

## CITY OF COSTA MESA

## INTER OFFICE MEMORANDUM

## INFORMATIONAL ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PETER NAGHAVI, MANAGER   
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

DATE: JUNE 20, 2005

SUBJECT: BROADWAY AND EAST SIDE TRAFFIC STUDIES

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In 1997 a comprehensive Eastside Residential Traffic Management Study was completed (Attachment 1). This study was initiated by the City Council in response to a petition from residents of East 19<sup>th</sup> Street requesting the installation of speed humps to address high traffic volumes, and excessive speeds. At the Council public meetings on January 15, and February 5, 1996, to consider such measures, many residents of the surrounding east side area also expressed concerns for traffic issues on other area streets and requested similar measures be considered on those streets as well.

Following the February 5, 1996 Council meeting, staff conducted further analysis of traffic conditions on East 19<sup>th</sup> Street and adjacent arterials. As a result of serious concerns by area residents, and Transportation Services Staff regarding possible adverse effects in the surrounding area that may result from the installation of speed humps on East 19<sup>th</sup> Street, the City Council, at their meeting of April 15, 1996, directed staff to retain a consultant to conduct a comprehensive traffic management study of the east side residential area, with local representation by interested residents/business owners through an Ad Hoc Committee, to fully address residential traffic issues in East Side Costa Mesa.

The Eastside Residential Traffic Management Study included analysis of traffic conditions in the primarily residential east side area bounded by East 17<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, Newport Boulevard to the west, Mesa Drive to the north and Irvine Avenue to the east. The Eastside Study responded to traffic concerns expressed by many residents in the Eastside neighborhood regarding speed and volume of vehicles and non-local, cut-through traffic within the residential environment. As a means to assess the current level of safety within the east side area the Eastside Residential Traffic Management Study included the evaluation of the prevailing speed and volume of traffic, accident data, and a determination of the level of outside traffic passing through the area.

The study documented existing traffic conditions and examined many traffic control measures designed with the potential to address concerns of area residents. These measures included speed humps, four way stop controls, and physical diversion of traffic from selected residential streets by the use of diverters or barriers to prohibit through movement.

In conjunction with this study the City Council authorized formation of an Ad-Hoc Committee of local businesses and residents to assist in the study process. Following an extensive public involvement and review process extending over a twelve-month period, the overwhelming consensus of the participants of the study was to not implement any severe traffic diversion measure but instead, increase police visibility and enforcement of existing traffic regulations. The installation of speed humps or other severe measures, such as diverters or street closures, to disrupt the efficient flow of traffic were not supported by the Ad-Hoc Committee or the majority of residents attending the workshop sessions.

On September 2, 1997, a staff report was presented to the City Council through a public hearing to consider the completed study and the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations for traffic control on the east side (Attachment 2). Following this public hearing, the City Council approved only low-level traffic control measures that would not directly affect normal circulation patterns. Excerpts of pertinent minutes from this meeting are attached for Council's information (Attachment 3).

Over the past few years the City has implemented other measures to address traffic concerns within the Eastside area. These measures include signing; narrowing travel lanes on East 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway; installation of additional stop signs on East 16<sup>th</sup> Street and East 19<sup>th</sup> Street; installation of speed humps on East 16<sup>th</sup> Street; and installation of bike lanes on Broadway and Santa Ana Avenue.

Recently, in January 2005, a fatal accident occurred on Broadway at the intersection of Westminster Avenue when a vehicle struck a pedestrian crossing Broadway in a wheelchair. Upon completion of an investigation by the Police Department, the driver of the vehicle involved was found to be not at fault. Following this tragic accident the City received correspondence from two residents requesting installation of stop signs on Broadway at the intersection of Westminster Avenue to enhance safety (Attachments 4 & 5).

Traffic conditions on Broadway have been reviewed during the previously completed East Side Study process as well as in recent years. As a result of a thorough analysis of traffic conditions on Broadway, both prior to and following the January 2005 accident, staff has repeatedly determined that the installation of stop signs on Broadway at Westminster Avenue does not meet accepted standards or warrants for their installation, and would, therefore, not be beneficial to overall traffic safety. While the installation of stop signs may appear an easy solution, in fact this kind of installation could contribute to creating more traffic accidents at the intersection.

The City has previously taken steps to reduce vehicular speeds on Broadway. These include creating narrower traffic lanes by restriping to add bicycle lanes, additional speed limit postings at each quarter mile intersection, and installation of special "Slow Down You Are Entering A Residential Neighborhood" signs.

Since the January 2005 tragic accident, and as mentioned above, staff has completed a further review of traffic conditions in this vicinity in order to assess any changes that may have occurred since earlier studies. This review encompasses the area between 18<sup>th</sup> Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The results of this review when compared with historical data indicate that east side traffic conditions have changed very little since the 1997 study. The following table summarizes traffic volume counts taken on Broadway over the years. The data indicates that traffic volume levels have not significantly changed over time. The largest change between 1992 and 1994 may be attributable to

the completion of the Costa Mesa Freeway to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and the opening of Triangle Square, both in late 1992.

Broadway at Westminster Avenue	
Year	24 Hour Volume
1992	2530
1994	3160
2003	2800
2004	3000

Traffic conditions have been consistent over the years and are indicative of traffic conditions staff observes throughout the City. However, Broadway is somewhat different than typical residential streets. Generally all residential streets in the City are constructed at a 40-foot street width. Broadway however, was constructed at a 50 foot street width. The increased width provides drivers a more clear view of conditions, and also provides a greater distance from parked vehicles. The increased width also increases the time a pedestrian needs to cross the street.

In recognition of the difference in width on Broadway, and in order to fully respond to all concerns for traffic safety, staff has developed a number of alternatives in an effort to reduce vehicular speeds on this street. These include techniques to further narrow the travel lanes by creating islands at various intersections, and possible reconstruction of curbs and gutters to effectively narrow the street.

The City Council at their Study Session of July 12, 2005, will receive a staff report depicting a range of traffic control options incorporating the above alternatives for consideration. Transportation staff would be pleased to discuss the attached material further if any member of Council desires additional information at this time.

- Attachments
- 1 Eastside Residential Traffic Management Study
  - 2 Staff Report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee
  - 3 Excerpt of minutes of City Council action
  - 4 Resident Correspondence
  - 5 Resident Correspondence

c: Allan Roeder, City Manager  
William J. Morris, Director of Public Services  
Dennis Johnson, Assistant Engineer