



DATE: December 17, 2018

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

VIA: Jeff Moneda, City Manager

FROM: Norm Dorais, Public Works Director/City Engineer

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC RELIEF PILOT PROGRAM - NO LEFT TURNS ON EAST HILLSDALE BOULEVARD AT EDGEWATER BOULEVARD AND SHELL BOULEVARD

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council of the City of Foster City adopt a resolution approving a Traffic Relief Pilot Program at the intersections of East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard restricting left-turn (including u-turn) movements from eastbound East Hillsdale Boulevard during peak evening commute hours in order to discourage cut-through traffic in Foster City.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the years, the City received a number of requests to reduce traffic cutting through Foster City during peak evening commute hours. City staff recommends that the City Council consider a Traffic Relief Pilot Program for the intersections of East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard.

BACKGROUND

There has been a growing concern from Foster City residents about increased traffic congestion in Foster City due to cut-through traffic on East Hillsdale Boulevard from U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) connecting to eastbound State Route 92 (SR 92), particularly during peak evening commute hours. In October 2017, the City hosted a Community Dialogue Series regarding transportation, and cut-through traffic was a major topic raised by the residents at the meeting.

Discussion with the residents at the meeting resulted in a suggestion to conduct a pilot program restricting left-turn movements from eastbound East Hillsdale Boulevard during peak evening commute hours in order to discourage cut-through traffic in Foster City. Based on staff's observations over the years, it appears that the intersections most affected by cut-through traffic, and thus most feasible for a pilot program, are East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard. The suggestion was studied and deliberated within several subcommittees for many months. Ultimately, after consultation with residents and businesses, City staff recommends a three-month Traffic Relief Pilot Program be implemented and closely monitored.

ANALYSIS

East Hillsdale Boulevard is primarily a six-lane arterial roadway with recently-installed dedicated bike lanes and speed limits ranging from 40 mph, from the City limits to Edgewater Boulevard, to 35 mph, from Edgewater Boulevard to Shell Boulevard. Both intersections, East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard, are controlled by traffic signals. Edgewater Boulevard varies from four (4) to six (6) lanes in each direction and is an arterial roadway with a 40 mph posted speed limit approaching East Hillsdale Boulevard in both directions. Shell Boulevard is also a four-lane arterial roadway with a posted speed limit of 35 mph approaching East Hillsdale Boulevard in both directions.

According to the citywide traffic counts conducted in 2015, the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) along East Hillsdale Boulevard, Edgewater Boulevard, and Shell Boulevard are as follows:

Roadway Segments	ADT (vehicles per day)	ADT (vehicles per day)
East Hillsdale Boulevard (City Limits to Edgewater Boulevard)	14,180 – 16,966 Eastbound	16,845 – 20,555 Westbound
East Hillsdale Boulevard (Edgewater Boulevard to Foster City Boulevard)	8,690 – 11,978 Eastbound	9,380 – 12,726 Westbound
Edgewater Boulevard (SR 92 to Beach Park Boulevard)	9,823 – 15,759 Northbound	7,070 – 14,133 Southbound
Shell Boulevard (Metro Center Boulevard to East Hillsdale Boulevard)	5,528 Northbound	5,117 Southbound
Shell Boulevard (East Hillsdale Boulevard to Bounty)	7,356 Northbound	8,079 Southbound

Drive)		
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Further analysis and recent traffic counts reveal that peak hour traffic (5:00 pm to 6:00 pm) has increased by as much as 30% since 2015.

Traffic Volume Comparison 2015 to 2018 along East Hillsdale Boulevard
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Peak Hour:

Count Location	2015			2018			Change %
	E/B	W/B	Total	E/B	W/B	Total	
East Hillsdale Boulevard, East of Altair Avenue	1,572	1,234	2,806	1,977	1,273	3,250	+16%
East Hillsdale Boulevard, West of Shell Boulevard	1,246	740	1,986	1,538	953	2,491	+25%
East Hillsdale Boulevard, West of Foster City Boulevard	891	709	1,600	1,313	774	2,087	+30%

The proposed Traffic Relief Pilot Program would discourage cut-through traffic through Foster City by including the restriction of left-turn (including u-turn) movements from eastbound East Hillsdale Boulevard during peak evening commute hours. Based on staff's observations over the years, it appears that the intersections most affected by cut-through traffic and most feasible for a pilot program are East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard (Attachment 2). Signs indicating, "No Left Turns During the Hours of 4PM – 7PM Monday through Friday" (Attachment 3), would be installed on the eastbound-facing mast arms at both the intersections of East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard. While U-turn movements are currently allowed from both left-turn pockets, they would be restricted during the Pilot Program from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm. Portable message boards would be utilized prior to installation of the signs, and social media platforms and email listservs would be used for other notifications. Furthermore, letters would be sent to businesses and residential properties within a 500-foot radius of both intersections, notifying the public of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program.

Initially, local streets may see increased traffic due to commuters adjusting to the new restrictions. For example, the regular cut-through traffic may use Foster City Boulevard instead to access SR 92, thereby increasing traffic at Foster City Boulevard. In addition, residents who live on the north side of SR 92 and the Bridgepointe Shopping Center/Costco shoppers would need to adjust their routes. It is proposed that increased

police presence during the trial period be utilized to educate commuters and increased signage indicating private property entrances be installed. Staff has offered to meet with the Homeowner Associations affected. Staff met with residents of Spinnaker Cove and will be donating signs regarding private access.

In addition, traffic counts prior to and during implementation would be conducted to gauge the impact on nine (9) other intersections in the vicinity (Attachment 4). Prior to implementation, navigation applications such as Waze, Apple, Google, and Equinox shall be contacted to update their applications to reflect the left-turn restrictions. Portable message board signs would be placed in the eastbound direction weeks in advance of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program, notifying the public of the pilot program.

It should be noted that there are concerns with the implementation of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program.

- Will implementation cause traffic problems at other intersections?
- Will residents who live on the north side of East Hillsdale Boulevard have difficulties accessing their properties?
- Will businesses be impacted with the left-turn restrictions?

The Traffic Relief Pilot Program is proposed for a trial period of three (3) months, with authority given to the City Manager to terminate the Traffic Relief Pilot Program at any time should safety concerns arise. In addition, use of a survey platform via the City's website would solicit citizen input regarding the effectiveness of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program. Upon completion of the three (3) month trial, the results of the survey regarding the pilot program, Engineering and Police staff observations, and recommendations moving forward would then be presented to the Traffic Review Committee for recommendations to the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the consideration of a Traffic Relief Pilot Program at the intersections of East Hillsdale Boulevard/Edgewater Boulevard and East Hillsdale Boulevard/Shell Boulevard restricting left-turn (including u-turn) movements from eastbound East Hillsdale Boulevard during peak evening commute hours in order to discourage cut-through traffic in Foster City. The pilot program would be implemented for a three-month duration beginning in early 2019 with an effectiveness status report to be presented to the Traffic Review Committee for recommendations moving forward. The recommendations from the Traffic Review Committee would then be presented to the City Council for final approval.

SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEWS

The Transportation Subcommittee, previously consisting of Mayor Sam Hindi and Vice Mayor Gary Pollard, discussed this item with City staff on January 10, 2018, and supports the recommendation presented in this report with reservations. The Transportation Subcommittee shares the concerns anticipated with the implementation of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program.

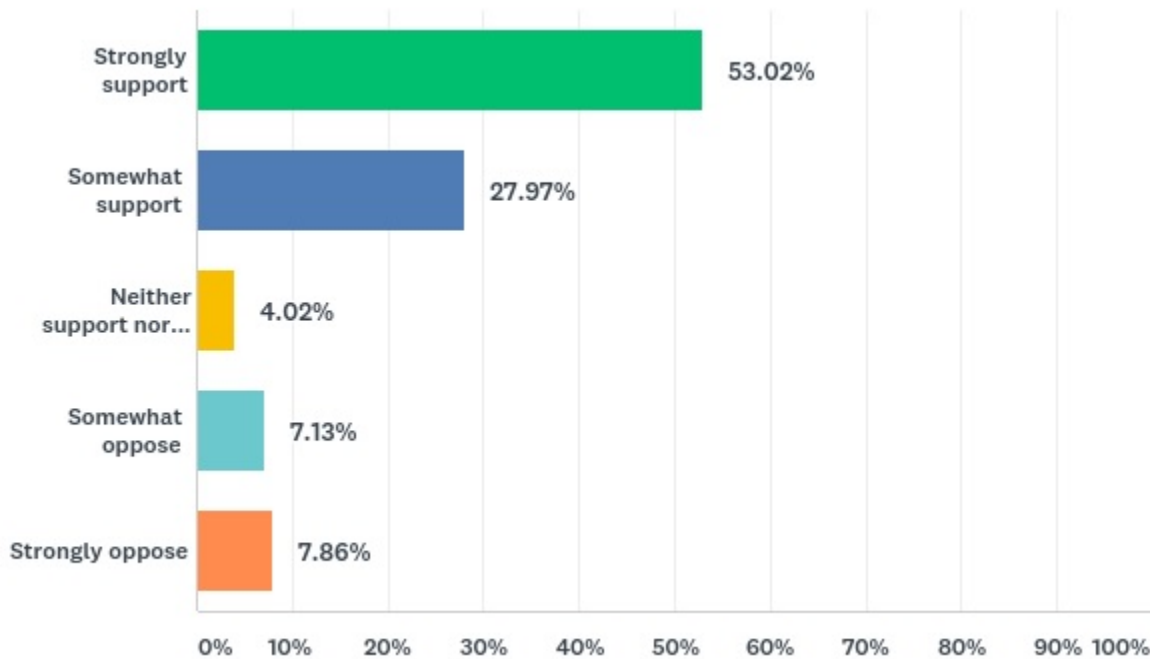
The Traffic Review Committee also reviewed the item at its January 17, 2018 meeting. The Traffic Review Committee raised similar concerns to those of the Transportation Subcommittee and recommended that the item be brought to City Council for consideration.

NOTIFICATION

A community meeting, as part of the City's Community Dialogue Series, was held on Saturday, October 20, 2018 to further engage and seek input on the proposed Traffic Relief Pilot Program from the community. The meeting attracted well over 80 members of the public. Concerns from the public were raised by several attendees. However, with the assurance that the program would be closely monitored during the trial period, there was overall agreement that the pilot program approach was worth pursuing.

In addition, an online survey was made available to the meeting attendees and as well as to those who could not attend. The survey was made available to the public for four (4) weeks following the Saturday community meeting. A total of 547 unique responses were recorded. Of the responses, as demonstrated in Graph 1. below, 443 (81%) supported the proposed Traffic Relief Pilot Program either strongly (53%) or with somewhat support (28%). A smaller group of 15% opposed the Traffic Relief Pilot Program either strongly (7.9%) or somewhat opposed (7.1%). The remaining (4%) neither supported nor opposed the program.

Graph 1. Survey Results for Q2: How much do you support or oppose the proposed Traffic Relief Pilot Program?



The survey results, including the complete list of questions and detailed responses, are available for review at the following web link: fostercity.org/trppsresults.

Lastly, properties (including Homeowner Associations and commercial properties) within a 500-foot radius of both subject intersections of the subject item were notified.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is a fiscal impact associated with the implementation of the Traffic Relief Pilot Program of approximately \$30,000. Approximate costs include traffic counts (\$8,500), the purchase of lane delineators (\$1,500), and the removal of the barricades each day by Public Works staff (\$300 per day of implementation or \$20,000 for the full three-month trial period).

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Resolution
- Attachment 2 – Vicinity Map
- Attachment 3 – Proposed Sign Restricting Left Turns

- Attachment 4 – Traffic Data Collection Map

**Past community meeting materials, including the link to the detailed survey responses, on the Traffic Relief Pilot Program is available on sustainable.fostercity.org/cds2018.*