



Agenda Report

February 25, 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: ADOPT A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PASADENA APPROVING THE SUBMITTAL OF A FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION CHANGE FOR LOCAL STREETS AND ROADS TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that this proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061 (b) (3) of the State CEQA Guidelines
2. Adopt a resolution of the City of Pasadena approving the submittal of a functional classification change for local streets and roads to the State of California Department of Transportation.

BACKGROUND:

All highways and roads in the United States are functionally classified using a common nomenclature to provide a consistently-defined roadway network across the country. These classifications are determined by the individual state's Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in conjunction with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and local officials, based on criteria established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA, per the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, is responsible for and has final approval of the functional classification of public streets.

The functional classification of a street in California dictates the process for setting the speed limit and further affects what means may be used for enforcing the speed limit. Per the California Vehicle Code (CVC 22357-22360), non-local streets (e.g., collector, arterial) require an Engineering and Traffic Survey to establish a speed limit. Periodic updating of the survey is required every seven to ten years to maintain a valid speed limit. For local streets in residential and business districts, the CVC establishes the statutory speed limit of 25 mph and waives the requirement for an Engineering and Traffic Survey.

Once an Engineering and Traffic Survey has identified the speed limit for a non-local street, the City must adopt that speed limit by ordinance for the speed limit to be enforceable. Subsequent changes to the speed limit that may be necessary as the Engineering and Traffic Surveys are updated also must be adopted by ordinance. Pasadena Municipal Code Section 10.48.010 identifies the current speed limits on non-local streets in the City.

Difficulties with enforcing a 25-mph speed limit on Madeline Drive (classified as a collector) highlighted a historical inconsistency with the classification of some streets in Pasadena. These streets have characteristics of local streets, including low volumes, narrow roadway width and discontinuous segmentation, but are currently classified as collector streets on the Federal Functional Classification Map. This inconsistency likely stems from a previous system of allocating federal roadway funds on the basis of the number of lane miles of non-local streets. That system, prevalent in the 1970s to 1990s, is no longer used to allocate federal surface transportation funds.

Having identified this disconnect, staff analyzed city streets and applied FHWA specified criteria to determine the appropriate FHWA roadway classification. Based on this review, staff determined that the functional classifications of ten (10) street segments (referenced in attachment A) should be updated. Re-classifying these street segments to "local" eliminates the need for an Engineering and Traffic Survey on these streets and allows for the streets to be posted 25 mph by statute. Reclassification to local status would allow the City to potentially apply various engineering treatments that are reserved for local streets through City policies, such as the installation of speed humps.

Agencies can submit street classification change requests to FHWA for approval whenever necessary. The process of reclassifying a street requires the following steps:

1. The City submits the following information to Caltrans:
 - a. A City Council approved resolution requesting to re-classify the street.
 - b. A concurrence letter from SCAG, as the MPO
 - c. Functional Classification Change Request Form and map
2. Caltrans District Coordinator reviews and provides a district concurrence letter.
3. Caltrans headquarters presents the proposed changes to FHWA for approval.
4. Functional Classification Map is updated upon FHWA approval.

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution approving the submittal for a functional classification change for local streets and roads to Caltrans. This action will allow the City to continue the process with Caltrans to formally reclassify the streets.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The reclassification of the streets will directly assist the Department of Transportation in implementing the following objectives of the Mobility Element:

- Enhance Livability
- Encourage walking, biking, transit and other alternatives to motor vehicles

Specifically, this reclassification addresses three policies of the Mobility Element:

- 1.10 Continuously evaluate the operation of the City's transportation system to manage the speed of travel at or below the speed limit, manage queues at intersections, and develop improvements to increase safety of all transportation services.
- 1.11 Design Streets to reflect the mobility needs of the adjacent land use context to support healthy activities such as walking and bicycling.
- 1.12 Apply traffic management measures to manage vehicular speeds as a function of designated street type to ensure safe and orderly movement of all modes of travel.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The City's Environmental Administrator has determined the program is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines in Section 15061 (b) (3), the General Rule. The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA only applies to programs that have a potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. A Notice of Exemption for the program will be filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk before the end of this month, as required. In addition, there are no changed circumstances or new information which would require further environmental review.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact as a result of this action and will not have any indirect or support cost requirements. When reclassified to local status, the on-going costs for Engineering and Traffic Surveys on the streets would no longer be incurred. The anticipated impact to other operational programs or capital projects as a result of this action will be minimal. The reclassification of roads to local designation does not impact the City's allotment of federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, which is based on population. However, capital projects on local roads are not eligible for the use of STP funding.

Respectfully submitted,



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Director

Department of Transportation

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STEVE MERMELL
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Attachment:

Attachment A – Proposed Street Segments for Reclassification