



## City of Santa Barbara Transportation and Circulation Committee

### *Staff Report*

**DATE:** January 26, 2012

**TO:** Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC)

**FROM:** Derrick Bailey, Supervising Transportation Engineer

**SUBJECT:** Pedestrian Crossing Treatment Alternatives for Milpas and Ortega Streets, and Milpas and Yanonali Streets

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#### **Recommendation:**

That the Transportation and Circulation Committee:

- A. Receive a report on the alternatives for pedestrian crossing treatments at the intersections of Milpas and Ortega Streets, and Milpas and Yanonali Streets; and
- B. Provide comments to staff on the alternatives.

#### **Background**

During the evening of October 7, 2011, Sergio Romero was killed while crossing Milpas Street at Ortega Street. Sergio was walking westbound in the south crosswalk. He had been waiting at the transit stop for the northbound Milpas bus on the northeast corner of the intersection, and after seeing his friend onto the bus, attempted to cross back over Milpas Street. A southbound vehicle in the number 1 lane (inside lane) stopped for Sergio. A second southbound vehicle, in the number 2 southbound lane travelling at approximately 50mph (30mph speed limit), did not yield to Sergio, and struck him in the crosswalk.

City staff attended two neighborhood meetings following the fatal crash. The community was outspoken in asking for improved crossing conditions at the intersection of Milpas and Ortega Streets. The most common request is for a traffic signal.

The community also identified the intersection of Milpas and Yanonali Streets as another location that they feel is difficult to cross. They are also asking for improved crossing conditions at this location, specifically a traffic signal.

As an initial response to improve safety, the City is working with Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) to evaluate relocating and consolidating the northbound transit stop at Milpas and Ortega Streets, and the southbound transit stop at Milpas and Yanonali Streets, to signalized locations. This will reduce the number of pedestrians attempting to cross Milpas Street at these unsignalized locations.

## **Pedestrian Master Plan**

Policies contained within the Santa Barbara Pedestrian Master Plan that pertain to this project include the following:

Policy 1.2: The City shall improve pedestrian safety and comfort at intersections.

Policy 1.5: The City shall assist neighborhoods that desire to improve pedestrian access to, from, and within their neighborhoods.

## **Discussion**

The attached technical memorandum provides more detail on each of the alternatives presented below.

Figures and diagrams associated with each of the alternatives presented below are contained in the technical memorandum.

An engineering analysis of Milpas and Ortega Streets, and Milpas and Yanonali Streets, revealed that overall safety and efficiency would not be improved with the installation of a traffic signal. Alternatives should focus on non-signalized solutions. Viable alternatives are presented below.

### *Milpas and Ortega Streets*

The following alternatives are considered feasible:

1. Remove the marked crosswalks

Discussion: removing the marked crosswalks and signs would likely raise the awareness of the pedestrians to cross with care at the unmarked crosswalk, or encourage pedestrians to cross at adjacent signalized intersections.

2. Median refuge island with pedestrian activated flashing lights

Discussion: providing a median refuge island allows pedestrians to cross half the street at a time, making cross maneuvers easier. Creating room for a median refuge island would mean that some on-street parking would have to be removed, or a left turn lane removed.

A median refuge island should be supplemented with pedestrian activated flashing lights.

3. Neighborhood Transition Striping

Discussion: Traffic volumes on Milpas Street between Cota Street and Canon Perdido Street are approximately 15,700 per day. With these volumes, it is possible to remove one traffic lane in either direction between Cota Street and Canon Perdido Street, creating a transitional roadway section between the neighborhood north of Canon Perdido Street, and the busier

section of Milpas Street closer to the freeway. This would eliminate two traffic lanes that pedestrians currently have to cross.

The transition striping could be supplemented with a median refuge, curb extension, or pedestrian activated flashing lights.

### *Milpas and Yanonali Streets*

The following alternatives are considered feasible:

1. Remove the marked crosswalks

Discussion: removing the marked crosswalks and signs would likely raise the awareness of the pedestrians to cross with care at the unmarked crosswalk, or encourage pedestrians to cross at adjacent signalized intersections.

2. Median refuge island

Discussion: providing a median refuge island allows pedestrians to cross half the street at a time. Creating room for a median refuge island would mean that some on-street parking would have to be removed, or a left turn lane removed.

A median refuge island could be supplemented with pedestrian activated flashing lights.

### **Next Steps**

On January 26, 2012, staff will be presenting viable alternatives to the TCC. Staff is seeking comments from the TCC. In February, staff will be presenting the same information to the Neighborhood Advisory Council. Staff is also seeking comments from the community as well as support for one of the alternatives identify for Milpas Street. Staff will return to the TCC in the Spring of 2012, seeking a recommendation from the TCC to take to City Council.

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