

**City of Culver City, California  
Agenda Item Report**

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| Meeting Date: 04/08/13                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  | Item Number: <u>PH-1</u>                                                               |  |
| <b>CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING – (1) Discussion of Linwood E. Howe Safe Routes to School Project, and (2) (If Desired) Direction to the City Manager Related Thereto.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |                                                                                        |  |
| Contact Person/Dept.: Sammy Romo/PW,<br>Gabe Garcia/PW                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  | Phone Number: (310) 253-5619<br>(310) 253-5633                                         |  |
| Fiscal Impact: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  | General Fund: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      |  |
| Public Hearing: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  | Action Item: <input type="checkbox"/> Attachments: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Commission Action Required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  | Date: _____                                                                            |  |
| Public Notification: (E-Mail) Agenda and Meetings – City Council (04/02/13); (Mail) Neighborhood south of Downtown; (Mail) Full blocks where physical improvements are proposed which are not in the immediate vicinity of Linwood E. Howe Elementary School; (Mail) the residential neighborhood south of Downtown; (E-Mail) Downtown Neighborhood Association; (E-Mail) the Culver City Bicycle Coalition; (E-Mail) the Downtown Business Association; (E-Mail) the Culver City Chamber of Commerce; publication in the Culver City News on 03/28/13 and 04/04/13; Link from the City web site home page to a Courtesy Notice for this item; (E-Mail) all who provided input via e-mail; (Mail) all who provided input by letter; CCUSD Superintendent; Linwood E. Howe Principal, Safe Routes to School Committee, PTA, and Culver City Police and Fire. |  |                                                                                        |  |
| Department Approval:<br>Charles D. Herbertson (03/28/13)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | City Attorney Approval:<br>Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (04/01/13)                       |  |
| Chief Financial Officer Approval:<br>Jeff Muir (04/02/13)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  | City Manager Approval:<br>John M. Nachbar (04/02/13)                                   |  |
| <p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u></b></p> <p>Staff recommends the City Council discuss the Linwood E. Howe Safe Routes to School project and direct the City Manager as deemed appropriate.</p> <p><b><u>PROCEDURE:</u></b></p> <p>(Note: This is not a legally required public hearing. Therefore, no affidavits of publishing were required.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mayor calls on staff for a brief staff report.</li> <li>2. Mayor requests a motion to open the public hearing to allow for public comments, if any.</li> <li>3. Receive comments from the public.</li> <li>4. Mayor requests a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.</li> <li>5. The City Council discusses the matter and provides direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.</li> </ol>                           |  |                                                                                        |  |

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**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

The City was awarded a State grant for the Linwood E. Howe Safe Routes to School Project (P-941), in the amount of \$447,480, with a City matching contribution of \$49,720 and \$30,280 in design costs. The purpose of the grant is to create more comfortable routes for walking and biking to and from school, by using nationally-proven physical improvements to address common safety concerns for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. The proposed project consists of adding bike facilities along several streets near the school, and constructing physical improvements, such as new curb extensions, perpendicular curb ramps, and striping high visibility crosswalks and advanced STOP bars at a number of locations on routes to the school.

After receiving the grant award, the City went through the process of encumbering the grant funds and hiring an engineering firm to do the design of the proposed physical improvements. The designs were completed in June 2012.

Recognizing the sensitivity of the project, the Public Works Department decided to model the proposed improvements at select locations with temporary measures using paint, sand bags, delineators, and barricades before moving forward with advertising the project for construction bids. The modeling began in July 2012 and concluded after the first week of school in September 2012. About 200 e-mails/phone calls were documented. The general input was the project is not warranted based on the poor economy or lack of necessity.. The commentators who provided location-specific input cited their opinion that the streets were already narrow and that by narrowing them further would cause difficulty when cars turn in or out of the streets. The greatest number of comments referred to Farragut Drive/Duquesne Avenue and the right turn movement from southbound Duquesne Avenue onto westbound Braddock Drive.

To encourage further input, subsequent to the modeling, staff made presentations at two community meetings: one organized by the Downtown Neighborhood Association and the other by the Culver City Bicycle Coalition.

In response to the site-specific comments that were received from the community, staff modified the original plans. The following are the proposed modifications:

- A reduction of nearly all curb-extensions from six feet, down to four feet. This reduction of two-feet from each curb extension on two sides of a street yields a gain of four additional feet for roadway width and a greater comfort as drivers execute their turns at the project intersections;
- The intersection with the greatest number of negative comments, Farragut Drive/Duquesne Avenue, has been dropped from the project;

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- The specific corner with the second greatest number of negative comments, the northwest corner of Braddock Drive/Duquesne Avenue (the right turn from southbound Duquesne Avenue onto westbound Braddock Drive) has been removed from the project. The proposed physical improvements at the other three corners of this intersection remain part of the project, and the curb-extensions are proposed to be reduced from six feet down to four feet, as indicated previously. One exception is that the curb-extension at the northeast corner will be longer so that its curb aligns with the curb extension at the southeast corner;
- At intersections with one-way streets (such as at A Street/Van Buren Place, Braddock Drive/Irving Place, Farragut Drive/Irving Place, and Farragut Drive/Van Buren Place), the curb-extensions are proposed to be of a longer length due to the lack of some of the turning movements;
- For the intersection of Braddock Drive/Lincoln Avenue, new perpendicular curb ramps are proposed. No curb extensions are proposed;
- For the intersection of Higuera Street/Lucerne Avenue, new high-visibility crosswalks and advanced STOP bars are proposed.

Below is a summary of the modifications to the original proposal by intersection:

1. Braddock Drive/Lafayette Place (reduced curb extensions from six feet down to four feet);
2. Duquesne Avenue/Braddock Drive (curb extension at northwest corner of intersection removed from plans);
3. Braddock Drive/Madison Avenue (reduced curb extensions from six feet to four feet);
4. Duquesne Avenue/Farragut Drive (removed from project);
5. Duquesne Avenue/Lucerne Avenue (reduced curb extensions from six feet to four feet);
6. Irving Place/Farragut Drive (lengthier curb extension at southeast corner of intersections and reduced curb extension width from six feet to four feet);
7. Irving Place/Braddock Drive (reduced curb extensions from six feet to four feet);
8. A Street/Van Buren Place (lengthier curb extensions and reduced curb extension widths from six feet to four feet);
9. Farragut Drive/Van Buren Place (lengthier curb extension and reduced curb extension width from six feet to four feet);
10. Lucerne Avenue/Ince Boulevard (reduced curb extensions from six feet to four feet);
11. Higuera Street/Lucerne Avenue (only striping) ;
12. Higuera Street/Washington Boulevard (no change); and
13. Braddock Drive/Lincoln Avenue (Installation of new curb ramps only).

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The engineering design firm hired by the City was asked to make revisions to the original plans to incorporate the modifications indicated above. The revised plans are 95% complete. Accordingly, staff is returning to the City Council for a discussion of the project and revised plans. After receiving input from the public and City Council, staff anticipates scheduling another City Council meeting within approximately one month, to approve the revised plans and specifications (taking into account any additional input and direction received during this meeting), and authorize staff to advertise for construction bids. If the City Council agrees to this process, the construction contract is anticipated to be awarded in June, and the bulk of the construction is anticipated to occur during the summer to minimize impacts to Linwood Howe School.

In addition to physical improvements, the grant also includes some funding for education, encouragement, and traffic enforcement efforts so that students can feel safer walking or bicycling to or from their school. These funds will complement the separate federal Citywide K-8 non-infrastructure Safe Routes to School grant that the City received in 2011.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Draft Project plans for the Linwood E. Howe Safe Routes to School Project, P-941.

**MOTION:**

That the City Council:

Discuss the Linwood E. Howe Safe Routes to School physical improvements project and direct the City Manager as deemed appropriate.