



Agenda Item # _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Wilson and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

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

DATE: February 15, 2005

SUBJECT: Uphold the Parking and Public Improvements Commission Recommendation to Approve Implementation of Lane Designations on Pacific Avenue between Ardmore Avenue and Valley Drive

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council pass a motion to approve the Parking and Public Improvements Commission recommendation to implement the following measures to designate lane assignments on Pacific Avenue between Ardmore Avenue and Valley Drive:

1. Add signs and markings to designate the inner lanes in each direction for left turns only
2. Add signs and markings to designate the outer lanes in each direction for right turns or straight movements
3. Adjust the crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue
4. Paint red curb to a distance of 40 feet on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Avenue

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

Installation of signage and striping to designate lane assignments would cost approximately \$500 and could be accomplished through existing Public Works programs and budgets.

BACKGROUND:

On December 21, 2004, the City Council reviewed a request to designate lane assignments on northbound and southbound Pacific Avenue in the short block between Ardmore Avenue and Valley Drive. This stretch of Pacific Avenue has two lanes in each direction. As the lanes currently have no designations, drivers can go either left or straight from the center lane and straight or right from the outside lane. The requestor feels lane designations would improve traffic flow and increase safety as cars travel through the area. The Council felt additional analysis was needed before any changes could be approved and referred the issue to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission for consideration. The PPIC reviewed the matter at their meeting on January 27, 2005.

DISCUSSION

As described in the attached analysis the Traffic Engineer supports implementing lane designations. Pacific Avenue narrows from two lanes in each direction to one both south of Ardmore Avenue and north of Valley Drive. The current lack of lane assignments can lead to potential problems with two cars converging into a single lane. Based on observed traffic volumes and turn movements, he concluded that the following modifications would promote safer and more efficient traffic flow through the area:

- The inner lanes in each direction be designated for left turns only
- The outer lanes in each direction be designated for right turns or straight movements
- The crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue be adjusted to more appropriately direct pedestrians
- Paint red curb on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Avenue to better align the through lanes

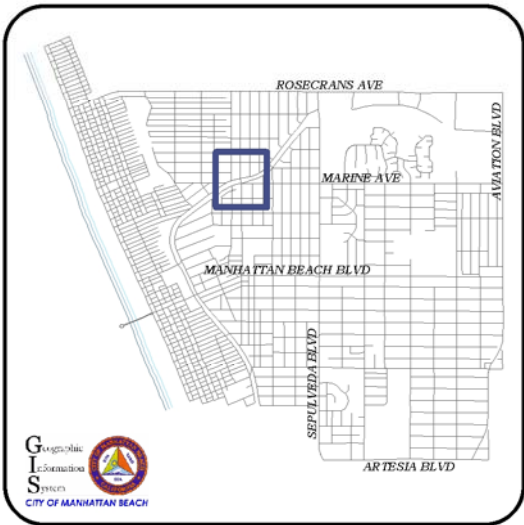
At the PPIC meeting one resident provided public testimony. He felt that some form of lane designation was needed to improve traffic flow. The Commission agreed with the Traffic Engineer's findings and voted unanimously to recommend approval of his proposed modifications.

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

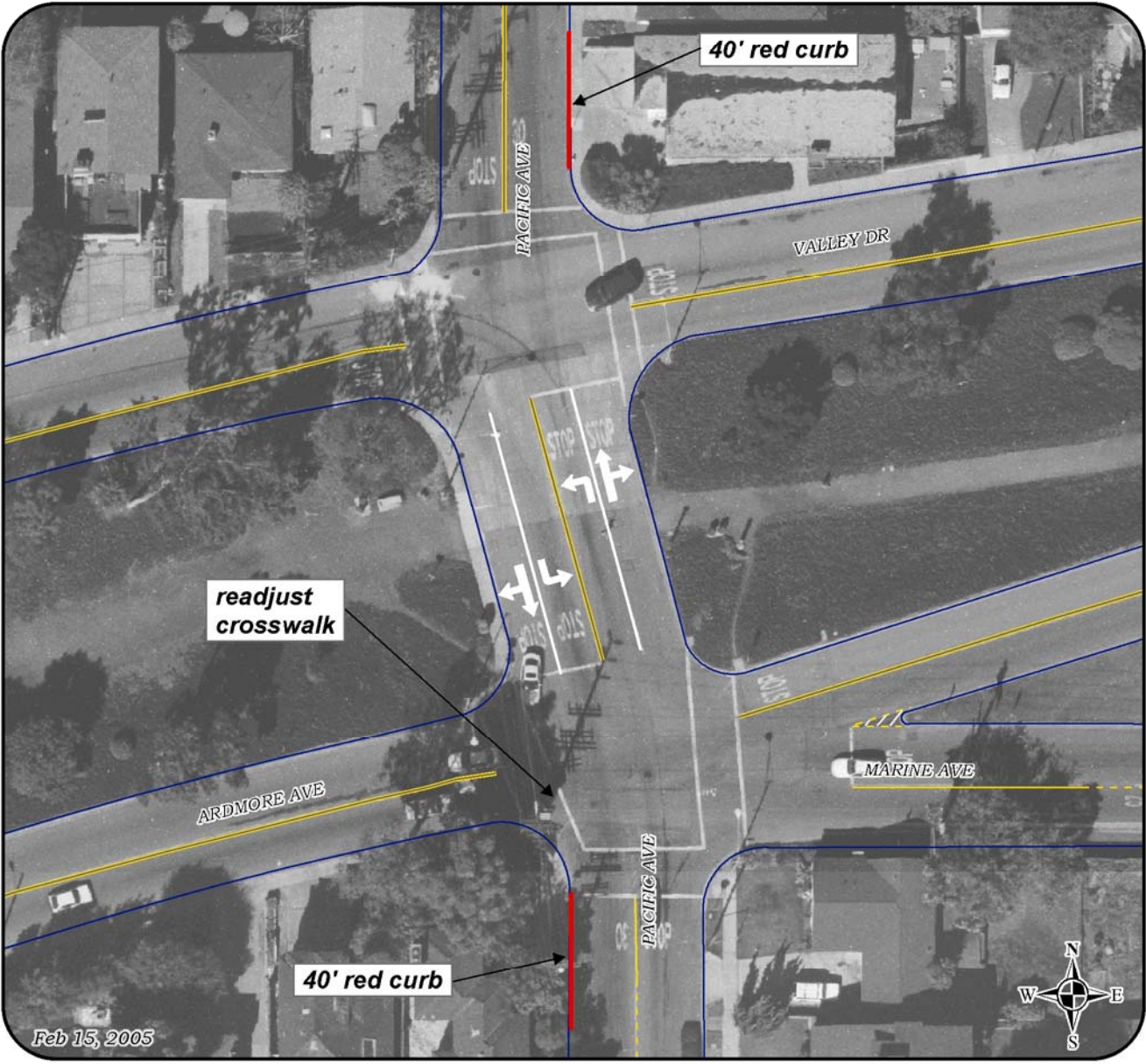
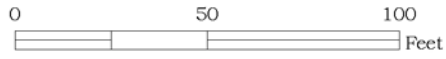
ALTERNATIVES:

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

- Attachments:
- A. Proposed lane designations
 - B. Excerpt from PPIC minutes of 1/27/05
 - C. PPIC report dated 1/27/05, with attachments
 - D. Meeting notice, 2/1/05



Pacific Ave @ Valley/Ardmore Recommended Lane Designations



**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 27, 2005**

4. Request for Traffic Modifications - Pacific Avenue

Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet presented the staff report, explaining that the City received a letter from a Pacific Avenue resident requesting lane arrows on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue. He reviewed staff's analysis and stated that based on improved safety and traffic flow expectations, staff is recommending that the following actions on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue be implemented: add signs and markings to designate the center lanes as left turn movements; add signs and markings to designate the outer lanes as straight or right turn movements; adjust the crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue; and paint red curb on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Avenue to the first driveway.

The Commission and staff held discussion on this item relative to additional crosswalks, the Pacific Avenue stop, access to Veteran's Parkway and the length of proposed red curb.

Chairman Saunders suggested that the length of red curb be limited to 40 feet.

Audience Participation

Terry Yamamoto, Pacific Avenue, talked of the intersection's configuration, specifically the location of the Pacific Avenue stop sign, and the number of motorist confrontations he witnesses from his home. Mr. Yamamoto voiced his support of the proposed modifications and his hope that the long term goal will be reconstruction of the entire intersection.

Discussion

Relaying that she travels this intersection often, Commissioner Ackland commented that the proposed modifications are a great idea and should improve the traffic flow and congestion. She commented that she would not like to see any additional crosswalks crossing Veteran's Parkway, stating that it is too busy of an intersection and pedestrians should not be encouraged to cross mid intersection.

Commissioner Lesser voiced his support of the proposed modifications, stating that they represent a good first step with minimal cost.

Commissioner Lang stated that he agrees with Commissioner Ackland that additional crosswalks at the Veteran's Parkway would not be a good idea. He voiced his support of the modifications and suggested that staff look into the feasibility of reconstructing the intersection in the future.

Chairman Saunders also stated his support of staff's recommendations.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Ackland/Lesser) to approve staff's recommendation to implement the following changes on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue:

1. Add signs and markings to designate the center lanes as left turn movements
2. Add signs and marking to designate the outer lanes as straight or right turn movements
3. Adjust the crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue
4. Paint red curb (not to exceed 40 feet) on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Street to the first driveway

AYES: Ackland, Lesser, Lang, Chairman Saunders

NOES: None

ABSENT: Osterhout

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: January 27, 2005

SUBJECT: **Consider a Request to Modify Striping
Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Commission recommend the following changes on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue:

1. Add signs and markings to designate the center lanes as left turn only movements.
2. Add signs and markings to designate the outer lanes as straight or right turn movements.
3. Adjust the crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue.
4. Paint red curb on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Street to the first driveways.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2004, Mr. Tom Howat, a resident at 2404 Pacific Avenue, sent a letter requesting lane arrows on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue. Mr. Howat wishes to remove the potential conflict between two vehicles going straight through the intersection that must merge into one lane. Specifically, Mr. Howat recommended that only vehicles in the outside lanes be allowed to go straight.

On December 21, 2004, the City Council discussed a staff report and heard public testimony regarding striping modifications and felt that more study was needed before a change should be made. The City Council referred this matter to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission for a recommendation.

DISCUSSION:

Pacific Avenue is a major local two-lane local street that provides north-south traffic circulation through a residential area. Pacific Avenue connects with Rosecrans Avenue to the north and Manhattan Beach Boulevard to the south. Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue are collector streets that connect Sepulveda Boulevard and the downtown area. The intersection of Pacific Avenue and Valley Drive/Ardmore Avenue/Marine Avenue is a couplet of stop-controlled approaches. There are five approaches at Pacific Avenue/Ardmore Avenue/Marine Avenue, and

four approaches at Pacific Avenue/Valley Drive. This set of intersections is a key transition point for drivers crossing the Veterans Parkway, as well as a crossroads for drivers in the northwest section of the City. Approximately 17,800 vehicles per day pass through one or both intersections.

Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue has two lanes in each direction, while the north and south extensions have only one lane in each direction. This often causes vehicle conflicts when two vehicles compete for the same departure lane. Since there are no markings or lane use signs, vehicles in the inside and outside lanes can legally continue straight at either intersection. This can lead to confusion when other drivers waiting at the intersection do not know where or when the two vehicles stopped in the same direction will go. This condition is similar for northbound drivers at Valley Drive or southbound drivers at Ardmore Avenue.

The traffic collision history between January 1, 1997 and December 31, 2001 was analyzed for this set of intersections. According to City records, there are an average of one collision per year at Valley Drive/Pacific Avenue and two collisions per year at Ardmore Avenue/Pacific Avenue/Marine Avenue during this six-year period. The primary collision patterns were right-of-way violations and rear end collisions.

A turning movement count was conducted on Wednesday, January 19, 2005 on a typical school day. Exhibit 1 shows a summary of the peak hour volumes for each directional movement. As indicated by the volumes, the left turn and straight volumes at each intersection between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue are both high during the AM and PM peak hours. Right turn volumes from Pacific Avenue are generally very low, and would not typically justify exclusive right turn lanes.

As shown on the aerial photo and confirmed in field observations, the center lanes between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue currently align better with the departure lanes to the north and south. If vehicles are parked along Pacific Avenue close to the intersection, motorists in the outer lanes must swerve to avoid them. However, the outer lanes would have better alignment if red curb was painted to prohibit parking near the intersection, and the crosswalk on the west leg of Ardmore Avenue was realigned.

During peak hours, motorists that want to continue straight on Pacific Avenue tend to use the outer lanes, mainly due to the large number of vehicles turning left from the inner lane. Also, the five-way intersection historically works well, with only one driver entering at any time. These practices are mainly due to drivers' prior knowledge of the intersection. It was observed that an equal number of motorists make left turns and go straight from Pacific Avenue when crossing the Veterans Parkway.

If the inside lanes were designated as left turn only lanes, then motorists in all directions would have more confidence in the intended direction of the other motorists. Also, since the left and straight movements are approximately equal, the separation into different lanes would increase capacity and reduce delay through the intersections. A single through lane would improve safety by eliminating two merge conflicts, one at each intersection.

By restricting through movements to one lane and designating a left turn only pocket for the northbound and southbound directions, a more efficient and safer traffic flow will result. Less delay should occur, since the stop signs self-regulate the movements already and two vehicles could proceed without conflict during each stop cycle.

CONCLUSION:

Based on improved safety and traffic flow expectations, it is recommended that following actions on Pacific Avenue between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue be implemented:

1. Add signs and markings to designate the center lanes as left turn movements.
2. Add signs and markings to designate the outer lanes as straight or right turn movements.
3. Adjust the crosswalk on the west approach of Ardmore Avenue at Pacific Avenue.
4. Paint red curb on the east side of Pacific Avenue just north of Valley Drive and on the west side of Pacific Avenue just south of Ardmore Street to the first driveway.

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

EHZ:

ATTACHMENTS

Aerial Photo-Recommended Lane Designations

Turning Movement Counts

Traffic Collision Summary

Petition Letter

CC Staff Report-December 21, 2004

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**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
TRAFFIC COLLISION SUMMARY**

**Pacific Avenue at Valley Drive
January 1, 1996 to December 31, 2001**

DATE	DIRECTION	TYPE
2001	None	
2/17/00	EB Thru vs. NB Left	Broadside
9/9/00	NB Lev't vs. SB Thru	Broadside
10/29/99	NB Thru vs. EB Thru	Broadside
1/15/98	SB Slowing vs. SB Thru	Sideswipe (Raining)
3/18/97	NB Thru vs. EB Thru	Broadside
1996	None	

**Pacific Avenue at Ardmore Avenue / Marine Avenue
January 1, 1996 to December 31, 2001**

DATE	DIRECTION	TYPE
11/26/01	NB Left vs. SB Left	Broadside
3/31/01	SB Backing vs. SB Stopped	Rearend
10/10/01	SB Thru vs. WB Thru (Marine)	Broadside
2000	None	
3/25/99	EB Thru (Ardmore) vs. SB Thru	Broadside
11/4/99	SB Stopped vs. SB Stopped	Rearend
7/23/99	SB Thru vs. SB Parked	Sideswipe-DUI*
10/12/98	WB Thru (Marine) vs. WB Stopped	Rearend
10/4/97	EB Thru (Ardmore) vs. NB Thru	Broadside
1/26/97	SB Thru vs. WB Thru (Marine)	Broadside (Raining)
9/28/96	EB Thru (Ardmore) vs. SB Left	Broadside-DUI



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

February 1, 2005

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

Re: Traffic Request – Pacific Avenue

Dear Resident/Property Owner:

On January 27, 2005, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission reviewed a request to designate lane assignments on northbound and southbound Pacific Avenue in the short block between Ardmore Avenue and Valley Drive. The Commission voted to recommend the following designations:

- The inner lanes be utilized for left turns only
- The outer lanes be utilized for right turns or through movements

The City Council will review this recommendation at a public meeting on Tuesday, February 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
Community Development Department