



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0571, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to authorize City Manager, or designee, to approve intermittent closure of certain non-arterial, neighborhood streets, as identified, to through vehicular traffic for increased outdoor activities, and a stronger economic recovery, all while maintaining appropriate physical distancing and adherence to the current Safer at Home Health Order; and

Authorize City Traffic Engineer to review and adjust identified neighborhood street boundaries and closure hours, as necessary. (Citywide)

On May 19, 2020, the City Council requested the City Manager to create an open streets initiative and explore ways to open more public space throughout Long Beach to allow for increased outdoor activities and stronger economic recovery, while maintaining appropriate physical distancing, in accordance with the current Safer at Home Health Order (Health Order).

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have tremendous impacts on our health and economy, staff are looking at creative measures to opening space by limiting cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets and repurposing these areas for active transportation such as walking, bicycling, and wheelchair rolling to activate neighborhoods. Adding more open public space will make it easier for people to move throughout the city and for businesses to survive, by providing more opportunities for alternate transportation modalities in a safe environment, while ensuring the necessary physical distancing.

The Public Works Department (PW) has worked with City Council offices and business districts to identify key neighborhood streets throughout the city to support these efforts. Attachment A outlines all proposed streets for intermittent closure through October 31, 2020. The recommended closure of the proposed streets is Monday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The City Traffic Engineer may review and adjust as necessary to support needs as identified after implementation.

Neighborhood closures will be supported through A-frame barricades at each end of approved streets and placed by PW, similar to those used with City block parties. The City Traffic Engineer has evaluated these locations for appropriateness and safety, and will continue to assess pedestrian, bicycle, and wheelchair safety through the course of this program. The PW team will also work with the Joint Information Center to ensure proper signage is in place that supports communication to residents regarding the current Health Order guidelines. Additional signage will include guidelines regarding approved activity within the street closure and traffic management signage. Approved activities are those which

adhere to physical distancing guidelines and do not impede local access or access by emergency response vehicles.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Amy R. Webber on June 11, 2020.

SUSTAINABILITY

Neighborhood street closures focus on sustainability, efficiency, and alternative transportation modalities, which are intended to reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions while also prioritizing and promoting healthy living opportunities.

STATEMENT OF URGENCY

To begin intermittent neighborhood street closures citywide as soon as possible, City Council action is requested on June 16, 2020.

EQUITY LENS

The City has incorporated the Equity Toolkit into this recommendation as requested by the City Council on April 21, 2020. Creating an open streets initiative and exploring ways to open more public space citywide allows for increased outdoor activities and a stronger economic recovery, while maintaining appropriate physical distancing in accordance with the current Health Order.

City Council action is requested on June 16, 2020.

Costs associated with the requested recommendation are currently unknown but will be absorbed through the \$216,000 Open Streets grant from Metro, which was adopted by the City Council on March 17, 2020. Any remaining costs after exhaustion of Open Streets grant funds will be absorbed by the General Fund in the Public Works Department. This request is anticipated to have a minimal impact on staff hours beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation. No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.

Approve recommendation.

CRAIG A. BECK
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER