



REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

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STAFF REPORT
December 13, 2005

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Subject: Construction Traffic Control Management Report Back

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation:

This report recommends that Council direct staff to move forward with requesting two new construction inspection positions in the mid-year budget to manage construction traffic impacts related to continued development and new high rise construction in the downtown area, and implement the Construction Traffic Control Management recommendations.

Contact: Jon Blank, Supervising Engineer, 808-7914; Nicholas Theocharides, Engineering Division Manager, 808-5065

Presenters: Jon Blank, Supervising Engineer, 808-7914

Department: Department of Transportation

Division: Engineering Services

Organization No: 3437

Summary:

This report provides information related to best management practices of other major cities with similar construction growth and construction traffic management issues, and recommends increasing the number of staff providing construction traffic control management and enforcement to minimize impacts related to continued development and new high rise construction in the downtown area.

Committee/Commission Action:

On November 7, 2005, the recommendations contained in this report were presented to the Development Oversight Commission (DOC). The DOC indicated that it supports the increase in staff to provide better customer service during the permitting process, start of work, and during construction. The DOC also indicated that it does not support additional regulatory requirements. The recommendations contained in this report focus on coordination, outreach, and enforcement to facilitate the approval of permits and to minimize traffic delays and impacts during construction operations.

Background Information:

On June 14, 2005 the Department of Transportation (DOT) provided a report back that recommended the implementation of short term process improvements to improve construction traffic control management. The following short term processes have recently been implemented to minimize the impacts from increased building construction activity in the downtown area by:

- Maximizing the use of existing resources by using on-street parking enforcement personnel and traffic investigators to report construction traffic control violations.
- Requiring the use of changeable message signs to display advisory information on expected delays and alternative routes as appropriate for projects.
- Establishing a construction hotline number for the public to report traffic congestion due to construction activities.
- Requiring contractors to prominently display their traffic control permit number and the construction complaint hotline number on site.
- Increasing the administrative penalty for traffic control violations from \$500 to \$1,000.

As part of the June 14, 2005 report, the Department of Transportation initiated a review of the best practices of other cities with similar construction growth and construction traffic management issues to evaluate the adequacy of the City's existing program. A list of proposed high-rise projects in the downtown area is shown as Attachment A with an overview map of the projects as Attachment B. A survey was sent out to the participating agencies of the California Multi-agency Benchmarking Study. Cities that responded were San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Jose, and San Diego. Site visits to San Francisco, San Jose, and Seattle were also conducted to gain additional information from cities with high-rise buildings under construction.

The results of the survey on construction traffic control management practices and processes are summarized in Attachment C. Some of the common practices identified through the survey and the field visits conducted include:

- Maintaining safe and adequate ADA, pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Minimizing the duration of closures.
- Allowing closures only if there is no resulting congestion.

- Limiting closures to night time work when appropriate to minimize traffic impacts.
- Screening construction sites to reduce distractions to motorists.
- Limiting street encroachment through the use of metal covered walkways which can also be used as staging for craning construction materials where appropriate.
- Dedicating adequate resources to manage coordination, approval, and enforcement of traffic control plans.
- Centralizing management of the construction traffic control management program and giving management and enforcement responsibility to a single operating unit.
- Using Traffic Operations Center technology to control signal timing in impacted corridors.

While the City is currently implementing these best management practices, additional resources will allow Staff to apply them more consistently and to adopt them as standard practices.

Construction Traffic Control Management Recommendations:

In order to respond to the growing demand for construction traffic control management in the downtown area, DOT temporarily reallocated staff resources and assigned a Construction Supervising Engineer and a Construction Supervisor to coordinate traffic control management, approvals, and enforcement. While this has greatly reduced impacts through more oversight and the implementation of the short term process improvements previously discussed, there is a need to dedicate permanent staff resources to implement the following recommended best management practices:

- Create a work unit dedicated specifically to the management of the downtown traffic control program that coordinates and manages issues related to business impacts and public convenience and safety, traffic engineering, parking, and construction inspection. The work unit would be housed within the Encroachment Permits Section of DOT's Engineering Services Division.
- Staff the work unit with a registered civil engineer with knowledge of traffic engineering principles. The engineer will oversee and be responsible for all aspects of the City's construction traffic control management program.
- Staff the work unit with a construction inspector responsible for traffic control enforcement and outreach, maintaining permit data and project information, and coordinating on-site operations.
- Create a GIS based "street use" map that is updated daily and illustrates all downtown construction activities, special events, and other planned street use.
- Increase coordination and outreach with developers, stakeholders, affected businesses, the Downtown Partnership, Economic Development, On and Off Street Parking, Regional Transit, and others to share information and minimize impacts.
- Minimize the duration of time permitted for street and pedestrian closures, the storing of materials and equipment on City streets, and the temporary removal of on-street parking.

- Expand the encroachment permit process to provide for inspection and enforcement of "street use" permit conditions for activities such as the placement of scaffolding, sidewalk and pedestrian closures, lane closures for crane lifts, the placement of dumpsters, access to maintenance holes, and access to monitoring wells.
- Establish a goal to respond and resolve construction traffic complaints within 20 minutes or less of receipt.

The addition of the two new positions, an Associate Engineer, and a Construction Inspector will provide the resources to manage the City's anticipated increase in high-rise building activity in the downtown at a level comparable to that of other major California cities. Currently the City outsources construction management and inspection services to private firms at a cost at \$1.6 million. Creating the two additional positions in the Construction section of Engineering Services to insource the work, will allow the Department of Transportation to provide improved customer service to both, the development community and the traveling public. The proposed resource allocations and responsibilities of the two positions are shown in Attachment D.

Financial Considerations:

The implementation of the process improvements for Construction Traffic Control Management program required the temporary reallocation of construction staff resources and the transition of some workload to consultants. The addition of an Associate Engineer and a Construction Inspector III will allow Construction Services staff to return to their regular duties, and return consultant expenditures to the originally planned levels. The positions will be fully funded through Capital Improvement Program (CIP) reimbursements.

Staff will bring back specific cost information for the recommended budget augmentations during the Mid-Year budget review process.

Environmental Considerations:

The proposed recommendations contained in this report are not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the general rule (15061(b)(3)) in that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

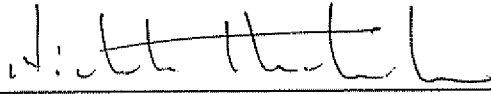
Policy Considerations:


The recommendations to improve traffic control management on downtown streets are consistent with the City's Strategic Plan goal improving and expanding public safety, and expanding economic development throughout the city.

In addition, these recommendations are consistent with the Development Oversight Commission's policies of improving human resource support and implementing best management practices to achieve the level of service desired by the development community.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):

No goods or services are being purchased with this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: 
Nicholas Theocharides
Engineering Services Manager

Approved by: 
Marty Hanneman
Director, Department of Transportation

Recommendation Approved:

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ROBERT P. THOMAS
City Manager

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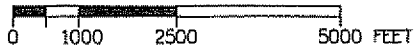
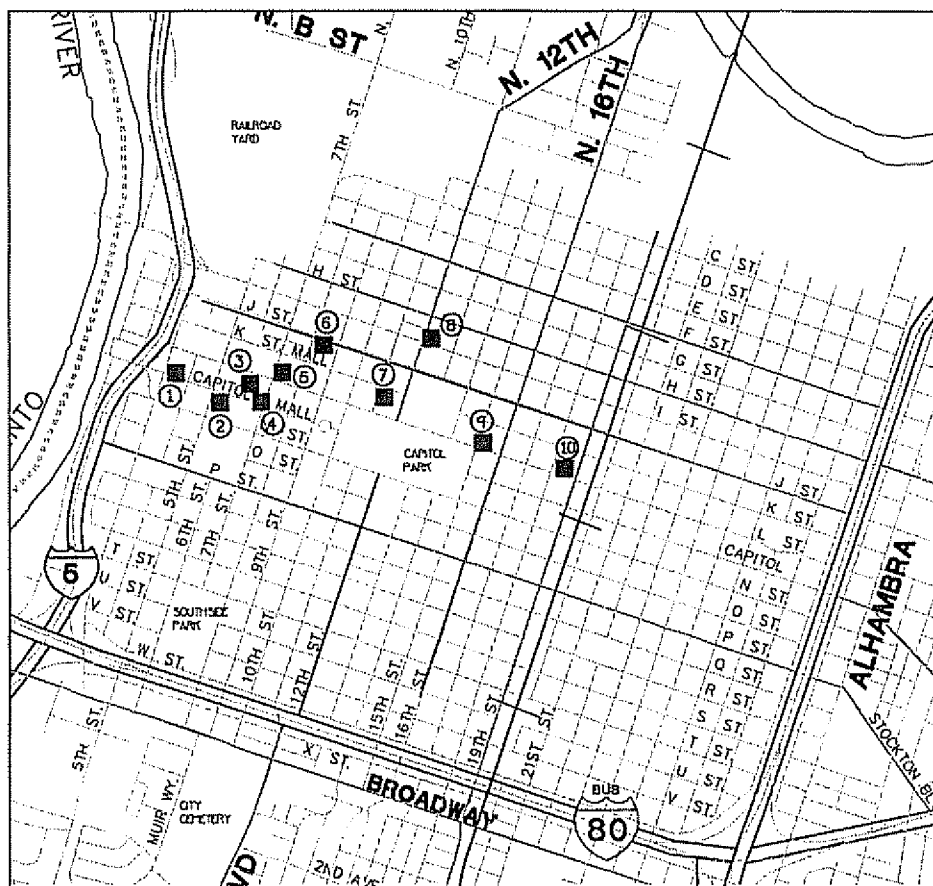
Downtown / Mid-town Projects

Team Leader	Project Name	Location	Description	App. Rec.	EIR Comp.	Entitlements	Plann Comm	Comments
Willie Harris	The Aura	601 Capitol Mall	39 Story Condo	Yes	Completed	Underway	10/27/2005	Soil testing needed
Willie Harris	Lot A	621 Capitol Mall	25 Story Office	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Foundation & Utilities in Dec.
Willie Harris	Cathedral Square	1020 J St	25 Story Condo	Yes	In Progress		In Progress	Plans at 15%
Bridgette Williams	The Docks			N/A	N/A		N/A	Preliminary Exploration
Stacia Cosgrove	The Epic	1215 I St	50 Story Condo	Yes	In Progress	Underway	In Progress	Application incomplete
Brad Marchetti	Globe Mills	1131 C St	Condo's	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Building in plan check
Willie Harris	The Grand Tower	1215 J St	56 Story Hotel	Yes	In Progress		In Progress	Purchase the corner bldg.
Ryan DeVore	Historic Office	926 J Street	Hist Off. Restor.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Construction Underway
Willie Harris	L Street Lofts	1812 L Street	7 Story Condo	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Plans at 60%
Willie Harris	Marriott Hotel	1501 L Street	15 Story Hotel	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Const drawings submitted
Willie Harris	Plaza Lofts	800 J St	7 Story Condo	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Const completed Spring 06
Bridgette Williams	927 10th St.	927 10th St		No	N/A		N/A	Preliminary Exploration
Willie Harris	The Parthenon	500 Capitol Mall	29 Story Office	Yes	In Progress	Underway	In Progress	Client doing outreach
Bridgette Williams	The Towers	301 Capitol Mall	53 Story Condo	Yes	Completed	Completed	Completed	Demo underway
Greg Blitter	Greyhound Bldg.	703 L Street	31 Story Office	Yes	In Progress	Underway	In Progress	Greyhound Corp not committed
Jeanne Corcoran	Mercy Hospital	39th & J St	Institution	Yes	In Progress	Underway	Summer '06	
Greg Blitter	Millimia Railyards	Railyards	Mixed Use	Yes				
Jeanne Corcoran	Sutter Hospital	2800 J Street	Institution	Yes	10/11/2005	Underway	11/10/2005	Design Review approved
Rita Goolkasian	Westfield Big Box	Westfield Plaza	Retail / Theatre	Yes	No	No		

Note: The rows above that have been highlighted represent projects that will require a waiver from the Holiday Construction Moratorium.

ATTACHMENT B

**PROPOSED HIGH RISE PROJECTS
IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA**



- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① THE TOWERS—53 STORY CONDO | ⑥ THE PLAZA LOFTS—7 STORY CONDO |
| ② THE PARTHENON | ⑦ CATHEDRAL SQUARE—22 STORY CONDO |
| ③ THE AURA—30 STORY CONDO | ⑧ THE EPIC—50 STORY CONDO |
| ④ 621 CAPITOL MALL—OFFICES | ⑨ MARRIOTT HOTEL—15 STORY HOTEL |
| ⑤ 701 'L' STREET—31 STORY OFFICE | ⑩ 'L' STREET LOFTS—7 STORY CONDO |

LEGEND	
PROJECT	①
LOCATION	■

LOCATION MAP

MAP CONTACT: B. CAMERON
DATE: 11/29/05

Attachment C

CITY	MANAGES TRAFFIC CONTROL	DEPARTMENTS THAT APPROVES TRAFFIC CONTROL PLANS	ALLOCATED RESOURCES FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT	DECIDES WORKING TIMES	WORKING TIMES ON MAJOR STREETS
Los Angeles	Transit and Transportation Construction Traffic Management Committee	Department of Transportation, Bureau of Street Services	Traffic Engineer, 2 Civil Engineers, Senior Inspector, Senior Investigator	Transit and Transportation Construction Traffic Management Committee	9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday
San Diego	Downtown Partnership Group (Paradise in Progress)	Development Services (private) or Field Engineering Division (CIP)	Senior Engineer, Associate Engineer, 2 Assistant Engineers, Clerical	Development Services (private) or Field Engineering Division (CIP)	8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
San Francisco	"Street Space Meeting"	Construction Section, Special Projects, Dept. of Parking and Traffic (DPT)	Senior Engineer, Associate Engineer, Assistant Engineer, Clerical, 6 Traffic Engrs. from DPT	Standard times set, variances approved by DPT.	9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday See Blue Book on web site
San Jose	Downtown Coord., Principle Const. Inspector, Project Inspector	Public Works, Department of Transportation	Project Engineer, Princ. Const. Eng., Project Inspector, Downtown Coordinator	Project Engineer Inspectors	9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday
Sacramento	Supervising Construction Engineer, Traffic Engineer	Department of Transportation	Supervising Engineer, Traffic Construction Inspector	Traffic Engineering	8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday

Attachment C

CITY	CITATION AUTHORITY	TIME FOR PERMIT TO BE ISSUED	CONSTRUCTION HOTLINE	SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL MANAGEMENT	TRAFFIC OPERATIONS CENTER
Los Angeles	\$220 per lane per day	Same day, up to 2 weeks for lane closures	Yes, 311, Committee deals with complaints		Yes, cameras, able to control timing
San Diego	No	1 week	No, not city-wide		No
San Francisco	\$500 first, \$750 second, \$975 third, \$1,000 thereafter	Minimum of 2 days, longer for more complex projects	No, not city-wide	Case by case, but street closures are rare, and only for brief periods	In progress of developing
San Jose	No	1 week	No, not city-wide	Case by case, but street closures are rare, and only for brief periods	Yes, cameras, able to control timing
Sacramento	\$1,000 per incident	1 week	City Help Desk, in progress of developing	Case by case, but street closures are rare, and only for brief periods	Yes, cameras, able to control timing

Proposed Resource Allocations and Responsibilities

Engineer:

- Supervise the review and approval of traffic control plans. Identify developer's needs, street use requirements, and obtain construction schedules. Coordinate with City staff, businesses, special events coordinator, and other stakeholders to resolve issues related to scheduling, storage of materials, duration of street use, and permit requirements.
- Manage the Construction Hotline, resolve complaints related to construction traffic violations, track complaints, and enforce contractor requirements to prominently display permit numbers.
- Increase the enforcement of Traffic Control Permits, Street Use Permits, and development permits. Increase outreach to contractors and create informational brochures detailing permit requirements and the purpose of the administrative penalty ordinance related to Construction.
- Consolidate the current permit tracking data base and project information into one GIS based data base. Oversee the data base and the processing of information.
- Determine ways to measure the success of the process improvements, and continue to identify and implement additional process improvements.

Construction Inspector:

- Input data and maintain a readily accessible data base updated daily, and create and distribute GIS based maps indicating the location of current and proposed development projects. Track "street use" permits and the duration of time for street, pedestrian, and parking lane closures. Calculate "street use" administration fees.
- Respond to hotline complaints, provide field support to resolve traffic related issues, log in complaints, and record actions taken to resolve issues.
- Provide field support and obtain traffic count data during the review and approval of traffic control plans.
- Inspect street use permits and enforce specific requirements of the traffic control plan related to management such as displaying permit number and construction hotline number.
- Support outreach and coordination efforts in the field.