

DATE: April 9, 2013
TO: James Johnson, CD7
FROM: Charles H. Parks, CD7
SUBJECT: Traffic Signal and Turnabouts/Traffic Circles

I am fully in support of the City of Long Beach's plan to install a traffic signal at Pacific Avenue and Wardlow Road. It is long overdue as it the subject of extreme traffic congestion during the morning and evening rush hour traffic. And the uncontrolled traffic poses a safety hazard for parents dropping off their pre-school children at the church nursery at that intersection in the mornings and picking them up during the evening hours.

There is also another very active pre-school nursery a half block west of that location. Further, there are two active churches at that location and two large complexes where a large population of seniors resides. Many of the seniors are somewhat restricted in their movements and have difficulties in crossing the streets at that location.

There have been several vehicle accidents at that location, including one in which I was struck by another vehicle trying to beat other vehicles traveling in several different directions.

About a dozen years or so ago, my neighbor John Deats and I were discussing the traffic on Pacific Avenue. I invited John to join me as we traveled to Glenarm and Lake Avenue in Pasadena, California. We were both impressed with the roundabout/circle at that location. I also mentioned the roundabouts/traffic circles along Vista Ave.

The City of Long Beach has had successes in several different turnabouts/traffic circles designed to better manage vehicular traffic. Some of these designs can be found in neighborhoods, and at major traffic arterials. The designs can be found at the Cerritos inner/outer traffic circle with intersecting streets of Pacific Coast Highway, Lakewood Blvd, and Los Coyotes Diagonal; Banner Drive near the intersection of Orange Avenue and San Antonio; Rose Park at 8th and Orizaba; Carroll Park, near 3rd and Junipero, Drake Park, near 10th Street and Maine; and Maine and Loma Vista.

Several years ago before I retired from the Long Beach Police Department as a Police Commander, I was assigned to the Traffic Enforcement Division. I sat down with my management team and developed a philosophy of bringing back to the police department any ideas or observations made that would enhance the goals of the department.

Among the ideas brought forth were traffic circles/roundabouts; wrecked vehicles posted at various high volume of traffic during holiday seasons; Officer Waxworks ... a manikin dressed in a police uniform and parked in a marked police vehicle at targeted intersections. This program appeared on David Horowitz's TV show, and was repeated in the sixty commercial markets of the United States, and throughout the world where United States military installations were located; coffee cup program developed with 7-11 Stores throughout Long Beach the first year

...throughout Los Angeles County during the second year, and plans developed with MADD with support of the Southland Corporation; Turkey Ticket Program whereby motorists were cited with a turkey voucher award for a courteous driving act; joint DUI program with neighboring police departments; and training for the Lateral Gaze Nystagmus application;

All programs were underscored with the slogan, "Courtesy is Contagious."

With the approval of the Chief of Police and the City Manager, we were able to acquire a complete study of Long Beach Traffic, conducted by University of California, at Berkeley ... at no cost.

I will be available for any questions you may have.