
ATTACHMENT A BACKGROUND, PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR CEQA EXEMPTION

1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of West Hollywood (City) responded to Caltrans' Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 10 funding call for Projects and submitted a Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR) application requesting consideration of funding to upgrade traffic signal coordination of 34 City-maintained intersections along 7 major City corridors including Sunset Boulevard, Fountain Avenue, Doheny Drive, La Cienega Boulevard, Harper Avenue, Fairfax Avenue, and La Brea Avenue. HSIP funding has been programmed for the City's application under federal project number HSIPL 5440 (010)3.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is the Lead Agency for the proposed HSIP-funded Sunset/Santa Monica Fiber Loop Project (herein referred to as Project) to allow for consistent and reliable traffic signal coordination to increase safety and reduce congestion at 34 high collision intersections along various arterials within the City.

The Project is included in the 2021 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) with funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Proposed improvements at the Project's 34 intersections would include updating signal timing at signalized intersections, installing fiber optic system loop to connect traffic signals along 7 corridors, implementing leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) timing, and installing retroreflective backplates on City-maintained intersection signals. The Project would also include fiber optic installation at select bus stop shelters and City welcome signs, as well as installation of fiber optic cable to connect the William S. Hart Dog Park's communication systems to City Hall. Ground disturbance at the 34 intersections would include 18- to 24-inch trenching for fiber optic reinstallation. Trenching would potentially cause traffic slowdowns, but would be performed during off-peak hours to lessen construction impact on traffic patterns. All other equipment installation would require little to no traffic flow alteration and would not require serious construction activities.

Proposed Improvements and Traffic Signal Coordination Upgrades

From observations made during site visits and using the City's collision data for the entire roadway network, the Project's 34 intersections (see Table 1 below) and corridors are some of the busiest in the City and contain some of the highest concentrations of collisions in the City. Therefore, upgrading signal coordination and installing retroreflective backplates can improve traffic safety and efficiency. The Project would install a fiber optic interconnect communications system along Santa Monica Boulevard to produce groups of vehicles traveling at more constant speeds with fewer stops to reduce the number of rear end collisions. Upgrading signal coordination and visibility would establish larger gaps in traffic to promote less frequent potential interactions with oncoming traffic while abating aggressive driving by optimizing efficiency. The Project proposes three improvement measures to be implemented at the 34 City intersections. See also **Table 1: Proposed Improvements at Each of the Project Intersections.**

1. Improve Signal Timing (coordination, phases, red, yellow or operation)

Signal coordination is key to reducing the number of red-light runners and rear-end crashes along the identified corridors. Signal coordination produces platoons of vehicles that can travel at more constant speeds with minimal stops. Allowing vehicles to proceed without stopping at multiple intersections reduces rear-end conflicts. Signal coordination can also improve the operation of turning movements, especially permissive turning maneuvers. Platooning of vehicles would create larger caps in traffic, allowing left-turning vehicles higher acceptance gaps and reducing the frequency of potential conflict. Traffic signal coordination has also been shown to abate aggressive driving since the intersections would operate at optimal efficiency. Traffic signal coordination would also be a critical step in providing the City's transit services with reliable connections to the many transit lines in the greater Los Angeles region.

a. LPI Timing Upgrade

LPI timing provides pedestrians with a three to seven second head start to cross and enter intersections while vehicles traveling in the same direction move parallel to the pedestrians with a green signal. Implementing LPI timing would allow for safer flow of pedestrians along Project corridors by enhancing pedestrian visibility at intersections and establishing their right of way over moving vehicles. To adjust signal timing to perform LPI timing, a traffic signal controller reconfiguration would occur at each of the Project's 34 intersections.

b. Upgrade Traffic Signal Controller and Cabinets

The Project would remove current traffic signal controllers and replace them with a 2070 LX Cisco IE-3300-8U2X-A ethernet monitoring connection and its related equipment. The controller complies with Advanced Transportation Controller (ATC) guidelines and Caltrans Transportation Electrical Equipment Specifications (TEES). The Project would upgrade current cabinets to 332 ATC traffic signal cabinets and install auxiliary equipment including 3- and 4- inch PVC Schedule 80 conduit, innerduct, muletape, 432 single mode fiber optic (SMFO) trunk line cable, 36 SMFO branch line cable, and a Locatable 3-Way Over-Sheet Futurepath Microduct. New equipment is needed for the existing system to continue performing its intended operation and conform to Caltrans Standards Specifications. Upgrading controller and cabinets would promote safer intersection interactions between pedestrians and vehicles as previously mentioned.

2. Install a Fiber Optic System Loop to Connect Traffic Signals

Fiber optic installation at current bus stops along the Project's seven corridors would include new fiber optic cable, conduit, pull boxes, splice closures, fiber termination panels, and network hubs. 65,855 feet of 432 SMFO cable and 3000 feet of 36 SMFO cable would be installed along the Projects intersections. Installation includes removing and upgrading existing with necessary specifications to meet intersection requirements. This entails removing current pull boxes and replacing them with C48 24- or 12- inch pull boxes, installing distribution units and splice enclosures, and splicing cables to meet intersection functionality requirements. Installation would require excavation of existing cable at a depth ranging from 18- to 24- inches depending on existing cable depth and intersection specifications.

Twenty-four SMFO Cable for fiber optic installation at the William S. Hart Dog Park would be installed to connect the Park's communication systems to City Hall. Installation includes a splice enclosure point to the mainline system, new conduit running from that splice point pullbox down into the Park's property all the way to the Main Distribution Frame (MDF) / Minimum/Main Point-

Of-Entry (MPOE) room, additional pullboxes needed to run the fiber cable to the mainline in Sunset and to a patch panel in the MDF/MPOE room.

Fiber optic installation at nine bus shelters along the Project's limits would include splice enclosure points to the mainline system, new conduits running from the splice points to a new pullbox placed adjacent to the bus stop shelter, and fiber cable spliced to the mainline and to a 12 port patch panel inside a communication cabinet hanging on the bus shelter structure. The nine bus shelter locations are as follows:

- WB Sunset FS Doheny Road
- EB Sunset NS Cory Avenue
- EB Sunset NS Hammond
- EB Sunset FS Holloway Drive
- WB Sunset FS Miller Drive
- EB Sunset BI NS La Cienega BI
- EB Sunset NS San Vicente BI
- EB Sunset NS Sweetzer
- WB Holloway FS La Cienega

Fiber optic installations to the six welcome sign along the Project's limits would include splice enclosure points to the mainline system, new conduits running from the splice points to a new pullbox placed adjacent to the welcome signs, new fiber cable in the pipelines spliced to the mainline, and coiling the new fiber cable in the new pullbox for future use (when a new digital sign will replace the existing static sign). The six welcome sign locations are as follows:

- SE corner of Sunset and Phyllis
- NE corner of Sunset and Roxbury
- SW corner of La Brea and Fountain
- NE corner of Santa Monica and La Brea
- NE corner of La Brea and Romaine
- NE corner of Fairfax and Willoughby

Installing the fiber optic loop and fiber at the bus stop shelters along Santa Monica and Sunset Boulevard's seven corridors would promote safer intersection interactions between pedestrians and vehicles.

3. Improve Signal Hardware with back-plates with retroreflective borders:

The Project would furnish and install high visibility yellow reflective strips at approximately 440 vehicle signal heads along the 34 intersections. Existing backplates are either damaged or missing and require replacement to promote driver visibility and safety. Multiple replacement options are available including louvered surfaces for high wind conditions or retroreflective borders for low light conditions. Installing backplates at the Projects 34 intersections would promote safer intersection interactions by improving signal visibility at night and would address the high number of rear-end and broadside collisions along these corridors.

Table 1 Proposed Improvements at Each of the Project Intersections		
Intersection Number	Intersection	Proposed Intersection Improvements
1	Doheny Dr & Beverly Bl	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
2	Fairfax Ave & Norton Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
3	Fairfax Ave & Willoughby Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, welcome sign fiber installation
4	Fountain Ave & Crescent Heights Blvd	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
5	Fountain Ave & Fairfax Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
6	Fountain Ave & Fuller Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
7	Fountain Ave & Gardner St	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
8	Fountain Ave & La Brea Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, welcome sign fiber installation
9	Fountain Ave & Laurel Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
10	Fountain Ave & Olive Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
11	Fountain Ave & Poinsettia Pl	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
12	Fountain Ave & Spaulding Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
13	Fountain Ave & Sweetzer Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
14	Fountain Ave & Vista St	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
15	Holloway Dr & Horn Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation
16	Holloway Dr & Larabee St	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation

Table 1 Proposed Improvements at Each of the Project Intersections		
Intersection Number	Intersection	Proposed Intersection Improvements
17	La Brea Ave & Lexington Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
18	La Brea Ave & Romaine St	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, welcome sign fiber installation
19	La Brea Ave & Santa Monica Bl	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, welcome sign fiber installation
20	La Cienega & Fountain Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
21	La Cienega Bl & Holloway Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation
22	La Cienega Bl & Santa Monica Bl	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
23	San Vicente Bl & Holloway Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation
24	Santa Monica Bl & Fairfax Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
25	Santa Monica Bl & Melrose Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
26	Sunset Bl & Alta Loma Rd	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
27	Sunset Bl & Doheny Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
28	Sunset Bl & Doheny Rd	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation, welcome sign fiber installation at the southeast corner of Sunset Boulevard and Phyllis Street
29	Sunset Bl & Hammond St	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation
30	Sunset Bl & Harper Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, welcome sign fiber installation at the northeast corner of Sunset Boulevard and Roxbury Road
31	Sunset Bl & Kings Rd	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation

Table 1 Proposed Improvements at Each of the Project Intersections		
Intersection Number	Intersection	Proposed Intersection Improvements
32	Sunset Bl & La Cienega Bl	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation
33	Sunset Bl & Sunset Plaza Dr	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation
34	Sunset Bl & Sweetzer Ave	Retroreflective backplate replacement, LPI timing implementation, upgrading signal control and cabinet units, fiber optic cable reinstallation, bus stop shelter fiber installation

Refer to **Figure 1** below, which depicts all the Project intersection locations.

General Plan Land Use and Zoning

All of the Project's intersections and corridors are located in the public right of way and do not have a General Plan land use designation and a Zoning designation.^{1,2}

Surrounding Development

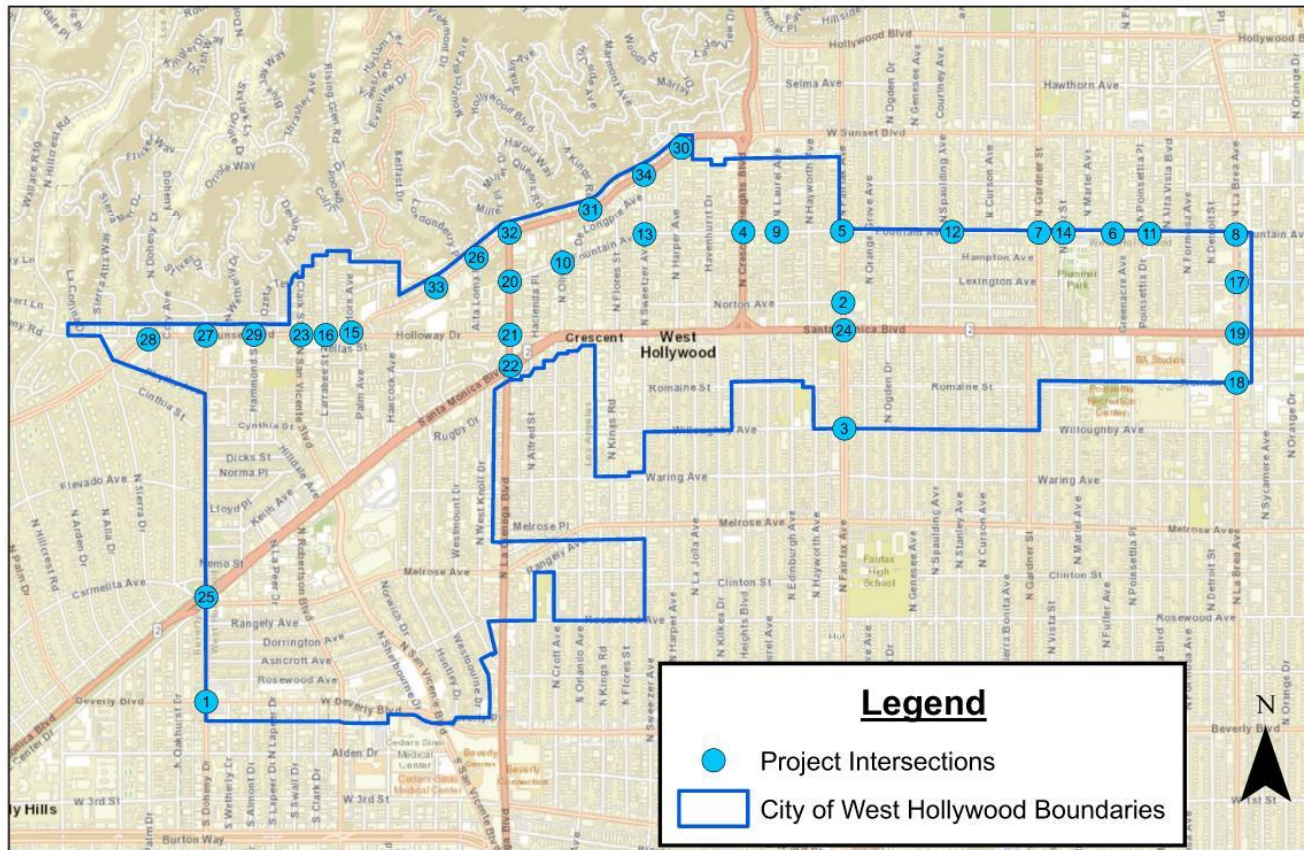
Based on observations made during site visits, the Project intersections are all within developed portions of the City and are surrounded by commercial, residential, recreational, and institutional land uses.

¹ City of West Hollywood, General Plan Land Use Designations Map, 2011, pgs. 3-23 and 2-20. Available at <https://www.weho.org/home/showpublisheddocument/7939/635229037960770000>. Accessed on January 24, 2022.

² City of West Hollywood, City of West Hollywood Zoning Districts, 2018. Available at <https://www.weho.org/home/showpublisheddocument/36958/636692560718630000>. Accessed on January 24, 2022.

Figure 1

HSIP Application - City of West Hollywood Project Vicinity Map - Sunset/Santa Monica Fiber Loop Project



Existing Conditions

As described above, the Project's 34 intersections traffic signals and their corresponding traffic technology is out of date and needs upgrading to meet the minimum Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) requirements. Within the past five years, the City has installed 5 pedestrian traffic signals, 7 pedestrian flashing beacons, 2 pedestrian refuge islands to enhance pedestrian safety, 20 speed humps on residential streets to reduce speeding, 5 in-road-warning-lights (IRWLs) along Fountain Avenue, 9 traffic circles, 2 medians, and 3 bulbouts.

Project Operations

The Project would replace outdated and damaged traffic signal hardware and implement or replace traffic signal head components, new fiber optic cable, and retroreflective backplate technology at 34 intersections to improve safety and intersection timing. The Project would also include fiber optic installation at select bus stop shelters and City welcome signs, as well as installation of fiber optic cable to connect the William S. Hart Dog Park's communication systems to City Hall.

3.0 REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under a Class 1 categorical exemption.

Categorical Exemptions

Class 1 (CEQA Guidelines 15301): Existing Structures

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of Projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the Project involves negligible or no expansion of use. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances;
- Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood;
- Additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than:
 - 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 25,000 square feet, whichever is less; or 10,000 square feet if:
 - The Project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for maximum development permissible in the General Plan, and

- The area in which the Project is located is not environmentally sensitive.
- Addition of safety or health protection devices for use during construction of or in conjunction with existing structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment, or topographical features including navigational devices;
- New copy on existing on and off-premise signs;
- Maintenance of existing landscaping
- Division of existing multiple family or single-family residences into common-interest ownership and subdivision of existing commercial or industrial buildings, where no physical changes occur which are not otherwise exempt;
- Demolition and removal of individual small structures listed in this subdivision;
 - (1) One single-family residence. In urbanized areas, up to three single-family residences may be demolished under this exemption.
 - (2) A duplex or similar multifamily residential structure. In urbanized areas, this exemption applies to duplexes and similar structures where not more than six dwelling units will be demolished.
 - (3) A store, motel, office, restaurant, and similar small commercial structure if designed for an occupant load of 30 persons or less. In urbanized areas, the exemption also applies to the demolition of up to three such commercial buildings on sites zoned for such use.
 - (4) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences.

Justification why Project is Exempt: The Project would consist of repairs and minor alternations to the existing traffic infrastructure that improves traffic, pedestrian safety, and operation reliability. Class 1 includes (underline added):

- Interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances;
- Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood.

Additionally, the Project would not involve expansion beyond the existing 34 intersections as listed in Table 1 above. Therefore, the Project would be exempt from CEQA under a Class 1 categorical exemption.