

MEMORANDUM



Date: August 18, 2020

To: Leeanne Singleton, AICP, LEED AP
Environmental Analyst

From: Nicole Jules, PE
Consulting Traffic Engineer

Subject: Letter of Opinion regarding the Proposal to Convert 26th Street to One-Way
Westbound between Manhattan Avenue and Morningside Drive

The North School Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP) was recently developed in a joint effort between the City of Hermosa Beach and the Hermosa Beach City School District. The NTMP addresses traffic concerns in the surrounding neighborhood, particularly regarding the proposed North Elementary School, which is located on 25th Street east of Myrtle Avenue and backs up to 26th Street (see Exhibit 1). One of the near-term recommendations is to convert 26th Street, which is currently a two-way street, to a one-way westbound street. This Letter of Opinion summarizes the results of our analysis of the proposed one-way conversion and provides a recommendation regarding its implementation.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

26th Street between Manhattan Avenue and Morningside Drive is a narrow, 25-foot-wide, residential street with a prima facie speed limit of 25 mph. Parking is allowed on both sides with 7-foot-wide parking stalls marked on the street, leaving an 11-foot-wide two-way travel lane in the middle. The east end of 26th Street terminates at Morningside Avenue and the west side of Valley Park. Valley Park is a heavily used neighborhood park along the east side of Morningside Avenue. Morningside Avenue also provides access to 27th Street/Gould Avenue to the north. The study segment of 26th Street terminates at Manhattan Avenue on the west, where it is approximately three blocks from the beach. 26th Street slopes steeply downward to the east and to the west, with the peak located approximately 200 feet west of Morningside Drive. 26th Street currently has two parking restrictions: “1-Hour Parking, 10 AM to Midnight, May 15 to Sept 15, Except Resident or Pay Permits” for seasonal beach-goers, and “No Parking Tuesday, 8 AM to 12 Noon” for street sweeping.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we were unable to collect existing traffic count data. The NTMP traffic study, however, did collect traffic count data in 2019, but it did not specifically collect traffic count data for 26th Street. Also, the *North School EIR* collected traffic data for the surrounding streets in 2016 and developed projected 2019 traffic volumes. To estimate the magnitude of traffic on 26th Street, we compared the traffic count data for Myrtle Avenue for projected 2019 (from the 2018 *North School EIR*) to the actual 2019 (from the *North School NTMP*) and used it to extrapolate the estimated 2019 daily traffic volume on 26th Street. The existing (2019) two-way daily volume results are an estimated 600 vehicles per day between Morningside Drive and Myrtle Avenue, and an estimated 540 vehicles per day between Myrtle Avenue and Manhattan Avenue. Although pedestrian counts were not collected, a large number of pedestrians were observed to use 26th Street.

ANALYSIS

The traffic collision data was reviewed as part of the analysis using the Statewide Integrated Traffic System (SWITRS) and City of Hermosa Beach Police Department records. There were no reported traffic collisions on 26th Street between Manhattan Avenue and Morningside Drive for the last five years. This is likely due to the low traffic volumes and low traffic speeds.

Converting 26th Street to one-way westbound would have several effects on local traffic, as follows:

1. Reduction in the likelihood of traffic collisions, even though the crash rate is already low.
 - The chances of head-on collisions would be largely eliminated.
 - The likelihood of right-angle collisions at cross streets caused by limited sight distance, would be reduced due to entering motorists only needing to see approaching traffic from one direction.
 - Potential conflict points, including with pedestrians, would be reduced.
2. Decrease in the traffic volumes on 26th Street by approximately half between Morningside Drive and Myrtle Avenue and by somewhat less than half between Myrtle Avenue and Manhattan Avenue. The decrease in traffic volumes would also improve traffic flow, but potentially slightly increase traffic speeds.
3. Impacts to the traffic flow on the following streets:
 - Morningside Drive – Decrease northbound traffic by over half, but somewhat increase southbound traffic
 - Myrtle Avenue – Somewhat increase northbound traffic, and decrease southbound traffic by a similar amount
 - Ozone Court:
 - It is anticipated that vehicles diverted from exiting the neighborhood on Morningside Drive at 27th Street would instead use Ozone Court and make a right turn onto 27th Street.
 - Between 25th and 26th Streets, increase northbound traffic somewhat and decrease southbound traffic by a similar amount.
 - Between 26th and 27th Streets, somewhat increase both northbound and southbound traffic, but could have a greater increase in northbound traffic.
 - 25th Street – Slightly increase eastbound traffic from Manhattan Avenue to Myrtle Avenue
 - 27th Street – Slightly increase eastbound traffic from Manhattan Avenue to Myrtle Avenue
4. Improvement in traffic flow and an increase the roadway capacity on 26th Street, as follows:
 - By eliminating vehicles traveling in opposite directions, there would be no need for vehicles to pull over and wait for each other to pass.
 - By eliminating the conflict and reducing the delay of a parked vehicle pulling out in front of a vehicle traveling in the opposite direction.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED NORTH SCHOOL TRAFFIC

The proposed North School would be built on the same footprint as the existing facility, with access to the on-site parking lot from 25th Street. The North School EIR estimated that during the AM peak hour,

the school would add 35 vehicles to 26th Street east of Myrtle Avenue and to Morningside Drive, and 5 vehicles to 26th Street west of Myrtle Avenue. With 26th Street converted to one-way, approximately 21 AM peak hour school trips would be diverted from northbound Morningside Drive to westbound 26th Street and 3 school trips would be diverted from eastbound 26th Street west of Myrtle Avenue. It is anticipated that the one-way street could better accommodate the school traffic than the existing two-way street.

FINDINGS

Converting 26th Street to one-way westbound would improve traffic flow on 26th Street and reduce the likelihood of head-on, broadside and pedestrian collisions. Although the conversion would reroute traffic on nearby streets, it is anticipated that they have adequate capacity to handle any traffic increases. Our analysis supports converting 26th Street to one-way westbound.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

If the City decides to convert 26th Street to one-way, the City should also consider converting certain other nearby streets to one-way at the same time. 27th Court is a narrow street that feeds the garages for the houses fronting 26th Street and 27th Street. Converting 27th Court to one-way eastbound would create a couplet with 26th Street, improving traffic flow not only on 27th Court but also for local traffic. Morningside Drive is another street to consider converting, to one-way southbound. Parking is already limited to the southbound side and the section south of 27th Court would essentially be one-way if 26th Street is converted. Converting Morningside Drive to southbound-only, however, would eliminate the primary access to exit the area onto 27th Street/Gould Avenue. Perhaps only convert the section of Morningside Drive south of 27th Court. If the City is interested in these options, they should be studied as a whole circulation system before any decisions are made.

Exhibit 1

Location Map & Existing Traffic Volumes/Speeds

(Excerpt from *North School Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP)*, July 2020 Draft, produced by Fehr & Peers, for the City of Hermosa Beach and the Hermosa Beach City School District)

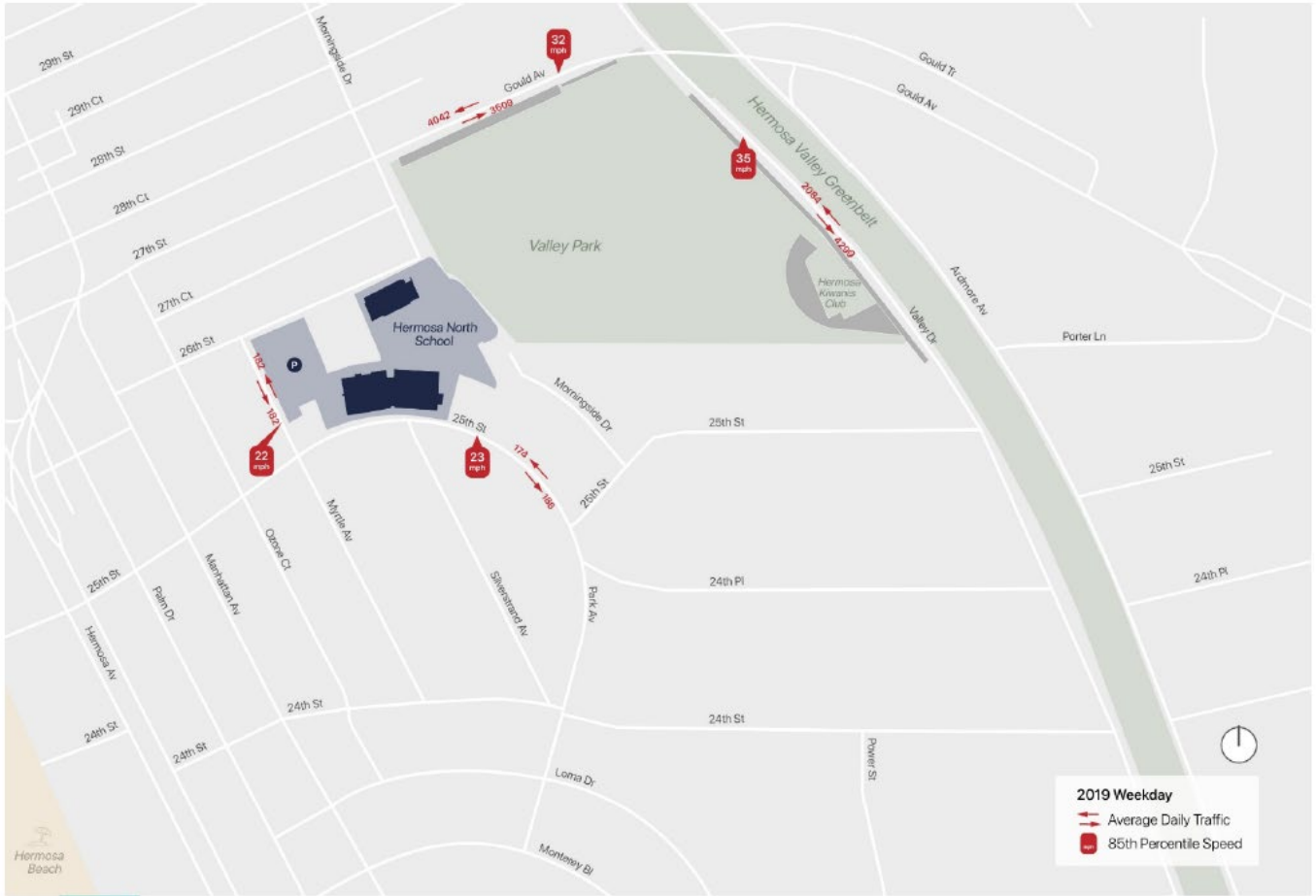


FIGURE 5

HERMOSA NORTH SCHOOL NTMP

Existing Traffic Volumes and Speeds

FEHR & PEERS