




Date: December 12, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: **Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District** 
Chair, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Subject: Report from Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Potholes are a major infrastructure and quality of life issue throughout our community. The current timeline for pothole repair is approximately 30 days. In order to begin to address this problem on a citywide level, the Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held two recent meetings. The Department of Public Works was asked to present an in-depth review of the City's current pothole repair system, and subsequently present the committee and public with an action plan to expedite this process.

At the Committee's September 28, 2006 meeting, Public Works presented a report on the City's current system, including the number of allocated repair staff, and a discussion of equipment and budget resources. The report also included information on the pothole reporting system and dissemination of work orders. At the November 30, 2006 follow-up meeting, Public Works presented a short-term plan to address the current pothole backlog and projected repair needs, which includes increased staffing, new equipment and the development of a quadrant system.

Additionally, the Committee discussed the coordination of infrastructure projects with local utilities, the establishment of a Community Notification and Involvement System, and the development of a master list and schedule for improvement projects.

Attached is information submitted by Public Works to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Committee will schedule a future meeting to discuss a long-term approach to pothole repair citywide, as well as the additional issues addressed at previous meetings.

Recommendation: Receive and file report from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee regarding citywide infrastructure maintenance and improvement processes.



Date: November 30, 2006

To: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:
Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
Councilwoman Suja Lowenthal, Member
Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Member

From: Christine F. Andersen, Director of Public Works

Subject: Pothole Report Update

At the September 28, 2006 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting, staff from the Public Works department made a presentation describing how potholes are currently repaired by the City, and the staff resources and equipment that are available to perform this work. In addition staff discussed the current backlog of potholes. Staff was asked to evaluate how other agencies are performing this work and to also determine what efforts could be made to alleviate the pothole problems in the City.

Staff polled several California cities regarding pothole repair methods, staffing and equipment. The results of that survey are attached. Based on a comparison of the information gathered from other cities with the City of Long Beach indications are that, for its size and general pavement condition, Long Beach is under resourced and should be deploying up to two additional pothole crews to achieve a more appropriate level of service.

To help address this issue an additional pothole repair truck has been ordered. This vehicle will be an alternatively fueled vehicle (LNG) and will take nine months to be delivered (anticipated to be June 2007). During the budget preparation for FY08 an additional five new positions will be requested to permanently staff this vehicle. In the interim, staff has received approval to hire five non-career maintenance assistants that should be available to begin work within 90 days. This will help support the availability of full crews to focus on street maintenance and will support staffing of the new pothole truck when it is available in June 2007.

Staff has also begun utilizing existing crews on an overtime basis to try to reduce the backlog of potholes. Over the past two months crews have worked 6 full days of overtime, which resulted in the repair of slightly over 550 potholes as well as some other minor street repairs.

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In September the pothole backlog was estimated at just over 5000 potholes. Staff estimates that the current backlog is approximately 3500. It should be noted that continued progress on reducing this backlog will be weather dependent, and as the winter rains arrive, it is expected that this figure will rise again.

Attachment: Pothole Repair Resource Survey

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Pothole Repair Resource Survey

City	Area in Square Miles	No. full time pothole crews	Average pavement condition
Long Beach	50	2 (Long Beach equivalent)	Fair to Poor
Pomona	22.8	2 (4.4 per 50 square miles)	Good
Santa Monica	8.3	1 (6.0 per 50 square miles)	Good
Anaheim	48.9	1 (1.0 per 50 square miles)	Very Good to Good
Oakland	56.1	3 (2.7 per 50 square miles)	Fair to Poor
Torrance	20.5	4 (9.7 per 50 square miles)	Good
Los Angeles	466	24 (2.6 per 50 square miles)	Fair to Poor

All of the cities polled had pothole crew sizes of three to four maintenance workers which is similar to Long Beach. In addition they were using equipment and pothole repair methods similar to what Long Beach currently does. Response times varied from as little as 24 hours for the better staffed cities to 30 plus days for Oakland which is a city similar in size and pavement condition as Long Beach. Los Angeles claims a response time of 24 to 48 hours, but Long Beach staff living in the Los Angeles area have indicated that response times are typically several weeks if not longer.



Date: November 30, 2006

To: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:
Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
Councilwoman Suja Lowenthal, Member
Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Member

From: Christine F. Andersen, Director of Public Works

Subject: Coordination of Utility Work on City Streets

The following information is being provided in response to agenda item No. 2 of the November 30, 2006 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting. Staff has previously been working on this matter and, to date, has implemented the following items:

- Every October, the Public Works Department sends a letter to all utility companies and other entities operating underground pipelines or other facilities within the public right-of-way, requesting a listing of all projects they plan to construct during the upcoming calendar year.
- This information is then overlaid on street maps and posted each January on a "utility construction coordination site" on the Public Works Department website.
- All project managers working on an upcoming street project are required to consult this map and determine if there will be a conflict with upcoming utility work. If there is, the street project is delayed until the utility work is completed.
- In addition, to protect streets that have been recently paved from being excavated by utility companies, the City's Municipal Code was amended in 2004 to place a formal permit moratorium on newly paved streets. Staff cannot issue permits for street excavation on streets for a period of five years after being newly paved or two years after being slurry sealed. All requests for exceptions to the moratorium must be approved by the City Council unless the work is necessary for emergency repair or to establish new utility connections.
- A map showing all streets under this moratorium is posted on the Department's "utility construction coordination website."

- The Department has also created an automated right-of-way permitting system on the City's intranet to coordinate street excavations by Public Works, Long Beach Gas and Oil and the Long Beach Water Department. Previously, these departments were not required to obtain permits for work on City streets, but have agreed to do so to help avoid construction conflicts. With this system, all permit requests are reviewed to insure that newly paved streets are not excavated and that utility work is coordinated with upcoming street repairs.

Staff from the Public Works Department continue to work with utility companies as well as our own Long Beach Gas and Oil and Long Beach Water Departments to improve the timeliness and quality of street repair work done in conjunction with their planned infrastructure replacement programs. Whenever possible, and within the limits imposed by law on the uses of utility fees as well as the street repair funding available in the City's budget, Public Works attempts to coordinate full street repair with their pipeline replacement projects.

Over the past few years of implementation of the City budget reduction strategy, the ability to forecast street rehabilitation funding into future years has been limited. The FY06 capital budget represented the first year of a commitment of \$5 million for arterial street rehabilitation and \$5 million for local street rehabilitation. This funding level was reaffirmed in the FY07 budget adoption process with an additional commitment of \$2.3 million for local streets. If the City determines an ongoing level of capital commitment to street rehabilitation it will enable staff to forecast a three to five year schedule of street projects that can be used to better coordinate with utilities and to communicate with the public.