



Administrative Report

J.2., File # PWS24-1739

Meeting Date: 10/28/2024

To: PUBLIC WORKS AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

From: Department of Public Works

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AVENUE H / MASSENA NEIGHBORHOOD HOLIDAY TRAFFIC MEASURES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Annually, during the year-end holidays, the City of Redondo Beach implements an evening closure of Avenue H at the city border of Redondo Beach and Torrance to reduce the effects of holiday lights traffic activity in the area. Visitors from around the region typically visit Torrance neighborhoods just east of Avenue H each year to enjoy Christmas/holiday decorations, lights, and festivities. The gatherings have increased in popularity over the years, which resulted in numerous complaints by Redondo Beach residents, especially those who live east of Prospect Avenue along Avenue H, Massena Avenue, and Circle Drive. The City proposes to continue implementing a nightly 5pm - 10pm closure of Avenue H at the city border via in-road removable bollards. However, due to changes in traffic restrictions within Torrance, Redondo Beach staff are proposing additional measures to alleviate the effects of increased traffic in the area.

Staff is seeking input and direction on this matter from the Public Works and Sustainability Commission (PWSC), with the goal of developing an implementation plan for City Council approval in November 2024 before the holiday lighting period, which begins the weekend after Thanksgiving. Notification of this agenda topic was mailed to addresses along Avenue H, Massena Avenue, and Circle Drive east of and along Prospect Avenue. Notification was also provided to properties in the vicinity along the west side of Prospect Avenue. **Attachment 1** shows a map of the notification area. Notification was also provided to RBUSD, as Tulita Elementary School is located adjacent to this neighborhood.

BACKGROUND

Each year since 1984, residents within the Seaside Ranchos neighborhood of Torrance, also known as "Sleepy Hollow," voluntarily install holiday/Christmas light displays and decorations that attract visitors from around the region. The event is sometimes known as the Seaside Holiday Lights, Torrance Christmas Lights, or Torrance Candy Cane Lane. The event is organized and sponsored solely by residents and members of the Seaside Neighborhood Association, not the City of Torrance. Lights are typically active each evening, 5pm to 10pm between Thanksgiving weekend and the New Year. The privately run website seasideholidaylights.com and associated social media platforms, sponsored by the Seaside Neighborhood Association, provide information, reminders, and access information. The website recommends visitors to park west of the main display area, specifically near Tulita ES and the surrounding streets in Redondo Beach. Some residents and non-residents within the display area sold a variety of food and beverages, either legally or illegally. This has resulted in complaints of trash from Redondo Beach residents. Sidewalk/roaming vending in the Torrance neighborhood is not allowed due to a lack of 6-foot sidewalks, while home vending was allowed under cottage food ordinances. However, the Torrance City Council recently voted to prohibit any home vending after 5 PM for the 2024 season. This effectively prohibits any vending when holiday lights are on for the 2024 season.

Attachment 2 shows the approximate holiday lights display area. In conjunction, the City of Torrance provides a website with FAQs, vending rules, traffic plans, and other regulations. The City of Torrance typically provides traffic message boards, trash cans, and public safety enforcement.

Since 2023, the City of Torrance has implemented alternating side street parking restrictions within the Seaside Holiday Lights area to facilitate unimpeded two-way vehicular travel. The odd-years map is also shown in **Attachment 2**. During even years, the parking restriction is flipped to the other side of each affected street. These restrictions are in effect on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays between 5pm and 10pm, starting December 6, 2024.

Since the Seaside Holiday Lights have become more popular, the City of Redondo Beach has implemented a closure of Avenue H at the city border with in-road removable bollards to prevent regional vehicular traffic from accessing the lights area from Prospect Avenue. This nightly bollard closure during the holiday lights season has been in effect for at least twenty years. Some signage has been placed to warn motorists of the road closure. The City also provides a trash receptacle at the City border as a courtesy. Due to the newly implemented street parking restrictions within Torrance, residents on the Redondo Beach side have expressed concerns that the City's holiday traffic plan needs to be revised.

DISCUSSION:

City staff met with the Councilmember for District 1 (Nils Nehrenheim) to discuss potential traffic and outreach strategies. Because of the reduction of approximately half of the street parking spaces within the holiday lights area in Torrance, and the Seaside Neighborhood Association's parking suggestions, the City of Redondo Beach expects a higher level of parking utilization along surrounding streets, including those in Redondo Beach.

City staff proposes to continue implementing the annual bollard closure of Avenue H, which will occur nightly from 5 PM to 10 PM between the day after Thanksgiving and January 2 of the next year. Additionally, City staff proposes additional signage at the Prospect/Avenue H intersection warning motorists of the upcoming road closure, shown in **Attachment 3**. This will also include a changeable message sign that says alternates between "LOCAL ACCESS ONLY" and "PUT TRASH IN BIN." Public Works staff will provide two (2), more visible trash receptacles along Avenue H to encourage proper disposal of litter.

City staff reached out to RBUSD to discuss parking options at Tulita Elementary School, which is within the neighborhood and next to the holiday lights. District staff have observed an uptick in visitors parking in the Tulita ES lot but have been able to manage any negative effects. The parking lot is ungated and Tulita ES activity typically ends at 6 PM. At this time, RBUSD is not planning any particular measures at Tulita ES during the holiday season.

Councilmember Nehrenheim has agreed to reach out to entities such as St. Lawrence Martyr School/Church and Seaside Elementary School (TUSD) to discuss the potential use of their parking lots for visitors during the holiday season. In particular, St. Lawrence Martyr School could accept donations for parking and provide direct walking access to the holiday lights area via their Linda Drive gate, if the institution chooses. Councilmember Nehrenheim also intends to out to the Seaside Neighborhood Association (Torrance), which runs the website and social media platforms for the event, to request removal of references and suggestions for visitors to park near Tulita ES.

At this time, staff and Councilmember Nehrenheim agree that any additional parking restrictions within the Redondo side of the neighborhood would be too severe and impactful on neighborhood residents. Staff considered utilizing Redondo Beach Municipal Code (RBMC) 3-7.17, which contains specific provisions and requirements to establish preferential permit parking zones. Preferential permit parking zones, as the RBMC 3-7.1702 is written, are intended to address year-round parking issues that occur "at regular and significant daily or weekly intervals." It is highly unlikely that the specific thresholds under RBMC can be met to legally

establish an enforceable preferential permit parking zone.

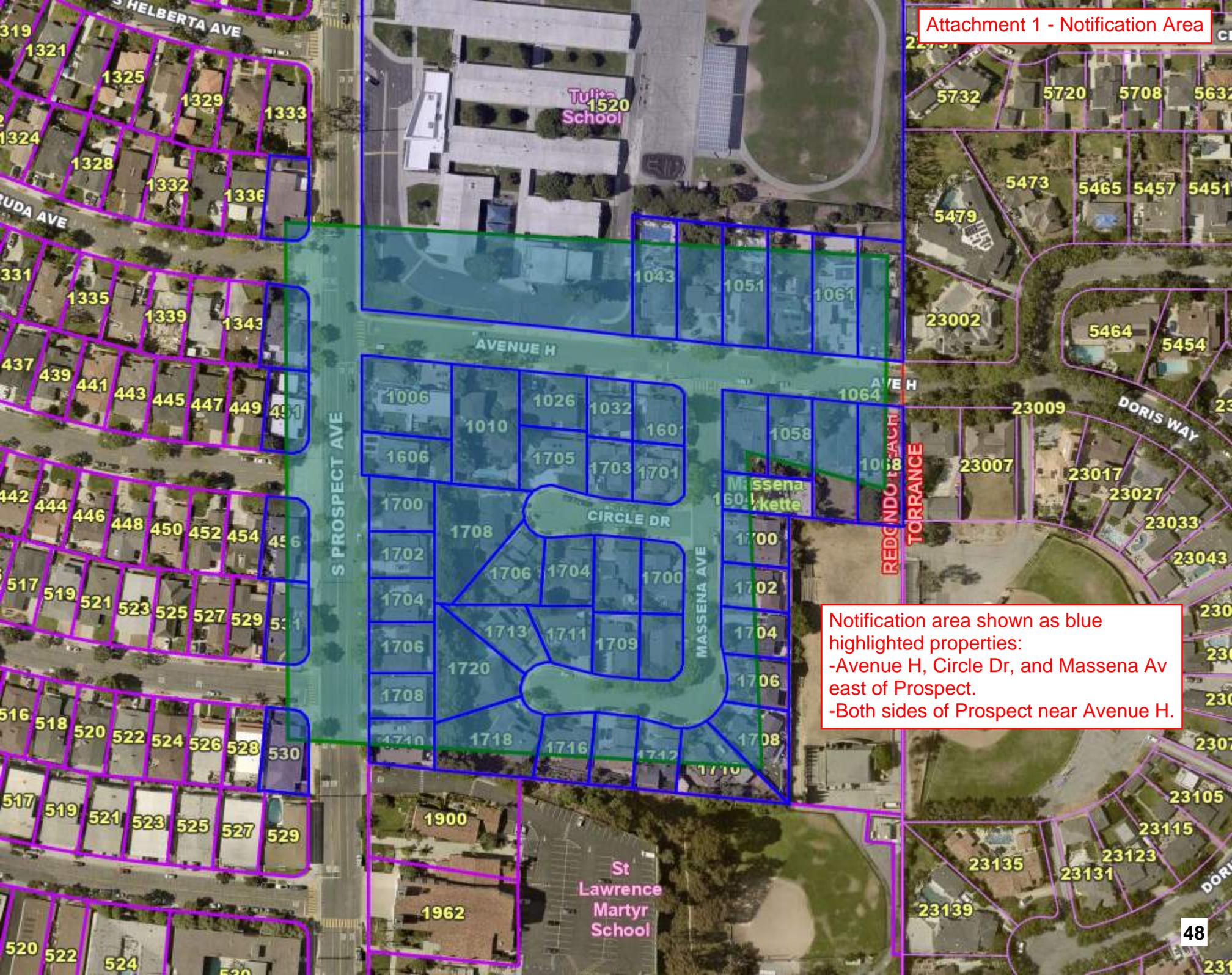
City staff and Councilmember Nehrenheim also discussed the possibility of a complete parking prohibition on all streets within the Redondo side of the neighborhood during the peak holiday lights period of 5 PM to 10 PM on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays to match similar restrictions in the City of Torrance. However, this was considered infeasible due to the impact it would have on residents within the neighborhood, especially during the year-end holidays when many residents host family, visitors, and holiday parties. The City will continue to monitor the effects of the holiday lights and adjust its strategies accordingly.

COORDINATION

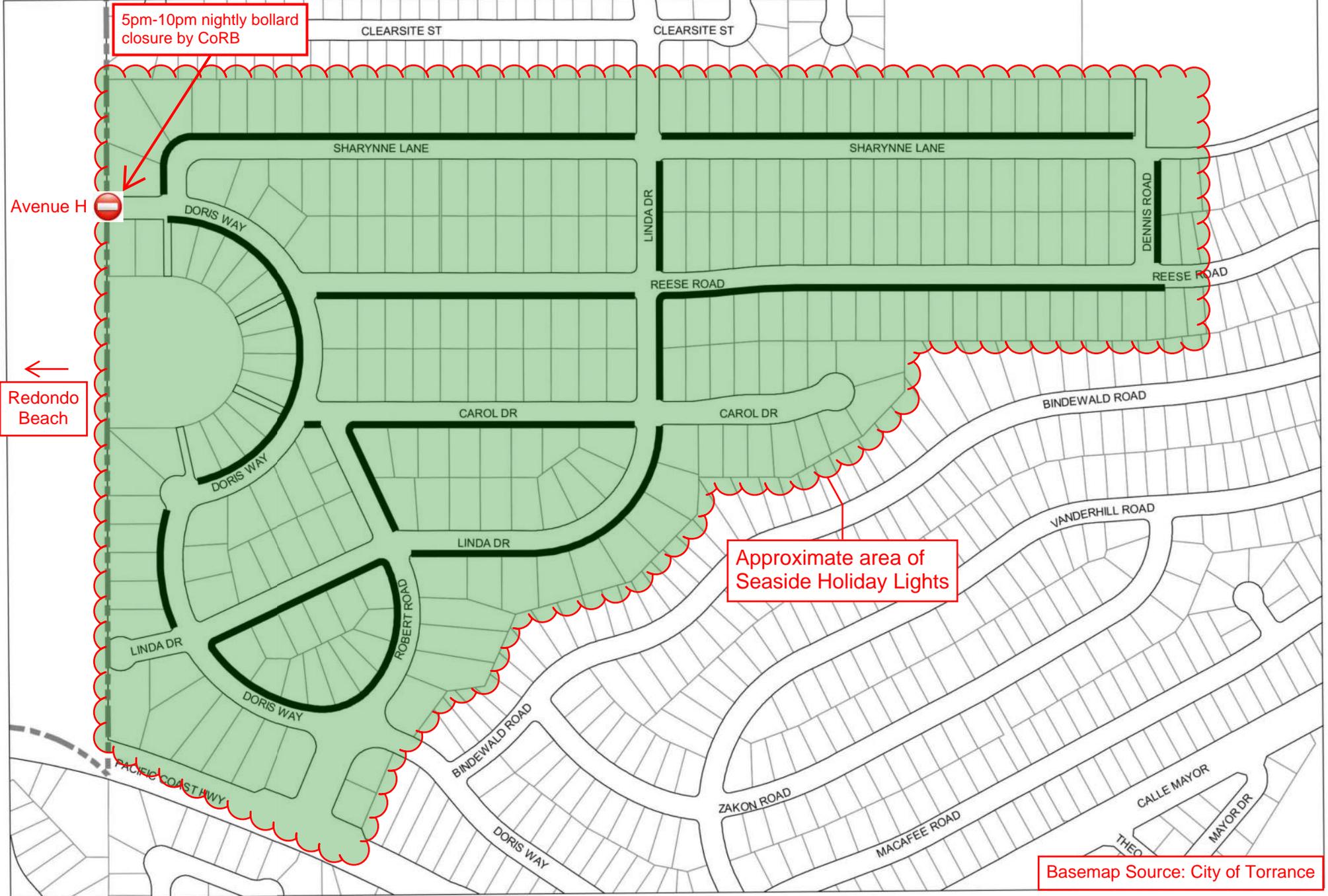
Coordination of this evaluation and report took place within the Public Works Department, the Councilmember for District 1, and RBUSD.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 - Notification Area (Redondo Beach)
- 2 - Seaside Holiday Lights Area and Parking Restrictions (Torrance)
- 3 - Holiday Sign Plan for Prospect/Avenue H



Notification area shown as blue highlighted properties:
-Avenue H, Circle Dr, and Massena Av east of Prospect.
-Both sides of Prospect near Avenue H.



HolidayLightsParkingRestriction

— Parking Restriction

Holiday Lights Parking Restrictions - Odd Years



Attachment 2 - Seaside Holiday Lights Area and Parking Restrictions

Per Torrance, parking restrictions expected to be flipped to other side of each street during even years.

Annual Avenue H Holiday Closure Sign and Trash Bin Plan



1345 Prospect: Sign on Type 2 barricade facing southbound

Provide changeable message board:
...LOCAL ACCESS ONLY...
...PUT TRASH IN BIN...

Other side facing northbound

Signs on Type 2 barricades against curb facing entry:



Type 2 barricade sign facing northbound approach



Add additional "No Outlet" (W14-2) sign at Ave H/Massena



Add barricade light to each Type 2 barricade.

W14-2

Trash cans to be placed along Avenue H and Massena.

W14-2a