

STAFF REPORT



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DATE: December 6, 2022

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

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

SUBJECT: Update on Preferential Parking District on 100-200 Blocks of South Reese Place and South Orchard Drive, Speed Humps on South Reese Place, and Temporary Street Closure on South Orchard Drive Near Raising Cane's Restaurant

RECOMMENDATION

Note and file

BACKGROUND

On August 23, 2022, staff recommended installation of three traffic calming measures near the Raising Cane's restaurant, including permit parking on South Orchard Drive and South Reese Place, speed humps on South Reese Place, and a temporary closure of South Orchard Drive to through traffic. The City Council voted to approve these recommendations and directed staff to return in 60 days with an update on the effectiveness of the installation.

Following approval by the City Council on August, 23 2022, staff installed speed humps on September 21, 2022 and the temporary closure on September 23, 2022. Staff began distributing parking permits to neighbors on September 26, 2022 and allowed time for all residents to apply and receive their permits before beginning enforcement on October 17, 2022.

DISCUSSION

After two months of the restaurant operating with the permit parking, speed humps, and the temporary closure installed, staff has collected additional data to assess the effectiveness of the measures. Based on this data, the three main community concerns have generally been addressed: commercial parking in residential zones, speeding on neighborhood streets, and drive-through encroachment into the residential zone of South

Orchard Drive. The implemented measures sought to directly address each of these concerns.

Permit Parking

The main tool to address parking concerns is the implementation of a permit parking program. Staff collected parking utilization data from before and after implementation, and staff has determined that the program has generally been successful in reducing commercial parking in residential areas. It has reduced parking utilization on South Orchard Drive and South Reese Place, although the magnitude of reduction differs by street.

After Raising Cane's opening date, patrons began parking on the residential portions of South Orchard Drive and South Reese Place to walk to the restaurant. This was especially apparent during the first few weeks of operation, and the issue persisted thereafter. Once the permit parking program was established and enforcement began, parking utilization decreased on the residential portion of South Orchard Drive from August to November (64.4 percent to 43.1 percent during Raising Cane's peak evening hours of 7:00pm to 9:00pm) and decreased on the residential portion of South Reese Place (50.9 percent to 43.9 percent during Raising Cane's peak evening hours) (Attachment 1). When compared to parking utilization before Raising Cane's opened, parking utilization during the evening in November was lower than it was in March 2022 on South Orchard Drive (55.9 percent in March to 43.1 percent in November) and approximate to the March 2022 parking utilization on South Reese Place (42.1 percent in March to 43.9 percent in November).

The permit parking program had the benefit of reducing the number of Raising Cane's patrons parking in the residential neighborhood. However, it did introduce other issues that did not exist before the permit parking program. Residents had to proactively apply online for a permit and staff processed these manually. Several residents had difficulty applying online and requested help from staff in navigating the process. Each residence is allowed two guest permit hang tags, and any additional guest needs to apply for a daily guest permit, which is consistent with parking programs citywide. This process adds an additional step and cost for large group gatherings. Also, an effective permit parking program relies upon adequate enforcement. The City is seeking additional Parking Enforcement Officers to enhance Citywide parking enforcement, and staff seeks to understand how additional resources and Parking Enforcement Officers can affect parking compliance in the Rancho Providencia Neighborhood. Finally, while Raising Cane's covered the cost of permit fees for all residents for three years, after that time the cost of the program will be charged to residents which is consistent with other permit parking programs throughout the City.

As part of the permit parking program, City Council allocated a number of parking permits for businesses along West Olive Avenue for employee parking. Raising Cane's was not allocated any parking permits. Although staff set the number of parking permits consistent with the Burbank Municipal Code and allocated proportional to each businesses' number of employees, some neighboring businesses communicated that they felt the number of permits allocated was insufficient.

Speed Humps

Speeding on nearby streets was a concern before Raising Cane's opened, and staff heard ongoing feedback about speeding once the restaurant began operation. Staff collected speed data on all four streets, and the data shows that speeds have declined on South Reese Place due to installation of speed humps.

Data collected in August 2022 showed that 85th-percentile speeds above 30 miles per hour persisted on South Reese Place in the northbound direction, warranting installation of speed humps. After installation, data collected in November 2022 showed average speeds were significantly reduced to 24 miles per hour in the northbound direction and 24.7 miles per hour in the southbound direction. Both directions now exhibit average speed below the 25 mile per hour speed limit (Attachment 2). Speed humps were not considered on South Orchard Drive because the proposed temporary closure would block through traffic. Data collected in November show that speeds remained consistent around 25 miles per hour (26 miles per hour northbound, 27 miles per hour southbound). Speed data were analyzed on South Sparks Street and South Parish Place, and they are consistent with data collected in January 2022 at around 30 miles per hour.

While the speed humps significantly reduced 85th-percentile speeds on South Reese Place, residents have voiced concerns that they still observe speeding cars. During follow-up observation, the data shows that 2 percent of cars (89 over a 5-day period) displayed excessive speeds above 35 miles per hour.

Temporary Closure

Before the temporary closure was installed at the north end of South Orchard Drive, traffic could access the drive-through from West Olive Avenue and West Oak Street. While it is no longer possible for the drive-through line to form in the residential neighborhood, staff collected vehicle volume data to illustrate the overall effect of the temporary closure on neighborhood traffic. The data show that the temporary closure has decreased vehicle volume on South Orchard Drive to pre-restaurant levels.

Although security guards were directed to not allow cars traveling from West Oak Street into the drive-through line, motorists still followed that path of travel and regularly caused the drive-through line to queue down South Orchard Drive into the residential neighborhood. The temporary closure eliminates access from West Oak Street to the drive-through line. That is reflected in the traffic volume data on South Orchard Drive. While daily weekday vehicle volume was 1241 vehicles in July 2022, following the temporary street closure daily vehicle traffic was 551 vehicles in November 2022. This number is consistent with the daily traffic volume gathered in January 2022 (501 vehicles) before Raising Cane's opened (Attachment 3). This weekday volume is similar to vehicle volumes on the weekend.

A concern for closing one street to through traffic is diversion to other streets. Accordingly, nearby streets have seen an increase in vehicle volume. Daily vehicle volume on South Reese Place was 418 in January 2022, 1180 in July 2022, and 818 in November 2022. While volumes on nearby streets are still higher than what they were before Raising

Cane's opened, they are about 30 percent lower than before the installation of the temporary closure and within the expected limits of a neighborhood street.

South Parish Place has seen a similar increase from January to November (611 to 1175), and there was a modest increase on South Sparks Street (1178 in January 2022 to 1433 in November 2022). However, it cannot be assumed that these increases are exclusively the result of Raising Cane's. Each street is a signalized intersection that serves as the main connecting roads between the neighborhoods north and south of West Olive Avenue. The increase on each street may reflect the return of citywide economic activity as businesses continue emerging from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The temporary closure has raised other concerns that staff received from the community. Residents on South Orchard Drive need to drive around and access the street from West Oak Street. Now that there is "No Left Turn" signage, the left turn onto the portion of South Orchard Drive that leads to the drive-through is illegal, but cars have been observed making that left turn movement. While queuing onto West Olive Avenue has decreased, in the instance that drive-through vehicles reach West Olive Avenue, security staff have been instructed to close the drive-through. This has the possibility of diverting those waved-off vehicles to turn right at South Reese Place and loop back via West Oak Street and South Parish Place. Volume data show highest volumes of southbound traffic on South Reese Place between 12:00pm and 7:00pm, during Raising Cane's business hours. However, that pattern is not consistent during peak business hours on the weekend.

General Assessment

Staff recommends keeping the temporary measures in place while staff continues data collection for the full Rancho Providencia Neighborhood Protection Plan (NPP) area. The data collected shows that these measures have alleviated the immediate concerns identified related to speeding, traffic, and parking. Overall traffic to the restaurant declined from 27,535 customers during its grand opening week in June to 17,918 during the week of November 7, a 35 percent decrease. The decline may continue when the additional Raising Cane's locations open in North Hollywood, Northridge, and Hollywood. With additional time to observe these measures and as other locations open, data may show that the additional effects become less significant as people become more familiar with the parking requirements in Burbank and seek other nearby options.

Rancho Providencia Neighborhood Protection Plan

As noted above, staff is in the process of updating the Rancho Providencia NPP. These measures around Raising Cane's were implemented as Phase 1 of the plan update. Phase 2 will observe how these measures affect the broader neighborhood and could include recommendations for additional traffic calming countermeasures for the rest of the neighborhood that work in conjunction with the measures on South Orchard Drive and South Reese Place. Next steps will include further observation of the installed Phase 1 measures, and then the activities related to Phase 2 of the NPP update, including additional data gathering, public meetings, and public review of the draft plan that includes these additional proposed countermeasures.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact of leaving existing measures in place. City Council previously allocated funds to prepare the Rancho Providencia NPP update.

CONCLUSION

The traffic calming measures approved on August 23, 2022, and installed by October 1, 2022, are working as intended. While the restaurant introduced new traffic challenges to the neighborhood, the traffic calming measures mitigated some of the main concerns that residents have communicated to staff. Staff proposes continuing to observe the traffic pattern as patrons and neighbors adjust to the changes. A proposal for permanent improvements will be included as part of the Rancho Providencia NPP update in Spring 2023, which will feature data collection of the whole neighborhood and identify if additional traffic calming measures are warranted.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Parking Utilization Data

Attachment 2 – Vehicle Speed Data

Attachment 3 – Vehicle Volume Data