



Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Fahey and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

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

DATE: March 15, 2005

SUBJECT: Uphold the Parking and Public Improvements Commission Recommendation to Approve a Request to Implement Various Traffic Safety Measures at the El Porto Parking Lot Exit at 40th Street

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council pass a motion to approve the Parking and Public Improvements Commission recommendation to implement the following measures at the El Porto Parking Lot exit at 40th Street:

- Paint crosswalk markings along the Strand at the exit
- Paint a white pedestrian path through the parking lot to the beach access stairs
- Paint a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path
- Remove the "PED XING" sign north of the parking lot exit
- Repaint the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance
- Do not install a speed bump at the exit at this time
- Direct the Police Department to provide focused enforcement in the area

Staff recommends that the wrong way spikes at the parking lot exit be repaired by the Public Works Department rather than be replaced as suggested by the PPIC.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The cost of replacing the wrong way spikes is estimated at \$6,000. Repairing the spikes and implementing the other measures recommended by the PPIC could be accomplished through existing Public Works programs and budgets.

BACKGROUND:

The City recently received a petition requesting implementation of the following measures at the El Porto Parking Lot exit at 40th Street:

- Installation of a speed bump at the exit
- Installation of a painted crosswalk across The Strand at the exit driveway
- Installation of a painted pedestrian path across the parking lot leading to the beach access stairs
- Locking down the wrong way spikes at the exit during the non-peak season

The petitioners expressed concerns related to pedestrian safety and noise impacts in this area. The petition was reviewed by the Parking and Public Improvements Commission at a public meeting on February 24, 2005.

DISCUSSION:

As described in the attached staff report, the Traffic Engineer supports the measures requested in the petition. He feels there are some safety and noise issues in this area that could be mitigated through the implemented through implementation of various minor measures. He recommended the following:

- Installation of a 3 ½” high x 2” wide speed bump at the exit
- Installation of painted crosswalk markings on the Strand
- Installation of a painted pedestrian path through the parking lot
- Locking down the wrong way spikes during the non-peak season.
- Creating a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path
- Removal of the ineffective “PED XING” sign north of the parking lot exit
- Repainting the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance

At the Commission meeting testimony was provided by five residents. Opinions expressed regarding the need for wrong way spikes, noise created by the spikes and the need for a speed bump at the exit were varied. The Commission supported the Traffic Engineer’s findings with the exception of the wrong way spikes and the speed bump. They feel the spikes are needed at all times and should be replaced with the latest technology to reduce noise impacts. They do not feel a speed bump would be effective at this location. A motion to recommend the following was approved unanimously:

- Installation of painted crosswalk markings
- Installation of a pedestrian path
- Replacing the wrong way spikes with the latest technology
- Creating a new parking space just west of the exit
- Removal of the ineffective “PED XING” sign
- Repainting the existing striping and markings on 40th Street
- That the Police Department provide focused enforcement in this area

The Public Works Department has indicated that there are no superior wrong way spike products available on the market. The existing spikes are insulated with a rubber-like material that deadens noise impacts. However, the insulation material wears out frequently and is currently in need of repair. Public Works staff recommends repairing the existing spikes rather than replacing them.

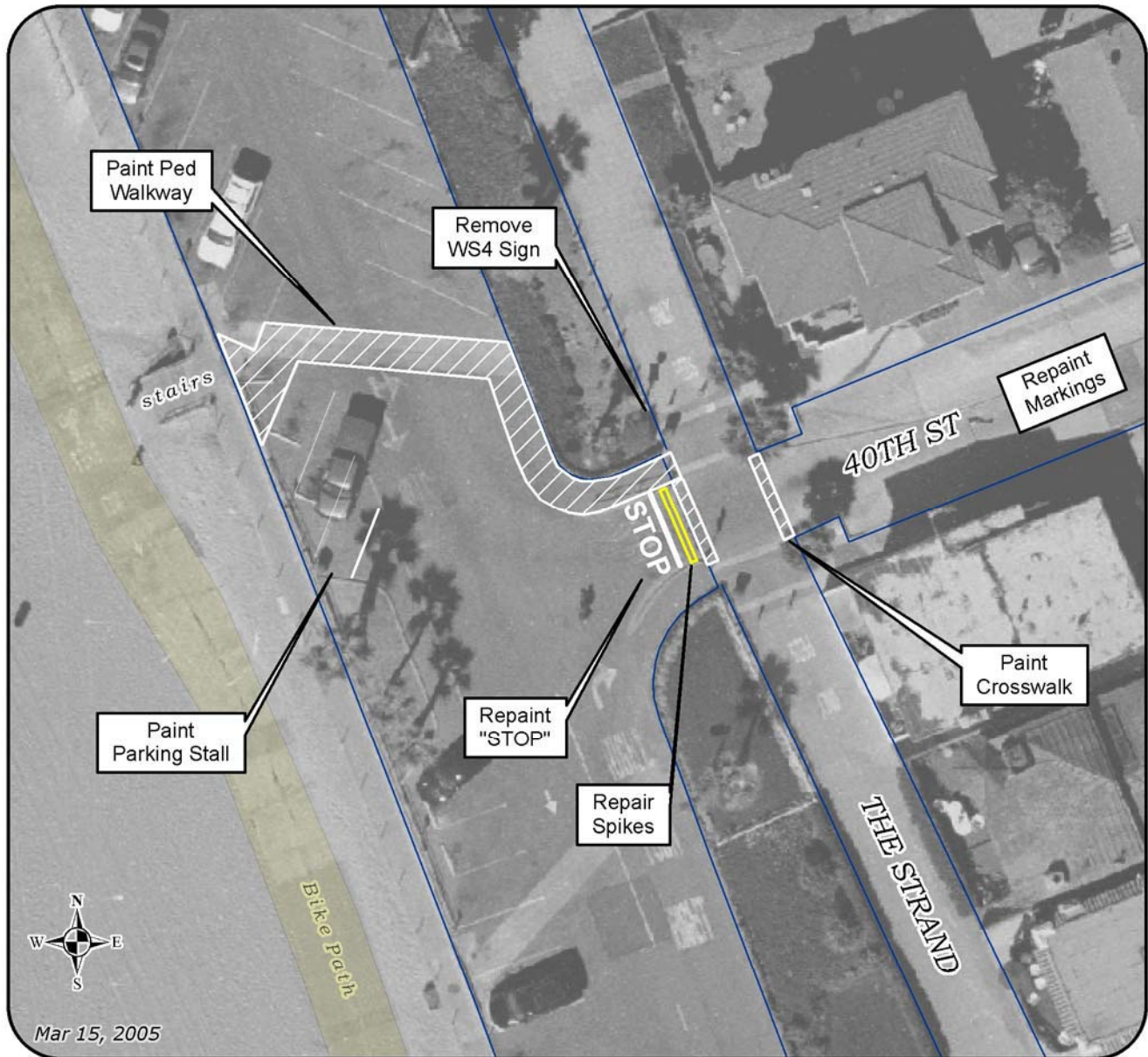
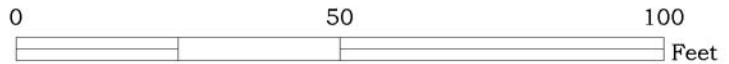
Meeting notices were sent to all properties within 300 feet of the parking lot exit.

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. Area map
 - B. Excerpt from PPIC minutes of 2/24/05
 - C. PPIC report dated 2/24/05, with attachments
 - D. Meeting notice, 3/1/05

El Porto Parking Lot 40th Street Exit Sign & Striping Modifications



**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 24, 2005**

2. Request for Various Modifications - El Porto Parking Lot Exit at 40th Street

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report relative to a submitted petition signed by four local residents requesting various noise and pedestrian measures at the El Porto Parking Lot exit. He reviewed staff's findings and analysis of the request, stating that based on the expected traffic and pedestrian safety improvements, staff is recommending the following measures:

1. "Lock down" the wrong way spikes during the non-peak season
2. Paint crosswalk markings at the El Porto Parking lot exit at The Strand
3. Paint a white pedestrian path through the parking lot to the stairs
4. Paint a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path
5. Remove one "PED XING" sign north of the parking lot exit on a street light too far from the exit.
6. Install one 3 ½ " high x 2" wide speed bump in the parking lot at the exit to 40th Street
7. Repaint the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance.

The Commission held discussion with Traffic Engineer Zandvliet relative to the noise of the spikes in disrepair, methods to quiet or update the mechanism and the coordination of the recommended measures with the Strand Improvement Project. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that staff believes a speed bump would raise driver's awareness and not generate a lot of noise as drivers will be traveling at a slow speed when crossing over the bump.

Audience Participation

Michael Hoffman, 40th Street, stated that the problem at the El Porto Lot is caused by continual cut through traffic, ignorance of traffic restrictions and lack of police enforcement. He shared that locking down the spikes will increase cut through traffic and questioned why exit traffic from the lot is not spread out to nearby streets which would lessen the burden on 40th Street.

Randall Meadors, The Strand, provided a background on the El Porto Lot and how it has become a thoroughfare. He talked of the noise generated by the spikes and his belief that locking down the spikes will not increase traffic and should be tested on a trial basis, noting that the spikes can be easily unlocked if necessary. Mr. Meadows talked of motorists traveling fast through the lot, stating that a speed bump may help but he doesn't think it will make a major impact. He also suggested that the parking spot near the pedestrian walkway be realigned to create more walking space.

John Stiegler, The Strand, thanked staff for their efforts to make this area safer. He talked of the loudness of the spikes and inquired if proper maintenance or some type of rubber seal or strip could dampen the sound. Mr Stiegler also talked of the danger these spikes pose to barefoot and sandal clad pedestrians traveling to the beach and suggested that the spikes be painted to increase awareness. He voiced agreement with Mr. Meadors' suggestion to enlarge the pedestrian walkway and that speed bumps may help slow down traffic.

Relaying that he is long time resident of this area, **Joe Williams, 40th Street**, shared history on the Parking Lot and how it was configured to provide entrance on 45th Street and exit on Rosecrans Avenue, and that 40th Street was one way westbound with diagonal parking. Mr. Williams cautioned the placement of speed bumps, stating that nearby residents will be sorry once they are installed because they will increase noise. He concluded by stating that he has a "No Left Turn from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m." sign he would love to give to the City for free.

Art Merken, The Strand, stated that the first problem that needs to be resolved in this area is safety as it has a large amount of pedestrian traffic intersecting with a heavy vehicle usage. He suggested that additional and more visible signage be installed. He cautioned against a painted crosswalk, stating it will create a false sense of security and agreed that the pedestrian crossing area needs to be re-aligned to increase the walkway space. Mr. Merken voiced support of trying out the speed bump as well as measures that could dampen the sound of the spikes.

Discussion

Commenting that he is a former resident of 40th Street, Commissioner Lang shared that the majority of speeding occurs as motorists are traveling up 40th Street and that the issue is police enforcement. He asked staff if Police Department personnel was invited to the meeting.

Management Analyst Osborne responded that Police personnel were not invited to attend as the issue was not presented as a police enforcement matter.

Commissioner Lang continued with his comments, stating that he does not believe speed bumps will solve the problem but in fact increase motorists speed and noise, and that more appropriate placed signage might help. He shared that the spikes seem to be working and that measures can be implemented to decrease noise. He concluded by reiterating that he believes the issue at hand is enforcement.

Commissioner Lesser agreed with Commission Lang that the issue is enforcement and that a speed bump may not prove effective. He stated that the spikes serve as a deterrent and should be properly maintained, suggesting that staff look into methods or improved equipment to lessen the noise and make the spikes more visible to pedestrians. He spoke in favor of the crosswalk and signage that can be clearly seen and noted the importance of integrating these proposed measures with The Strand

Renovation Project.

Commissioner Osterhout agreed that the speeding problem is more of an issue farther up 40th Street and also questions the effectiveness of a speed bump. He talked of the lack of signage that exists, noting that it is not obvious that the Parking Lot exit brings you to the Strand. Commissioner Osterhout indicated his support of passing the proposed measures to the City Council for further review and integration with The Strand Renovation Project.

Acting Chairperson Ackland stated that although she had concerns with some of the proposed measures, specifically the speed bump, she acknowledges that the residents have worked with staff to bring forth these measures and should be considered. She requested that the recommendations also include the replacement of the current spikes with the newest technology possible and that the equipment be maintained properly. Acting Chairperson Ackland also suggested that a small sign noting beach access at 45th Street be installed.

Commissioner Lang commented on the Commission installing a speed bump when they have doubts on its effectiveness.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet responded that a speed bump won't hurt and might help the situation by notifying the driver to "watch out" and be more aware. He stated that noise level shouldn't increase much if vehicles travel over the speed bump at the proper speed.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Ackland) to approve the following measures at the El Porto Parking Lot Exit at 40th Street:

1. Replace the current spikes with new, latest technology spikes and institute a proper schedule of maintenance
2. Paint crosswalk markings at the El Porto Parking lot exit at The Strand
3. Paint a white pedestrian path through the parking lot to the stairs
4. Paint a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path
5. Remove one "PED XING" sign north of the parking lot exit on a street light too far from the exit.
6. Install one 3 ½ " high x 2" wide speed bump in the parking lot at the exit to 40th Street
7. Repaint the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance
8. That the Police Department provide focused enforcement in this area

AYES: Lesser, Lang, Osterhout, Acting Chairperson Ackland
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

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

TO: Parking and Public Improvements Commission

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
Robert D. Osborne, Management Analyst

BY: Erik Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer

DATE: February 24, 2005

SUBJECT: Request for Various Modifications
El Porto Parking Lot Exit at 40th Street

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Commission recommend the following:

1. "Lock down" the wrong way spikes during the non-peak season.
2. Paint crosswalk markings at the El Porto Parking lot exit at The Strand.
3. Paint a white pedestrian path through the parking lot to the stairs.
4. Paint a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path.
5. Remove one "PED XING" sign north of the parking lot exit on a street light too far from the exit.
6. Install one 3 ½" high x 2" wide speed bump in the parking lot at the exit to 40th Street.
7. Repaint the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance.

BACKGROUND:

On December 16, 2004, Mr. Randall Meadors, at 4002 The Strand, submitted a petition signed by four local residents requesting various noise and pedestrian measures including the following:

1. Installation of a speed bump at the exit driveway to El Porto Parking Lot,
2. Installation of a painted crosswalk markings along The Strand at the exit driveway,
3. Installation of a painted pedestrian path across the parking lot to the stairs leading to the beach, and
4. Locking down the "Wrong Way" spikes at the exit during non-peak season.

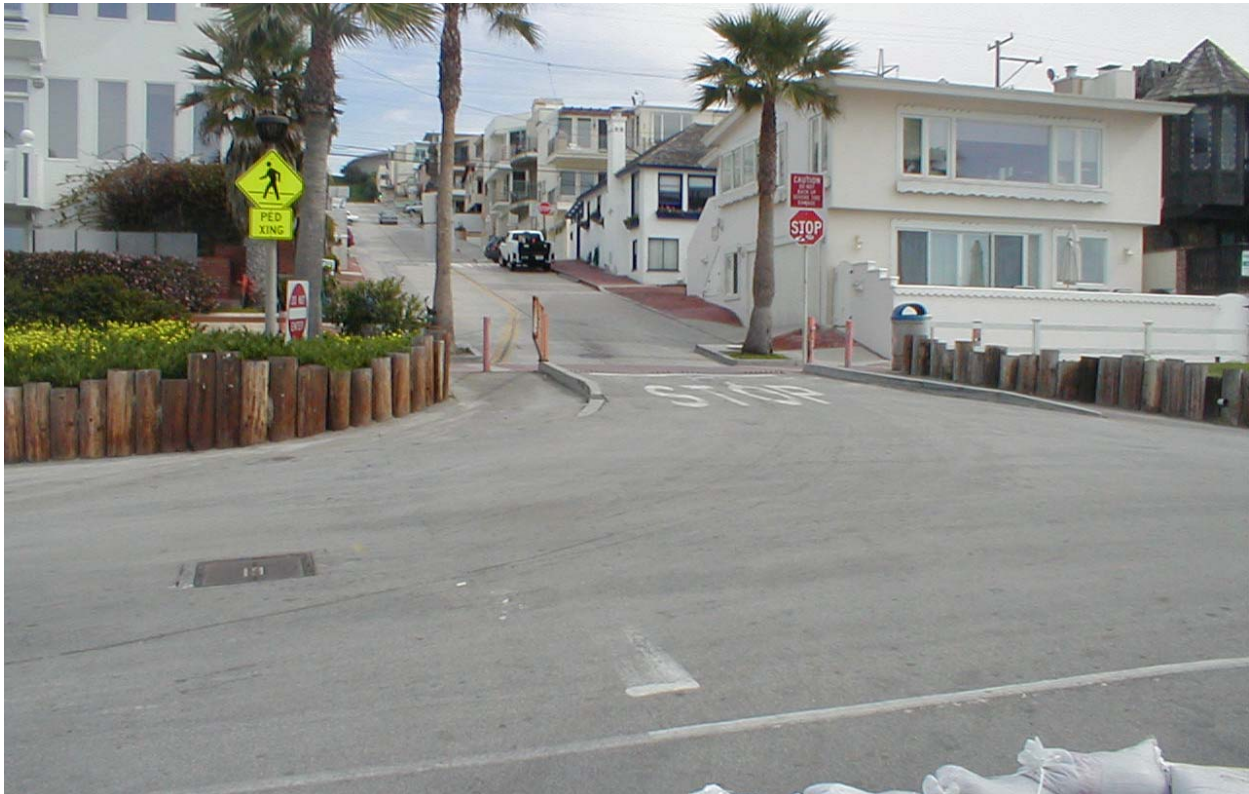
In June 2004, the City had previously received a letter from Mr. Meadors, which explained several noise and pedestrian issues near the parking lot exit. Subsequent to this letter, staff met with Mr. Meadors to discuss certain improvements that may help address some of his concerns and recommended that he solicit local support for his suggestions.

DISCUSSION:

The El Porto Parking Lot is a large public lot that serves beach visitors at the north end of the City. The parking lot is one-way southbound between 45th Street and 40th Street. The only exit

for the lot is via 40th Street. 40th Street is a one-way eastbound street between The Strand and Ocean Drive and carries mostly traffic generated by the parking lot. There are gates at the entrance and exit that are closed after hours.

The driveway exit is clearly posted with a stop sign and stop legend at The Strand pedestrian path. The Strand is well defined with colored concrete and other physical features. There is a pedestrian crossing sign to the north of the intersection, somewhat out of the view of drivers exiting the parking lot. The driveway is short, so high speeds are not possible near the Strand and, therefore, do not generally travel fast through the Strand crosswalk. However, it has been observed that many drivers fail to stop at the stop sign, especially if no pedestrians are present.



El Porto Parking Lot at 40th Street Exit Driveway

“Wrong Way” Spikes

There are existing “wrong way” spikes just west of The Strand to prohibit westbound traffic from entering the exit driveway to the El Porto Parking Lot. These spikes are in disrepair, and most teeth are not functioning. Since 40th Street is clearly marked and signed to prohibit inbound traffic, there is no legal or logistical requirement to keep the wrong way spikes. These devices are usually a last effort to prevent wrong way traffic. The entire length could be removed, however, the Police have mentioned they rely on it to self-enforce the one-way street. As an alternative, the teeth could be retracted or covered with a steel plate to reduce noise in off-peak times when there is less potential for violation. Also, a sign for westbound traffic on 40th Street at Ocean Drive directing them to the proper parking lot entrance might help.

Speed Hump at Driveway Exit

A speed hump just west of The Strand could be installed to reinforce the need to drive slowly and cautiously through The Strand crossing. Due to the restricted space and low speeds, a reduced size hump of 3-1/2" high and 2' wide would be appropriate. This size is taller than a typical speed hump but longer and softer than other parking lot speed bumps in the same parking lot. If placed in the driveway west of the Strand, it would raise drivers' attention to the Strand crossing and stop sign. The speed hump would not be placed on a public street. This could be done on contract with LA County. The approximate cost for a speed hump is \$2,000.

Pedestrian Crossing Sign

The existing pedestrian crossing sign near the exit driveway is too far to the north, and is not easily seen by exiting drivers. The sign could be moved just east of the Strand facing the exit driveway for better visibility or removed in lieu of crosswalk markings. Either option would be a far more obvious and effective location.

Crosswalk Markings at The Strand

Crosswalk markings could be painted on either side of The Strand to designate a crosswalk. Specifically, painted white stripes would be placed on the east and west sides of The Strand pavement so that drivers are given proper notice that they are crossing a designated crosswalk. It would also encourage pedestrians to watch for vehicles as they approach the crossing.



El Porto Parking Lot Beach Access

Pedestrian Path Markings Through Parking Lot

A pedestrian crosswalk should be painted from the pedestrian gate adjacent to the exit driveway to the beach access on the west side of the parking lot. The crossing would be aligned with a concrete cross gutter which is a natural place to cross. This will help pedestrians know the safest path between The Strand and the beach. It will also inform drivers in the parking lot that there may be pedestrians crossing the aisle at a designated place. Presently, there is no designated walkway across the parking lot from this access point. One parking space would have to be removed to provide an unobstructed path to the beach access stairs, but could be replaced with a new striped space just to the south.

Pavement Treatments at the Exit Driveway

More elaborate pavement treatments could be done and might also help improve pedestrian safety, especially to designate the pedestrian walkways through the parking lot. Of course, this would be considered a capital improvement, and require an appropriation of City funds. Decorative pavement and/or crossing materials may only have a minor effect on the overall safety of this exit, but would go far towards improving its look. This work could be added to the Strand walkway project or considered as a separate CIP project at substantial cost, subject to approval by the Council.

Automatic Exit Gate

A vehicle activated exit gate could be installed in lieu of the “Wrong Way” spikes along with a vehicle detector that would raise automatically when an exiting vehicle approaches. It would prevent wrong way drivers, since it would be closed except when a vehicle exits the parking lot. Although effective, the gate may be broken occasionally and require replacement.

Other One-Way Signs and Markings

It appears there are sufficient signs and markings indicating that 40th Street is a one-way (eastbound) street, so additional signs are not recommended. Many of the existing markings are faded and in need of repainting. An additional sign is regularly deployed on 40th Street just west of Ocean Drive during restricted hours to reinforce the posted turn restrictions. Notwithstanding all posted signs, there will still be drivers that insist on going the wrong way.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the expected traffic and pedestrian safety improvements for various measures identified above, the following actions are recommended:

1. “Lock down” the wrong way spikes during the non-peak season.
2. Paint crosswalk markings at the El Porto Parking lot exit at The Strand.
3. Paint a white pedestrian path through the parking lot to the stairs.
4. Paint a new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path.
5. Remove one “PED XING” sign north of the parking lot exit on a street light too far from the exit.

6. Install one 3 ½" high x 2" wide speed bump in the parking lot at the exit to 40th Street.
7. Repaint the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance.

These measures are low cost and can be completed using existing maintenance resources. The speed bump would be inside the parking lot and would act to raise driver's awareness of the stop sign and crosswalk at the parking lot exit. The Police Department does not have an objection to locking down the wrong way spikes during non-peak periods.

Meeting notices were sent to all properties within 300 feet of the subject area.

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

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

March 1, 2005

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

Re: Request for Modifications – El Porto Parking Lot Exit

Dear Owner/Resident:

On February 24, 2005, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission reviewed a petition requesting implementation of various measures at the El Porto Parking Lot exit at 40th Street. The Commission voted to recommend the following:

- Replacement of the wrong way spikes at the exit
- Painted crosswalk markings along the Strand at the exit
- A painted pedestrian path through the parking lot to the beach access stairs
- A new parking space just west of the exit to replace one lost for the pedestrian path
- Removal of the “PED XING” sign north of the parking lot exit
- Repainting the existing striping and markings on 40th Street to increase driver compliance
- A speed bump not be installed at the exit at this time
- The Police Department provide focused enforcement in the area

The City Council will review these recommendations at a public meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2005. 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
Management Analyst