



Agenda Item #: 06/1108.14

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Tell and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager *GD*

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development *RT*
Rob Osborne, Management Analyst *RO*

DATE: November 8, 2006

SUBJECT: Uphold the Parking and Public Improvements Commission Recommendation to Implement Traffic Flow Modifications in the Civic Center Area, Including Removal of the Stop Sign on Southbound Valley Drive at 13th Street and the Left Turn Pocket on Northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council pass a motion to approve the Parking and Public Improvements Commission recommendation to:

- Remove the stop sign on southbound Valley Drive at 13th Street
- Eliminate the left turn pocket on northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street

It is also recommended that the Council adopt Resolution No. 6072 to amend the City's Traffic Resolution to include these modifications as well as others made during development of Metlox and the Police/Fire facility.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The recommended modifications could be accomplished through existing Public Works programs and budgets.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Metlox and Police/Fire Facility developments a number of traffic flow modifications were made in the Civic Center area. Most notably a segment of Valley Drive was changed from one-way to two-way traffic flow, a segment of Morningside Drive was changed from two-way to one-way traffic flow and 13th Street was extended through to Valley Drive from Morningside Drive. While these modifications have generally been found to be successful, two areas of concern have been identified, as follows:

- Southbound traffic on Valley Drive is frequently backed up from the new stop sign at 13th Street

- Drivers turning onto southbound Valley Drive from 15th Street often cross the center line because they do not have sufficient space to make their turns

These issues were reviewed by the Parking and Public Improvements Commission at their meeting on September 28, 2006.

DISCUSSION

As described in the attached report the Traffic Engineer supports removal of both the Valley/13th Street stop sign and the Valley/15th Street left turn pocket. He feels the stop sign is not necessary to facilitate safe left turns onto Valley Drive from 13th Street and creates significant congestion for southbound traffic. It is also felt that removing the stop sign will help alleviate driver confusion in the area during the Metlox Farmers' Market on Tuesday afternoons. With regard to the northbound left turn pocket, the Traffic Engineer feels it is rarely used and additional space is needed for those turning onto Valley from 15th Street.

At the PPIC meeting testimony was provided by two area residents. The Commission agreed with the Traffic Engineer's findings and voted (3-0, Donahue and Paralusz absent) to approve the staff recommendations.

Should the Council approve the recommended modifications, adoption of the attached Resolution No. 6072 would make the necessary amendment to the City's Traffic Resolution. It would also reflect the following changes made during development of Metlox and the Police/Fire facility:

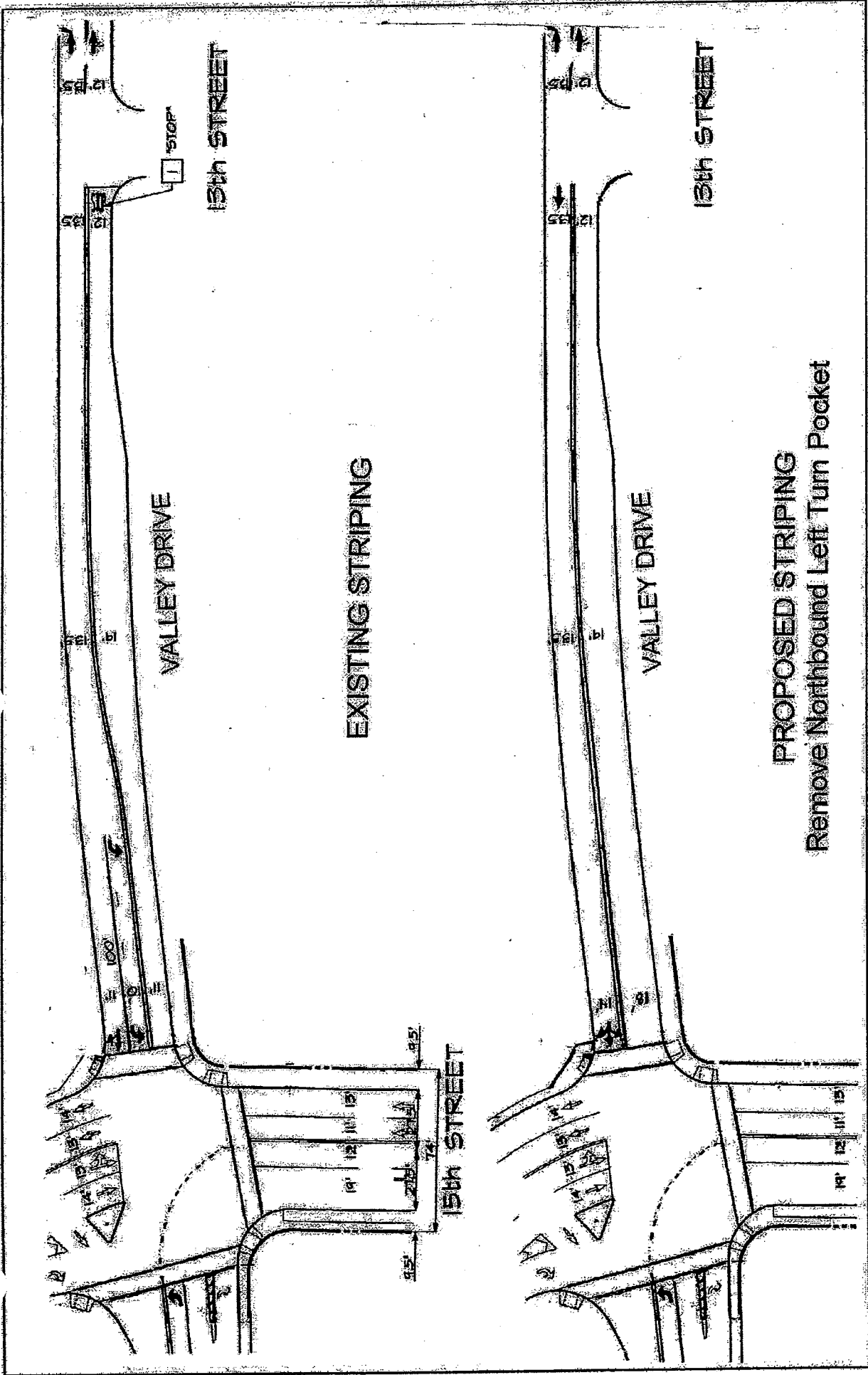
- Conversion of Valley Drive to two-way traffic flow between 15th Street and 13th Street
- Installation of a traffic signal on northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street
- Conversion of Morningside Drive to one-way traffic flow between Manhattan Beach Boulevard and 13th Street
- Installation of stop signs on the eastbound, westbound and northbound approaches to the Morningside Drive/13th Street intersection.
- Installation of a stop sign on eastbound 13th Street at Valley Drive
- Elimination of a stop sign on southbound Morningside Drive at Manhattan Beach Boulevard

Meeting notices were sent to all properties on Ardmore Avenue and 15th Street in the Civic Center area.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. **APPROVE** the recommendation of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission.
2. **REMOVE** this item from the Consent Calendar and provide staff with direction

- Attachments:
- A. Sketch of modifications
 - B. Resolution No. 6072
 - C. Excerpt from PPIC minutes of 9/28/06
 - D. PPIC report dated 9/28/06, with attachments
 - F. Meeting notice, 10/24/06



**VALLEY DRIVE BETWEEN 13TH STREET AND 15TH STREET
PROPOSED STRIPING MODIFICATION**

PROPOSED STRIPING
Remove Northbound Left Turn Pocket

City of Manhattan Beach
Department of Community Development
Traffic Engineering



PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 8th day of November, 2006.

Ayes:
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

Mayor, City of Manhattan Beach, California

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By 

City Attorney

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2006**

Consideration of Civic Center/Valley Drive Traffic Modifications

Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet presented staff's report and recommendation to remove the stop sign in the southbound direction of Valley Drive at 13th Street and the northbound left turn pocket on Valley Drive at 15th Street.

Audience Participation

Bob Lauson, 600 Block of 23rd Street, shared how surprised he was when the above measures were first implemented, as he felt they did not make any sense. He talked of the traffic backup and driver confusion caused by these measures and questioned why Morningside Drive has to be one way.

Daniel Giallombardo, 1100 Block of North Ardmore Avenue, remarked that the back up of traffic is just occurring during rush hour. The stop sign slows drivers' down and actually makes the area safer because pedestrians are cutting through the hedge and crossing the street.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet responded that Morningside Drive was made a one way street to assist traffic circulation out of Metlox and address the congestion on Manhattan Beach Boulevard. In regard to pedestrians cutting through the hedge and crossing over Valley Drive, he shared that the City is undertaking a Downtown Parking Study which will study this area in greater detail.

Discussion

Commissioner Osterhout voiced his support of staff's recommendations.

Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that she agrees with staff's recommendations, but also agrees with Mr. Lauson's comments that this stretch of road is awkward. She requested that signage be installed in the Valley Drive parking lot to direct pedestrians to the signalized crosswalk on Manhattan Beach Boulevard, and noted that Morningside Drive being designated a one way street has alleviated traffic congestion on Manhattan Beach Boulevard which is a problematic intersection.

Chairman Lang noted his agreement of staff's recommendations as well.

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Seville-Jones/Osterhout) to approve staff's recommendation to remove the stop sign in the southbound direction of Valley Drive at 13th Street and the northbound left turn pocket on Valley Drive at 15th Street.

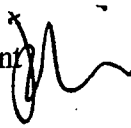
DRAFT

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AYES: Osterhout, Seville-Jones, Chairman Lang
NOES: None
ABSENT: Donahue, Paralusz
ABSTAIN: None

DRAFT

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

TO: Parking and Public Improvements Commission
FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development 
BY: Erik Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer *RO*
DATE: September 28, 2006
SUBJECT: Consideration of Civic Center/Valley Drive Traffic Modifications

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Commission recommend:

1. Removal of the stop sign in the southbound direction of Valley Drive at 13th Street, and
2. Removal of the northbound left turn pocket on Valley Drive at 15th Street.

BACKGROUND:

In June, 2006, the City restriped Valley Drive between 13th Street and 15th Street from a one-way southbound street to a two-way street in conjunction with the opening of 13th Street between Morningside Drive and Valley Drive. This change is part of the Metlox and Public Safety Facility projects in downtown, intended to improve traffic circulation around the Metlox development and the eastern portion of downtown. Prior to this date, Valley Drive had two southbound only lanes beginning at 15th Street. In the final street design for the Public Safety Facility, stop signs were included on all approaches of Valley Drive/13th Street as a precaution at the new intersection.

DISCUSSION:

Valley Drive is a 26 to 32-foot wide, two-lane local street that provides north-south circulation through the western portion of the city and through downtown. The speed limit on Valley Drive in the downtown segment is 25 mph. Valley Drive between 15th Street and Manhattan Beach Boulevard is improved with curbs and gutters on both sides and sidewalks on the west side. Parking is not allowed on either side of the street. 13th Street is a two-lane local street between Highland Avenue and Valley Drive. The speed limit on 13th Street is 25 mph. 13th Street is improved with curbs, gutters and sidewalks on both sides. Diagonal curb parking is provided on both sides of 13th Street. The Public Safety Facility is on the west side of Valley Drive north of 13th Street and the Metlox Development is south of 13th Street.

The intersection of Valley Drive and 15th Street is signalized, and works together with signals at Ardmore Avenue/15th Street. There is one lane in the north-south directions and two lanes in the

east-west directions with left turn pockets on the northbound and southbound directions only. The traffic signal works in coordination with signals at Ardmore Avenue and 15th Street.

The intersection of Valley Drive and 13th Street is stopped in the eastbound and southbound approaches. The northbound approach is one-way southbound. There are no access points on the east side of Valley Drive in this segment.

The traffic collision history was not analyzed for the intersection due to recent opening of 13th Street. However, the city is not aware of any reported traffic collisions near Valley Drive and 13th Street since it was opened.

While a traffic volume study has not been conducted, the Traffic Engineer's observations estimate the volume at approximately 500 vehicles per day. Valley Drive carries approximately 7,500 vehicles per day.

Removal of Northbound Left Turn Pocket

Once traffic began using this new section of roadway, staff noticed that some drivers had difficulty negotiating the eastbound to southbound right turn, particularly bus and truck traffic. This was caused by the restriping of three lanes in the same street width as two lanes prior to the modification in combination with a small southwest corner radius. After further observations, the Traffic Engineer has determined that the removal of the northbound left turn lane and adjustment of the centerline eastward will alleviate this condition while not adversely affecting traffic flow. Northbound left turn volume is very low, and northbound traffic between 13th and 15th Streets is also low. The eastbound to southbound right turn, on the other hand, is substantially higher in volume, and includes frequent bus and medium size commercial truck traffic.

Removal of Southbound Stop Sign

The opening of 13th Street with stop signs on both approaches also precipitated another unanticipated condition. Besides many southbound drivers failing to stop on Valley Drive at 13th Street, the high volume of southbound vehicles creates congestion that often extends beyond the traffic signal at 15th Street. Also, the initial concern that 13th Street traffic would have difficulty entering Valley Drive has not materialized. This is due to adequate breaks in southbound traffic resulting from the signalized controls at 15th Street to the north, coupled with low traffic volume on 13th Street. As such, staff believes that removal of the southbound stop sign would not have an adverse effect on traffic flow. In fact, it is believed that the potential for rear-end collisions will be reduced because the large majority of traffic on Valley Drive will not be forced to stop at an unexpected stop sign between two traffic signals. The Traffic Engineer has also confirmed that sight distance is very good for motorists waiting on 13th Street at Valley Drive.

The Police and Public Works Departments were asked to review the possibility of removing the stop signs. Their comments are attached. Some concern was stated that eliminating the stop sign could increase the likelihood of collisions at the intersection.

Multi-way Stop Signs: The State of California has established guidelines for the installation of stop signs. These criteria have been widely accepted and are used by the City of Manhattan Beach. Multi-way or all-way stop controls are generally recommended when one or more of the criteria are satisfied.

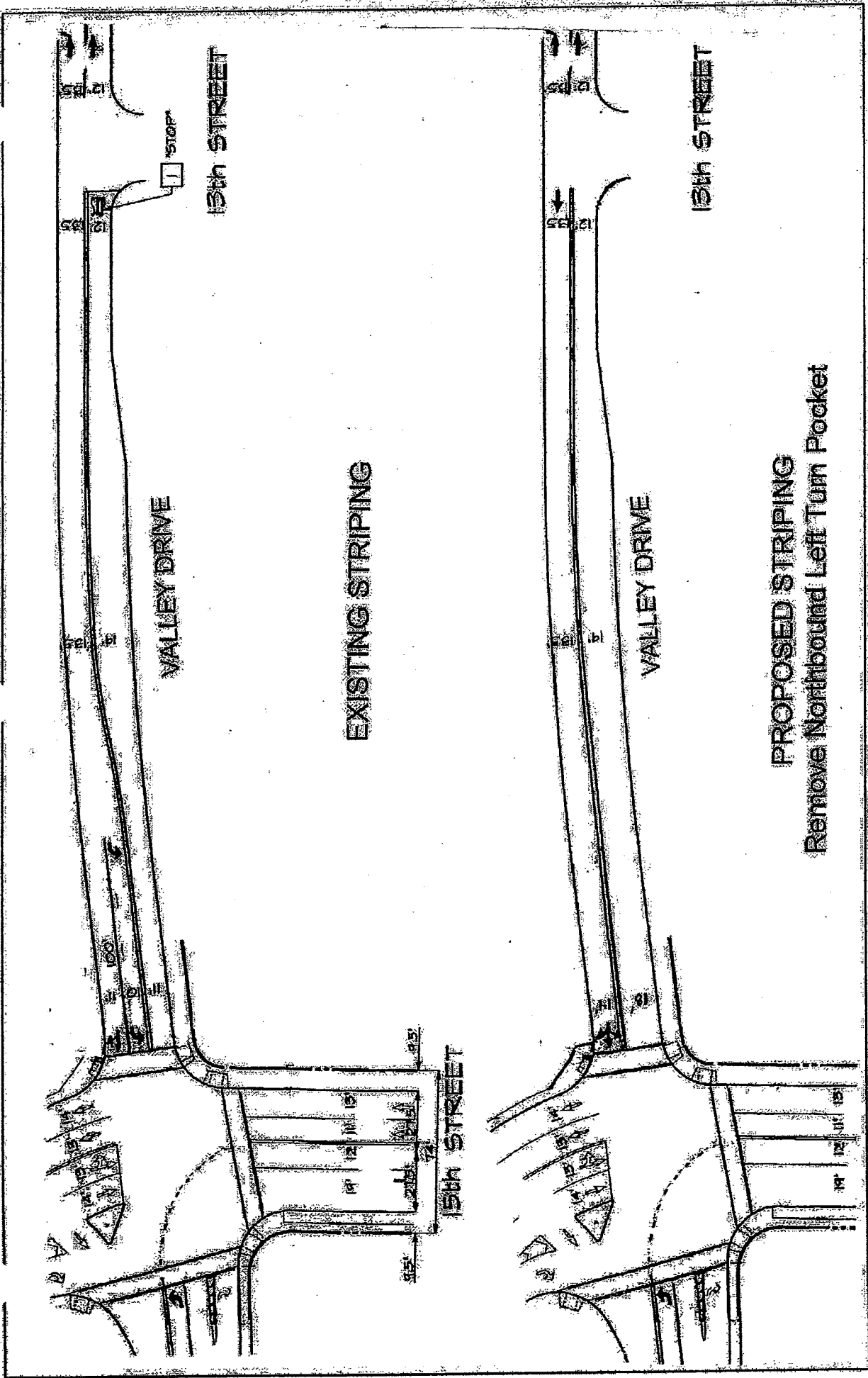
A stop sign warrant checklist is attached to this report that indicates that either single or multi-way stop signs may be warranted at this location based on low traffic volumes, good visibility and absence of a collision history. However, multi-way stop signs may be justified if conditions change, such as the possible addition of a crosswalk to the public parking lot on the east side of the intersection or long delays in eastbound traffic. If conditions become apparent that can not be remedied by other means, multi-way stop signs could be reconsidered in the future.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the narrowed lane widths, low northbound traffic volume and difficulty for large vehicles to make eastbound to southbound right turns, removal of the northbound left turn pocket on Valley Drive at 15th Street and restriping to two lanes is recommended. Due to low volumes and good sight distance for motorists waiting on 13th Street, the removal of the southbound stop sign on Valley Drive at 13th Street is recommended.

Meeting notices were sent to all properties on Ardmore Avenue and 15th Street in the Civic Center area.

Attachments



VALLEY DRIVE BETWEEN 13TH STREET AND 15TH STREET
 PROPOSED STRIPING MODIFICATION

City of Manhattan Beach
 Department of Community Development
 Traffic Engineering





STOP SIGN WARRANT CHECKLIST

MAJOR STREET: Valley Drive MINOR STREET: 13th Street

REQUESTED BY: Staff DATE: 7/18/05

REVIEWED BY: EHZ

Warranted?

SINGLE STREET STOP SIGN WARRANTS - None

- On a less important road where the normal right-of-way rules would not be expected to provide reasonable compliance with the law.
- On a street entering a legally established through highway or street.
- At an unsignalized intersection in a signalized area.
- At other intersections where high speeds, restricted view, or crash record indicates a need for control by a stop sign.

MULTI-WAY STOP SIGN WARRANTS

- Where traffic signals are warranted, and stop signs are used as an interim measure to control traffic while the signal is installed.
- Where a crash problem exists, as indicated by five or more reported accidents within a 12 month period of a type correctable by a multi-way stop sign.
- Where the total vehicular volume entering from the major street approaches average at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours, and

the combined vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian volume from the minor street approaches average at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to the minor street traffic is at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour, and

if the 85th percentile approach speed of the major street traffic exceeds 40 MPH, the minimum vehicular volume warrant is 70 percent of the above requirements.
- Where there four or more reported accidents within a 12 month period of a type correctable by a multi-way stop sign, and

the average major and minor street volumes are at least 80% of the minimum values.
- Other locations where multi-way stop signs are justified based on an engineering study.

MULTI-WAY STOP SIGN WORKSHEET

MAJOR STREET: Valley Drive 85TH SPEED - < 40mph

MINOR STREET: 13th Street DATE: 9/20/06

TRAFFIC VOLUMES **WARRANTED** **YES** **NO**

If the 85th percentile speed of the major street exceeds 40 MPH, use 70% volume.

Street	Min Volume	70%	80%	Ave.	Hour / Volume
Major	300	210	240	750	750 (estimated)*
Minor	200	140	160	<50	< 50 (estimated)*

And, does the minor street have an average delay of at least 30 seconds in the peak hour?

Peak Average Delay	<30 sec
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COLLISION RECORD **WARRANTED** **YES** **NO**

Are there five or more reported collisions within a 12 month period of a type correctable by a multi-way stop sign?

DATE	TIME	DIRECTION	TYPE	CAUSE
		None recorded to date.		

Too recent to determine

80% COMBINATION **WARRANTED** **YES** **NO**

Are there four or more reported accidents within a 12 month period of a type correctable by a multi-way stop sign, and

Average major and minor street volumes are at least 80% of the minimum values?

OTHER MULTI-WAY STOP CONDITIONS **WARRANTED** **YES** **NO**

- A. Need to control left turn conflicts YES NO
- B. Need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts at high ped locations YES NO
- C. Visibility obstruction after stopping on minor street approach YES NO
- D. Two similar neighborhood collector streets that would improve operation YES NO

Note: Item B is a future condition that is not evident at this time.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

*The density and pattern of existing intersection controls in the downtown area is such that some drivers may have the expectation that this intersection is stopped in all directions.
The proximity to sensitive locations such as Schools or Police and Fire Department driveways could justify multi-way stop signs for improved safety.*

Rob Osborne

From: Derrick Abell
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 2:02 PM
To: Rob Osborne
Subject: RE: Valley/13th Street

The Chief asked the same question and I responded with the following:

In the short time that we have been here it appears that southbound Valley traffic is consistently backed up in front of the Police Department exit on Valley. In order for officers to be able to respond to emergency calls from the Valley exit it may be necessary to mark the street with "Keep Clear" in front of the PD exit. I don't believe that we are going to be able to remove the stop sign altogether because there has to be an allowance for eastbound 13th Street traffic to be able to turn northbound onto Valley.

This suggestion may not reduce the congestion but it will reduce the number of vehicles blocking the police exit.

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Osborne
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 1:43 PM
To: Bryan Klatt; Derrick Abell; Juan Price
Subject: Valley/13th Street

We've been asked to evaluate the need for the new stop sign on Valley at 13th Street. There is concern that it backs up traffic quite a bit during busy periods. Any thoughts?

Rob Osborne

From: Bryan Klatt
Date: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 2:15 PM
To: Rob Osborne
Subject: RE: Valley/13th Street

Rob,

It definitely does back up...Maybe eliminate the Valley Dr stop sign and keep the one on 13th....Just my thought on it....Bryan

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Osborne
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 1:43 PM
To: Bryan Klatt; Derrick Abell; Juan Price
Subject: Valley/13th Street

We've been asked to evaluate the need for the new stop sign on Valley at 13th Street. There is concern that it backs up traffic quite a bit during busy periods. Any thoughts?

08/02/2006

Message

Rob Osborne

From: Juan Price
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 3:01 PM
To: Rob Osborne
Subject: RE: Valley/13th Street

I think it's warranted- I think a t-bone collision is more likely without it (s/b Valley vs. left turning going n/b Valley). It also makes it safer for the farmers market

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Osborne
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2006 1:43 PM
To: Bryan Klatt; Derrick Abell; Juan Price
Subject: Valley/13th Street

We've been asked to evaluate the need for the new stop sign on Valley at 13th Street. There is concern that it backs up traffic quite a bit during busy periods. Any thoughts?

Rob Osborne

From: Richard Magnuson [rmagnusonaia@verizon.net]
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2006 10:09 AM
To: Rob Osborne
Subject: Valley Drive Traffic Modifications

Dear Mr. Osborne,

I support keeping the stop sign on southbound Valley Drive at 13th Street. It has significantly reduced southbound speeding on Valley Drive between Live Oak Park and Manhattan Beach Boulevard.

Elimination of the left turn pocket on northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street would be beneficial to drivers coming from Ardmore and 15th Street and trying to turn onto southbound Valley Drive.

In addition, the City should long ago have painted over the "Keep Clear" pavement markings in front of the former temporary fire station on Valley Drive. Many drivers still observe this warning and it contributes to the southbound back-up on Valley during evening rush hour.

Please pass my comments along to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission.

Thank You,

Richard Magnuson
510 17th Street
Manhattan Beach

09/27/2006



City Hall 1400 Highland Avenue Manhattan Beach, CA 90266-4795

Telephone (310) 802-5000 FAX (310) 802-5001

September 14, 2006

***** PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE *****

Re: Valley Drive Traffic Modifications

Dear Resident/Property Owner:

On Thursday, September 28, 2006, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission will review the following issues related to traffic flow in the Civic Center area:

- The possibility of eliminating the stop sign on southbound Valley Drive at 13th Street
- The possibility of eliminating the left turn pocket on northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street to create additional room for cars turning onto southbound Valley Drive from 15th Street

The meeting will be held in the City Council Chamber, 1400 Highland Avenue, and will begin at 6:30 p.m. Interested parties are encouraged to attend the meeting and provide input.

If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please call 802-5540 or E-mail rosborne@citymb.info

Sincerely,

Rob Osborne
Management Analyst
Community Development Department



City Hall 1400 Highland Avenue Manhattan Beach, CA 90266-4795

Telephone (310) 802-5000 FAX (310) 802-5001

October 24, 2006

***** PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE *****

Re: Civic Center Traffic Modifications

Dear Owner/Resident:

On September 28, 2006, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission reviewed the feasibility of eliminating the stop sign on southbound Valley Drive at 13th Street and the left turn pocket on northbound Valley Drive at 15th Street. The Commission voted to recommend that these traffic control measures be eliminated.

The City Council will review this recommendation at a public meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2006. The meeting will be held in the City Council Chamber, 1400 Highland Avenue, and will begin at 6:30 p.m. Any comments you might like to make at the meeting would be welcomed.

The issue will be on the portion of the agenda known as the "Consent Calendar", meaning that it will not automatically be discussed. If it is not requested to be discussed by either a member of the audience, a City staff person or a Councilmember, the recommended action will be approved without discussion. At a point at the beginning of the meeting the Mayor will ask the audience if they would like any items to be removed from the Consent Calendar. If you do not agree with the recommended action for this item, be sure to request that it be removed at that time. It will then be discussed during the portion of the agenda entitled "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar", toward the end of the meeting.

If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please call me at 802-5540.

Sincerely,

Rob Osborne
Community Development Department

