MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, September 6, 2011 in the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library meeting room.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Sargent led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Galvin, Green, Sargent, Siani, Tsao, Walter, and Chairperson Rudolph.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Transportation Manager Semaan, Planning Associate Crump, Traffic and Lighting Supervisor Hall, and Torrance Police Lieutenant D'Anjou.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Galvin moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Tsao seconded the motion and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES: AUGUST 1, 2011

Engineering Manager Semaan requested that his title, Transportation Manager, be changed to Engineering Manager throughout the August 1, 2011 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Sargent moved for the approval of the August 1, 2011 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Walter seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Siani abstaining).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1

None.

7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION

Chairperson Rudolph explained the policies and procedures of the Traffic Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to City Council.

7a. REVIEW FINAL DRAFT OF SOUTH BAY BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Engineering Manager Semaan introduced the item and distributed supplemental materials received after agenda packets were prepared.

Planning Associate Crump provided background and introduced Marissa Christiansen, South Bay Initiative Director, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, as well as representatives from Alta Planning and Design. She requested that Commissioners

review the final draft of the South Bay Bicycle Master Plan and concur with staff's recommendation to forward Traffic Commissioners' comments and final draft of the Bicycle Plan to the City Council Transportation subcommittee on September 13, 2011 and finally to City Council in November 2011. She reminded Commissioners that the multi-jurisdictional Bicycle Plan allows the City an opportunity to apply for grant funding and allows flexibility for each of the South Bay cities to implement the program as best it can. She noted that the Commission and City Council would have the opportunity to revisit proposed bikeways for Torrance in Table 9.9 pending funding availability.

Marissa Christiansen, South Bay Initiative Director, presented the final draft of the South Bay Bicycle Master Plan. She pointed out that language has been softened and additional information added regarding funding and project specific analysis for top priority projects for each city. She reviewed the Bicycle Plan purpose to provide guidelines, policies, and a unified vision for regional connectivity, encourage new bicyclists, support active transportation, and improve road safety. She suggested that the City appoint a staff member to oversee implementation of the Plan and be part of a Bicycle Advisory Committee with the other six South Bay cities.

She discussed benefits of a bike plan that include eligibility for grant funding, increase in property values and business revenues, increased bike ridership, and improved road safety for all users. She provided information about Federal, State, regional, and other funding sources, noting that all seven cities are eligible for the Cal Trans Bicycle Transportation Account. She presented maps of the current and proposed bike network that focuses on closing existing gaps and providing interconnectivity. She stated that the 63 miles being proposed for Torrance is roughly twice what there is today. She concluded her presentation with Bicycle Plan benefits that include more money for the City, increased property values and business revenues, a healthier community, more bikes on the road, and safer roads.

In response to Commissioner Galvin's inquiry, Lieutenant D'Anjou advised that bicycle licensing is not enforced and has not been for over 25 years.

Commissioner Sargent asked how Commissioners' comments are handled and Ms. Christiansen stated that they would be forwarded to the City Council Transportation subcommittee and it would be up to them and City Council whether major revisions should be made. She explained that making revisions to regional chapters could cause a conflict because they would need to go back to the other six cities for approval.

Chairperson Rudolph recommended that Commissioners voice their comments at this meeting.

Commissioner Siani expressed concern that the proposed Project #1 on Cabrillo Avenue would change the character of the road and would be significantly greater than merely adding bicycle lanes.

Ms. Christiansen advised that the draft is a plan level document and that each of the proposed facilities would have to be designed and engineered, likely requiring additional public hearings on a project-to-project basis.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that the document is a wish list and, when funding or a project becomes available, the Commission would have the opportunity to provide input in determining on a case-by-case basis if a proposal is feasible, if additional funding is required, and to consider any necessary Municipal Code revisions.

Chairperson Rudolph inquired about Chapter 2, Section 1.4.5 regarding mandatory implementation required from private property owners.

Sam Corbett, Alta Planning and Design, explained how implementation has been achieved in other cities by changing development code or by offering incentives to employers, noting that the Plan focuses on new developments and not existing facilities.

Commissioner Walter recognized the Master Plan as an important first step and recommended moving forward with it.

MOTION: Commissioner Sargent moved to concur with staff's recommendation to forward Traffic Commissioners' comments and the final draft South Bay Bicycle Master Plan to the City Council Transportation subcommittee for its review and approval. Commissioner Green seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Dean Francois, Hermosa Beach, representing Friends of the South Bay Bicycle Path, voiced support for the Master Plan but expressed concern about the proposed two-way bike path on one side of Harbor Drive in Redondo Beach. He noted the petition in the material of record stating that the proposal is dangerous and confusing. He urged the Commission to recommend removing the proposed Class 1 designation and improving the existing Class 2 bicycle lanes on Harbor Drive.

Ms. Christiansen stated that they are working closely with the community and Redondo Beach staff members to find the most viable, safe, and progressive facility for the area. She expressed hope that the proposal can remain in the Bicycle Plan and to be explored at a later date.

Laurie Jester, Deelane Street, Planning Manager for City of Manhattan Beach, stated that there is overwhelming support in Manhattan Beach for the Bicycle Plan. She stated that it is a long-term policy document, noting that it is not set in stone and is important in promoting safety for youth.

Planning Associate Crump received clarification from Mr. Corbett that the City would be able to update or revise the Torrance chapter post-adoption and would remain eligible for grants even if the other cities did not update their chapters. Mr. Corbett noted that all documentation and electronic files would be turned over to the clients and that it should be updated every five years to remain eligible for funding. He stated that ideally the Bicycle Advisory Committee of the seven cities would coordinate to retain consistency.

7b. TRAFFIC COMMISSION WORK PLAN – SECOND PRIORITY: DEVELOP A GUIDELINE FOR PROTECTED PERMISSIVE LEFT-TURN SIGNALS

Engineering Manager Semaan provided background on the item continued from the Commission meeting of August 1, 2011. He reported that the language in the guidance document Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is more explicit about when protected left-turn phasing can be installed as well as how to design and implement Protected-Permissive Left-Turn (PPLT) signals but does not include warrants or guidelines. He presented feedback from professionals in the field of signal design and operations relating to staff's inquiry on use of PPLT signals. He noted that the majority of respondents have made upgrades from existing permissive left turns but not from protected left-turn phases.

He presented and described a recommended list of criteria used on when not to consider PPLT phasing: posted speed limit is over ___ mph; left-turn movement crosses three or more opposing through lanes; a left-turn accident problem exists; high opposing volume of through traffic with lack of adequate gap; with lead-lag left-turn phasing operation; and an existing line of sight issue. He noted that a spreadsheet of 166

signalized intersections with consideration criteria for PPLT or Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-Turn signals was included in Attachment B. He stated that his goal is to work with the Commission's direction to finalize the qualifying criteria so that staff could begin identifying those intersections that are not viable for consideration.

Responding to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan explained that Flashing Yellow Arrow Permissive-Only Left-Turn indication is more intuitive to drivers and is not well received in California cities, adding that it provides a permissive phase. He recommended using either flashing yellow indication or PPLT, not a combination of both.

Commissioner Sargent received clarification from staff that SSD stands for Stopping Sight Distance. He questioned why the required line of sight is not tied to the speed limit and was advised that vertical and horizontal curves can impede visibility, making SSD a consideration.

Planning Associate Crump left at 8:15 p.m.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that once a list of viable intersections is established, a more in-depth, detailed design component would need to take place. He indicated that the exercise would allow them to determine what should not be considered instead of just where they want to consider them.

Chairperson Rudolph expressed an interest in adding a column of posted speed limits and initiated a brief discussion regarding using critical speed versus actual speed.

He expressed concern about the safety of the concept that has to be applied to all aspects of society, specifically Torrance, and stressed the importance of education before implementation.

Engineering Manager Semaan responded that PPLT has been implemented County-wide, State-wide, and throughout the country and has proven itself to be a good alternative to just protective phasing.

In response to Chairperson Sargent's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan explained the Permissive Protective operation and why PPLT could not be turned off and on throughout the day. He offered to bring a five section head doghouse to the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Siani received clarification from Engineering Manager Semaan that the six bullets listed in the item are criteria that have been used in multiple jurisdictions that responded back to staffs' inquiries. He also suggested that double left turns also be added to the criteria to not be considered for PPLT phasing.

Responding to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan explained SSD and noted that line of sight and speed limit cannot be tied together and are two sets of criteria, adding that speed is already built into SSD. He offered to bring back an illustration to make it clearer and to spell out the reason for line of sight issues on the spreadsheet.

Commissioner Green recommended removing from the spreadsheet those intersections that Torrance is not the primary agency, where there are double left turns, and using critical speed limit rather than posted speed limit.

In response to Chairperson Rudolph's inquiry about accident history, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that it is challenging because it may be unknown why protected

left-turn phasing was installed. He added that it would require research or that perhaps personal knowledge may exist. He stated that five or more accidents within a 12 month period is explicitly spelled out in the MUTCD.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiries, Engineering Manager Semaan responded that intersections having pedestrian controls would not present an issue and that most cities use 45 mph for a critical speed limit for criteria.

MOTION: Commissioner Galvin moved to adopt the following criteria to use in not considering protective permissive left-turn phasing: 1) Critical speed limit is over 45 mph; 2) Left-turn movement crosses three or more opposing through lanes; 3) A left-turn accident problem exists; 4) High opposing volume of through traffic with lack of adequate gap; 5) With lead-lag left turn phasing operation; 6) A line of sight issue exists; 7) Non-Torrance primary agency; and 8) Double left turns exist. Commissioner Walter seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Engineering Manager Semaan relayed Traffic and Lighting Supervisor Hall's concern that PPLT phasing could hinder emergency vehicle pre-empters for emergency vehicles; he stated that he would research the possibility with staff.

7c. RECEIVE & FILE – QUARTERLY TRAFFIC COMMISSION SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

Engineering Manager Semaan presented and reviewed the first quarterly summary of requests dated back to June 2011.

He presented a proposed timeline for the Commission and staff to work on Commission goals, noting that the Commission traditionally goes dark in January and September.

Commissioner Sargent suggesting sending a copy of the timeline to City Council as an information item.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

8a. Commissioner Walter offered further explanation about lead-lag operation.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:25 p.m., Chairperson Rudolph adjourned the meeting to October 3, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall.

Approved as Submitted
October 3, 2011
s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk