



Staff Report

File #: 24-0053

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 01/17/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Public Works Department

SUBJECT:
COUNCIL MEMBER REQUEST: TRAFFIC MITIGATION ORDINANCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council for direction on the request from Council Member Daddario to develop an ordinance prohibiting citywide lane closures before 8:30 am to alleviate congestion in early traffic commuting hours.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council provide direction on Council Member Daddario's request to develop an ordinance that would prohibit citywide lane closures before 8:30 am.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

A City Councilmember may request items to be placed on a future agenda by submitting a "Future Agenda Item Request Form" to staff. On October 19, 2023, Council Member Daddario submitted this form to staff with a request to discuss adopting an ordinance that would prohibit lane closures for any type of work within the City until after 8:30 am, particularly around schools, shopping centers, hospitals, and one mile of freeway entrances.

ANALYSIS:

Lane Closure Approval Process

Any lane closures for private development, utility work, capital improvement projects, and special projects require encroachment permits through the Planning and Development Department, which are reviewed and commented on by Traffic Engineering staff before approval. Upon approval of the encroachment permit, staff will condition working hours of 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Permits with lane closures near schools, busy intersections, or major arterials are provided with modified working hours to avoid further impacting traffic. In these cases, special work hours are provided to tailor to the needs of the streets and their surrounding uses.

Lane closures for City related work such as tree trimming, utility repairs, or roadway maintenance do not require an encroachment permit, but are reviewed by Traffic Engineering upon request. Typically, Traffic Engineering will coordinate with other departments to discuss schedules, work-hour restrictions, and other pertinent project details. While some of these projects may require lane closures earlier than 8:30 am, staff diligently attempts to avoid having these lane closures take place around critical congestion areas. Also, if there is an emergency-related issue or larger-scale project, a lane may be closed for 24 hours and multiple days.

Impacts of Request

After analyzing the request, staff has some concerns about the impact of limiting all lane closures to after 8:30 am. Some of these concerns are:

- This creates a shorter daily working window, which will lead to additional days required to complete the work.
- Due to the shorter working widow, the work may be rushed, sacrificing safety or quality.
- Additional working days would result in increased construction/maintenance costs.
- This would reduce the flexibility staff currently has when it comes to providing lane closure requirements via permit approval, specific to the type of work being performed.
- The proposed request would not fully eliminate lane closures before 8:30 am, as they will still occur for certain projects and emergencies.

Therefore, based on a review of the current lane closure approval process and the impacts of the proposal, staff recommends keeping the current process versus having a blanket restriction on all lane closures throughout the City.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with the recommended action.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Action (CEQA), as the action is not a "project" as defined by CEQA (PRC Section 21065 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15378), guidelines which define a "project" as the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or reasonable foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is an activity directly undertaking by any public agency including public works construction and related activities. This action involves the consideration of the development of a policy or ordinance. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: ROSALVA N. URENO, CITY TRAFFIC ENGINEER

REVIEWED BY: SAVAT KHAMPHOU, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Presentation