



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 Deny a Request for Installation of a Painted Crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Approve Installation of a Painted Crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

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

- Deny the request for installation of a painted crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street
- Approve installation of a painted crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

Installation of one painted crosswalk as suggested by the PPIC would cost approximately \$200 and could be accomplished through existing Public Works programs and budgets.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City recently received a petition requesting installation of a painted crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street. The petitioners feel a crosswalk would increase the level of safety for pedestrians crossing Highland at this intersection. The request was reviewed by the Parking and Public Improvements Commission at a public meeting on January 27, 2005.

### **DISCUSSION:**

As described in the attached staff report, the Traffic Engineer does not support installation of a crosswalk at the requested location. Because there are no crosswalks or consistent sidewalks on 28<sup>th</sup> Street west of Highland, he does not feel it should be designated as an optimum location to cross Highland. He feels 27<sup>th</sup> Street is a much more appropriate crossing location. It is a more continuous pedestrian path to the beach with consistent sidewalks and existing crosswalks at Manhattan Avenue and Ocean Drive. Highland/27<sup>th</sup> Street also has better visibility and driver awareness of pedestrians because it borders Parque Culiacan.

At the Commission meeting testimony was provided by three residents. Two supported adding a crosswalk at 28<sup>th</sup> Street and the third felt a crosswalk at 27<sup>th</sup> Street would improve safety. The Commission agreed with the Traffic Engineer's finding that 27<sup>th</sup> Street is a more appropriate place to cross Highland. They voted unanimously to recommend the following:

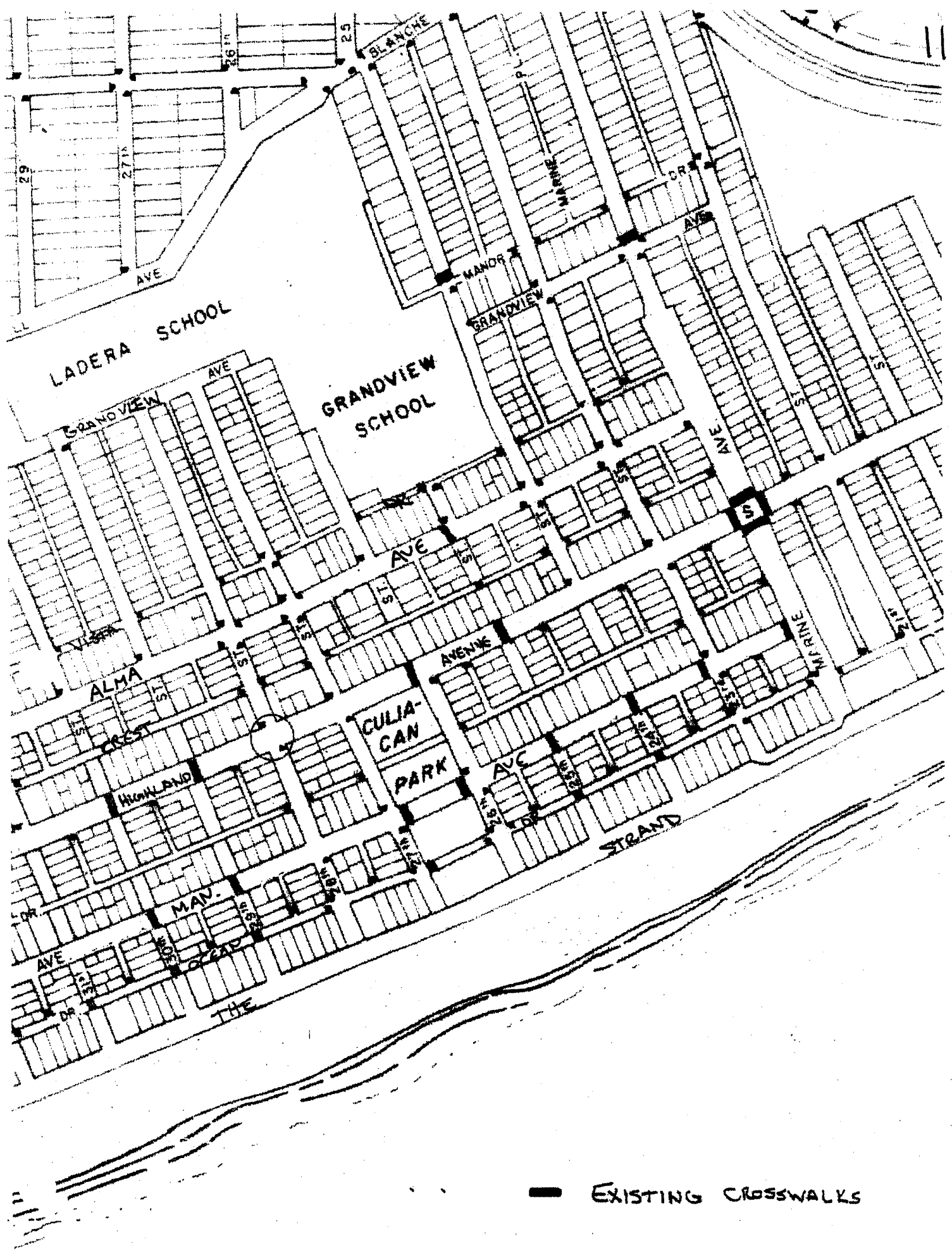
- Denial of the request for a crosswalk at Highland/28<sup>th</sup> Street
- Installation of a crosswalk at Highland/27<sup>th</sup> Street
- Installation of crosswalk warning signage as determined necessary by staff

Meeting notices were sent to all properties on 28<sup>th</sup> Street and 27<sup>th</sup> Street between Alma Avenue and Manhattan Avenue.

**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 1/27/05
  - C. PPIC report dated 1/27/05, with attachments
  - D. Meeting notice, 2/1/05



— EXISTING CROSSWALKS

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

**3. Request for Painted Crosswalks - Highland at 28<sup>th</sup> Street**

Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet presented the staff report relative to a submitted petition from residents on 28<sup>th</sup> Street requesting that the City paint a crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street to provide safer access for residents and guests in the surrounding neighborhoods. He reviewed staff's analysis of the request, stating that since there are existing sidewalks and crosswalks on 27<sup>th</sup> Street west of Highland Avenue that connect to the beach, a crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street would be more appropriate. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that this location has better visibility and driver awareness of pedestrians since Parque Culiacan is on the southwest corner, and 27<sup>th</sup> Street also provides direct access to public parking and other recreational uses that generate pedestrian activity.

**Audience Participation**

Noting that he generated the petition, **Bill McCaverty, 28<sup>th</sup> Street**, thanked staff for their analysis of this request and asked that the Commission consider the placement of a crosswalk on 28<sup>th</sup> Street. He mentioned the number and location of crosswalks located on Highland Avenue and questioned why the area to the north has more crosswalk access. Mr. McCaverty stated that he understands staff's logical analysis but still believes a crosswalk is needed in this location due to the numerous pedestrians, especially children, needing a safe place to cross. He also talked of the excessive speed of vehicles traveling on Highland Avenue and his hope that a crosswalk might improve the situation.

Commissioner Ackland stated that crosswalks can actually give pedestrians a "false sense of security" and that the City has to be cautious when determining such locations, pointing out that staff believes the 27<sup>th</sup> Street location provides more of an opportunity for motorists and pedestrians to be seen. In regard to excessive speeds on Highland Avenue, Commissioner Ackland voiced her frustration with the ongoing need and lack of police enforcement and encouraged Mr. McCaverty to make his thoughts known at the City Council level.

**Patty McCaverty, 28<sup>th</sup> Street**, talked of her concern with motorists being unaware of pedestrians trying to cross the roadway. She noted that many of the City's crosswalks are faded and in need of repainting and that there is no consistency in the placement and markings of crosswalks throughout the City. Ms. McCaverty also talked of high speed of motorists traveling Highland Avenue and asked that the City take steps to educate motorists of pedestrian right of way.

**Terry Yamamoto, Pacific Avenue**, commented on the number of motorist/pedestrian confrontations in this area and the need for crosswalks. He voiced his support of a crosswalk on 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

## **Discussion**

Commissioner Lesser stated his support of staff's recommendations for a crosswalk on 27<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated that he shares residents' concerns regarding the consistency and maintenance of crosswalks and supports efforts that can be made to increase motorist awareness of crosswalks.

Commissioner Ackland stated that she appreciates the efforts of the 28<sup>th</sup> Street residents, but agrees with staff that 27<sup>th</sup> Street is a better location for the crosswalk.

Commissioner Lang noted that he will reluctantly support the installation of the crosswalk on 27<sup>th</sup> Street, due to the false sense of security a crosswalk may create. He stated that the real issue is speeding and lack of police enforcement and implores the City Council to address the need for police enforcement and why the Police Department cannot be more proactive.

Chairman Saunders relayed that he will also support staff's recommendation.

## **Action**

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Ackland) to approve staff's recommendation to deny the request for a marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street and install a new marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street; and that staff review the all City crosswalk markings for repainting needs and consistency of markings and signage.

AYES: Ackland, Lesser, Lang, Chairman Saunders

NOES: None

ABSENT: Osterhout

ABSTAIN: None

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**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:** Request for Painted Crosswalks - Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Commission deny the request for a marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street and recommend a new marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

**BACKGROUND:**

In December 2004, Mr. Bill McCaverty, a resident at 300 28<sup>th</sup> Street, submitted a petition from residents on 28<sup>th</sup> Street to paint a crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street. The petition states that a marked crosswalk would provide safer access for residents and guests in the surrounding neighborhood.

**DISCUSSION:**

The California Vehicle Code Section 275 defines a crosswalk as:

1. That portion of a roadway included within the prolongation or connection of the boundary lines of sidewalks at (an) intersection where the intersecting roadways meet at approximately right angles, except the prolongation of such lines from an alley across a street.
2. Any portion of a roadway distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, there shall not be a crosswalk where local authorities have placed signs indicating no crossing.

The primary purpose of a painted crosswalk is to encourage pedestrians to cross at the optimum location by providing positive guidance and control and/or where a recommended crossing may not be obvious to the pedestrian.

It is typically advised that pedestrians cross at controlled crossings, especially in business districts. Numerous studies have been conducted that indicate that painted uncontrolled crosswalks are less safe than unmarked crosswalks. (See attachment.) Uncontrolled crossing locations are generally better served by not marking crosswalks so that pedestrians are encouraged to use the signalized or walk street crosswalks or use more caution when crossing the street at an unmarked location.

Highland Avenue is a collector street that serves as the primary access for both residents and commercial businesses within the Strand/El Porto neighborhoods. Highland Avenue carries approximately 18,000 vehicles per day. The area has high pedestrian usage, particularly during the summer months. There are several painted crosswalks, both signalized and unsignalized, across Highland Avenue in this area. The land use both north and south of the study area is mainly residential multi-family.

The intersection of Highland Avenue and 28<sup>th</sup> Street is a four-way intersection with stop signs on both approaches on 28<sup>th</sup> Street only. 28<sup>th</sup> Street has a downhill slope in the westbound direction. There is a marked crosswalk less than 200 feet (one block) to the north at 29<sup>th</sup> Street (walk street). There are sidewalks on both sides of Highland Avenue and portions of narrow sidewalks along 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

Pedestrians are generally encouraged to use the walk streets where possible since there is less conflict with vehicles and the walk streets connect directly to The Strand. While it is currently legal to cross at 28<sup>th</sup> Street pursuant to the Vehicle Code, the optimum crossing is at the existing walk street crosswalk to the north. As a general rule, the number of crosswalks along Highland Avenue should be limited in order to direct pedestrians to key crossing points where drivers have a higher expectation of pedestrians. It is also important to place crosswalks along the safest pedestrian paths. For example, there are no other crosswalks on 28<sup>th</sup> Street between Highland Avenue and The Strand, whereas 27<sup>th</sup> Street has a continuous pedestrian path with crosswalks at Manhattan Avenue and Ocean Drive on the south side.

Since there are existing sidewalks and crosswalks on 27<sup>th</sup> Street west of Highland Avenue that connect to the beach, a crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street would be more appropriate. This location has better visibility and driver awareness of pedestrians since Parque Culiacan is on the southwest corner. 27<sup>th</sup> Street also provides direct access to public parking and other recreational uses that generate pedestrian activity. Based on these factors, a marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street would be recommended instead of one at 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

Pedestrian counts were not taken at this time of year due to the under-representation that would occur during the off-season period. However, it is generally acknowledged that pedestrian crossing volume at all crossing locations on Highland Avenue is significantly higher in the peak summer months. In fact, many pedestrians cross mid-block without using existing crosswalks.

The traffic collision history between January 1, 1997 and December 31, 2001 was analyzed for Highland Avenue and will be presented at the meeting.

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on the above analysis, a marked crosswalk on Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street is not recommended. Rather, it is recommended that a marked crosswalk be painted across Highland Avenue at 27<sup>th</sup> Street on the south leg.

Notices were sent to all properties within 300 feet of Highland/28<sup>th</sup> Street, which includes the areas surrounding Highland/27<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Attachments**

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# EXHIBIT 1

## EXISTING CROSSWALK LOCATIONS HIGHLAND AVENUE BETWEEN MARINE AVENUE AND ROSECRANS AVENUE

<b>CROSS-STREET</b>	<b>INTERSECTION TYPE</b>	<b>CROSSWALK TYPE</b>
Marine Avenue	Traffic Signal	Signalized
23 <sup>rd</sup> Street	2-Way Stop Signs	None
24 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (West)	None
25 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (Both)	School Xing with Paddle Sign
26 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (East)	Marked Uncontrolled
27 <sup>th</sup> Street	2-Way Stop Signs	None
28 <sup>th</sup> Street	2-Way Stop Signs	None
29 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (Both)	Marked Uncontrolled
30 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (Both)	Marked Uncontrolled
31 <sup>st</sup> Street	Walk Street (West)	None
32 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Walk Street (Both)	Marked Uncontrolled
33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	Traffic Signal	Signalized
34 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (West)	Marked Uncontrolled
35 <sup>th</sup> Street	Walk Street (West)	Marked Uncontrolled
36 <sup>th</sup> Street	2-Way Stop Signs	Marked Uncontrolled
Rosecrans Avenue	Traffic Signal	Signalized



# CROSSWALKS

## WHEN IS A CROSSWALK UNSAFE?

Apparently, whenever it is painted on the street!

A number of years back, the City of San Diego published some startling results in a very extensive study of the relative safety of marked and unmarked crosswalks. San Diego looked at 400 intersections for five years (without signals or four-way stops) that had a marked crosswalk on one side and an unmarked crosswalk on the other. About two and one half times as many pedestrians used the marked crosswalk, but about six times as many accidents were reported in the marked crosswalk!

Long Beach studied pedestrian safety for three years (1972 through 1974) and found eight times as many reported pedestrian accidents at intersections with marked crosswalks than at those without. One explanation of this apparent contradiction of common sense is the false security pedestrians feel at the marked crosswalk. Two painted lines do not provide protection against an oncoming vehicle and the real burden of safety has to be on the pedestrian to be alert and cautious while crossing any street. A pedestrian can stop in less than three feet, while a vehicle traveling at 25 mph will require 60 feet and at 35 mph approximately 100 feet.

The California Vehicle Code says that a crosswalk exists at all intersections unless pedestrian crossing is prohibited by signs. Some of these crosswalks are marked with painted lines, but most of them are not. Pedestrian crosswalk marking is a method of encouraging pedestrians to use a particular crossing. Such marked crossings may not be as safe as an unmarked crossing at the same location. Therefore, crosswalks should be marked only where necessary for the guidance and control of pedestrians, to direct them to the safest of several potential routes.

From the *Traffic Information Program Series*

An Institute of Transportation Engineers Informational Report  
Co-sponsored by the Automobile Club of Southern California



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February 1, 2005

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

Re: Request for Crosswalk -Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street

Dear Resident/Property Owner:

On January 27, 2005, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission reviewed a petition requesting installation of a painted crosswalk across Highland Avenue at 28<sup>th</sup> Street. The Commission ultimately recommended that a crosswalk be painted across Highland at 27<sup>th</sup> Street, rather than at 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

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