

FEASIBILITY AND OPTIONS STUDY FOR TRAFFIC OPERATION IMPROVEMENTS - EXISTING CONDITIONS
REPORT

APPENDIX B: Notes from Community Meeting/Walks

October 1, 2014

APPENDIX B: NOTES FROM COMMUNITY MEETING/WALKS

INTRODUCTION

Community Meeting #1 took place at 6:00pm on June 4, 2014 and was attended by approximately 52 people. Attendees met at the Lafayette Community Center located at 500 St Marys Road. The meeting started with a presentation by the consultant team on information collected to date which was followed by a discussion period. There were four designated geographic areas, each with a table, and attendees could choose which table to sit at during the three 15-minute sessions. After the small group discussion period, the facilitators from each table reported back to the entire group, and attendees could comment on whether their ideas had been properly summarized. This meeting lasted approximately two hours. The summary notes are organized by area and reflect Stantec's understanding of the comments made by attendees during this meeting.

AREA 1: OLYMPIC BOULEVARD/PLEASANT HILL ROAD INTERSECTION

Problems

- School traffic backups
- Right-of-Way violations
- Pedestrian safety due to traffic violations
- Vegetation restricting the visibility of signs (e.g. truck weight restriction sign on Pleasant Hill Road)
- Turning traffic (from Pleasant Hill Road turning right onto Olympic Blvd) encroaches into bike lanes
- Backups on Olympic Boulevard are creating cut-thru traffic on Reliez Station Road; the left turns from Reliez Station Road to Pleasant Hill Road are very dangerous

Solutions

- Install flashing pedestrian crossing lights like at Las Trampas Road, or even in-pavement lights
- Roundabout
- Take out the stop sign at Glenside Drive and Reliez Station Road and install a semi-actuated signal.
- Reduce the volume of vehicles passing through this intersection
- No signal at this intersection
- Coordinate with school bus program to reduce school traffic
- Signalize the intersection
- Revise the school district boundaries to reduce school related traffic

AREA 2: OLYMPIC BOULEVARD/RELIEZ STATION ROAD AND BEECHWOOD DRIVE/ANDREASEN DRIVE/RELIEZ STATION ROAD

Problems

- Lines of sight were not improved with the pedestrian path construction (Contractor successfully had City remove the task to cut back the hillside and straighten Reliez Station Road from contract)
- Congestion in this section blocks fire/police/ambulance access
- Lines of sight are limited
- Vehicle sizes; the larger vehicles can only manage slow speeds up the hills, creating back-ups
- Larger vehicles also create unwanted noise
- Much of the traffic on the by-pass route is created by students going to Acalanes High School
- High speeds on by-pass route are particularly dangerous because there are three school bus stops on this segment. This segment has no sidewalks but some speed bumps [
- Volumes on the bypass are inappropriate given the type of road.
- Turkeys and bikes are an additional hazard on the by-pass route
- Faded road markings at Andreasen Drive
- Use of the roadway by trucks is not monitored; they are too tall
- Routing software gives this route
- Trucks get stuck
- The steep grades here create problems for drivers with stick shifts and for truck drivers who want to maintain a steady speed
- The character of the area may have to be considered in conjunction with new signage
- Getting out of Beechwood Drive is a problem in either direction

Solutions

- Lower speed limit (e.g. 20 mph) or speed cameras on the bypass route
- Stop enforcement @ Reliez/Olympic
- Need to keep stop sign at Reliez and Olympic to allow cars into traffic.
- No rotary/roundabout---idea: Roundabout at Olympic/Pleasant Hill Road with no RH stop
- Bike lanes on Reliez Station Road to allow faster cars to bypass slower cyclists
- Better striping for keep clear zones
- Stop light that detects presence of a car at Beechwood Drive (but would otherwise facilitate the flow of thru traffic)
- Better pedestrian crossing-lights, textured pavement
- Better visibility or enforcement of the stop sign coming off the trail
- Rumble strips on Reliez Station Rd
- City requires truck permits, so this should be enforced
- More mirrors, but not always effective (e.g. limited use when there is fog or shadows)
- Turn on headlights
- Prepared to stop sign
- Vehicle height ban; with overhead bars or weights for enforcement
- A light would help, but drivers don't observe
- Enforcement campaign

- Warnings
- A cop has no way to observe traffic in some locations; motorcycle cops may be better., although there is limited police capacity in Lafayette
- Camera/radar feedback signs
- The greater use of flashing lights, although drivers may be immune to them
- Roundabout only if really protects side roads ins/outs
- Activated lights might work, but a problem with them is high expectation of greens

AREA 3: LAS TRAMPAS ROAD/ROCHELLE CT AND GLENSIDE DRIVE/RELIEZ STATION ROAD

Problems

- Installing handicap-accessible curb in conjunction with the roadway work at Las Trampas may encourage unsafe travel across Reliez Station Road
- Appears that St.Mary's College is generating more traffic now than historically.
- Olympic and Reliez Station peaks are different than typical.
- Stanley and Burton Valley school traffic dramatically changed in past 4-5 years.
- Not only significant increase in volume, but increase in density of traffic.
- Lots of contractor traffic.
- Increase in truck traffic. Feel that Google maps etc. are directing traffic along the study corridor.
- Stop sign at Reliez Station Road/Glenside Dr backs up significantly.
- Mirrors don't work well in fog and when sunshine reflecting.
- Sight distance very limited.
- Speed is higher than posted.
- Project to implement ADA at Las Trampas Road would worsen sight distance.
- Truck restriction signs, but in wrong location.
- Study in past recommended a semi-actuated signal at Las Trampas Road/Richelle Ct (same at Glenside Dr/Reliez Station Road)
- Hills were to be graded to improve sight distance but never happened.
- Signal was planned 20 years ago at Reliez Station Road/Richelle Ct/Las Trampas Road but threat of litigation stopped implementation (conduit is in ground)
- Large trucks are not necessarily a problem; they create gaps in traffic that allows side traffic to get in
- Bikes/groups of bikers travel up past Las Trampas Road and slow traffic
- Different indications for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Significant grading done during reconstruction, but work that would improve sight distance was not performed.
- Drivers traveling southbound on Reliez Station Road (or turning south from Las Trampas Road or Richelle Ct) cannot see the pedestrian crossing.
- Reliez Station Road/Richelle Ct./Las Trampas intersection is generally confusing when pedestrians are crossing.

- Vehicles cross centerline going northbound downhill.
- The City should consider safety first, above mobility.

Solutions

- Remove beacons and replace with rectangular rapid flashers/signs
- Need enforcement
- Make Reliez Station Road a one way street during certain hours.
- Provide a double line or median to prevent cars from driving over the centerline when traveling northbound downhill.
- If a semi-actuated signal is installed at Glenside Dr, one is also needed at Las Trampas Road/Richelle Ct.
- Close the northern end of Las Trampas Road or restrict access for certain movements. However, the southern end of Las Trampas Road is a private road.

AREA 4: OVERALL STUDY AREA

Problems

- Pedestrian safety is issue at Las Trampas + Pavement in poor condition
- Stop sign violations
- Safety + police + fire + congestion
- Congestion is an issue. However capacity increases because corridor is designated as a route of regional significance is not acceptable
- Speeding is a common problem
- Large trucks frequently use Reliez Station Road , but it's not a designated truck route

Solutions

- Yellow flashing/red flashing at Glenside Dr/ Reliez Station Road
- Nothing more on Las Trampas Road
- Require truck permits
- Glenside stop (all-way) works well.
- Need stop light at Richelle Ct.
- School-adjust bell schedule + public bus to school.
- Roundabout at Olympic Boulevard and Pleasant Hill Road+Bicycle issues
- Extend study area up to Moraga/St. Marys

Introduction

Community Walk #1 took place at 10:00am on June 7, 2014 and was attended by approximately nine people. Attendees met at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road and Olympic Boulevard and proceeded to Glenside Drive and Reliez Station Road, making stops along the way to make observations. The walk lasted about two hours. The summary notes are organized by stop and reflect Stantec's understanding of the comments made by attendees during this walk.

Pleasant Hill Road/Olympic Boulevard

- Morning Congestion: Left turn from Olympic Boulevard to Pleasant Hill Road. Few vehicles continue east on Olympic.
- When eastbound left turn backs up, through traffic on Olympic Boulevard uses bike lane to bypass the queue.
- At the southbound right turn, a sign restricting large trucks (No trucks over 3 tons) is placed too late to be effective—there is no reasonable path for trucks to divert once in the right turn. Need signs placed earlier on Pleasant Hill Road and on Olympic Boulevard.
- All the streets in the study corridor except Andreasen Drive have other routes for trucks to access.
- Huge buses use road frequently-teams going to games at St Mary's College.
- Video cameras are a potential solution for enforcement
- There are new plans for trail extension that will connect to Burton Valley
- The volume of recreational pedestrian and bicycle traffic on weekends is very high
- Bicycle traffic has the option of using the Lamorinda trail
- Online navigation programs such as Google Maps and Bing have, in the past, directed motorists and trucks to use the narrow and windy portion of Reliez Station Road that connect Olympic and Pleasant Hill Road where they (especially trucks) have difficulty turning left onto Pleasant Hill Road. Google appears to have resolved this issue after the City complained.
- The congestion built up at the eastbound left turn from Olympic Boulevard to Pleasant Hill Road is traffic destined to SR 24 & I-680 North, and avoiding delays on Moraga Road and Downtown Lafayette
- If widening of Olympic Boulevard is possible, it should occur in the westbound direction
- A potential configuration to make space available for widening Olympic is to consolidate both directions of bicycle lanes on one side of the street utilizing the existing trail

Olympic and Reliez Station Road

- May be an opportunity for a roundabout
- Reliez Station Road southbound right turns frequently do not stop, but there is no enforcement
- Beechwood-some people do not come via Reliez Station Road
- The southeast corner of Reliez Station Road/Olympic Boulevard houses a PG&E high pressure gas line pumping station and a fiber optic trunk junction making that corner impossible to modify

- Andreasen Drive serves a total of 16 homes
- The Keep Clear pavement marking on Reliez Station Road at Andreasen Drive has poor visibility to traffic on Reliez Station Road
- The driveway accessing the home located on the northwest corner of Beechwood Drive and Reliez Station Road egresses onto Beechwood but directly at the corner nearly invisible to drivers turning right from Reliez Station Road onto Beechwood Dr.
- Calculation of sight distance on Reliez Station Road needs to account for grade (which reduces the effective stopping distance)
- The path adjacent to Reliez Station Road was built in 1991

Las Trampas Road / Richelle Court / Reliez Station Road

- With closure of Happy Valley School the district will send the students to other schools and the traffic will impact the corridor. Burton Valley is the largest school in the district and the only school with capacity.
- The pedestrian crossings in both directions are unsafe due to poor sight distance and high speeds.
- Previously proposed ADA improvements would worsen the conditions for motorists attempting to turn from Las Trampas Road. Presently the ADA improvements are on hold indefinitely and the intersection remains non-compliant
- An cause of a collision while making a southbound left turn from Las Trampas Road to Reliez Station Road was inadequate visibility
- The parabolic mirrors installed for the benefit of Las Trampas Road and Richelle Court traffic do not function correctly due to scratched and fogged plexiglass coverings and scratches and grime on the mirrors so nobody bothers to use them except at night when headlights reflect off of the mirrors. The mirrors need to be cleaned and maintained, at a minimum, but residents are not confident that mirrors are the appropriate solution
- Consider the use of rumble strips to warn approaching drivers of the intersection crossing
- Potential solution may be to relocate the crosswalk nearer to the roadway (not clear which crosswalk is being referenced)
- Traffic generally stops for pedestrians, but occasionally drivers will not stop even with pedestrians in the crosswalk or will slam on brakes at last minute
- There have been numerous unreported crashes in the westbound direction of Reliez Station Road immediately west of Las Trampas Rd where the road curves, vehicles driving too fast would slide at the curve and leave the roadway ending up in the front yard of the adjacent home, approximately six or seven crashes occurred at this location but there has not been a crash since the City grooved the pavement
- A new guardrail was put up recently. There were seven accidents 5 to 7 years ago
- Narrowing Las Trampas Rd could be a solution
- Conduit and power supply for a traffic signal are already installed at this intersection

Diana Ct. / Reliez Station Road

- Consider a traffic circle at Dianne Court to slow traffic

Glenside Drive/ Reliez Station Road

- Congestion in both directions (Morning and Evening)
- During afternoon school release time Glenside Drive backs up due to traffic from Stanley Intermediate School (3:15 pm)
- Residents of Las Trampas Road will sometimes travel indirectly to use Glenside / Reliez Station Road as an alternative to turning left from Las Trampas at the top of the hill
- Traffic conditions at 3:00 pm-northbound traveling fast while southbound is bumper to bumper

Introduction

Community Walk #2 took place at 7:30am on June 12, 2014 and was attended by approximately twelve people. Attendees met at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road and Olympic Boulevard and proceeded to Glenside Drive and Reliez Station Road, making stops along the way to make observations. The walk lasted about two hours. The summary notes are organized by stop and reflect Stantec's understanding of the comments made by attendees during this walk.

Pleasant Hill Road/Olympic Boulevard

- Pleasant Hill Road is a major thoroughfare for ambulances
- Dump trucks coming from Walnut Creek may need a sign east of Pleasant Hill Road on Olympic Boulevard
- Lafayette traffic exempt sign can be taken out
- Thru-traffic needs to use Moraga Way and Moraga Road by ordinance
- Most people do not know how to drive through a roundabout
- Consider whether the problems in this area are all-day or temporal. Solutions may only be needed for the peak periods.
- There are four rush hours: 7:30 am to 8:30 am, 9:00 am for Burton, 3 pm, and 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Academic programs start at St. Mary's College at 4:00 pm.
- There is a school bus stop right after the westbound stop in the 45 mph zone. Buses block the intersection.
- There have been multiple collisions involving the gated community where people drove through the intersection. That's why a flashing light was added. Several of these accidents were purportedly caused by drunk drivers.
- The intersection turn taking is very well done and people stop for each other.
- Based on a field travel time count on that day, a driver took 1 min 15 seconds to cross the intersection from the end of queue for the eastbound left turn movement
- There are no speed limits sign on Olympic Boulevard to the west of this intersection, so no one is sure what the speed limit is.
- It is very dangerous for cyclists traveling through this intersection in all directions.
- When the trail is extended along Olympic Boulevard, it will increase pedestrian traffic at the intersection.

Olympic Boulevard and Reliez Station Road

- At Beechwood Dr, left turns are impossible and right turns are difficult
- Drivers coming down the hill and turning right don't stop
- It is difficult to cross the crosswalk.
- Drivers coming down the hill and going straight are rare
- It is almost impossible to turn left from Andreasen Dr.
- Cut-thru traffic is a problem for Reliez Station Road north of Olympic Boulevard
- Trucks cutting through to Reliez Station Road were observed in the field.

- Reliez Station Road (north segment) is a school bus route.
- Richelle Ct residents sometimes have to drive north to the parking lot at RSR/Olympic and make a U-turn because they cannot make a left turn out of Richelle Ct
- Bicyclists don't stop at the stop signs. There are bicycle conflicts with vehicles.
- The southside crosswalk does not have much of a purpose; only pedestrians coming from Andreasen Dr would use it.

Reliez Station Road –Beechwood Dr Intersection

- It is unsafe for pedestrians to cross at the intersection
- A single lane roundabout is doable but not one that is multilane
- Is it possible to have two roundabouts for Reliez Station Road /Olympic Boulevard and Reliez Station Road /Beechwood Dr?
- Is it possible to restrict left turns at Beechwood Dr? Perhaps just at certain times of the day.

Las Trampas Road

- The crosswalk at Las Trampas Rd is difficult to cross and dangerous
- The mirror doesn't work except at night when headlights are visible. It has been changed five times according to a resident.
- Many people turn right at Richelle Ct. to go south.
- A rest on green light is the best solution
- The issue of trucks stopping on grade due to a signal was discussed. Residents said that trucks are currently stopping on slopes due to backups due to congestion, anyway.
- St. Mary's College's on campus enrollment projects should be considered instead of their off-campus projections, since they are significantly different.
- The fence (railing) south of the intersection has been hit multiple times. A reflectors or yellow chevron marking should be used to alert drivers of the curve
- There have been near misses between cars and pedestrians at the crosswalk, since some drivers stop and some don't
- Needs directives from the signs for drivers
- A stop sign may be OK, but not a traffic light.
- There are too many bicyclists. Most of them are going down the hill, but some are coming up the hill, as well.
- A series of roundabouts along the corridor could be a solution
- Will Las Trampas Rd traffic be able to get in if a roundabout is installed at this location?
- A traffic light was recommended in 1990's. This was prior to the St. Mary's College expansion. Conditions are even worse now.
- A raised crosswalk or colored crosswalks may be considered.

Diana Ct.

- There is sometimes bicycle traffic on the pedestrian pathway

- There is no crosswalk connecting the path across Diana Ct.
- The path needs repaving

Glenside Dr

- Is a roundabout feasible here?
- The traffic sometimes backs up to the trail and up to Burton Valley
- There are no sidewalks on Glenside Dr. Middle school kids walk along the road
- Re-align intersection to meet at 90 degrees
- Glenside used to be St.Marys Road