

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: MASSOUD SABERIAN, SUPERVISING ENGINEER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT REQUEST TO FEDERAL
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION FOR INSTALLATION OF RED BUS
ONLY PAVEMENT MARKINGS IN DOWNTOWN SANTA ROSA

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by motion, authorize the Director of Transportation and Public Works to submit a request for experimentation to California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to add red colored (BUS ONLY) pavement markings at two locations in downtown Santa Rosa.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff is proposing to install "bus only" markings in the left-turn pockets that enter into the Transit Mall from B Street and Santa Rosa Avenue similar to those used in San Francisco (examples attached). This involves painting the pavement red and using white "bus only" stencils to denote those areas where private vehicles are prohibited. This is a somewhat unique and experimental technique and San Francisco has received special approval from the State to implement. It is our intention to follow San Francisco's model and request the ability to experiment with these pavement markings. If approved by Council, our request will be agendaized and acted on by the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC) at their August meeting.

BACKGROUND

In response to concerns from the transit operators and transit service representatives, we are looking at ways to reduce the number of private vehicles that enter and navigate through the Transit Mall. The presence of unauthorized vehicles creates significant safety concerns for bus operators and pedestrians that would not expect to encounter private vehicles. The Transit Mall is regularly congested with buses from five different operators (CityBus, Sonoma County Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Mendocino Transit

and Greyhound) that load/unload passengers against the curb and use the center lane to navigate in and out between the stopped busses. In addition, thousands of pedestrians traverse the Transit Mall attempting to catch their bus and transferring between buses. While we credit our professional bus operators for the limited number of incidents, there have been numerous close calls that could be avoided by providing better visual information to the public to limit unauthorized vehicles.

There are currently large signs at both entrances noting “Do Not Enter”, “Authorized Vehicles Only” and “Bus Only”. Unfortunately, this messaging has proven to not be adequate. In that regard, staff has been researching alternative techniques to improve the visual recognition that this area is just for buses.

ANALYSIS

Transportation and Public Works have considered many different techniques to provide a better visual recognition for the public that the Transit Mall is not an open and through street. Some of these have included reinstalling a gateway style arch like the ones that existed before the Transit Mall renovation, using the red lane “Bus Only” markings in the turn lanes similar to San Francisco, painting unique designer crosswalks along the Santa Rosa Avenue and B Street sides of the Transit Mall and painting “BUS ONLY” along the crosswalks with a thick red stripe. In considering these alternatives, staff believes that painting the left-turn pockets red with large white “Bus Only” stencils would provide the public with the most cost effective visual indication that they should not be driving there.

Since this technique is considered experimental, it is necessary to request authorization from the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC). If approved by Council, the Transportation and Public Works Department will submit an agenda request for the CTCDC to consider our experimentation request at their August 10, 2017, meeting. Standard process also requires that our request for experimentation be copied to the Federal Highway Administration.

FISCAL IMPACT

An estimated cost of \$9,500 for material and labor is anticipated which will be paid for from the current 2017-18 operation and maintenance budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15301 in that it involves minor alteration to existing facilities with no proposed expansion of use.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This has the support of both Santa Rosa Transit and Santa Rosa Police Department staff.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Pictures of Red Pavement Marking Examples

CONTACT

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