

**MINUTES
TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 16, 1998**

The agenda for the Traffic Safety Commission meeting of April 16, 1998, was duly posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

A regular meeting of the Reedley Traffic Safety Commission was held Thursday, April 16, 1998, in the Reedley City Hall Council Chambers, 845 "G" Street, Reedley.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Penner called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL.

Commissioners

Present: Brockett, Penner, Clements, Kennedy and Interim Police Chief Tatum.

Staff

Present: Andrew Benelli, City Engineer; and Kay Pierce, Engineering/Public Works Secretary.

Others

Present: Bobby Ikemiya and Officer John Rogers.

3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION - None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C. Tatum moved and C. Brockett seconded to approve the minutes of the January 8, 1998 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Requested stop sign on Parlier Avenue at Thompson Avenue.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report with the Commission stating that at the last meeting there was a petition submitted at the last meeting requesting a stop sign at this intersection. He is please report that there have not been any more complaints regarding sight distance problem or the stop. City crews removed the trees and the sight distance has greatly improved. He did receive a complaint regarding the striping in the area. He went on to state that Parlier Avenue will ultimately be a four lane street. The north side of Parlier is already built in the ultimate location. The south side of Parlier Avenue has no curb and gutter. When Parlier is ultimately completed, the left turn lane will be in the center of the roadway, but because the road is not completed to its ultimate width, the left turn lane is really further to the north. Although there are two lanes striped, as a vehicle gets closer to Frankwood, the lane starts to get pinches together so there isn't enough room for the other lane unless the parking was eliminated. The complaints received are from the two residents living on Parlier

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

Avenue. They have stated that as they park on the street and want to get in and out of their vehicles and load stuff, vehicles come in the lane and drive very close to where the vehicles are park. Some westbound vehicles also continue to use the right lane west of East Avenue. The moving vehicles also tend to pass in the right lane if the traffic in the left is going too slow. The ultimate width of Parlier Avenue is 64 feet and there is currently 32 feet on the north side of the center line stripe. This width allows for two 12-foot travel lanes and an 8-foot parking lane. Parlier is 38 feet wide on the north side at the Frankwood intersection to accommodate the westbound turn lane. There is not sufficient width to allow the two westbound lanes to extend to Frankwood unless parking is prohibited near the Parlier/Frankwood intersection.

City Engineer Benelli went on to state that there are several options to respond to this complaint. One would be to continue the outside lane west of East Avenue and paint three arrows to encourage the traffic to merge into the inside lane; the second would be to make the existing lane a right turn only lane at Thompson and East Avenues; and the third option would be to remove the striping that creates the outside lane. Staff recommends the first option.

Officer Rogers asked if the fog line could be continued? City Engineer Benelli stated that might be a good idea also. Officer Rogers stated that would help the police department in enforcement if the vehicle is passing the arrows and are over the fog line. City Engineer Benelli repeated that his recommendation is that the road be striped further, install three arrows to notify vehicles to merge to the inside lane, and add a sign notifying vehicles to merge, and continue the fog line.

C. Brockett moved, C. Clements seconded to accept staff's recommendation to continue the outside lane west of East Avenue and paint three arrows notifying vehicles to merge to the inside lane. Motion carried unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for a left turn lane at the Manning Avenue/Frankwood Avenue intersection.

City Engineer Benelli presented the Commission with a map of this intersection with different variations of traffic striping for a left turn lane for northbound Frankwood at Manning. During the discussion at the last Traffic Safety meeting, staff believe that insufficient right-of-way existed to widen Frankwood Avenue. However, the right-of-way has been investigated further and it has been determined that the City does have sufficient right-of-way to widen Frankwood Avenue and construction a left turn lane. One of the problems presently existing is the location of the traffic loops which is not going to work for this project. Additional loops would have to be added, possibly three in the left turn lane and three more in the through lane. Two options were brought to the Commission for their consideration. One would be for City crews to change the intersection striping and hire an electrical contractor to relocate the detector loops. The work could be done within two months. This would provide a through lane that is 14-foot wide which would be adequate, but not great because it would be a little narrow for a through lane at an intersection. A better solution would be prepare plans, specifications, and bid documents to widen Frankwood either to the alley or to Linden Avenue which would make it even with the existing curb return. This would give a width of 31 feet. It would take longer for staff to put a project together and obtain funding. It wouldn't be done right away, but it could be constructed by the summer of 1999.

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

Interim Police Chief Tatum stated this would be double the cost because it would have to be paid for now and then money would have to be spent again to redo this intersection at a later date. He asked what the funding mechanism is for this project and if there is an estimated cost? City Engineer Benelli stated that he does not have an estimated cost right now. The funding mechanism would be undetermined. It wouldn't qualify for a CMAQ funding because the traffic volumes are not that large. We could use FCTA money in next year's budget.

C. Clements asked if the City take the right-of-way needed for the installation of the signal and turn lane, would the City install sidewalk at that time to accommodate the pedestrian traffic. City Engineer Benelli stated that he would recommend it.

Interim Chief Tatum stated that for aesthetics, when the sidewalk is installed, could the wooden fences be replaced with a cement or block wall? City Engineer Benelli stated that the fence is on private property, but if the Council was willing to pay for the block wall, it would look better. He went on to point out on the plan sheet that there is an alley and a drop inlet for storm drain water which would require rebuilding the storm drain inlet and placing it back to the new curb.

Interim Police Chief Tatum asked what kind of funding is available to apply toward this project? City Engineer Benelli stated that there are three different funding sources which include the Gas Tax, the Local Transportation Tax which comes out of motor vehicle registration, and FCTA which is the additional sales tax paid in Fresno County which is probably the best one to use. Chief Tatum asked if we could use funding? City Engineer Benelli replied that federal funding is like the ISTEA money which is in limbo right now, but will be back soon. They have a lot of conditions on their money, one being that it be on a major thoroughfare and this might qualify because it is at a Manning Avenue intersection. There are several different programs. Some are based on whether it improves air quality. Most of the signal projects that we have done are based on the air quality improvement that it generates and those are the CMAQ projects. This project wouldn't qualify for CMAQ because we already have a signal and there isn't sufficient volume to generate the left turn. The other money is the STP money which is also an ISTEA project. There is a possibility that it could be used here. Those funds are somewhat already targeted for the Manning Avenue and Reed intersection that the City is trying to improve. This will be a big project and staff doesn't yet know how much money the City will receive because it's a Federal Highway Bill and it hasn't passed. The first year's funding on the ISTEA will probably go towards that project.

C. Kennedy asked for some clarification on the statement that it takes a total of six new traffic loops which cost from \$500 to \$700 per loop. So even though the loops were not placed properly because of the current design, we are only talking about a maximum \$2,000 that might be lost when the intersection is redone in the future. But we could have it restriped, looped for immediate relief within two months, if they can put the looping in properly, then the money would be saved, otherwise it would just be a duplicate cost when they expanded it. He knows that this concern for the this intersection has been around for a long time, and he thinks that immediate relief is a good idea, but long term is a good idea even if there is a duplication of \$1,500 to \$2,000 is a worthwhile expense for the one to two years.

Interim Police Chief Tatum stated that he agreed with C. Kennedy in part, but even if the \$2,000 can avoid be duplicated, we have to consider that because the City doesn't have the kind of revenues that it should have. The other thing is the community perceptions of doing a project and within six months

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

to a year, the City is digging it up again and how people complain due to their lack of knowledge about what is going on out there, but that's what is going to happen. We are going to do something and a year later dig it up and people are going to ask what's going on. Then the comments come out about how our money is being spent and the public doesn't understand what is going on even though it's the right thing to do.

City Engineer Benelli stated the loops could be placed in their ultimate location. The pull box would need to be moved and that will need additional conduit, but the pull box could be moved to the ultimate location before the loops are installed. This work would not have to be repeated at a later time. Another consideration is that a 14-foot lane is going to be very narrow.

C. Clements stated that the school buses have a difficult time making right turns onto Manning Avenue from northbound Frankwood because of the narrow width of the street.

City Engineer Benelli stated that at some intersections there is enough room to pass on the right if another vehicle is waiting to make a left turn, however this intersection is very narrow and most vehicles have to wait to go right or straight through until the left turning vehicle can move.

Chief Tatum asked how close to the intersection are we allowing parking? City Engineer Benelli stated that there are no parking restrictions on Manning or Frankwood that he is aware of.

Officer Rogers stated that the service truck which parks on Manning Avenue has been a problem for years. C. Clements stated that the property owner did lose one new truck which was parked on Manning Avenue. Officer Rogers added that both the truck and trailer have been hit in the past. Chief Tatum stated that it could be posted No Parking on Manning Avenue at this intersection since parking of these vehicles causes a traffic hazard. If no parking is posted at this location on Manning Avenue, this property owner would have to move his vehicle up and park in front of his neighbor's house which might not be fair for the neighbor.

C. Kennedy added that if a hazard for people turning right even if Frankwood is widened to 21-feet, the same problem and hazard will still be there.

Chief Tatum stated that there has been one collision at this intersection involving the vehicles parked on Manning Avenue and if this is a hazard and determined to be hazard, then the City would have a liability factor if the City didn't do something even if it means inconveniencing the property owner by telling him that he cannot park in front of his house. Once you develop the fact that you have a hazardous situation and you don't take action, the City will be liable for a lot more than the upset neighbor.

C. Kennedy moved and C. Tatum seconded to make a two step process where the striping is changed at this intersection and add the loops at this time and then proceed with the recommendation of the City Engineer which includes widening Frankwood Avenue as appropriate in the upcoming project cycle with the intent to not move the loops a second time if at all possible. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Southbound Right Turn Lane at the Manning Avenue/I Street/Manning Avenue Intersection

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

City Engineer Benelli discussed the staff report stating this location is the most recent signal installation and was designed so that there will eventually be a fourth approach which will be called Kingswood Parkway. Right now this intersection has only three approaches. The south Manning Avenue approach is very wide and there will eventually be a through lane, but for now it is just a right turn lane. Staff received a complaint from woman who works at Spencer Fruit who makes a U-turn there every day and states that vehicles in the right turn lane pull out and don't notice vehicles making a U-turn and there is a conflict. She is hoping that the City will eliminate the center right turn lane.

Officer Rogers stated that he tried several times to get in the touch with the lady making the complaint from Spencer Fruit and she never returned his calls. City Engineer Benelli stated that he responded to her complaint with a letter and he didn't hear anything back from her. She was notified of tonight's meeting. Even though Manning is a two lane street, the U-turn on Manning is not very wide so when a U-turn is made, the vehicle will go into the right turn lane. The U-turn vehicles seem to be limited to people working at Spencer Fruit. There is a very heavy right turn movement; people traveling through town going onto Manning Avenue. Part of the problem is that the signal was new and people weren't used to watching for U-turn traffic. The letter suggested eliminating the center right turn lane possibly by changing the striping so that there is only one lane by forcing everyone over to the right. The middle right turn lane will eventually be a thru lane. C. Penner asked if the right curb could be moved back a little to accomplish this. City Engineer Benelli stated that we don't have the right-of-way and this present curb is the ultimate location.

C. Kennedy suggested a left turn opening closer to the bridge for vehicles turning into Spencer Fruit. He feels that keeping both right turn lanes is important. Chief Tatum suggested posting the signal "No Right Turn for Center Lane Only". Another suggestion is to have no right turns while the green left turn signal is on.

City Engineer Benelli stated that would be an expensive alternative for an intersection that has just been built and for one that is going to be modified in the future when development comes in on the south quadrant. We probably couldn't get funding to do that. The complaints happened when the signal was very new, maybe drivers are more used to the procedure now. Enforcement is probably the best solution. Officer Rogers stated this is a very difficult intersection to enforce because you are watching two groups.

The consensus of the Commission is to table this item until the next meeting in July to see how traffic moves during the fruit season.

C. Reed Avenue Speed Limit at North City Limit

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report stating that this is an issue that has been brought before this Commission previously. He has been contacted again by Bobby Ikemiya from Ito Packing with the request that the speed limit be reduced. The center of Reed Avenue in the area of Ito Packing is the Reedley City Limits. The City controls the northbound and the County controls the southbound lane. There is a 50 mile per hour limit on both lanes in front of Ito Packing. They have a large volume of trucks and cars that creates not only a hazard, but makes it difficult to enter and exit their facility. In 1994, Ito Packing requested a reduction in that speed limit. Two areas were studied

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

at that time; South Avenue and Reed Avenue. There was a reduction in speed on South Avenue to 40 MPH. Reed Avenue in this area is still at 55 MPH. The procedure that needs to be done would be a speed survey with radar guns to determine what the 85th percentile speed in that area. At the last study done, the County refused to lower the speed limit because the 85th percentile was 55 MPH in this area. The reasoning for that is one, it's impossible to enforce and the other is that if there are two cars that are traveling at 55 MPH or more and one vehicle notices the speed limit has dropped to 35 MPH, that vehicle might slow down very quickly and the other vehicle might rear end the other car. It causes a possible hazard. If the 85th percentile speed in that area is above 50 or more, he doesn't think the County will reduce the speed even if the City requests the speed reduced. On the City leg which is the northbound side, the City is free to do what is necessary even though we are bound by those same rules. However, it's a different situation because the traffic is going 30 MPH and then speeds up to 55 MPH. The City could lower the speed limit to match the City speed limit of 30 MPH at South Avenue. He asked the Commission to either move to re-study or not study this area. We have no control over the County, so this is really just a motion to try to ask the County to reduce the speed. To do that, we would need to do a speed survey which the police department would have to conduct with their radar gun.

Chief Tatum stated that a speed survey is more than just the 85th percentile. It is also ingress and egress and well as other factors built into the survey. He asked what the County says about the driveways at Ito Packing and the traffic coming in and out. City Engineer Benelli replied that City records indicate that the County based their study solely on the 85th percentile. Chief Tatum stated that was not a proper speed survey. City Engineer Benelli agreed. He stated he doesn't have all the details. He has only the records to go by and what Bobby Ikemiya relayed to him. City Engineer Benelli stated he feels that the speed limit should be reduced to at least 40 MPH.

Officer Rogers stated that 30 MPH would be too slow. Even though Ito Packing is the only entering this roadway until the first driveway at the college, but for Ito to try and get trucks out of the driveway is very difficult. Chief Tatum stated that is why it doesn't sound as though the County is taking this into consideration.

Bobby Ikemiya drew a sketch on the board showing that they noticed, while studying the property, was that coming from south to north, traffic goes from a 30-35 MPH zone to a 35 mile per zone on Frankwood, to a 45 mile zone. After you cross South Avenue on Frankwood, then it goes to a 45-55 MPH zone with the amount of traffic. From the same point on Reed Avenue, the limit goes 35 MPH up to where the subdivision ends and then it bumps up to 55 MPH right away all the way and past South Avenue. There is no transition. Ito Packing did request a slower speed zone on South Avenue because of the 45 MPH zone going east all the way to Buttonwillow. That was approved and installed. However, Ito has a major entrance on Reed Avenue, one on South Avenue and a parking lot entrance for approximately 400 vehicles. Surabian Packing is to the north of Ito Packing which also their traffic. In the Ito letter of 1994, they mentioned roughly 100 trucks coming in and out of Ito's facility daily during the fruit season. The majority of the traffic comes on Reed, turns on South Avenue or comes directly down Reed and turns from Reed Avenue into Ito Packing. One of the things noted by Bobby Ikemiya was the traffic counts taken in 1994. They were dated in the month of May, 1994, and in May the traffic would be very light. The traffic load would not be heavy until late June or early July.

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

C. Kennedy asked the difference between the vehicle counts between Reed Avenue and Frankwood Avenue? City Engineer Benelli stated he thought the difference would be 1½ to 2 times as much more traffic on Reed Avenue as on Frankwood. The reason the speeds are lower on Frankwood is because of the existence of residences.

Chief Tatum stated that was interesting because that's part of the traffic survey including residences along with the 85th percentile and existence of driveways. On Reed Avenue there are no residences and the County probably figured the speed would not create a problem but they obviously don't know what goes in and out of the Ito Packing driveway.

C. Kennedy asked if City Staff could work with County Staff on getting a traffic count in June and July? City Engineer Benelli responded by stating that the City has received a letter in the past from Lynn Gorman who is the Senior Traffic Engineer at the County, and perhaps he could recommend to her to do another speed survey when Ito's is in operation during June or July. Even if the speed survey shows the speed as rather high, we could send the County a letter stating that based on conflicts at the intersection and at the driveway and the heavy truck traffic, it would be wise to recommend a reduction in speed on Reed. We could also state that the City is going to post their northbound route for maybe 45 miles per hour, and maybe the County will post their southbound lane at 45.

Officer Rogers asked if the severity of traffic accidents would have any effect on the County's design. Some of the accidents he assisted the Highway Patrol with were very bad accidents and the primary collision factor was speed.

Chief Tatum suggested that we should include the collision survey to try to convince the County to go along with our recommendations.

City Engineer Benelli stated he feels that staff would get support from the County if we stated our case and let them know that we are going to change our speed zone on the northbound lane. They might want to comply with what the City of Reedley is doing. He felt the County might be concerned about the legality of reducing the speed limit by possibly causing a speed trap, or what people might claim is a speed trap because vehicles are coming into town in a 55 mile zone and then suddenly it's a 35 mile zone. He stated that when the police department purchases the new radar trailer, this area would be a good place to put it to check speeds.

Chief Tatum moved, C. Clements seconded to accept the recommendation of the City Engineer to work the City by installing graduated speeds in this area. Motion carried unanimously. City Engineer Benelli stated that this item will be brought back at the meeting on July 16.

7. COMMISSION COMMENTS AND REPORTS

A. Receive and Discuss Reports from Commission Members Regarding Commission Member Activities.

1. C. Kennedy stated that on Cypress Avenue, the southern street of the Willow Ridge Subdivision is a real long thoroughfare. The retirement homes are being built there and there will be a T-intersection and there is talk of a possible stop sign eventually. But currently vehicles run

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

right up Cypress Avenue. The residents of this subdivision have met and talked about the City finishing out the park that is supposed to be on Carob Avenue. One of the questions posed to the police office who was there is the concern of how fast the vehicles go down Cypress Avenue. Is there a way that the police department could place a radar unit on Cypress?

Officer Rogers replied that a radar survey would first have to be done on Cypress Avenue before a radar unit could be used.

C. Kennedy stated that he sees kids playing basketball near the street all the time and the ball goes out into the street and vehicles aren't going to see them run out after the ball and a kid is going to get killed and there will be big liability problems there. He would like to see a radar survey done as soon as possible.

City Engineer Benelli asked the status on speed surveys and was told that they are to do be done every five years and Chief Tatum hasn't seen anything since he has been with the City. He asked that Officer Rogers look into speed surveys with the new police chief.

City Engineer Benelli added that staff is requesting the purchase of new traffic counters so that better statistical information will be available to the Commission in the future.

2. C. Clements asked what the status is in the terms of restriping projects such as northbound Reed coming off "I" Street in the spaghetti bowl. The painted island has basically disappeared and with the recent rains, at night it is hard to see. City Engineer Benelli replied that in recent years the Air Pollution Control District has made it much more difficult to use an oil based painted so the cities are using a water based paint and they just don't stay down long. We have gone to a program of restriping almost the entire town each summer. We getting started a little late this year, but we do have paint and are getting ready to start our project to get through the whole town this summer if possible. He stated that it has been requested to restripe downtown first before the spaghetti bowl. However, he will request that the spaghetti bowl be done first for the purposes of safety.

3. C. Penner that at "H" Street along the tracks between 10th and 13th Streets, there are no stop signs on "H" Street in either direction. City Engineer Benelli stated that "H" Street is destined to be part of the "Rail Trail" and he hasn't received any complaints with regard to no stop signs. C. Penner stated he was looking at the lack of stop signs as a liability factor for the City. The alleys have stop painted at each ingress and egress, but "H" Street does not. City Engineer Benelli stated that he would direct staff to paint stop at these intersections.

4. Police Chief Tatum stated he has received several complaints regarding the parking public lot on "F" Street next to Wells Fargo Bank. The old parking stall lines are still visible and vehicles are parking there blocking the entrances to the parking lot. City Engineer Benelli will direct staff to "black out" the old parking stall lines.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

Chairman Penner adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

REEDLEY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING - April 16, 1998

Jim Penner, Chairman
City of Reedley Traffic Safety Commission

ATTEST:

Kay Pierce, Secretary