

STAFF REPORT



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DATE: December 5, 2023

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director
VIA: David Kriske, Assistant Community Development Director –
Transportation
BY: Chris Buonomo, Senior Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program, and Amending the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood Protection Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURBANK ADOPTING A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, ADOPTING A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM, AMENDING THE RANCHO PROVIDENCIA NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION PLAN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF RELATED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

The Rancho Providencia Neighborhood Protection Plan (NPP) is a series of street improvements adopted by the City Council in 1998 to reduce cut-through traffic in the residential neighborhood bounded by Buena Vista Street, Olive Avenue, Victory Boulevard, Main Street, and Alameda Avenue. This area includes approximately 800 homes, Dolores Huerta Middle School, Saint Finbar Parish and School, and numerous other businesses. There are 15 north-south streets generally bisected by Oak Street. Roadway countermeasure and preferential parking zone installations were completed in 2001. However, changes in commercial and studio activity on the perimeter of the neighborhood as well as surrounding traffic conditions moved City Council to direct staff to update the NPP.

On June 22, 2021, Council directed staff to commence an update to the Rancho Providencia NPP in response to the potential for increased cut-through traffic in the residential neighborhood south of Olive Avenue near Orchard Drive due to the opening of Raising Cane's drive-through restaurant. NPPs are recommended in the Burbank2035 General Plan as a method to protect neighborhoods and preserve quality of life by managing traffic patterns in a specific geographic area. The purpose of an NPP is to

protect residential neighborhoods from impacts caused by cut-through vehicle traffic, which is traffic that utilizes local streets to travel through a neighborhood to a destination outside the area.

Staff returned to Council at various points in the Rancho Providencia NPP update process. On August 23, 2022, Council directed staff to implement three initial temporary measures in furtherance of the Rancho Providencia NPP update to address traffic caused by the opening of Raising Cane's: 1) a road closure on South Orchard Drive, 2) speed humps on South Reese Place, and 3) permit parking on both streets. On December 6, 2022, staff provided a follow-up report on the effectiveness of these measures. On June 6, 2023, Council directed staff to amend the permit parking on South Reese Place from "No Parking 8AM to 10PM, Except By Permit" to "No Parking 2PM to 10PM, Except By Permit" to accommodate employee parking for businesses on Olive Avenue.

Staff distributed public notices by mail for these Council meetings, inviting residents in the Rancho Providencia NPP area to provide public comment. In addition, staff held a virtual community meeting on April 7, 2022, distributing a mailed notice in advance. During the Environmental Review phase, staff presented to the Transportation Commission on October 16, 2023, and held a community meeting on October 19, 2023, with a public notice mailed in advance. More detail can be found in the Environmental Review section. Staff distributed a public notice and posted in the Los Angeles Times in advance of the December 5, 2023, City Council meeting.

DISCUSSION

Data Collection

The NPP update (Attachment 2) documents all the data analysis, observations, and conclusions that staff prepared over the last 23 months. Staff began the NPP update process in January 2022 with vehicle data collection throughout the neighborhood, including speed, volume, cut-through patterns, and parking occupancy. Volume is reported as Average Daily Traffic (ADT), the number of vehicles to pass the count location in a 24-hour period. Speed is reported as 85th percentile of all vehicle speeds in a 24-hour period, the standard speed measurement method utilized by the State of California. Three days of counts were conducted, and the average of those days is utilized for comparison.¹ A cut-through traffic analysis was administered by observing license plates of vehicles entering and exiting the NPP area in five minutes or less and observing the locations where these time-limited trips occurred.

A smaller set of interim data was collected in July and August 2022 around the Raising Cane's restaurant after the restaurant opened to ascertain its operations' impact on the neighborhood. This Phase 1 data collection and analysis led staff to propose three initial pilot measures to address traffic and parking issues caused by Raising Cane's, which were approved by City Council in August 2022 and installed by September 26, 2022.

¹ At virtually all locations, data was collected on the same three-day periods, the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays in the weeks of January 17, 2022 and January 16, 2023. However, several locations displayed outlier results due to equipment malfunction and were re-counted the following week.

In November 2022 (after the temporary measures were installed) staff collected additional interim data on the streets immediately around Raising Cane's to assess the effectiveness of the Phase 1 measures. Staff collected follow-up data in January 2023 for the entire neighborhood to assess changing conditions in the entire neighborhood over the entire year. This Phase 2 data and analysis utilized the same methods as Phase 1, described above.

Finally, a parking demand study was administered on South Reese Place, South Orchard Drive, and Parish Place between Olive Avenue and Oak Street, the streets considered most likely to be impacted due to the opening of the Raising Cane's restaurant. Initial data was collected on a weekday, Thursday, March 3, 2022, and on a weekend, Sunday, March 6, 2022. Follow-up parking data was collected on Thursday, August 4, 2022, and Tuesday, August 9, 2022 (before the Phase 1 measures were installed) as well as Thursday, November 3, 2022, and Saturday November 5, 2022 (after the measures were installed).

Data Observations

Based on an evaluation of the traffic and parking data taken at various times over a twelve-month timeframe, four major observations emerged regarding travel within the Rancho Providencia NPP Area throughout the data analysis:

1. *Speeding is present where there are no speed humps.*

Speeding is present in the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood. Phase 2 data from January 2023 show that every street without speed humps (except for the short segment of Edison Street) have speeds above the speed limit. Two street segments show an average 85th percentile speed of 29 mph, and 14 streets segments are 30 mph or higher.

2. *Speed humps are effective at reducing vehicle speed.*

Speeds are consistently at or below the posted speed limit on streets with speed humps. Of the six street segments equipped with speed humps for both phases of data collection, five streets exhibit 85th percentile speed average speeds at or below the posted 25 mph speed limit. This is consistent in both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 data. In addition, South Reese Place from Olive Avenue and Oak Street had speed humps installed after Phase 1 data collection (installation in September 2022), which allowed staff to conduct a direct before-versus-after analysis of speed humps on the same street. The speed humps on South Reese resulted in a reduction in speeds from 33 mph in January 2022 to 22 mph in January 2023. Data from the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood demonstrate that speed humps are effective at reducing overall average speeds on local and collector streets.

3. *Vehicle volume is consistent with residential street volumes.*

When Raising Cane's opened, volumes on the streets directly adjacent to the restaurant showed very large growth in traffic volume. However, in January 2023, six months after opening, volumes on streets near the restaurant fell back to levels expected for a residential street. Streets with higher volumes elsewhere within the study area were in expected places: around Dolores Huerta Middle School and St. Finbar School, as well as streets that have signalized Olive Avenue crossings.

Other neighborhood streets that do not directly abut the schools or a signal have average volumes consistent with local streets.² Also, nearly all streets saw an increase in volume in 2023 as compared to the year prior, likely to the return to normal in-person work and school after the COVID-19 shutdown, with overall traffic increasing by 10 percent across the neighborhood. While the streets near Raising Cane's saw a precipitous rise immediately after the restaurant opened, volumes have since fallen and their magnitude volumes are now within the expected bounds for neighborhood streets.

4. *Cut-through traffic is less of a factor than expected.*

Based on this data, it appears that neighborhood-wide cut-through traffic is less severe than anticipated. In both January 2022 and January 2023, the segment of Keystone Street between Olive Avenue and Alameda Avenue had the highest instance of cut-through traffic of any street observed. Keystone is the only street in the neighborhood with signalized intersections at both Olive and Alameda, and it is a signalized path to and from Burroughs High School, the studios, and the 134 freeway to the south. Although Keystone has the highest cut-through pattern, its traffic volume is still well within the acceptable level for a neighborhood street. In fact, total cut-through traffic in the neighborhood declined from January 2022 to January 2023.

Recommendations

Based on the data analysis and observations taken to evaluate the Rancho Providencia NPP and the temporary measures that have been installed, the Plan update makes several conclusions. Based on this analysis, the Plan update prescribes three recommendations regarding the existing temporary measures as well as two additional recommendations to further traffic calming in the neighborhood. The recommendations outlined in Chapter 7 of the Plan are:

1. *Maintain speed humps on South Reese Place.*

As noted in the Intermediate Data Collection section, speed humps were effective in reducing the average 85th percentile speed on South Reese Place from 33 mph to 22 mph. This measure has directly addressed the speeding concern and has reduced average speeds to below the posted speed limit. This is no additional cost.

2. *Maintain the Permit Parking Program on South Reese Place and South Orchard Drive.*

Since the installation of the parking permit program on South Reese Place and South Orchard Drive, the instance of patrons parking in residential zones and walking to Raising Cane's has decreased, although it has not been eliminated. Parking utilization on South Reese Place, the more accessible of the two streets, has decreased from 50.9 percent in August 2022 (when Raising Cane's was open but permit parking program was not yet in place) to 42.1 percent (when permit parking program was in place) in the evening.

² 1,000 ADT is considered "little traffic" (Ben-Joseph, "Residential Street Standards & Neighborhood Traffic Control: A Survey of Cities' Practices and Public Officials' Attitudes," [1995])

Burbank Police Department entered into a contract with a parking enforcement company in June 2023 to increase staffing for permit checks and parking enforcement citywide. These parking control officers have been specifically deployed on South Reese Place and South Orchard Drive as a focused area of enforcement. Council approved an amendment to the parking permit hours to 2PM to 10PM to balance parking needs with neighboring businesses, which, in concert with improved enforcement, can allow more flexibility during the morning and lunch hours while improving enforcement during the more problematic evening hours. In addition to permits offered to residents, the Council also allocated a limited number of business parking permits to be allocated to businesses abutting South Reese Place and South Orchard Drive to further maintain a balance in parking utilization between residents and businesses.

Staff proposes increasing the percentage of non-resident or commercial applicants for permits within the permit-parking zones in the amount from 25 percent to 30 percent of the available street parking within the Permit Parking Zones. When current permits expire, staff will contact all neighboring businesses to determine which desire permits and then re-allocate proportionally. Cost to maintain the permit program will be incorporated into the existing Citywide program.

3. *Maintain the South Orchard Drive Temporary Closure for One Additional Year.*

The primary objective of the temporary closure on South Orchard Drive is to keep the Raising Cane's drive-through line from forming into the residential zone. This closure has been effective at doing so. Staff has considered whether to make this closure permanent with curb and landscaping installations. While queueing from Raising Cane's continues to encroach into the South Orchard Drive and Olive Avenue public right-of-way in certain times of day, the incidence of this encroachment has decreased over time as the restaurant has become more established. Further, additional Raising Cane's Restaurants in Hollywood, North Hollywood, and Northridge have opened or are expected to open within the next year. More restaurant openings could result in reduced demand at the Burbank location resulting in drive-through traffic no longer encroaching into public right-of-way.

If this were to occur, the South Orchard Drive closure would no longer be necessary, and the City may consider removing it so that its secondary effects on pushing traffic to other nearby streets would also be eliminated. Given that making the closure permanent through permanent curb and drought-tolerant landscaping installations would make its removal more costly later, and, given the uncertain impact the opening of more Raising Cane's locations may have on the Burbank location, staff recommends the closure remain in place in its temporary condition for one additional year. During that time, store activity and drive-through activity can be monitored as additional Raising Cane's Restaurants open nearby. Should drive-through activity continue to spill into the public right-of-way even after other restaurant locations open, it is recommended that a decision to make the closure permanent be considered at that time. There is no additional cost to maintain the temporary measure. Staff will return with an estimated cost to construct the permanent measure if deemed necessary after the one-year observation period.

4. *Recommend additional locations for speed humps.*

Analysis shows that nearly all local streets without speed humps display average 85th percentile vehicle speeds above the posted speed limit of 25 mph and that streets with speeds humps are nearly all at or below the posted 25 mph speed limit. Data from the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood demonstrate that speed humps are effective at reducing overall average speeds on local streets. Because speeding was one of the most common complaints about traffic in the neighborhood and because speed humps were shown to be effective in reducing speeds, staff recommends that fifteen street segments in the neighborhood be eligible to petition for speed humps without further engineering studies. While residents of these streets would still need to follow the City of Burbank Speed Hump Policy to petition for a speed hump installation, the data collected as part of the Rancho Providencia NPP satisfies the need for a traffic engineering study that is normally required as part of the City’s Speed Hump Policy. Given the amount of data analysis conducted and the conclusion of speed hump effectiveness in this specific neighborhood, staff recommends that most streets in the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood without speed humps be eligible for them if a majority of the residents support their installation. This expands eligibility for five additional streets that would otherwise not be eligible under the City’s current Speed Hump Policy. The full list of fifteen street segments is below.

Table 1: Recommendations for the Installation of Speed Humps

SEGMENT #	STREET	SEGMENT	January 2023	
			ADT	85th Percentile Speed*
Group A (Qualified under existing speed hump policy)				
4	Myers Street	Oak St to Alameda Av	554	32 mph
6	Lamer Street	Oak St to Alameda Av	703	31 mph
9	Parish Place	Olive Av to Oak St	1,141	30 mph
14	Sparks Street	Olive Av to Oak St	1,189	34 mph
15	Sparks Street	Oak St to Alameda Av	1,407	35 mph
16	Beachwood Drive	Oak St to Alameda Av	748	34 mph
20	Mariposa Street	Oak St to Alameda Av	1,483	30 mph
21	Mariposa Street	Verdugo Av to Oak St	1,174	32 mph
22	Virginia Avenue	Verdugo Av to Oak St	625	30 mph
24	Glenwood Place	Verdugo Av to Oak St	565	33 mph
Group B (Qualified under expanded speed hump policy)				
3	Lincoln Street	Oak St to Alameda Av	400	31 mph
7	Lamer Street	Olive Av to Oak St	634	29 mph
19	Griffith Park Drive	Verdugo Av to Oak St	409	30 mph
23	Lomita Street	Verdugo Av to Oak St	447	31 mph
29	Angeleno Avenue	Virginia Av to Victory Bl	749	28 mph

ADT = average daily traffic, vehicles per day
 mph = miles per hour

To date in Burbank, speed humps have been deployed at individual locations and across larger neighborhoods. Although residents on the street segments identified in Table 1 still need a petition to demonstrate sufficient community support, there

is a possibility for several adjacent street segments to petition in favor of speed humps. While they are effective at slowing vehicle speeds, Burbank Fire Department staff advise that a concentration of speed humps in the neighborhood may affect emergency vehicle response time. Furthermore, the addition of speed humps will lead to increased wear and tear on emergency vehicles and therefore increased maintenance costs. When speed humps are deployed on a single street, as they were on South Reese Place, an emergency vehicle only has to navigate one set of speed humps while traveling to an emergency. However, several consecutive street segments with speed humps may make them unavoidable during an emergency response, which could potentially increase response times and add to overall fleet maintenance needs.

One possible solution to balance emergency response times against the vehicular safety benefits of installing speed humps is to ensure that the design of speed humps in the neighborhood include pass-by slots so that emergency vehicles do not have to slow down dramatically or navigate a vertical element in the roadway. This traffic calming element is called a “slotted speed hump” or a “speed cushion.” Slotted speed humps exist with a seven-foot center cushion on North Bel Aire Drive and North Beachwood Drive between Clark Avenue and Magnolia Boulevard. This design has proven effective at managing speeds while offering a slight benefit to public safety vehicles versus regular speed humps. The speed humps located on South Beachwood Drive in the NPP are actually implemented as slotted speed humps with a narrower center pad width of five feet, but average 85th percentile speed at this location was still measured to be above the speed limit at 28 mph. Burbank Fire Department has identified that the width of its dual-tire fire vehicles cannot currently navigate through the seven-foot slotted speed hump design without a high likelihood of impacting the speed of the vehicle, and prefers the narrower 5-foot-wide design. However, the narrower slotted speed hump design does not slow regular vehicles compared to the seven-foot slotted speed hump design. Thus, a five-foot-wide slotted speed hump design would not be effective as seven-foot-wide slotted speed humps in reducing overall vehicle speeds. It should be noted that the City’s current Speed Hump Policy prescribes that regular, non-slotted speed humps be installed if a street meets the policy criteria.

Based on this analysis, staff is recommending that the City Council adopt the following:

- a. Streets listed in Table 1 will be eligible for the installation of speed humps with a supporting petition per the guidelines in the Speed Hump Policy.
- b. For streets that have met the petition requirements, slotted speed humps shall be installed to reduce the impacts to emergency response while also reducing vehicle speeds, as approved by the Public Works Director and Fire Chief.

Staff estimates the cost of speed humps on all recommended streets to cost \$90,000. As residents of neighborhood streets will petition for speed humps over time, staff recommends the City Council allocate \$30,000 upon approval of the

plan and allocate \$30,000 per year for the subsequent two years as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program.

5. *No additional street closures recommended.*

Staff does not recommend any additional street closures in the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood. City Council approved the closure on South Orchard Drive to separate the residential properties from the traffic accessing the Raising Cane's drive-through. This closure has addressed the immediate concern of queuing on South Orchard Drive in front of residential properties. Further, it is recommended that this closure remain a temporary closure so that future restaurant activity and the opening of other nearby Raising Cane's locations can be evaluated to determine if the closure remains warranted. There is no other location in the neighborhood where drive-through queuing spills out into the residential neighborhood, which is the justification for the ongoing South Orchard Drive closure. While the data show that additional trips from the South Orchard Drive closure likely have been diverted to nearby streets, vehicle volumes on those streets do not exceed levels that are to be expected on any other typical residential street. Therefore, it is not recommended that additional street closures be implemented as part of this plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State CEQA Guidelines (Attachment 6). The MND provides detailed analysis and discussion of two topic areas: Biological Resources and Noise. The other issues on the City's environmental checklist were determined not to have the potential for significant environmental effects, and this checklist is addressed in the Initial Study that is part of the MND. The MND determined that installation of neighborhood-wide speed humps and a permanent closure at South Orchard Drive (pending petitions for speed humps and the future determination for permanent closure) could have potentially significant impacts on nesting birds and bats, but this impact can be reduced to less than significant with implementation of a monitoring program near any roadway construction. Also, there is potential for significant impact due to construction noise, but with mitigation measures ensuring construction noise suppression and adherence to construction hours outlined in the City Building code, this impact can be reduced to less than significant. The summary of impacts and mitigation measures is contained in the Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program (MMRP). The MMRP is included in the final MND.

The Initial Study/MND was circulated for a 30-day public comment period, from October 4, 2023, to November 3, 2023. In addition, staff presented the analysis and conclusions of the Rancho Providencia NPP Update to the Transportation Commission on October 16, 2023, and held a community meeting on October 19, 2023, to solicit comments. The Transportation Division received 12 comments pertaining to the Initial Study/MND, all of which are included and addressed in the MND. Comments mostly pertain to frustration at the presence of the Raising Cane's restaurant and general support for speed humps. This is in addition to the over 250 comments that have been received during the NPP Update process, which have been incorporated at various stages of plan development and echo similar sentiments expressed during the Initial Study/MND public comment period.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff is requesting Council authority to amend the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 Budget by appropriating \$30,000 from revenue account number 127.CD33A.70020.0000.00000 (Public Improvements Fund, Public Improvements - Transportation, Holding - Capital) to expenditure account number 127.CD33A.70002.0000.24274 (Public Improvements Fund, Public Improvements – Transportation, Street Improvements, Rancho Providencia Neighborhood Protection Plan).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the plan update, the MND, and public comments, staff recommends that Council approve the Rancho Providencia NPP Update and its corresponding recommendations. The initial measures installed in September 2022 have been effective and should remain in place, with the determination of the South Orchard Drive temporary closure's possible future permanence determined after one additional year of observation. The main insight of the NPP update is the effectiveness of speed humps in the neighborhood. Additional speed humps in the neighborhood can help curb speeding, and residents have supported the idea of humps. Opening the speed hump petition process to additional streets can allow for more speed humps and less speeding in the neighborhood. Finally, the recommendation for no additional closures reflects the intent of the South Orchard Drive closure to serve in deterring vehicle queueing into the residential neighborhood, and any additional closure will not serve this purpose.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Proposed Resolution

Attachment 2 – Rancho Providencia NPP Update

Attachment 3 – Rancho Providencia NPP Updated Appendices

Attachment 4 – 85th Percentile Vehicle Speed Data (January 2023)

Attachment 5 – Average Daily Traffic Data (January 2023)

Attachment 6 – Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Correspondences