citymb.info, elisegoodrich@earthlink.net, "Jessi J. Hedland" <jessih@ironclad.com>, fuzzystork@yahoo.com, govbach@gmail.com, damyers@gmail.com, maryjwhite@earthlink.net, "Shon Tomlin" <Shon.Tomlin@fuel.tv>, dodo1945dodo@yahoo.com, Gaylene.Nagel@gmail.com,

mikeslsexc@mac.com, nixmbtns@aol.com Date: Monday, August 3, 2009, 11:37 PM

I honestly want to thank all of you (Council Members) for taking the time to read my email and the rest of the emails in regards to the above noted situation. Your collaboration and communication to continue and push for a solution is a positive impact for our communal beach lifestyle. And one that our kids will not be too concerned about now, but they'll certainly enjoy its fruit later.

I have been an owner on 40th Street for the last *two* years and have frequented El Porto as a surfer on a daily basis for the last 26 years. Im 36. Most of my life has been at El Porto. I've experienced and have lived both perspectives in regards to the Traffic issues within the El Porto area. I can completely understand and agree and clearly see first hand the neighborhood issues with all of the traffic problems and safety concerns; especially since I have a young teenage son to worry about. As well, I can appreciate the ability to gain access and exit the parking lot as a visitor at El Porto for all the various, obvious reasons.

With that said, I hope a very important decision is finally made after almost three decades of litigation, negotiation, mitigation, etc with this run on sentence(although I'm not an English major). I think we all concur that a Civil Engineer's perspective to solve the problems at hand would be to build a bridge to connect the lot to Rosecrans for all the points previously discussed in our subsequent council meetings this past year. Unfortunately, Economics are a harsh reality.

After reading a couple of emails this afternoon from my very astute neighbors, I decided to view an aerial view of the lot using google map. I noticed something interesting. On my way home from work I decided to investigate what I disco vered. A very solid inkling of a ramp exists directly below the entrance ramp to the lot fr om 45th Street. It appears that a very pragmatic approach is in front of us. To belabor the neighborhood pitch, reworking the entrance from 45th to the lower ramp and in addition continue utilizing the existing ramp as an exit, we might have a way out of this debacle. We would of course need to model the first half of the lot to mirror the second half of the lot. Yes, the city will loose parking and some revenue. However, they will

decrease expenses in police activity, mitigation costs (signage costs, consultants, etc), and liability. And, the chaos from the parking density that simmers in the first half of the lot will diminish. As well as the long lines that build for hundreds of yards on a hot, summer day. Plus, the neighbors and neighborhood will not forget your brilliant actions for the sa fety and well being of their lives. Lastly, any visitor entering the lot on a popular day will be a lot happier with the meter maids telling them the don't have to circle the neighborh ood... We all can see who is coming and leaving, the city will be able to manage the lot in a more effective and efficient way.

Cheers,

SHAWN PAPAZIAN

Papazian Broz, papazianbroz.com shawn@papazianbroz.com C.310.384.0394 F.888.596.7770

---- Original Message -----

From: Jessi J. Hedland <jessih@ironclad.com>

To: Portia P. Cohen; Mitch Ward; Richard Montgomery; Nick Tell; Wayne

Powell

Sent: Mon Aug 03 15:10:31 2009

Subject: El Porto Parking Lot and 40th Street Traffic

Esteemed Council Members,

As I am sure you are probably being inundated with correspondence on the subject, I will keep my note as brief as possible. Following up on the Council Meeting a few months ago and preempting the upcoming meeting September 1st on the subject of the North Manhattan Beach Parking Lot and subsequent traffic; I am in agreement with most of my neighbors (from 40TH, Kelp, Ocean...) in the opinion that it would behoove the neighborhood as a whole to re-route "Parking Lot" traffic back to it's original course (entrance and exit on 45th Street). Of course, it would mean sacrificing a few parking spaces (to accommodate the cross directional traffic), this would be an immediate/cost effective solution to what has become a safety hazard and public nuisance. While the residents of 45th may not be as enthusiastic about this plan as the rest of us, it appears to be the most viable and immediate solution to an ongoing problem. The noise, pollution and hazards caused by traffic racing up 40th, Kelp or any of the surrounding streets (which were not meant to handle this) are egregious. The facts that 45th St. 1) has the capacity to accommodate the traffic, 2) was the original entrance & exit and 3) only has homes on one side of the street, should be enough to convince you that the benefits outweigh any disadvantages that might result. With the shallow setbacks on most El Porto properties, many of our vehicles must hang

beyond the edge of our driveways, further narrowing the course. When you consider that 45th only has homes on one side of the street, not only are fewer than % the number of residents affected but the road does not have the same narrowing effect caused by vehicles parked in driveways on both sides. Short of building an exit at Rosecrans, I believe that 45th St. appears the be the only real solution to this incessant community issue.

In the event that I am not able to attend the upcoming council meeting September 1st, please consider my comments and opinion in weighing your decision.

Thank You,

Jessi J. Hedland 119 40th St

Jessi James Hedland Manager International Ironclad Performance Wear 2201 Park Pl. Ste. 101 El Segundo, CA. 90245

--- On Tue, 8/4/09, Norm Usui <usuin@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Norm Usui <usuin@yahoo.com>

Subject: El Porto Beach Parking Lot Circulation Study

To: pcohen@citymb.info, mward@citymb.info, rmontgomery@citymb.info,

ntell@citymb.info, wpowell@citymb.info Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2009, 8:49 AM

As a resident of El Porto, I have been very encouraged by the responsiveness of the City Council to the traffic concerns of myself and my neighbors. The actions taken to direct the City Engineer to prepare a preliminary circulation study of the El Porto parking lot were very well received by those of us in attendance at the April City Council meeting. However, I would like to ensure that this effort continues and that the option of changing the configuration of the lot to have both the entrance and exit on 45th Street be fully explored. I would like to ask the City Council to provide further direction and/or funding to the City Engineer to proceed further.

Thanks in advance, Norm Usui 120 40th Street

From: Ed SKEBE (DHL US) [mailto:Ed.Skebe@dhl.com]

Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2009 3:07 PM

To: Erik Zandvliet

Cc: Ana Stevenson; Richard Thompson; Geoff Dolan

Subject: RE: El Porto Parking Lot Study

Erik,

During the July 7th Council Meeting Nick discussed the El Porto Parking Lot Study with Geoff, and that a preliminary report was to be presented along with the upcoming Work Plan. Please advise status and what meeting it will be scheduled.

Below are notes from my 7-7-09 council presentation regarding implications of moving the exit back to 45th.

Life Guard, emergency and fire vehicles could continue to use the 36th St Exit – thus allowing 40th to be blocked.

Parking space analysis:

1/4 mile markers on the strand just north and south of last available spaces south of 40th and near 45th.

22 feet required for each parallel space.

1/4 mi = 1320 feet/ 22 ft per space = 60 parallel spaces.

Currently 82 diagonal spaces.

Net loss = 22 spaces.

Lost city revenue analysis:

Additional spaces only considered when the lot is full --- about 15 weekends per year from 10 – 4pm

Total of 30 days 6 hours each.

\$180 per meter x 22 spaces

Or about \$4,000 per year.

This may be a net benefit considering the cost of maintaining the diversion!

These additional spaces have been an ongoing problem ever since. Complaints, studies, council meetings, and traffic diversions have all failed to correct this. Cost has also been incurred for exit spikes, barriers, & cost to place & remove barriers and signs.

Switching back to 45th would resolve a twenty six year controversy.

- It would eliminate the safety issues on Kelp
- It would relieve 40th of weekend and summer traffic
- And it would eliminate cars illegally entering at 40th.

Regards, Ed Skebe 210 Kelp St