

City of Garden Grove

INTER-DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

To:	Matthew Fertal	From:	Keith G. Jones
Dept.:	City Manager	Dept.:	Public Works
Subject:	BELFAST RAISED MEDIAN ALTERNATIVES	Date:	November 11, 2008

OBJECTIVE

To present alternatives regarding the existing raised median on Belfast Drive and seek direction in moving forward.

BACKGROUND

In June 2005, staff conducted a neighborhood meeting to discuss local traffic volumes with residents from the area bound by Trask Avenue on the south, Garden Grove Boulevard on the north, Kerry Street on the east and Galway Street on the west. The purpose of the meeting was to listen to the community and discuss solutions to the relatively high traffic volumes.

As a result of the meeting, staff recommended to the Traffic Commission at the September 2005 meeting that the raised median on Belfast Drive be constructed. The item was unanimously approved. The item was subsequently taken to City Council, where it was also approved. In the spring of 2007 the median was constructed.

Staff conducted an after-study to determine the effects the raised median had on local traffic volumes. Depending on the particular street segment, traffic volumes were reduced from 20 to over 40 percent. Even with this significant traffic reduction, the city received numerous complaints due to the turning movement restrictions the median created.

On January 24, 2008, staff mailed out over 350 ballots to the property owners in the affected area soliciting their input. The property owners were asked whether they wanted to keep the median, remove the median to allow full access at all locations, or remove the median and study other options to reduce traffic including possible turn movement restrictions at select locations.

With nearly a 40 percent voter response, the property owners chose to remove the raised median to allow full access at all locations by more than a 2 to 1 margin.

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The result of this ballot (see attached) was presented at the March 4, 2008 Traffic Commission meeting. After discussion, the Traffic Commission recommended removal of the raised median.

On March 25, 2008, staff forwarded the Traffic Commission recommendation to City Council. After discussion and public input, the item was tabled.

DISCUSSION

Staff has formulated the following alternatives in addressing the Belfast Median issue:

1. LEAVE MEDIAN INTACT

This alternative keeps traffic volumes within the residential area relatively low and is in keeping with the goals identified in the City's Specific Plan. No additional cost would be required. This alternative, however, would be inconsistent with the Traffic Commission recommendation that recognized that the vast majority of the property owners wanted the raised median removed in its entirety. Access to businesses, the church and residences would remain restricted.

2. REMOVE MEDIAN IN ITS ENTIRETY

This alternative satisfies the request of the majority of the property owners and is consistent with the Traffic Commission recommendation. Implementation of this alternative, however, would likely cause an increase in traffic volumes within the residential area. Staff estimates the cost of removal to be \$30,000.

3. REMOVE PORTION OF MEDIAN AT GALWAY TO PROVIDE FULL ACCESS THERE

This alternative could be considered as a compromise in balancing overall traffic volumes with vehicle access. Full access to the church at the corner of Galway and Belfast would be restored and a pathway connecting Trask to Hanmi Plaza reopened. This alternative, however, would seem to disproportionately impact Galway in terms of anticipated traffic volumes. Traffic volumes on Galway would likely increase while those on Donegal would likely not. Costs for this partial removal are estimated to be \$10,000.

4. ALTERNATIVE #3 PLUS CONSTRUCT RIGHT TURN DIVERTER ON GALWAY AT TRASK

This alternative attempts to mitigate the anticipated traffic volume increase on Galway created in Alternative #3. Right turn diverters, by definition, shift traffic to other streets by preventing access into a residential area where

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placed, but at the same time allowing right turning traffic to exit. A number of these raised island improvements have been constructed on the north side of Trask over the years. This additional construction would mean additional costs for a total estimate of \$20,000.

It should be noted that motorists would be able to enter Donegal at Trask and access Galway via Imperial, Central or Crosby.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Depending on the alternative selected, the cost could be as high as \$30,000.

COMMUNITY VISION IMPLEMENTATION

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

- Select an alternative regarding the existing raised median on Belfast Drive and direct staff accordingly.

WEM

KEITH G. JONES
Director of Public Works


By: Dan Candelaria, P.E., T.E.
City Traffic Engineer

Approved for Agenda Listing


Matthew Ferial
City Manager

Attachments: No. 1 - Median Survey Results Map
No. 2 - March 4, 2008 Traffic Commission Excerpt