



PUBLIC COMMENT

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMISSION MEETING

April 18, 2023

Item No.	Name	Document	Date Received
1	Michael Siegel	E-Mail	04/18/2023 9:16am
1	Ella Hushagen	E-mail	04/18/2023 11:52am
1	Ella Hushagen	E-Mail	04/18/2023 12:38pm

From: [Michael Siegel](#)
To: [MTIC Public Comments](#)
Subject: 4-18-23 Item 3 - Crossing Guard
Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 9:16:15 AM

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Commission/Council/Staff,

As the report points out, yes, Infrastructure changes are the real key to safety and are what is needed. However, since those changes are not coming anytime in the near future, what will the commission and council do to keep our neighbors safe?

We have heard from Council and Commission many many times since the death of our neighbor just a block from this location that they "will be looking into it". The literal least you can do is keep the crossing guard until you actually do.

I invite everyone to come cross the street here on a school morning, see for yourself. The fact that we have any children crossing here at all, despite the inhospitable conditions to cross, shows the need. Like anything else, you build the infrastructure, make people feel safe, and they will come.

Push for safe infrastructure, not just here but across the city. And until you build it, keep other safety measures in place, like crossing guards.

Mike Siegel
Avon Place

April 18, 2023

General Public Comment Re: Agenda Item 3, Crossing Guard at Huntington Blvd. & Marengo Ave.

MTIC Commissioners,

We support the presence of a second crossing guard at the intersection of Huntington Drive and Marengo Avenue.

Since the start of the school year, there have been two crossing guards present at opposite corners of the busy intersection of Huntington Dr. and Marengo Ave. The additional guard has offered relief to all of us as we make our way on foot to and from Marengo Elementary and South Pasadena Middle School.

We strongly disagree with the City's consultant's conclusion that two crossing guards are not necessary. The conclusion is, apparently, based on data showing that: 1) there were between 23 and 54 pedestrians crossing the intersection at peak times on September 1, 2022, and 2) only two recent collisions in the intersection involved pedestrians or cyclists.

The consultant does not explain why 23-54 pedestrians is "low volume," relative to any other guarded intersection in the city or along Huntington (such as at Valentine Elementary in San Marino). Characterizing the figure as too low to warrant two guards—without accounting for the fact that Huntington is a six-lane thoroughfare popular for commuters where motorists are frequently speeding excessively—is baffling. As Mayor Primuth pointed out during the July 2022 hearing, there is no other street like Huntington in South Pasadena.

The collision data covers 2018-2021, *i.e.*, a five-year period including two aberrant years during which our kids were educated remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regionally, pedestrian fatalities are on the rise.¹ More importantly, the fact that there were "only two" collisions between motorists and pedestrians or cyclists is cold comfort. A fatal collision involving a motorist and a pedestrian took place one block south of Huntington, at Marengo and Maple, less than a year ago. The community disagrees that because there were "only" two collisions involving motorists and pedestrians or cyclists, the city should scale back an important safety measure. These are our kids.

If the consultant is looking for data about the safety of the intersection, it could seek the South Pasadena Police Department's records about how many citations it has issued at the intersection when it has sent traffic enforcement. Anecdotally, the parents who walk their kids to school observe officers citing motorists for entering the crosswalk when pedestrians are crossing every time SPPD traffic enforcement is present.

¹ "L.A. Traffic Deaths Rose in 2022, surpassing 300 for the first time in two decades," Dakota Smith, *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 14, 2023. Available online at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-01-14/traffic-deaths-rise-again-in-2022-with-marked-increase-in-pedestrian-fatalities>

Better yet, the City could seek to hear directly from the pedestrians who use the intersection every day, as well as the crossing guards themselves. The crossing guards stationed at Marengo and Huntington do not stay the full academic year—evidently, they request safer assignments after experiencing the hazards first hand.

We agree with the consultant’s recommendation that the City implement additional safety precautions at the intersection. The crossing guards alone cannot mitigate all the risks. But, the consultant omitted certain intersection modifications that merit consideration, such as scramble crossing, and prohibiting parking further from the intersection to allow for better visibility. All options to improve safety should be considered.

Notwithstanding any additional safety measures being considered by the City, the second crossing guard is essential for now. If the countervailing concern is the fiscal impact, it is trivial. The City pays each crossing guard less than \$20,000 for the entire academic year. That is less than the cost of *one day* of SPPD’s operations in FY 2022-2023. The cost of a second crossing guard at Marengo and Huntington to promote the safety of our students and pedestrians is reasonable and doable.

Signed,

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|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Ella Hushagen | 26. Laotong Ea |
| 2. Owen Ellickson | 27. Emily Lau |
| 3. Sarah Perez-Silverman | 28. Paula Imoto |
| 4. Tony Lockhart | 29. Nathalie Coppens |
| 5. Kristen Boyle | 30. Khairi Mdnor |
| 6. James Boyle | 31. Heather Bland |
| 7. Soo Baek | 32. Vincent Lee |
| 8. James Park | 33. Michelle Himawan |
| 9. Sandy Shannon | 34. Leslie Hanway |
| 10. Queena Ang | 35. Ada Lee |
| 11. Eva Romero Ramirez | 36. Stephanie Christensen |
| 12. Frederic Bana | 37. Kristen Swift |
| 13. Noel Garcia | 38. Todd W. Edwards |
| 14. Francis K. Cholko | 39. Victoria Inducil |
| 15. Quinton Swantner | 40. Joe Inducil |
| 16. Stephanie MacLean | 41. Bianca Ciebrant |
| 17. Vanessa Valencia | 42. Kristen Kuhlman |
| 18. Arturo Torres | 43. Jeff Kuhlman |
| 19. Linus Ang | 44. Andrew Terhune |
| 20. Michael Siegel | 45. Jessica Fang |
| 21. Danelle courtice | 46. Shari Sakamoto |
| 22. David Courtice | 47. Frederick Eberhardt |
| 23. Karen Tamis | 48. Minoli Ratnatunga |
| 24. Emily Porter | 49. Don Diego |
| 25. Lulu Wang | |

To whom it may concern:

April 18, 2023

I am writing this letter to share my observations regarding the intersection at Huntington and Marengo in South Pasadena, in hopes that funding for a second crossing guard remains a priority.

There has long been a crossing guard on the east side of the street, but the west side has been unguarded. I personally have been nearly struck by a car as I crossed Huntington on the west side of Marengo (nearly struck meaning a car turned in front of me as I crossed, I'd estimate 5-10 feet away from me). But my observations in general come from driving across that intersection every school day. When I leave to drive my kids to school early, before the crossing guard has arrived, or on days when the crossing guard isn't there, I frequently see drivers cut off pedestrians who are in the crosswalk. Sometimes they cut dangerously close behind a pedestrian while they are still crossing, but sometimes I do see people cut in front of pedestrians. I also frequently see drivers who *are* waiting for pedestrians to cross, and the drivers behind them start honking their horns to hurry them along, although they are following the law. When the crossing guard is present, none of this happens because they are clearly holding off traffic with the raised stop sign until all pedestrians have cleared the crosswalk.

The schools and community are often encouraging families to bike or walk to school. For example, there is a "walk-to-school" day when police officers are outside school giving out stickers or prizes to kids who walked. How can we encourage children to walk to school and not protect them as they cross an incredibly busy intersection? I wish that intersection could be protected at all times, as it is usually busy. But I feel it's especially crucial to protect pedestrians at a time of day when high numbers of children are walking to and from school.

Sincerely,
Sarah Perez-Silverman
Resident of La France Ave., South Pasadena
perezsilverman@stanfordalumni.org