

February 3, 2014

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2014 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Furey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bajaj, Furey, Habel, Herring, Rudolph, Sargent, and Chairperson Siani.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Engineering Manager Semaan, Associate Engineer Sedadi, Assistant Engineer Gruezo, Torrance Police Sergeant Koenig, and Torrance Police Sergeant Estrada.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5a. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2013

Chairperson Siani noted the following correction to the minutes: Page 2, Item 7a, Paragraph 6: "Chairperson Siani inquired about an occurrence in South Torrance..."

MOTION: Commissioner Rudolph moved for the approval of the December 2, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1

The Commission welcomed new Traffic Commissioner Ben Bajaj.

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

7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION

**7a. TRAFFIC COMMISSION 2014 WORK PLAN – SECOND PRIORITY:
STAGGER LIMIT LINES FOR DOUBLE LEFT TURN MOVEMENTS**

Associate Engineer Sedadi provided background and reported that staggering limit lines for suitable left turn lanes can help left turning traffic clear an intersection at a higher speed by increasing the vehicle turning path radius while avoiding vehicles in their path. She pointed out that a typical configuration for a staggered limit line and a non-staggered limit line were shown in Attachment A. She noted that, in order to develop a policy for installation of staggered limit lines, three categories need to be considered: 1) Candidate Intersection; 2) Elements influencing the design and installation of staggered limit lines; and 3) Implementation Criteria. She requested that the Commission first consider developing criteria for Candidate Intersection by reviewing the staff report, receiving input from staff, and provide input to develop a draft policy to implement staggered limit lines for double left turn movements.

She stated that candidate intersections should have one or more of the following characteristics: Signalized intersections with double left turn movements; Intersection geometry; Channelization; and Truck routes. She noted that intersections have to be signalized with double left turn movements, explaining that single left turn movements would not benefit from staggered limit lines as the turning vehicle is unconfined and can safely complete a turn in any of the receiving lanes. She noted that a list of viable intersections for staggered limit lines was included in Attachment B and a map showing City owned and Non-Torrance intersections with double left turn movements was included in Attachment C.

Associate Engineer Sedadi described additional factors that should be considered as criteria: an intersection's geometry, channelization, and truck routes. She stated that narrow intersections with restricted maneuverability could be candidates for staggered limit lines. She explained that channelization is a component of an intersection's designed characteristic scheduled for reconstruction, pavement rehabilitation, or striping modification as part of a capital improvement project. She stated that intersections on the City's Truck Route need a larger turning radius and are better candidates for staggered limit lines.

With the aid of slides, Engineering Manager Semaan showed examples of candidates for staggered limit lines and noted that existence of medians, angles where the two intersections meet, speed of turning vehicles, and speed of oncoming vehicles are key components that need to be considered. He noted that safety is the main concern but that there are no locations in the City that have had reoccurring accident rates that have had to be examined. He stated that another element to consider is the cost of implementation and explained that many intersections have inductive loops that would need to be reinstalled. He noted that intersections with video detection would be less expensive and would just require reprogramming. He recommended that intersections be considered and analyzed on a case-by-case basis.

Responding to Commissioner Sargent's inquiries, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that their first preference would be to implement staggered limit lines as part of an existing or future capital improvement project. He explained how inductive loops are all connected together and that standards require three loops at the limit line for operation of the signal. He stated that State highways are not precluded from consideration but would require an extra element to be added.

In response to Commissioner Herring's inquiry, he explained that staff would consider implementing staggered limit lines for low cost locations based on guidelines set by the Commission; however, if there is a capital project moving forward, staff would prefer to implement staggered limit lines if the necessity is there. He added that any prioritization of intersections would occur when developing the design.

Sergeant Koenig assured Commissioners that traffic accidents, violations, or observations at non-staggered intersections are brought to staff's attention for more investigative analysis.

Commissioner Rudolph raised the possibility of cutting back the median at Anza Avenue and Calle Mayor and received clarification from staff that inductive loops are replaced on an as-needed basis.

Commissioner Habel offered his observation that medians can create problems for vehicles making left turns and suggested that some should be removed or cut back.

Engineering Manager Semaan explained how lead/lag operations, split phase operations, and lane lines are often implemented to rectify safety concerns.

In response to Commissioner Bajaj's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan explained how staff and Caltrans work together to implement changes involving State highways.

Chairperson Siani received clarification from staff that critical speed does not need to be included in recommended criteria.

Commissioners offered and discussed components for criteria that include double left turn movements, safety, cost, channelization, truck routes, medians, number of receiving lanes, and congestion.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that staff would compile Commissioners' suggestions and bring back a list of recommended criteria.

7b. STATUS UPDATE ON TRAFFIC COMMISSION 2013 WORK PLAN – SECOND PRIORITY: PROTECTED PERMISSIVE LEFT TURN PHASING SIGNAL OPERATION

Engineering Manager Semaan introduced the item and, at Commissioner Sargent's suggestion, Chairperson Siani explained the development of the Commission Work Plan priorities and Protected Permissive Left Turn (PPLT) phasing with Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA) signals.

In response to Commissioner Bajaj's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan explained the Commission's decision to implement FYA rather than the traditional five section head "doghouse."

Assistant Engineer Gruezo provided background regarding the public outreach campaign and award of contract for construction of Phase I initial PPLT phasing with FYA signals at the following intersections: Northbound and Southbound Arlington

Avenue at Sepulveda Boulevard; Northbound and Southbound Cabrillo Avenue at Sepulveda Boulevard; and All approaches on Prairie Avenue and 182nd Street. He reported that a preconstruction meeting for the project was held on January 31, 2014 and that construction is expected to begin in May 2014. He requested that the Commission concur with staff recommendation to implement Phase II of PPLT phasing with FYA signals for viable movements at the following four intersections: Southbound Lomita Boulevard at Anza Avenue; Northbound and Southbound Madrona Avenue at Emerald Street; Northbound Madrona Avenue at Plaza Del Amo; and Westbound Del Amo Boulevard at Maple Avenue.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that, if the Commission concurs with implementation at these locations, staff would ask the consultant to review the proposal and complete preliminary designs for the locations. He noted that, due to budget limitations, further design and construction could not begin until the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Rudolph initiated a discussion centered on postponing Phase II until the results and monitoring of Phase I have been completed. He voiced his support for erring on the side of caution and analyzing results of Phase I before moving forward with Phase II.

Engineering Manager Semaan indicated that, if directed by the Commission, Phase II could be delayed until summer but pointed out that a contract would not be awarded until after July 1, 2014. He stated that staff's intention was to begin preliminary work on Phase II now so that implementation could begin upon completion of Phase I. He stated that, in the event that it is decided not to proceed with Phase II, time and design costs would be lost. He explained that, if it is determined that PPLT FYA is unsuccessful, they would remove the FYA component and revert back to fully protected operation.

Commissioner Herring recommended going ahead and starting Phase II and Commissioners Sargent and Furey expressed concern that most drivers would not become educated and acclimated to PPLT FYA with just the three locations installed in Phase I.

Commissioner Rudolph stated that he would like the Commission to review the results of Phase I before moving forward and Engineering Manager Semaan responded that it would take five or six months for drivers to acclimate and to accurately come up with a conclusive direction.

At Commissioner Furey's request, Sergeant Koenig advised that when Phase I begins officers would monitor the intersections, educate the drivers, and investigate any collisions. He stated that he expects that some drivers will initially be confused and will just stop in the intersection with the FYA instead of turning.

MOTION: Commissioner Rudolph moved to direct staff to bring the item back at the August 4, 2014 Commission meeting for review and further concurrence following implementation of Phase I Protected Permissive Left Turn phasing with Flashing Yellow Arrow signals. The motion died due to a lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Sargent moved to concur with staff recommendation to proceed with implementation of Phase II of Protected Permissive Left Turns with

Flashing Yellow Arrow signals at recommended locations. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 6-1 roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Bajaj, Furey, Habel, Herring, Sargent, and Chairperson Siani.
NOES: Commissioner Rudolph.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

8a. Engineering Manager Semaan congratulated Commissioner Bajaj on his appointment and Commissioner Habel on his reappointment.

8b. Commissioner Rudolph discussed the need to improve Earl Street between Del Amo Boulevard and Torrance Boulevard.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that there are some industrial properties on Earl Street and that improvements can be made when those properties are recycled.

8c. Commissioner Habel offered his observation that the left turn pocket turning south onto Maple Avenue from westbound Del Amo Boulevard only holds three or four cars.

8d. Commissioner Habel stated that the green left turn arrow on Del Amo Boulevard turning southbound on Madrona Avenue only allows three cars per lane to turn.

Engineering Manager Semaan concurred that there is limited storage capability there and that is why staff is recommending PPLT FYA at that intersection in Phase II.

8e. Commissioner Furey related his observation that the green signal going east on Torrance Boulevard crossing Prairie Avenue is very short.

8f. Commissioner Furey relayed a concern that the green light is still signaling when exiting the old Daily Breeze site.

8g. Commissioner Herring relayed complaints from parents that there are no gaps in traffic to turn right or left onto Arlington Avenue from Lincoln Avenue.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:17 p.m., Commissioner Sargent moved to adjourn the meeting to March 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall. Commissioner Habel seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Siani so ordered.

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Approved as submitted May 5, 2014 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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