

Agenda Report

February 22, 2010

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Department of Transportation
SUBJECT: ROSE BOWL LOOP IMPROVEMENTS

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the proposed improvements around the Rose Bowl Loop as detailed in this report. The improvements include slurry seal of the entire loop, widening and coloring the pedestrian walkway, installing delineators along the walkway to separate various uses, and performing spot improvements at key locations to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

BACKGROUND:

The Rose Bowl Loop is one of the most famous and important recreation features for Pasadena and the surrounding communities as well as the entire Los Angeles Region. The roadways that encircle the Rose Bowl and Brookside Golf Courses currently accommodate automotive, bicycle, and pedestrian uses. The popularity of the loop has also created friction among the multiple users of the loop in the past. In response to these traffic safety concerns, the City Council directed staff to develop alternative solutions regarding the bicycle and pedestrian operations around the Rose Bowl Loop and identify any physical improvements to address the safety concerns. The improvements highlighted in this report are scheduled to be implemented in early March to address these issues before the spring time day-light saving time begins and the uses around the loop increase.

Existing Conditions

More than two years ago, in response to traffic safety issues raised by the users of the loop, the Transportation Department installed a 4-foot painted buffer zone between the existing 8-foot wide pedestrian walkway and the main street section where bicycles and automobiles travel (Attachment A). The intent of the buffer zone was to separate the walkers and joggers from the path of bicycles and automobiles and provide a safety zone between these uses that are traveling at different speeds. Subsequently, using grant funds obtained through the State's Office of Traffic Safety, an educational campaign was undertaken to encourage pedestrians to walk against the oncoming

traffic in a counterclockwise fashion, as well as educating the users about the intent of the buffer zone. As part of this program, educational materials and postcards were prepared and distributed to users, temporary pavement logos were installed at key locations around the loop, and permanent signs were installed at certain intervals around the loop encouraging pedestrians to walk against oncoming traffic. Although the new striping has marginally helped and improved the path for pedestrians, the new buffer zone unfortunately continues to be used by walkers and joggers and at times even recreational bicycles use this area to avoid travelling in the main road used by automobiles. The intent of the traffic and circulation study explained below was to address these ongoing concerns.

Alternative Circulation Plans

In mid 2008, in response to Council's direction, staff retained the professional services of the transportation engineering consulting firm of Crain and Associates to review the existing conditions around the Rose Bowl Loop and recommend improved circulation alternatives geared towards enhancing pedestrians and bicycle operations around the loop. Staff from various departments including Transportation, Public Works, Police, and the Rose Bowl Operating Company participated in the development and screening of the alternatives. A final draft of the "Alternative Circulation Plans for the Rose Bowl Loop" was prepared and posted online at www.cityofpasadena.net/rosebowlloop for public's review.

Recommended Enhanced Two-Way Walkway Operation: Staff is currently in the process of preparing detailed improvement plans for the Rose Bowl Loop to include the following primary elements. A schematic of the roadway cross section proposed for this alternative is shown on Attachment B.

- Slurry seal the entire Rose Bowl Loop and implement new roadway striping as outlined below
- Widen the walkway path to a minimum 13-foot width to better accommodate pedestrian use in both directions around the loop and remove the restriction for pedestrians to walk in a specific direction
- Color the entire width of the walkway to distinguish its use by pedestrians and visually separate it from the portion of the roadway used by automobiles and bicycles
- Separate the walkway from the automobile and bicycle way by a 12-inch painted line supplemented by raised flexible plastic bollards/delineators at specific intervals to encourage and reinforce the separate use of the roadway by walkers and bicycles
- Reconfigure the intersection of West Drive and Washington Boulevard in the northwest corner of the Bowl, to minimize pedestrian and bicycle conflicts and enhance traffic safety at the intersection
- Improve traffic operations in front of the Brookside Golf Club by redesigning parking spaces, prohibiting parking in front of the Golf Club during evening peak hours and installing No-U turns to minimize conflicts

- Install metal gates closing the eastern leg of North Arroyo Boulevard at Seco Street to minimize conflicts and allow gates to be opened as needed during the Rose Bowl events by the Police Department
- Install fences in the south corner of LOT K and prohibit automobile traffic to access the roadway around the corners thus enhancing the safety of pedestrians and bicycles in that area

Potential Future One-Way Loop: The draft final report documents other alternatives considered as part of the study. One alternative that has been suggested in the past included a one-way operation of the loop. The roadway cross section to accomplish this alternative is shown on Attachment C. The one-way operation was originally considered by the Central Arroyo Master Plan advisory group and was rejected for further consideration. The recommended improvements in this report are planned in such a way to allow for potential conversion of the loop to a one way operation some time in the future if such an alternative is deemed as favorable by the users and residents of the area. For a one-way loop operation, a number of factors as outlined below would have to be considered in the future before its implementation:

- To address a likely traffic diversion to some of the neighborhood streets, this option will require traffic impact studies and probably an environmental impact report disclosing the impacts
- Turn restrictions will be required at certain locations as the one-way operation will require traffic to be diverted to other roadways in the vicinity to reach its destination
- Motor vehicles travel counter-clockwise around the Loop
- Bicyclists may travel in an exclusive bike lane clockwise, or with motor vehicles in a counter-clockwise direction
- Seco Street and Washington Boulevard will remain as two-way streets

Public Involvement

There have been two major public involvements during the course of this study:

- On July 28, 2009, the public was invited to review the progress of the study and provide feedback to the city staff and consultants at two temporary tents set up along the Rose Bowl Loop. Hundreds of walkers, joggers, skaters and bicyclists stopped by at these tents and asked questions about the various alternatives and provided feedback to the study. Residents and users of the loop were also provided with an online survey form where they could provide their comments. Many of the comments were incorporated in the development of the improvements highlighted in this report. A summary of public comments is shown on Attachment D.
- On February 3, 2010, the public was invited to a community meeting at the Brookside Golf Club to hear the latest plans developed to improve the traffic safety operations for the various users of the loop. More than 60 users of the

loop including walkers, joggers, skaters and bicyclists attended the meeting and participated in the discussions. In general, those attending the meeting were very supportive of staff's efforts to improve the roadways' function around the Bowl.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed improvements outlined in this report are consistent with the goals of the Mobility Element of the General Plan and consistent with the vision outlined for this area in the Central Arroyo Seco Master Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This project is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. This exemption includes minor alterations involving negligible expansion of use beyond that previously existing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The improvements recommended for this project are estimated to require \$300,000. The majority of the work will be accomplished under a contract for slurry sealing approved by City Council on October 19, 2009. Sufficient funds for this project are available in Capital Improvement Program Budget Account 73580 (Preventive Maintenance - Asphalt Streets). This project has Gas Tax appropriation.

Respectfully submitted,



FREDERICK C. DOCK

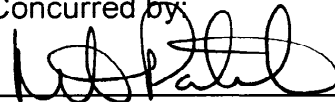
Director
Department of Transportation

Prepared by:



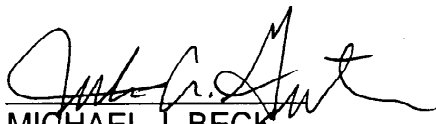
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Attachments:

Attachment A – Existing Conditions

Attachment B – Recommended Enhanced Two-Way Walkway Operation

Attachment C – Potential Future One-Way Loop

Attachment D – Summary of Public Comments