

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, March 6, 2006 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ulrich.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Galvin, Rische, Santome, Tsao, Ulrich, and
Chairperson Lewis.

Absent: Commissioner Lee.

MOTION: Commissioner Santome moved to grant an excused absence to Commissioner Lee for the March 6, 2006 Traffic Commission meeting. Commissioner Ulrich seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Also Present: Transportation Manager Semaan,
Project Manager Sedadi, and
Torrance Police Department Lieutenant Matsuda.

4. **AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

MOTION: Commissioner Rische 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; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Lee).

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: FEBRUARY 6, 2006**

MOTION: Commissioner Ulrich moved for the approval of the February 6, 2006 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Santome seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Lee).

6. **ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

6a. **CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE UPDATE OF THE
CIRCULATION ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE'S GENERAL PLAN**

Project Manager Sedadi reported that this was the third meeting that has been held to discuss the Circulation Element of the General Plan update. She noted that, perhaps due to rain, there was not the number of residents present that was expected. She requested that the Commission continue to provide comments and take public input regarding the current Circulation Element and update of the Circulation Element of the General Plan

Commissioner Ulrich received clarification from staff that the General Plan update will need to go before City Council in fall 2006 and that the traffic component of the Circulation Element will need to go to the Planning Commission after the May Traffic Commission meeting at the latest. He distributed copies of the City meeting calendar and suggested that Tuesday, March 14, 2006 be considered for an additional meeting.

It was determined that any component of the Circulation Element could be discussed tonight and that staff would place comments in the appropriate policy or program of the draft element.

Transportation Manager Semaan left the meeting to make copies of the current Circulation Element for members of the audience and Project Manager Sedadi welcomed comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Tsao recommended involving residents in efforts to make the City more beautiful with consistent and enhanced landscaping on major streets.

Project Manager Sedadi advised that the City is completing landscaping along Hawthorne Boulevard as funding allows, as part of the Hawthorne Corridor Specific Plan. She stated that the General Plan update would identify other corridors for landscaping improvements.

Commissioner Rische suggested including a provision that would assign separate parking spaces for motorcycles.

Referring to Policy 2.4, Chairperson Lewis suggested that the City make exemptions for residents with oversized vehicles so they can park them on their own property.

He proposed the addition of more lighted crosswalks and signage for pedestrians in Policy 6.1.4, particularly near schools and Del Amo Mall, as well as to provide more protection for pedestrians and bicyclists on high traffic streets.

Referring to Policy 9.2, he suggested that the City require the railroad to improve railroad crossings still in use as well as the installation of wider sidewalks for bike routes under Policy 10.2 so that bicyclists do not have to share the street with vehicles.

Commissioner Ulrich encouraged the City to take a strong look at recently vacated farmland at the Torrance Airport for storage of recreational vehicle parking or to use it to enhance traffic flow. He recommended providing incentives for ridesharing programs and use of low emission or electric vehicles.

He concurred with Chairperson Lewis' recommendation for enhanced crosswalks and suggested that City truck routes be reviewed.

Commissioner Galvin suggested that crosswalks be enhanced by adding "countdowns" for pedestrians and that the City require all future high-density developments to provide adequate parking spaces, perhaps four spaces per unit. She further recommended addressing school traffic and parking issues.

Referring to Policy 4.3, Commissioner Santome recommended developing a policy for oversized vehicle parking. He suggested that a neighborhood parking complaint mediation program be addressed in Policy 4.4, perhaps in conjunction with a neighborhood watch program.

He recommended a policy in 6.1.1 that assesses accessibility of sidewalks for pedestrians and line-of-sight issues for drivers due to green overgrowth. Additionally, he suggested that Policy 7.2.3 be added to address tree trimming for line of sight issues and sidewalk use.

He suggested adding a program to assist Torrance Unified School District with bicycle rodeos under Policy 7.2.3 in order to educate students about bicycle safety.

He reiterated the importance of providing City land for oversized vehicle parking and recommended charging a fee for storage to pay for necessary capital improvement. He noted that the City should be held accountable by having employees use "green" vehicles.

Commissioner Tsao recommended the promotion of more educational programs on CitiCable and through coordination with Torrance Unified School District. He recommended that future intersections should not have 90-degree turns.

At 7:37 p.m., Chairperson Lewis welcomed comments from the audience.

Gladys Meade, League of Women Voters of Torrance, congratulated Commissioner Ulrich for his letter to the editor in the Daily Breeze as well as Commissioners for their comments on the existing Circulation Element. She stated that the League of Women Voters was unable to comment on specific policies or programs in the element because it needed more information and analysis of raw data on traffic counts to understand why there were improvements and degradations. She stressed the importance of knowing what has been accomplished and what has failed in the last ten years under the existing Circulation Element before moving forward.

Project Manager Sedadi clarified that staff brings summaries of data analysis before the Commission, advising that residents were welcome to review complete data and analysis in the Transportation Planning, Engineering Permits and Records Division office. She stated that many programs and policies in the current Circulation Element have been implemented, such as neighborhood traffic calming and the Hawthorne Corridor Study, and will be reflected in the draft update.

Responding to Commissioner Ulrich's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan noted that the raw data was in six or seven three-inch binders and welcomed the opportunity to share the summary of that data to Ms. Meade or anyone from the League of Women Voters of Torrance. He explained that the Circulation Element was a guidance document while the Citywide Traffic Study addressed specifics.

Commissioner Rische initiated discussion on the importance of understanding what has been accomplished and what has failed under the existing Circulation Element.

Transportation Manager Semaan cited examples of efficiencies and improvements that have been made when Toyota expanded its campus, at the intersection of Artesia Boulevard and Prairie Avenue, and enhanced bicycle routes.

Ms. Meade thanked Transportation Manager Semaan for his explanations, reiterating her request for additional information and analysis to better understand what improvements should be made based on past experience.

Transportation Manager Semaan distributed copies of the current Circulation Element.

Martin Koebel, Rockview Drive, recommended that the City look into battery back-up for all City traffic signals to increase traffic flow, reduce pollution, and save gasoline.

Transportation Manager Semaan explained that most of the City systems and signals currently have battery back-ups with the change over to LED lights for signal operations. He provided details regarding the two modes of operation, noting two to six hours would be available for full operation mode. Referring to Hawthorne Boulevard, he stated that it was not under their purview or jurisdiction to provide battery back-up as it is a State route.

Robert Houston, Elm Avenue, distributed and entered into record copies of his presentation recommending the use of computer chips to control traffic problems. He stated that computer chips could count traffic density and control "go" time accordingly, as well as communicate with traffic signals to enhance traffic flow.

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that Mr. Houston's ideas were currently in progress with the development of "smart signals," automated transportation systems, and signal synchronization efforts. He provided information regarding the multiple systems to control that include time-based coordination and full on-demand operation.

Joe Arciuch, Kathryn Avenue, discussed the problem of skateboard and bicycle use on City sidewalks, complimented Commissioner Ulrich for his letter published in the Daily Breeze, and distributed and entered into record his proposed additions to the Circulation Element regarding Torrance Municipal Airport. He expressed concern about the lack of enforcement of the City ordinance banning touch-and-go training operations on weekends and holidays. He asserted that the Airport segment should be addressed in the same manner as ground transportation in conducting an impact analysis.

Transportation Manager Semaan advised that the General Plan consultants were taking input from the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission as well as the Airport Commission, and offered to forward Mr. Arciuch's comments to the consultants.

The Commission was in recess from 8:33 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

Don Clouch, 238th Street, questioned how staff would determine how many recreational vehicles are registered to City residents and who would be using the proposed City owned storage facility. He stated that he would not support a policy that would allow residents to cement 50% of their front yards to store their vehicles. He

suggested that there was a conflict in the Municipal Code regarding offset of dwellings and garage requirements.

Transportation Manager Semaan noted that it was not possible to determine the number of City registered recreational vehicles from Department of Motor Vehicles or Torrance Police Department data. He advised that the proposal to pave a portion of a front yard would be considered in the Land Use Element and suggested that Mr. Clouch address his concerns to the Planning Commission and at the March 28, 2006 City Council meeting.

Mr. Clouch noted the high number of cars parked on 235th Street from Crenshaw Boulevard to Nadine Circle and that the bike path on 235th Street was too narrow and unsafe due to parked cars.

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that dimensions of the bike path were designed under current standards and that wider bike paths could be addressed in the element update.

Carl Cewinski, Nadine Circle, stated that it was difficult for pedestrians to walk due to overgrowth, adding that pedestrians had to be more observant at intersections than drivers. He suggested that residents provide input on the General Plan update on a website and thanked Commissioner Ulrich for his letter to the Daily Breeze.

Mary Ann Reis, Engracia Avenue, expressed concern that the five-point intersection of Arlington Avenue, Engracia Avenue, and El Dorado was dangerous and recommended the installation of stops signs and crosswalks.

Charles Deemer, Talisman Street, suggested that "smart signals" needed to take pedestrians crossing wide streets into consideration.

Transportation Manager Semaan advised that pedestrian time and traffic operations were factors that would be looked at. Responding to Mr. Deemer's observation, he explained why additional lanes were not added when the Artesia Boulevard project was moving forward.

Public input ended at 9:05 p.m.

Transportation Manager Semaan discussed options of holding an additional meeting on March 14, 2006 or returning to the regularly scheduled April 3, 2006 Commission meeting with a response to comments heard and to receive additional input. He added that a special meeting could be held in April 2006 before the draft is forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Santome expressed concern that there was insufficient time to notify residents of a March 14, 2006 meeting.

Commissioner Ulrich suggested adjourning to the April 3, 2006 Commission meeting and that a letter be submitted to the Daily Breeze asking for additional public input and feedback at that meeting.

Project Manager Sedadi reminded Commissioners to review and provide comments regarding the other three components of the Circulation Element that involve infrastructure, future transportation-related issues, and transportation plans.

7. **ORALS**

7a. Transportation Manager Semaan relayed information about the recreational vehicle issue from the February 28, 2006 City Council meeting, noting that the item is continued until March 28, 2006.

7b. Commissioner Santome thanked staff for their expertise and requested an update on westbound Skypark Drive at Hawthorne Boulevard.

Transportation Manager Semaan advised that staff was continuing discussions with Cal Trans, noting that it was a simple modification.

7c. In response to Commissioner Galvin's inquiry, he identified locations of Southern California Edison's transmission lines currently used by nurseries.

7d. Responding to Commissioner Rische's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan discussed the City's liability and insurance needs involved with operating and maintaining a recreational vehicle storage facility.

7e. Commissioner Rische noted that drivers often turn left through several lanes of traffic on Anza Avenue and suggested the installation of signs restricting left turns.

7f. Transportation Manager Semaan encouraged Commissioners to attend the Traffic Engineers Commission Workshop on April 1, 2006 and Commissioner Galvin indicated that she would attend.

7g. Chairperson Lewis asked staff to investigate buses parked on 182nd Street west of Hawthorne Boulevard.

7h. Project Manager Sedadi stated that the apartment buildings on Van Ness and 176th Street have one single garage per dwelling unit as per standards when built in 1956.

7i. Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the Public Works Department was still considering combining street sweeping and trash pick-up days but that plans and funding sources have not been finalized.

7j. Newt Young, Hickory Avenue (no speaker card), stated that Hickory Avenue and 227th Street could not be swept due to school parking and suggested that the sweeper come at 7:00 a.m. or after school hours.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:32 p.m., Chairperson Lewis adjourned the meeting to April 3, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted April 3, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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