



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: JULY 20, 2010

ITEM NUMBER: _____

SUBJECT: BROADWAY SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL GRANT

DATE: JULY 8, 2010

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT - TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: PETER NAGHAVI, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: RAJA SETHURAMAN, TRANSPORTATION SERVICES MANAGER - (714) 754-5032

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve Option 4 "concept" for the proposed Safe Route to School (SRTS) improvement project on Broadway between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue; and
2. Authorize the initiation of design and continuation of the public outreach process during the design phase.

BACKGROUND:

Over the past few years, the City has considered and implemented a number of traffic control measures on several Eastside Costa Mesa area streets, including Broadway. These improvements included the installation of additional **speed limit signs, stop signs, neighborhood entry signs,** and **striping modifications.** These measures were well accepted and supported by the local community.

The traffic conditions on Broadway, while similar to other Eastside streets, is exacerbated by its wider curb-to-curb width. The curb-to-curb width of Broadway is 50 feet, compared to standard 36 feet to 40 feet on other Eastside streets. The increased width provides drivers a clearer view of conditions, which could potentially contribute to higher travel speeds. In order to address the overall traffic and pedestrian issues on Broadway, the Transportation Services Division was able to secure federal Safe Route to School (SRTS) grant funding to narrow Broadway, implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and other traffic calming measures such as chokers and/or medians. The limits of the project would be on Broadway between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue.

As this is a SRTS grant, the scope of work eligible for grant reimbursement is **restricted** and includes only the following features on Broadway:

- Narrowing of Street Width
- Chokers and Medians
- Sidewalks

- Ancillary Landscape Improvements
- Bicycle Facilities

The grant funds cannot be used solely for landscape improvements, entry monuments signs, street maintenance repairs, etc.

At the November 10, 2009, City Council Study Session, staff presented a report on various improvement options for Broadway proposed as part of the SRTS grant project (**Attachment 1**). The City Council directed staff to present the options to the public at neighborhood meetings, solicit comments, and provide a report on the findings.

Following the study session, two neighborhood public meetings were conducted to discuss Broadway SRTS improvement options. These meetings were held on March 4, 2010, and May 6, 2010, at Kaiser Elementary School Multipurpose Room. All Eastside residents who live between 19th Street to the north and 18th Street to the south, and between Fullerton Avenue to the west and Irvine Avenue to the east, were mailed notification of these meetings. The meetings were generally well attended with approximately 40 residents at each meeting.

At both meetings, which were set in a workshop format, staff presented the improvement options, answered many questions, and requested that the community provide comments and ideas. In addition, comment cards were provided to residents that could be either handed back at the meeting or mailed to City staff. All comments received at the meetings and sent via mail are included in **Attachment 2**. There was a good level of general support for the project. The following comments and primary concerns were also expressed:

- Parking impacts due to the proposed traffic control measures;
- Impacts to other adjacent streets as a result of the project;
- Location of mailboxes and mail delivery;
- Type of traffic control measures - Medians and Chokers;
- Maintenance of landscaping; and
- Impacts due to construction of sidewalks.

ANALYSIS:

Taking into consideration the grant requirements, the funding availability, as well as the neighborhood needs, four initial “conceptual” improvement options were developed. They are included in **Attachment 3**, and briefly described below:

Option 1 – Straight Trail/Sidewalk

Broadway would be narrowed by 14 feet on the north side. A five-foot sidewalk and eight-foot bicycle trail would be constructed off the street along the new curb. Mid-block chokers and medians with trees and landscaping will be added at certain locations within the street itself. All intersections between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue will be further narrowed to 22 feet with the construction of chokers for the purpose of calming traffic. Landscaping will be added to the chokers to further provide a neighborhood-entry feel. Opportunities for extensive landscaping such as parkways are limited in this option.

Option 2 – Meandering Trail

Broadway would be narrowed by 14 feet on the north side. A five-foot sidewalk will be constructed along the new curb. Adjacent to the sidewalk and using the available five-foot City right-of-way, a meandering eight-foot bicycle trail will be constructed. Landscaped parkway consisting of turf or shrubs could be implemented between the sidewalk and the bicycle trail. In addition, mid-block chokers and medians with trees and landscaping will be added at certain locations within the street itself. Similar to Option 1, chokers with landscape treatments will be installed at intersections between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue.

Option 3 – Improvements on Both Sides

This option also narrows Broadway by 14 feet on the north side. A meandering eight-foot bicycle trail and six-foot parkway will be constructed adjacent to the new curb. On the other side, a five-foot sidewalk will be constructed. The parkway will be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and ground cover. Similar to previous options, chokers and landscape treatments will be installed at intersections between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue. In addition, mid-block chokers and medians with trees and landscaping will be added at certain locations within the street itself.

Option 4 – Maintain On-Street Bicycle Lanes

In this option, Broadway will be narrowed by four feet on the north side. A five-foot wide sidewalk will be constructed adjacent to the new curb. Similar to Option 1, this option will have limited landscape potential. Similar to previous options, chokers and landscape treatments will be installed at intersections between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue. In addition, mid-block chokers and medians with trees and landscaping will be added at certain locations within the street itself.

Neighborhood Meetings:

The above options were presented to the residents at the first neighborhood meeting in March 2010. While several concerns were raised regarding the options, the residents generally supported Options 3 and 4 for further consideration. The concerns expressed at this meeting were mostly regarding impacts due to potential loss of parking, diversion of traffic to other parallel streets, bicycle lane treatment at chokers, and disruption of mail delivery. There were also requests for providing further detail on these options.

At the second meeting, “refined” Options 3 and 4 were presented in further detail (**Attachment 4**). Residents were able to assess **preliminary** locations of chokers/medians and resultant parking impacts in further detail.

The following are primary concerns of residents regarding the concept plans and an analysis of the concerns:

Parking Impacts:

Several residents from adjacent streets, such as Flower Street or Magnolia Street, were concerned about the shifting of parking impacts to their street with the implementation of certain traffic control measures on Broadway. Some Broadway residents also expressed concerns about loss of parking adjacent to their homes.

In response to these concerns, six parking surveys were conducted during weekdays and weekends. **Attachment 5** provides the results of the parking surveys. Approximately 310 on-street parking spaces are available on Broadway between Fullerton Avenue and Irvine Avenue. The results of the many surveys revealed that a total of 180 parking spaces, or about 60 percent (60%) of available spaces, were occupied at the highest demand period, leaving approximately 130 spaces unused. Within the busiest segment, the maximum utilization was on a weekend morning between Fullerton Avenue and Orange Avenue, with 79 percent (79%) parking occupancy. These results were carefully analyzed and employed in developing the improvement options to make sure that adequate parking is available on each segment at all times.

The actual location and size of the medians and chokers will be carefully considered and optimized during the “design” stage to assure minimum or no impact to the residents.

Impacts to other Adjacent Streets:

Residents of the paralleling adjacent streets expressed their concerns about the impacts this project might create on their streets due to diversion of Broadway traffic. Staff recognized this concern in the early stages of concept development and ensured that none of the options create the potential for traffic diversion. The traffic calming measures being considered are aimed at reducing the travel speeds to maintain the posted speed limit similar to other streets in the neighborhood. Measures that may result in changing travel patterns such as **speed humps, diverters, and stop signs, are not** part of the project. Therefore, the potential impact to other streets, due to the proposed improvements on Broadway, is very minimal.

Mailboxes:

Some concerns were also expressed regarding the placement of mailboxes at the property line behind the sidewalk. A representative from the U.S. Post Office attended the second neighborhood meeting and confirmed that repositioning the mailboxes at the property line behind the proposed new sidewalk will not create an issue with mail delivery.

Medians and Mid-Block Chokers:

The potential impact to parking with medians and mid-block chokers was extensively discussed at both meetings and via written and verbal communication. The installation of a typical 10-foot median will result in the loss of up to four parking spaces on the street. Similarly, a 20-foot choker at midblock will result in the loss of two parking spaces. Chokers at intersections will not impact parking significantly, as vehicles do not park close to intersections.

Attachment 4 shows Options 3 and 4 with preliminary locations of chokers and medians and a concept for Option 4 with chokers. A review of preliminary concept plans, including both mid-block **medians** and **chokers**, indicates a potential loss of up to 65 on-street

parking spaces. However, considering the total available on-street parking of 310 spaces and an observed “maximum” parking demand of 180 parking spaces, the loss of 65 spaces does not create an impact to the overall parking needs. If only mid-block chokers were provided, a total of up to 35 parking spaces would be eliminated.

The number of parking spaces mentioned above, represents a worst-case scenario estimate, and the actual number of parking spaces impacted will be determined during the final design process. The number of mid-block chokers and medians can be reduced, and their locations can be further optimized to minimize impacts.

Maintenance of Landscaping:

The landscaping on the proposed medians and chokers, installed as part of this project, will be maintained by the City. During the design process, detailed landscape plans will be developed with input from maintenance staff to ensure that attractive plants and shrubs with minimum maintenance needs are installed as part of this project. The construction project will include a plant establishment period of at least one year following the acceptance of the project. The maintenance of all new landscape areas during this one-year period will be the responsibility of the contractor.

Sidewalks:

Currently, sidewalks are provided intermittently on Broadway resulting in several missing links. Residents have expressed safety concerns about walking on the street at the missing sidewalk locations due to obstructions created by landscaping or hardscape treatments. Accordingly, during the neighborhood meetings, several residents expressed support for Options 3 and 4 as they include improvements to both sides of the street with the provision of sidewalks

While many residents support the idea of providing sidewalks, some have expressed opposition to this idea. The concerns were mainly due to loss of landscaping or relocation of other private amenities, such as decorative mailboxes, which have been installed within the City right-of-way and will be replaced by the proposed sidewalk. Staff will continue to work with residents to address these concerns during the design process.

Improvement Options:

The cost estimate for Option 3 is approximately \$2.3 million, whereas the cost estimate for Option 4 is approximately \$1.1 million. Taking into consideration available funding, costs, and overall benefits, a majority of residents supported Option 4, which is also consistent with staff recommendation.

Staff requests City Council approval of the concept in Option 4 and authorization to proceed with the design phase. During the design, the public outreach process will continue to obtain residents' feedback and to address their concerns on various elements.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

One alternative is to allow Broadway to remain in its current configuration. Under this alternative, the grant funding would need to be fortified. The City Council could also consider implementation of other more restrictive traffic control measures. However, due to their very significant impacts, such alternatives are not recommended.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The City has secured grant funding from the federal Safe Route to School (SRTS) program in an amount of \$999,600. This funding is for the design and construction phases of the project. Depending on the option selected by the Council, it is possible that additional funding may be required. Staff recommends approval of the concept shown in Option 4 as it more closely matches the needs of the neighborhood within the available budget.

LEGAL REVIEW:

There is no legal review required on this item.

CONCLUSION:

As a result of resident concerns on Broadway over the past few years, the City has considered and implemented several improvements. In order to implement improvements to reduce the existing street width and provide other traffic calming measures, staff secured a federal Safe Route to School (SRTS) grant in the amount of \$999,600.

Four initial improvement options were developed aimed at reducing Broadway Street width, installation of traffic control measures, and installation of sidewalks. These options were presented at the City Council Study Session on November 10, 2009, and at two neighborhood meetings held on March 4, 2010, and May 6, 2010. Several residents attended these meetings and provided their input and comments.

The primary concerns expressed were parking impacts due to mid-block chokers and medians, potential impacts to parallel streets, and installation of sidewalks. These concerns were addressed by staff during the meetings. Several parking surveys were conducted to document parking conditions. In all options, the on-street parking supply significantly exceeds the observed parking demand. Impacts to other parallel streets are expected to be minimal as the proposed traffic control measures are limited and aimed solely at reducing vehicle speeds on Broadway. The impacts due to installation of sidewalks will be reviewed during the design phase.

Several members of the public support Option 4 as a starting point for consideration of improvements on Broadway. This concept is also recommended due to funding availability as well as overall benefits that would be realized. Staff requests City Council approval of Option 4 as the preferred option for Broadway SRTS improvements and continuation of the public outreach process during the design phase.

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- ATTACHMENTS:
- 1 - [Study Session Report - November 10, 2009](#)
 - 2 - [Resident Comments](#)
 - 3 - [Broadway Improvement Options 1 – 4](#)
 - 4 - [Detailed Conceptual Plans - Options 3, 4](#)
 - 5 - [Results of Parking Surveys](#)

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