



Administrative Report

N.2., File # 26-0791

Meeting Date: 8/4/2026

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
From: ANDREW WINJE, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR CALTRANS' PCH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AT PALOS VERDES BOULEVARD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Caltrans will soon begin pavement rehabilitation along Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) in Redondo Beach, including significant improvements to the intersection at Palos Verdes Boulevard (PVB). A funded component of the Caltrans project includes installation of a dedicated right-turn lane on northbound PCH at PVB. The widening proposes to occupy space (currently sidewalk) that was dedicated as part of the Legado development at 1700 S PCH, now known/built as Eddy Redondo. The need for the right turn lane was based on traffic analysis performed a decade ago and in response to projected increases in traffic volume. More recent traffic studies have determined that the increase in vehicle traffic anticipated nearly ten years ago has not materialized. Additionally, the studies show that due to increased pedestrian traffic in the area, the intersection's operational performance will be negatively impacted (specifically longer wait times for north and south bound traffic along PCH) if the right turn lane is installed.

Staff now recommends that the right turn lane widening for the southern leg of the intersection be deleted from Caltrans' project scope. This recommendation is based on the conditions mentioned above, and the successful design of similar projects, community feedback, contemporary traffic safety practices, ADA requirements, and a comparative analysis of traffic volumes. Staff also recommends that the funds for the right turn lane work be redirected to other needed improvements along PCH within the City. These include the possible construction of tree wells in the south east quadrant of the PCH and PVB intersection and cross gutter repairs at various intersections along PCH between Knob Hill Avenue and Avenue H. If the recommendations are approved by City Council, staff will request Caltrans make the aforementioned adjustments.

BACKGROUND

The proposed dedicated northbound right-turn lane on PCH and PVB was originally conceived as a traffic mitigation for anticipated traffic demand due to the Legado development, exhibit attached. This was proposed at a time when measuring traffic impacts of developments only considered driver delay. However, many of these traffic impact measurements overestimated future traffic volumes. This often resulted in traffic mitigations that increased speeds, widened streets, and discouraged non-driving modes of transportation. Since then, CEQA standards have changed and public sentiments

are much more focused on reducing driving miles, lowering speeds, and improving roadway safety for all modes of transportation.

As part of a settlement agreement with the City, the Legado development was allowed to be built without needing to construct the right-turn lane. However, sidewalk space was offered in dedication to the City for that purpose if and when funding was secured and the project completed. The right turn lane project was eventually funded by Caltrans, using funds secured by the City through Measure R project recommendations, and is scheduled to be implemented with the Caltrans pavement rehabilitation project that spans PCH between Interstate 10 in Santa Monica and the Los Angeles/Orange County county line, now in progress. Recently, Caltrans held a pre-construction meeting for work to be performed within Redondo Beach. City staff decided to investigate the current necessity of a north bound right-turn lane in light of previous experience with similar projects, current traffic volumes, current community needs, and desires for different improvements.

The attached traffic count shows peak period traffic counts at the PCH/PVB intersection in November 2023 and March 2026, including bicycle and pedestrian movements. The only major change between the dates of the traffic counts that could substantially affect traffic volumes was the construction of the Legado/Eddy Redondo development. As of the 2026 traffic count, 61% of residential units in Eddy Redondo were leased and approximately 25% of commercial space was leased. Between the 2023 and 2026 traffic counts, the northbound PCH right-turn movement onto PVB remains the lowest volume movement at this intersection, with less than 70 right-turn movements during either peak hour in 2026. This movement remains lower than the counts taken in 2017 or forecast by the developer, despite the addition of Eddy Redondo traffic. More notably, walking activity has increased by 24-34%, and biking activity has increased by 48% during the PM peak hour. This is evidence of post-pandemic travel pattern shifts, a continued desire for residents to utilize non-driving modes, and the VMT efficiencies of locating mixed-use development near popular destinations such as Riviera Village. Overall PCH/PVB intersection counts have been more or less flat between 2023 and 2026 and have not reached the original projections forecast during traffic studies for the Eddy Redondo development.

Research suggests that right-turn lanes could be warranted if peak hour right-turn volumes exceed 100-125 movements, or if right-turns represent 10% or more of direction approach volumes (NCHRP 457). The northbound right-turn on PCH at PVB does not meet either threshold, and staff predicts the threshold will not be reached even when Eddy Redondo is fully leased.

Therefore, staff recommends deletion of construction of the northbound right-turn lane in coordination with the Caltrans project. Forgoing this lane addition prevents intersection widening from occurring, and avoids an increase of crosswalk distances. Increased crosswalk distances require increasing pedestrian signal walk times per ADA, which means taking green time away from other more dominant movements, such as for PCH traffic in this case. PCH would experience increases to vehicular congestion with the lane addition. In this case, a widening is actually a contrary response to data pointing to much more significant growth of walking and biking in the area. A deferral, for now, of the northbound right turn lane widening would not eliminate the City's right to perfect the dedication and construct the improvement at a future date. The offer of dedication does not sunset under the terms of the Legado agreement. If traffic patterns or public sentiment change in the future, the City will have the opportunity to install the right turn lane.

In preliminary conversations, Caltrans project staff have indicated openness to the proposed project

changes, as Caltrans is no longer singularly focused on vehicular throughput and is now more concerned with improving highway safety. As mentioned above, with Council approval, City staff will also propose to Caltrans staff that the project funds otherwise allocated for the right-turn lane project be repurposed for more meaningful improvements that would provide direct benefit to the Redondo Beach community, including installing tree wells in the right-turn dedication space to accommodate trees along Eddy Redondo, either planted by the property owner or by the City with the owner's approval. Additionally, staff would request Caltrans make repairs to cross gutters that line PCH intersections between Knob Hill and Avenue H. These cross gutters severely slow access onto and off of the side streets along this segment of PCH, which degrades operational movements, and can lead to damage to both vehicles and pavement. The current Caltrans project does not account for repairing these cross gutters, and staff will recommend redirecting the right-turn lane monies to make these improvements.

COORDINATION

This item was coordinated by Public Works Department staff in consultation with Caltrans.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact to the City resulting from the proposed change in project scope.

APPROVED BY:

Mike Witzansky, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit - Right Turn Pocket Construction Detail Drawing
- Table - Traffic Count Comparison