

CITY OF CORONADO

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

The regular meeting of the Traffic Operations Committee (T.O.C.) was held on Thursday, April 28, 2005, at 2:00 p.m. in the Police Facility Emergency Operations Center. Present were Robert Hutton, Ed Walton and Scott Huth. Tony Peña was absent and represented by Ed Kleeman. Kim Raddatz was absent and represented by Rick Sitta. Also present were Dave Johnson, Assistant Engineer and Laszlo Waczek, Patrol Sergeant.

1. Minutes of the March 24, 2005 Meeting – The minutes were unanimously approved as written.
2. Oral Communications – None.
3. Recommendation Regarding a Left-Turn Restriction on Alameda Boulevard at Fifth Street – Mr. Johnson provided some background. In 2002 the T.O.C. heard a request to install a left-turn restriction at this intersection. The traffic volume on Fifth Street appeared to have increased as a result of drivers using Fifth to bypass Fourth Street due to the installation of the semi-diverters. The T.O.C. recommended to the City Council that a turn restriction be installed, but the Council elected to put any new traffic controls on hold until the Major Traffic Study (MTS) was completed. The MTS discussed keeping traffic on arterial routes. Recent traffic counts indicate a 7% increase from 2002 to 2005 in vehicles turning eastbound from Alameda onto Fifth during 2:00-3:00 p.m. The traffic volume at the same location decreased 33% from 3:00-5:00 p.m. There is concern about what will happen downstream if a turn restriction is placed here. Accident history indicates that although volumes are up, accidents are down. Personal observation and traffic counts support the fact that afternoon eastbound traffic volumes on Fifth Street increased after the semi-diverters were installed and have not gone back to the previous levels since the diverters were removed. The delay on Fourth Street stems from drivers being released unimpeded off the base and subsequently, traffic backs up from Orange Avenue. Drivers are using Fifth to avoid the back-up on Fourth. The staff report points out that an afternoon turn restriction might cause drivers to turn left further down and turning on Sixth Street would have a greater impact on the schools. Another problem with turn restrictions is enforcement; it is not possible to have a police officer out there on a daily or even a weekly basis to enforce the no turn. Mr. Johnson says he feels many drivers will ignore a turn restriction.

Spiro Chaconas, 860 I Avenue, wrote a letter to the editor regarding Navy/school traffic and provided a copy of it to the T.O.C. members. He has two young children that he picks up at 2:30. He believes that the City treasures children and thinks that restrictions should be placed on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh. Drivers turning left on Fifth go pretty fast and there are no 15 mph speed limits on any streets adjacent to the schools. Mr. Johnson says there are no accidents, but he has seen a couple of near accidents. His theory is that the City should not wait until an accident happens. Make the Navy

understand that Fourth Street is all clogged up; then the Navy might do something about it and fund the tunnel.

Mary Humphrey, safety officer for the middle school, said that after school part of the staff goes out and tries to keep parents from clogging the streets. Every day they witness cars rolling through stop signs and unfortunately, middle schoolers do not pay attention to traffic, particularly those on bikes and skateboards. Cars are loud and the school is not air conditioned, so the windows are open most of the year and it's very distracting. The school would love to see no more traffic on Fifth.

Robin Franck, 317 Fifth Street, said that several years ago some people came to the T.O.C. about this issue and the T.O.C. supported their request, but the City Council was against it. She thinks it's appalling that today's staff recommendation is based on a lack of accidents. Cars are speeding and playing a game of "beat the clock." They turn down J, I, H and other streets to get onto Fourth. Intersections are not left open because of these "cheaters" and residents can't get across town. Consider the safety of kids.

Cindy Ribant, 408 Fifth Street, asked that the T.O.C. please look at the qualitative and quantitative aspects of this request. She questions when the studies were done because when the ships are in traffic is up. She can't even get in her own driveway and is surprised that there haven't been accidents, but she doesn't want to see one. If a turn at Second and Palm is blocked, why not other streets, especially when those other streets are populated with our children?

Bill Cass, Assistant Principal, Village Elementary School, 600 Sixth Street, is concerned that if a restriction is placed at Fifth it will direct traffic to Sixth. In addition, traffic will be increasing with the construction at Crown School.

Ted Moore, 472 J Avenue, said that Sixth Street has a stop sign, Fifth does not. He thinks traffic will be gridlocked on Alameda going back to Sixth by the stop sign. He thinks it will back up to the yield sign at the Navy base. Maybe the yield sign can be gotten rid of to discourage people.

Peter Hunt, 809 Fifth Street, recently moved back to Coronado and found traffic conditions "unbelievable." He commutes to North Island and tries to ride his bike. What happens is just as people have described. His children go to school and he will not let them cross the street. By design, traffic has been funneled onto Fifth Street. He said the residents had the T.O.C.'s support a couple of years ago; maybe now they should be talking to the City Council. It's the same situation as saying you haven't had a fire, so why do you need a smoke detector? Or why should you use gun locks when no one's been shot in your house?

Joan Sedar (sp?), 401 Fifth Street, said not enough people received this letter. She is aware of an accident at Fifth and I and is concerned about her eighth grader who walks home from school. Drivers don't stop at the stop signs. She likes the idea of having a stop sign at the base; it will slow them down.

Mr. Hutton asked about the notification for this meeting and Mr. Johnson said letters were delivered to residences within a 300' radius of the area in question. This is considered the "sphere of influence." Mr. Hutton observed that today's turn-out is actually a good one.

Dick Dolcer (sp?), 510 Fifth Street, said that children are oblivious to traffic. It starts at 4:30 a.m. Drivers zip through the stop signs. Something needs to be done.

Nancy Reynolds, T.O.C. recording secretary, read a letter from the Coronado Middle School teachers. They strongly urge the T.O.C. to implement a no turn policy for

the afternoon hours. They cited constant disruption from traffic noise, pollution from car exhaust and safety of their students.

Maury Shaw, 511 B Avenue, worked for the school district for 30 years and can attest that traffic has dramatically increased. He agrees with Mr. Chaconas about restricting turns on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh and feels it will only impact the Navy. He doubts they'll go to Eighth.

Mr. Kleeman said that some of the first comments focus totally on Fifth and there does not seem to be an awareness of the impact to Sixth and Seventh Streets. He wonders if those who support a restriction on Fifth would support the same on Sixth and Seventh.

Mr. Hutton questioned whether there are stop signs at the school on Fifth and Mr. Johnson responded that there are stop signs at E, F, G and H.

Mr. Huth asked if there'd ever been an analysis of the flow pattern for cars turning left to get back onto Fourth and Mr. Johnson responded no, he wasn't aware it was as frequent as he's hearing today.

Mr. Hutton asked if the City has purview over the yield sign at Alameda by the base and Mr. Johnson said the City can work with the Navy on that.

Linda Sorrels, 606 Margarita, is a caregiver who travels all over the City. She thinks there should be more yellow crossings, especially around the schools. Also, students need to be instructed on how to cross. Violations need to be enforced.

Mr. Huth said he is in support of a restriction on Fifth between 2:00-5:00 p.m., but he is really concerned with the Sixth Street impact, less so on Seventh. Sixth has some other dynamics, like the traffic signal that is at Orange. He'd like to see Sixth and Seventh Streets brought back for consideration after some traffic data has been collected. He thinks it is a legitimate concern that traffic could be diverted.

Mr. Hutton asked if the MTS addressed this situation and Mr. Johnson said it did not focus on localized traffic control, but rather on major arterials. When traffic controls are put in place in a piecemeal fashion unexpected outcomes will be seen.

Mr. Kleeman is concerned about the impact to smaller children on Sixth. He thinks it's very risky to experiment with their lives and suggests that in addition to a sign on Fifth, maybe put a temporary sign at Sixth and monitor Seventh. That would be more protection for kids on Sixth.

Mr. Cass said that Seventh Street is also a major dismissal area for elementary school students. Many high school students probably also leave from this area.

George Arnall, Assistant Principal, Coronado High School, 650 D Avenue, said the high school does have pick-up and drop-off spots on Seventh.

Mr. Hutton thinks there's value in looking at the yield sign coming off the base. Drivers don't have to slow down and can make sweeping turns onto Alameda.

Mr. Walton said the information in the report was gathered during the school year. Some of the data is from school influence and he would like to wait until summer to take more counts without the school influence. He knows it's mostly the Navy, but he would like to remove the school influence and does not recommend going forward with just Fifth Street because he feels vehicles will move to Sixth, taking the path of least resistance. There are regular meetings with the Navy and he can bring up the possibility of changing the yield sign to a stop sign.

Mr. Kleeman thinks CEQA analysis will be required. It wasn't done for the semi-diverters and this caused some problems.

Mr. Huth made a motion to recommend restricting left turns from Alameda Boulevard onto Fifth Street and, after gathering more data over the summer, to bring back to the T.O.C. a recommendation regarding the same restriction at Sixth and Seventh Streets. His motion also included looking at the right-hand turn coming off the base. Mr. Hutton agreed with the motion; he seeing most of the traffic between 2:00-5:00 p.m. and he doesn't think that's a lot of parents. Mr. Walton does want the parents on First Street or other parts of the City to know that the City considered their route to pick up their children from school. Mr. Kleeman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Kleeman left the meeting at this point.

4. Recommendation Regarding the Request for Analysis of a Four-Way Stop Intersection at B Avenue and Fifth Street – Mr. Johnson said this issue had been previously evaluated in 2003 and it was found that this intersection did not meet the warrant for a four-way stop. It was decided at that time to bring it back to the T.O.C. after the semi-diverter removal. He reviewed the conditions of the warrant for four-way stop intersections:

Volume: *Total vehicular volume entering the intersection from all approaches averages 300 vehicles per hour for any eight hours of an average day; and the vehicular volume entering the intersection from the minor street for the same eight hours averages at least one-third of the total volume entering the intersection.*

The volume entering the intersection averages 277 vehicles per hour which is **less** than the required 300 vehicles per hour. The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the minor street for the same eight hours is approximately 48% of the total intersection hourly average, which is **more** than the required one-third of the total volume entering the intersection. This condition is **not** met.

Accidents: *Six or more types of accidents susceptible of correction by stop signs within a 12-month period.* There have been a total of two reported accidents at this intersection and stretch of roadway in the preceding 12 months. This condition is **not** met.

Visibility: *Sight distance on at least one of the approaches of the principal street for vehicles or pedestrians crossing the intersection is less than 160 feet.* The straight line sight distance of vehicles and pedestrians on the principal street (Fifth Street) is greater than 160 feet. This condition is **not** met.

Special Conditions for Residential Areas: *In residential areas the minimum vehicle volume may be reduced to sixty percent of the stated value of 300 vehicles provided all the following conditions are met:*

- a. *Both streets have residential frontage with existing 25 mile per hour speed limit.* This condition **is** met as the speed limit on both B Avenue and Fifth Street is 25 mph.
- b. *Neither street is a designated "through" street.* This condition **is** met; B Avenue and Fifth Street are not "through" streets.

- c. *Neither street exceeds 48 feet of curb-to-curb roadway width.* This condition **is** met as both streets have a roadway width of 48 feet.
- d. *No existing stop sign or signal is located on the principal street within a distance of 800 feet.* This condition is **not** met. Due to the nearly equal ADT on these two streets, it could be argued that either one is the principal street but there is an existing stop sign at the intersection of Fifth Street and Orange Avenue, which is less than 800 feet from the subject intersection. There is also a stop sign at the intersection of B Avenue and Fourth Street, only 500 feet away.
- e. *Streets from at least three legs extend 800 feet or more from the intersection.* This condition **is** met.
- f. *Installation of a four-way or three-way stop is compatible with the overall traffic circulation requirements for the area.* This condition **is** met.

The warrant states that all conditions must be met to allow reduction of the traffic volume warrant. Since special condition (d) is not met, the reduction to the traffic volume criteria is not applicable.

Mr. Johnson concluded that, according to the warrant, this intersection does not qualify for installation of a four-way stop.

Guy Zeller, 534 B Avenue, is very disappointed, but not surprised by Engineering's recommendation. He feels the criteria and data are flawed. He said the warrant was established in 1979 and we'll all agree that traffic has changed since then. He wonders if all of the accidents that happen in the community are reported. These are residential streets with an increasing number of small children. What's not mentioned is quality of life. It's stressful. No consideration has been given to the effects the speed humps on Glorietta and Pomona have on A, B and C Avenues. B is the avenue of choice for people who want to avoid the parking lot on Orange. Traffic was supposed to revert to the earlier pre-diverter level, but it has not.

Joseph Moore, 520 B Avenue, cannot articulate any better than Mr. Zeller has done. The criteria being used by the committee need to be reconsidered. Speed is not being considered and since the semi-diverters were removed traffic speed has increased. There's no justifiable basis to exempt a stop on Fifth and B when there is one at every other intersection on B and every intersection on C. It's needed and it's needed right away.

Pam Murphy, 550 B Avenue, has seen near misses or near hits. She has heard about a proposal for a light at Third and B and thinks that might increase traffic.

Barry Lorge, 461 B Avenue, agrees with what Admiral Zeller said and wonders why Fifth and C qualified as a four-way stop and Fifth and B didn't. Since the semi-diverters came down he's surprised that the volume of traffic has not increased as he thought; what has increased is the speed. There are young kids in the neighborhood. 277 cars is getting pretty close to the required 300 cars in the warrant. B Avenue has become the street of choice since the semi-diverters came down. He wants to echo all the other valid points.

Jankel Bare, 436 B Avenue, said the intersection did not qualify for a four-way stop according to 1979. Now Coronado is over-congested. Two accidents is too many in

a year. Who's going to be responsible for a serious accident? Children will be safer if we have a four-way stop. What is the cost to make this a four-way stop? It's nothing compared to the benefits that we would accrue. To do nothing is easy. To do it after an accident would be very bad.

Maury Shaw, 511 B Avenue, lives two houses from the intersection. Although there have not been many accidents, there's almost an accident every day, mostly due to base traffic heading toward Pomona and Glorietta.

Mr. Huth said this is the main way he gets across town. He sees speeders jamming across Fourth, accelerating and carrying the speed forward. He also sees cars taking a right-hand turn onto Fifth from Orange and thinks the stop signs are needed. He's usually a supporter of the warrants, but based on his observations because he travels this so often, he's more aware of what's happening.

Mr. Sitta said the Fire Department is aware of excess speeds on Fifth. He concurs that there is a need to slow the traffic.

Mr. Johnson said he is hearing "speed" as the primary concern at this location and stop signs are not used for speed control. An improvement like speed humps is used for speed control. Mr. Sitta said the Fire Department is against speed humps – it is like a stop sign at every hump for their vehicles which delays arriving at their destination.

Mr. Hutton pointed out that he is aware of instances where stop signs were installed and then asked to be removed. There is noise from braking and acceleration. Mr. Zeller said "we would accept that cheerfully."

Mr. Walton said the purpose of stop signs is to control the right-of-way. He has a hard time going against the warrant. There is a need for traffic professionals to be consistent. If a restriction is put on turns from Alameda, volumes on Fifth may come down from 277 and be even further from meeting the warrant. Studies have found that with stop signs, drivers go faster in a shorter distance.

Mr. Hutton said he felt the average traffic number is so close to the requirement in the warrant that he is inclined to say this is a really close call and stop signs should be considered. However, he wanted the requestors to be aware that there can be adverse impacts. He made a motion to recommend to the City Council that the intersection of Fifth Street and B Avenue be made a four-way stop. Mr. Sitta seconded the motion and it passed with Mr. Walton voting nay.

5. Recommendation Regarding Parking Recommendations of the Seventh and D Avenue Open Space Committee, Including Diagonal Parking in the 600 Block of D Avenue and Removal of Red Curb Adjacent to the Police Station on Seventh Street – Mr. Johnson said that the area around the Senior Center will be spruced up as part of the finalization of the library project. The Seventh and D Open Space Committee proposed installing diagonal parking on the 600 block of D Avenue, making six of those spaces handicap spaces and removing the red curb adjacent to the Police Station on Seventh Street.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the angle parking warrant as follows:

1. *Street Width*

- a. *Curb-to-curb width must be at least 48 feet to permit 60-degree diagonal parking on one side with the retention of parallel parking on the other side. This condition is met as D Avenue is 48 feet in width curb-to-curb.*

- b. *For 60-degree diagonal parking on both sides there must be a minimum curb to curb width of 60 feet.* This condition is not met and diagonal parking on both sides of the street **is not** possible.

2. *Traffic Volume*

Average daily vehicular traffic volumes on the street of 2000 or less and no peak-hour problems with congestion. Vehicle traffic counts in the 600 block of D Avenue show an average daily traffic volume of approximately 4,055 vehicles. This condition is **not** met. The directional breakdown shows a nearly balanced Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of vehicles:

Southbound D Avenue	1886 vehicles	46%
Northbound D Avenue	2169 vehicles	54%

3. *Block Length*

There will be no intermingling of angle parking and parallel parking in a single block length row. In particular, there should be no loading zones on the same block face with angle parking. Angle parking will not be installed for a length of less than a full block. When unrestricted parking is restored to the east side of the 600 block of D Avenue the block will provide approximately 21 parallel parking spaces. If parking were reconfigured to 60-degree angle parking, approximately 30 parking spaces would result, an increase of nine parking spaces.

Mr. Johnson said the recommendation is to install 60-degree angle parking on the easterly half of the 600 block of D Avenue and that the three southernmost diagonal spaces be designated disabled parking.

Linda Sorrels, president of the Coronado Senior Center, is on the Seventh and D Open Space Committee. She totally agrees with what Mr. Johnson has recommended. She has a suggestion – there is designated space on the corner of Seventh and D for three cars to park, but there are no white markings, and she has noticed that two pick-ups have been parked there. If the area were marked, there would be one more space.

George Arnall, Assistant Principal, Coronado High School, 650 D Avenue, is representing the high school and Dr. Wheeler. They have some concerns that the reason there hasn't been diagonal parking on the 500 and 600 blocks is because of the schools. When the school is finished there will be only two entrances; currently, there are six pick-up/drop-off spots. They expect an even greater increase in traffic. Backing out from diagonal parking has some hazardous aspects associated with it; sometimes you have to back out almost blind. Children are pouring into the street. Gaining nine spaces is commendable, but children's safety should be considered against gaining nine spaces. The theater is there and when there's a performance there's a tremendous amount of congestion at that corner. The auditorium holds 600 people.

Mr. Hutton asked if school bus loading and unloading had been considered and Mr. Johnson said the amount of school bus service in the past few years has been in flux. Currently, there's one bus in the a.m. and one in the p.m. for special ed students. He doesn't think diagonal parking would affect this.

Ms. Sorrels said Mr. Arnall is looking at safety, but the library parking on D will move back to Orange when construction is complete. Construction vehicles won't be

here when the library is finished. All you'll have is high school students and seniors. She doesn't feel the school and senior activities will collide.

Mr. Sitta asked if parents park to drop off kids or just drop them off and Mr. Arnall responded that they're just dropped off. Mr. Sitta observed that they won't be taking up any parking. Mr. Arnall said his concern is that when cars are waiting to pick up the kids there will be problems with cars backing out of diagonal parking. It's an accident waiting to happen.

Mr. Huth said that you get more litter and tree debris with diagonal parking because the sweeper can't get in. When the old police department is demolished the parking that some library staff use will be gone and that will cause a real demand for parking around the library. He supports the staff recommendation.

Mr. Hutton said he was concerned about maintenance and maybe having a time of day limit to allow the sweeper to come in. The problem is that schools create more litter; he's not making a complaint, it's just the nature of the beast. Also, it appears that the parking intended for the library and Senior Center may turn out to be student parking. That's another reason for having limited hours, but it also creates an enforcement problem.

Mr. Huth moved to approve the staff recommendation to install diagonal parking on the easterly half of the 600 block of D Avenue, to designate the three southernmost spaces handicap parking and retain the red curb on Seventh Street adjacent to the Police Station. Mr. Sitta said he understands the high school's concern because backing causes 95% of Fire Service accidents. With that said, he seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Hutton wanted to discuss time limits. Mr. Walton said that currently there is limited time parking because of the library construction. He hates to lose parking for the school because then they'll park in front of someone's home. Mr. Johnson said the block could be split with some timed spaces and some unlimited. Mr. Huth thinks prohibiting parking between 4:00-6:00 a.m. would work and he will get with the sweeper operator to confirm this. Mr. Hutton didn't feel this should be a big issue because there are no residences there. Mr. Sitta thought the restriction should be for no overnight parking Monday through Friday and Mr. Hutton suggested limiting the size of vehicles that park there with T-marks. Mr. Walton said that would be enforceable if vehicles block the travel lane.

Mr. Huth moved to restrict the parking between 4:00-6:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. Mr. Sitta seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.