



Memorandum

TO: Rules Committee

FROM: Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio

**SUBJECT: LINCOLN AVE
ROAD CONFIGURATION**

DATE: September 17, 2015

Approved:

Date:

Pierluigi Oliverio 9-17-15

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Defer road paving on Lincoln Ave to the Summer 2016 Pavement Program.
2. Extend the current lane configuration pilot to Spring 2016 until a decision is made by the City Council to make the changes permanent or not, including consideration of items listed in Appendix B.
3. Direct staff to explore improvements identified by the Community Road Diet Working Group, DOT, and other community feedback listed in Appendix A.

BACKGROUND:

Most people agree that pedestrians, cars, and bicyclists deserve to be safe, and that a vibrant business district is in the best interest of all Willow Glen residents. However, there are good people with good intentions on both sides of the issue that still disagree on the number of lanes on Lincoln Avenue that would ensure both safety and economic vitality.

The sentiment from proponents is that two lane business districts are safe, quaint, pedestrian friendly, and are more desirable locations to shop and stroll. For others, the interest is maximum vehicle flow. Opponents of the current lane configuration emphasize traffic congestion and cut-through traffic on side streets.

As time goes on during the current pilot, traffic routes are settling into a new pattern. It is noteworthy that the WGBA board of directors voted against the current lane configuration in June 2015 while the Willow Glen Neighborhood Association & Willow Glen Elementary School PTA voted to support in July and August 2015.

Approximately half of the complaints I have received on the lane configuration is actually related to a completely different subject, which is not enough parking. The Lincoln Ave trial has not changed the number of parking spaces available, however there are suggestions in Appendix A to address this topic.

No overwhelming consensus has emerged on the optimal lane configuration. Therefore, my proposal is to extend the evaluation period and bring this item back for final consideration by the City Council in Spring 2016.

I understand that there are residents, merchants and community organizations (Sierra Club, SVBC, SPUR) that would like to see the current lane configuration become permanent immediately, but I feel patience is in order, so that whatever the conclusion is that the City Council chooses is based on good data to achieve safety and vitality.

The reduction of traffic capacity (vehicle lanes) will automatically hold back future large scale development on Lincoln Ave, however it will not interfere with the current development of Midtown between Parkmoor Ave and San Carlos Street. I believe northbound Lincoln Ave between Coe and Parkmoor should be four lanes (except for the southbound merge area) so traffic capacity is retained for a future development that may occur specifically at the large blighted parcel historically anchored by Mr. T's Liquor Locker.

The implementation of these recommendations, including traffic devices, materials, and associated data collection should be funded by the 2015-16 funding allocation already approved in the Mayor's June Budget Message.

The Lincoln Ave Trial has been an extensive effort, guided by the Community Road Diet Working Group and the Department of Transportation (DOT), to test the effectiveness and the impacts of a new roadway configuration designed to make it easier and more comfortable to walk and bike along Lincoln Ave. To ensure that the traffic impacts, operations, pedestrian and bike activity were thoroughly understood and analyzed, DOT conducted a full traffic study that was presented to the community on June 18, 2015 (community meetings were also held in November 2014 and February 2015). As part of the consideration of these recommendations, DOT should present the major findings of the report to the City Council.

I would like to thank all those individuals that have shared their feedback, detailed suggestions and often deeply felt viewpoints. I would also like to thank the DOT personnel who made this trial possible from the striping crew, to the geometrics team, to the traffic engineers, to the traffic signal engineers and Director Jim Ortbal. The trial was the only way for thousands of residents to experience the real time effects of a different road configuration.

Special thanks to the residents that serve on the Community Working Group:

Tom Trudell-Chair and member Willow Glen Business Association (WGBA)
Tim Mulcahy-President of WGBA
Maren Sederquist-WG Elementary PTA immediate past president
Chris Roth-President of the Willow Glen Neighborhood Association (WGNA)
Peter Allen-Board member WGNA
Eric Nelson-Lincoln Ave merchant (south of Willow) and WG resident
Stacey Houghton-Lincoln Ave merchant (north of Willow) and WG resident
Bill Cardoza-WG resident
Jim Lightbody-WG resident and retired VTA Director

APPENDIX A:

1. Upgrade two traffic signal heads at Willow & Lincoln to allow for dedicated east and west left turns, from Lincoln Ave, which may improve vehicle flow and reduce congestion.
2. Upgrade two traffic signal heads at Minnesota & Lincoln to allow for dedicated east and west left turns, from Lincoln Ave, which may improve vehicle flow and reduce congestion.
3. Explore and evaluate moving the merge area north towards Parkmoor Ave. This may reduce traffic impact on Glen Eyrie and allow for better access of street intersections like Pedro St.
4. Explore optimization of on street parking by adding parking delineators (tips) where most useful and work with the WGBA to maximize all available street parking
5. Implement "Keep Clear" markings on roadway at private driveway(s) to improve access at significant parking lots (100 spaces or more). Painting to be paid for by the private property owners.
6. Explore efforts to facilitate the property owner's effort to convert the existing entrance on Lincoln Ave to a right turn only exit. The privately owned parking lot at the Garden Theater has been a quagmire for more than a decade as it has three entrances and only one exit. Ultimately, there should be two entrances and two exits.
7. Consider painting the beginning 15 feet of bike lanes near Coe, Willow and Minnesota intersections green. This will be a visual reminder to bicycles, cars and delivery trucks identifying the bike lane.
8. Double parking has been a regular occurrence on Lincoln Ave for decades. It is requested that Lincoln Ave be put on a periodic parking enforcement schedule to reduce double parking and loading activity from the center turn lane. This can be executed by DOT parking enforcement and does not require a police officer.
9. Explore extending single lane and potentially a bike lane on west side of Lincoln, south of Minnesota to the Willow Glen Way crosswalk. This extension may provide a calmer traffic flow passing the Willow Glen Elementary School and Anglican Church connecting with the only existing pedestrian crosswalk in the area.
10. Explore restricting parking on Lincoln Ave north of Michigan Ave to allow for an unencumbered right turn lane onto Minnesota Ave, including just during the morning commute (M-F) when the capacity is most needed.
11. Consider "Keep Intersection Clear" at various intersections to allow through traffic during peak times.
12. Parking Space Audit:
Direct the City Manager to work with the WGBA on identifying the total number of public/private parking spaces serving Lincoln Ave. Explore which property owners and business will allow vehicle parking during non-business hours. WGBA to list results of shared parking lots on their website.
13. Staff to explore options for increased signage to identify the public parking lot located behind Bank of America which has an established history of being underutilized. Consider pedestrian scale signage on Lincoln Ave reminding pedestrians this public parking lot is available.
14. Explore banning bicycle riding on sidewalks between Coe and Minnesota with an exemption for pre-teens as was done Downtown. This would minimize conflicts with pedestrians, strollers, and canine companions.

15. Explore a pedestrian count threshold that would trigger an all four corner pedestrian crossing also known as a "Scramble" at Willow or Minnesota. Include upgrade cost.

16. Explore working with the WGBA on having as many dark drop deliveries and non-peak hour deliveries.

17. Explore implementing traffic calming where the existing traffic studies from the trial indicate an adverse impact and warrant an appropriate traffic calming treatment or are improvements that are simply long overdue. Examples may include:

A. Installing radar speed sign(s) on Bird Ave, Pine Ave at River Glen Park, Minnesota near the WG Library.

B. Using edge lines on the following streets to narrow roads and encourage slower vehicle speeds:

Pine Ave between Lincoln & Bird

Hicks Ave between Pine & Curtner

Camino Ramon between Minnesota & Willow

Minnesota Ave between Camino Ramon & Britton

Pine Ave between Cottle & Hicks

C. Explore a cut through study for Glen Eyrie Ave. Glen Eyrie Ave has long been a cut through street from Lincoln to Willow. It has six direct street connections in between Lincoln and Willow that further connect to numerous other street blocks. The DOT data measured a 4% traffic increase on Glen Eyrie which has been a concern for residents.

APPENDIX B:

1. Explore conducting a third speed and volume survey done when both public and private schools are in session (consider the addition of Cherry Ave south of Willow) and include Lincoln Ave corridor drive through times. Field surveys for pedestrians and bicycles should also include weekends.

2. To answer the question of safety, please consider a full year of crash data along the Lincoln Ave corridor.

3. Should traffic data show that any neighborhood street is having adverse impacts, DOT should propose potential traffic calming measures.

4. Identify any street that the traffic data shows the potential of reducing speed limits to 20 mph. Due to the elimination of vehicle lanes on South First and South Second street in the Downtown core, average speeds dropped allowing the speed limit to be lowered to 20 mph. A two lane Lincoln Ave may garner the same result for Lincoln Ave and other surrounding streets.

5. Provide year over year sales tax comparison by quarter for the Lincoln Ave business district and by SIC code. Should include:

April-June 2015

July-Sept 2015

Oct-Dec 2015

6. Consider presenting any case studies from other cities that are relevant regarding Lincoln Ave.