



CITY OF CARSON

Legislation Text

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Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Discussion

SUBJECT:

CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE CROSSING GUARDS FOR CARSON STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ANNALEE AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; CONSIDERATION OF PERMANENT CROSSING GUARDS FOR STEPHEN WHITE MIDDLE SCHOOL, BROADACRES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THE CAROLDALE LEARNING CENTER (CITY COUNCIL)

I. SUMMARY

The City of Carson provides crossing guard services for eleven schools, with twenty-one crossing guards at a direct cost of \$221,400 annually to the City's General Fund. The City Council has adopted policies that specify the general requirements to deploy crossing guards at elementary schools; middle schools may be allowed crossing guard assignments if justification and criteria are met. The policy requires crossing guard assignments to be withdrawn when the conditions no longer apply. Staff periodically reviews crossing guard assignments and returns to the City Council with recommendations. The only exceptions are to be granted by the City Council at a public meeting.

Council will consider reductions to crossing guard assignments at Carson Street Elementary School and Annalee Elementary School, which no longer meet the warrants. Council had extended temporary crossing guard services to Stephen White Middle School and Broadacres Elementary School for a six month period. This time period has expired and the City has been approached with making the crossing guards permanent. Council will also consider a staff recommendation to add a crossing guard for the Caroldale Learning Center, which meets City warrants.

II. RECOMMENDATION

1. REVIEW the request for permanent crossing guards for White Middle School and Broadacres Elementary School.
2. SUSPEND the crossing guard assignments at 213th Street and Bolsa Street, 215th Street and Main Street for Carson Street Elementary School
3. SUSPEND the crossing guard requirement at Turmont Street and Central Avenue for

Annalee Avenue Elementary School.

4. AUTHORIZE a crossing guard at Figueroa Street and Shadwell Street for the Caroldale Learning Center.
5. AUTHORIZE staff to draft a letter to our local Legislatures requesting that crossing guard funding be allowed as part of SB-1And AB-1, as well as future funding measures for local streets.
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III. ALTERNATIVES

1. CONSIDER allocating one crossing guard to Broadacres Elementary and Stephen White Middle School with the elimination of the two crossing guards at Carson Street Elementary School (no budget impact).
2. TAKE any other action the City Council deems necessary.

IV. BACKGROUND

The City currently provides crossing guard services under contract for eleven schools, with twenty-one guards. The Legislature amended the State Law in the 1990's shifting the funding for crossing guards from public school districts to municipal government. The City currently budgets \$221,400 in direct costs to the guard contractor - approximately \$11,000 per crossing guard. Additional staff time is devoted to monitoring the crossing guards and conducting traffic assessments.

The City developed a policy in 1969 governing warrants for elementary school crossing guard assignments. It should be noted that this policy does not apply to either middle schools or high schools. The policy was revised in 2009 and requires "at least 20 elementary school children per hour" to cross the street to and from the school. The policy includes other criteria, including traffic studies and does not require guards when schools are located on local streets with four-way stop signed intersections. The policy also covers the termination of guard assignments (Exhibit 2).

The City Council has directed staff over the years to search for funding sources for crossing guards. The City has been successful in obtaining "Safe Route to Schools" grant funding, however this funding is limited to physical improvements and no operational funding. We did reach out to Los Angeles Unified School District, who indicated that they have no budget to assist the City in funding the crossing guards. The Legislature is currently considering both SB-1 and AB-1, which would explore new funding for street repairs and construction. The Council may wish to pursue amendments to these proposed funding measures.

Staff continually monitors the student crossing activity and the City Council has made reassignments based on needs. The most recent monitoring reveals that the three crossing guards at Carson Street Elementary School can be reduced to one guard on 215th Street at Orrick Avenue. Also, the guard at Central Avenue and Turmont Street can be eliminated based on warrants (Exhibit 1). The following describes the current crossing

guard assignments at these schools under consideration for changes. We have included the student crossing counts:

Carson Street Elementary School

The City of Carson provides Carson Street Elementary School with crossing guard service at three intersections:

- 1) 213th Street and Bolsa Street (19 students in the morning; 16 students in the afternoon)
- 2) 215th Street and Main Street (6 students in the morning; 7 in the afternoon)
- 3) 215th Street and Orrick Avenue (Guard to remain)

Annalee Avenue Elementary School

The City also provides crossing guard service for Annalee Avenue Elementary School at the intersection of Turmont Street and Central Avenue. The pedestrians crossing at this intersection had drastically diminished to where it no longer meets the criteria for a crossing guard warrant. There are 8 morning crossings of students and 15 afternoon crossings at the signalized intersection.

Caroldale Learning Center

Former Assistant City Manager received a request for a crossing guard warrant at Figueroa and Shadwell streets for children attending Caroldale Learning Center at Figueroa Street and Shadwell Street. There are seventeen morning crossings and twenty-two in the afternoon.

Stephen White Middle School

In July of 2016 the City Council authorized two additional crossing guards for Stephen White Middle School. One guard was assigned on Figueroa and 220th and other at 220th and Moneta Avenue. The assignment was for a six month period of time, with the understanding that the principal would work to find parent volunteers for these assignments. The crossing guard services were discontinued on January 20, 2016.

Since that time we have been approached by the school to reassign the two guards. Staff volunteered to meet with the parents and was told that the principal holds “coffee with the principal” meetings. Staff continued to call the school and was not given the dates of the parent meetings, so we could not attend.

The crossing guard on Figueroa does not meet the City’s policy, since a pedestrian bridge serves the school. The school is served not only with the pedestrian bridge but a signalized intersection at 220th. The City policy also addresses elementary schools only. One of the concerns from the school was that students are dropped off on the west side of Figueroa and “jaywalk” across the street. It is not unusual for 50 to 75 students to use the bridge, the cross walk and to jaywalk. The crossing guard cannot force children to cross at the cross walk or to use the pedestrian bridge. The guard also cannot stop parents who drop their children off on the west side of the street and don’t use either the bridge or the crosswalk.

Staff observed that the school was originally designed with a two-lane student drop-off and

pick-up area immediately off of Figueroa. It appears that one of the drop-off lanes has been marked for staff parking. The school has adequate parking for staff in the lot at Figueroa and 220th (under the solar collector parking shade). Staff believes that the issue on the west side of Figueroa could be solved if the school restored the two drop-off and pick-up lanes and used their internal staff to monitor traffic. This is commonly done at other schools, both public and private. For example, Broadacres School uses parent valets. The restoration of the two drop-off lanes and the implementation of a valet program may eliminate the need for the guard on Figueroa and on 220th, improving safety and access to the school itself.

Broadacres Elementary School

Broadacres was also assigned a temporary crossing guard, while the school developed its student drop-off and pick-up plan. The principal at Broadacres has worked with City staff to implement a drop-off and pick-up area on Kramer Street, on the north side of the campus. This area appears to be working well, however we still observe parents dropping their children off on the north side of Kramer Street. One suggestion that staff has is to lengthen the drop-off area to allow for more cars. This may assist in removing the drop-off from the north side of the street. The City established a temporary cross walk which serves 24 kids in the morning, but is in less than an ideal place. Staff does not support the temporary cross walk, but would support having the guard assist the valets in the morning. The principal has asked for a guard in the afternoon at the intersection of Gunlock Avenue and Turmont Street. An average of 28 students use this crosswalk at this four-way stop in the afternoon.

City Traffic Engineers' Review

The City Traffic Engineer follows the criteria set by the City's Standard Management Procedure (SMP) 1.2 (Warrants for Adult Crossing Guard Assignments), which has lower threshold requirement (Exhibit No. 2) and the State of California's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Part 7 - Traffic Control for School Area, Chapter 7D-Crossing Supervision, which has a higher threshold criteria (Exhibit No. 3).

The study conducted at Figueroa Street and Shadwell Street indicated it met the City's minimum criteria for a crossing guard warrant only for the afternoon when children are dismissed. It may be difficult to obtain a crossing guard to work for about two hours per school day.

<u>School</u>	<u>Existing Guards</u>	<u>Temporary Guards</u>	<u>Warrants</u>
Annalee	1	n/a	0
Broadacres		2	1
Carodale	2	n/a	3
Carson	3	n/a	1
Stephen White		2	0

Summary

The principals at both Stephen White Middle School and Broadacres have requested two

crossing guards at each school. The City policy does not warrant guards at Carson Street Elementary, Annalee or Stephen White Middle School. The City policy does warrant a new crossing guard at Caroldale Learning Center.

The City Council would be eliminating three guards and could add one guard at Broadacres Elementary and one guard at Stephen White Middle School, one guard at Caroldale without impacting the budget. However, there are recommended mitigation measures that each school would be required to implement working in concert with the City.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact depends on which option the City Council chooses. Adding the four guards requested by the schools will cost \$44,000, which does not include the \$11,000 for the warranted guard at Caroldale Learning Center. Due to the City's budget deficit, staff suggests that Council attempt to stay within the current allocation of guards.

VI. EXHIBITS

1. Memo, Traffic Engineer's traffic study result, dated December 28, 2016. (pg. 6)
2. City of Carson Standard Management Procedure 1.2-Warrants for Adult Crossing Guard Assignments. (pgs. 7-8)
3. California MUTCD, Section 7D.01. (pg. 9)
4. Map of Crossing Guard Assignments. (pg. 10)

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