

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

**DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**

DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2003

CMR:377:03

**SUBJECT: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION ON THE PROPOSED SCHOOL COMMUTE
CORRIDORS NETWORK**

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Transportation Commission and staff recommend that City Council officially adopt the following:

1. The proposed Palo School Commute Corridors Network (Attachment A)
2. Principles of Designation (Attachment B)
3. Applications of Designation (Attachment B)
4. Criteria for Inclusion (Attachment B)

BACKGROUND

The School Commute Corridors Network designates a sub-set of Palo Alto's street system for special consideration in infrastructure improvement and travel safety enhancement. The network comprises a comprehensive and continuous system of travel routes linking residential neighborhoods to all public school sites in Palo Alto. It includes residential collector and arterial streets, existing and proposed (in the draft Palo Alto Bicycle Master Plan) bicycle boulevards, off-road paths, and such residential local streets as desirable to ensure continuity of routes and direct access to each school site.

The purpose of the School Commute Corridors Network is to give priority for pedestrian and bicycle facilities improvements, sidewalk replacement, street re-paving, and other enhancements to travel safety for the most important school commute routes. It is important to note that not all of the street segments on the proposed School Commute Corridors Network are at present optimal for school commuting. Many have intersections, for example, that are currently more challenging than may be desirable for some school age commuters. Others have prevailing traffic speeds that are too high for comfortable cycling or pedestrian crossing. Nevertheless, inclusion of such streets in a comprehensive school commute network signifies the intent to create a future continuous, comprehensive network

of school commute routes accessible to and comfortable for a broad spectrum of school children and their parents and other caregivers.

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On May 14, the Planning and Transportation Commission reviewed and unanimously recommended to Council the proposed Palo School Commute Corridors Network, Principles of Designation, Applications of Designation, and Criteria for Inclusion. The Commissioners recommended a clarification that preference be given to segments of the School Commute Corridors Network for consideration of undercrossings or overcrossings pertaining to bicycle and pedestrian use only, rather than for motor vehicles.

RESOURCE IMPACTS

The School Commute Corridors Network would be implemented solely within existing resources allocated for pedestrian and bikeway facilities maintenance and improvements, augmented as appropriate and feasible by external funding from federal, state, and regional transportation grant programs and prospective citywide traffic impact fee proceeds. Within these resource constraints, funds will be allocated for both capital improvements and on-going maintenance required of any transportation facility. It is very important to note that the main resource implication of this proposal is in potential re-prioritization of such as already on-going activities, including sidewalk replacement, street resurfacing and crosswalk enhancement projects in the Infrastructure Management Plan. School commute corridors would be given priority, where it is feasible to do so, for grant funding applications, improvements to crosswalks, bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and street resurfacing.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

These recommendations support and conform to Comprehensive Plan goal T-6: A High Level of Safety for Motorists, Pedestrians, and Bicyclists on Palo Alto Streets” and Policies T-40: Continue to prioritize the safety and comfort of school children in street modification projects that affect school travel routes”, and T-28: Make effective use of the traffic-carrying ability of Palo Alto’s major street network without compromising the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists also using this network.” Council adoption the School Commute Corridors Network comprises a statement of policy for the City of Palo Alto that principal school commute routes be given priority for public investment purposes and be accorded enhanced review as regards proposals for new commercial driveways and other street changes.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. The proposed Palo School Commute Corridors Network
- B. Principles and Applications of Designation, and Criteria for Inclusion
- C. May 8, 2003 Planning and Transportation Commission Report
- D. Minutes of May 8, 2003 Planning and Transportation Commission meeting

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School Commute Corridors Advisory Panel