


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: April 10, 2019

To: Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Honorable Mike Bonin, Chair, Transportation Committee

From: Seleta J. Reynolds,  General Manager
Department of Transportation

Subject: **ROWENA AVENUE, WAVERLY DRIVE, ANGUS STREET – REVIEW OF POTENTIAL MITIGATIONS PRESENTED IN KIMLEY-HORN'S MAY 2018 REPORT**

SUMMARY

This report responds to Council File 11-2130-S4 direction that the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) report back on the feasibility of implementing potential mitigations presented in Kimley-Horn's May 2018 report, "Rowena Avenue, Waverly Drive, Angus Street Cut-Through Traffic Study," and work with the Bureau of Engineering to develop cost estimates. Per communication from Council District 4, this report evaluates mitigations based on their ability to ensure safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council:

1. **SUPPORT** Kimley-Horn's Option 1 in the "Rowena Avenue, Waverly Drive, Angus Street Cut-Through Traffic Study," which makes no change to roadway geometry on Rowena Avenue and recommends additional pedestrian safety measures to the corridor and surrounding area;
2. **INSTRUCT** LADOT to work with the City Administrative Office (CAO) to identify capital funds to implement the feasible capital improvement recommendations identified in this report;
3. **INSTRUCT** LADOT to assess the possibility of making additional safety and traffic circulation enhancements to the project area.

BACKGROUND

In 2012, a driver fatally struck a woman crossing the 2800 block of Rowena Avenue. Following this collision, Council District 4 directed LADOT to develop mitigation strategies to increase safety on Rowena. At the same time, the Department of Water and Power (DWP) began construction along Rowena that temporarily reduced the corridor from two through lanes in each direction to one.

Following community outreach and a robust analysis of conditions in the area, LADOT recommended a reconfiguration that maintained the lane reduction and added both bike facilities and a center left turn lane. After receiving community support, LADOT worked with DWP to construct the permanent safety improvements identified above.

Some residents have complained that travel time has increased on Rowena, and that this increased congestion has shifted commuter traffic to smaller local streets. In response, LADOT conducted analyses at various time points to assess collisions, speeds, and bypass traffic. Results showed a reduction in collision frequency and severity, and a reduction in speed, but also an increase in bypass traffic on the adjacent local streets.

In 2017, Council District 4 commissioned a third-party study to analyze and examine conditions in the area. Kimley-Horn's report, entitled "Rowena Avenue, Waverly Drive, Angus Street Cut-Through Traffic Study" presented existing traffic conditions in the project area, identified issues raised by the community, and recommended potential strategies to mitigate adverse impacts.

DISCUSSION

Kimley-Horn provided the following four recommendations along Rowena Avenue:

- Option 1: Retain existing lane reconfiguration with additional pedestrian improvements along Rowena
- Option 2: Remove bike lanes in both directions to accommodate a second eastbound travel lane
- Option 3: Remove parking and bike lane in the eastbound direction and replace with a lane with sharrows
- Option 4: Remove bike lanes and restrict street parking during peak AM/PM commute hours. Convert parking zone to additional travel lane with sharrows in both directions during this time period

Report Options along Rowena

Option 1 recommends retaining the existing roadway configuration and adding additional pedestrian improvements (summarized in Attachment A). Data from the Kimley-Horn report indicate that traffic collisions along Rowena Avenue have decreased since the street reconfiguration on March 11, 2013. Additional analysis from LADOT validates this trend and also finds the following:

- Reduced collisions: Over the five years prior to the road reconfiguration, Rowena Avenue averaged 12.4 crashes per year. In the five years following, crashes averaged 7.8 per year. Rowena experienced five crashes in 2017, the lowest number on record. Attachment B illustrates these findings.
- Reduced speeding: Mid-day 85th percentile conditions went from two lanes in each direction at 39 mph to a single lane in each direction with 39 mph westbound and 36 mph eastbound.
- Consistent traffic volume: A review of average daily traffic (ADT) counts along Rowena Avenue indicates traffic volumes have remained consistent, with the corridor carrying approximately 25,000 ADT both before and after road reconfiguration. Attachment C provides a summary of this data.

- Unchanged collision patterns on side streets: Adjacent residential streets Waverly Drive and Angus Street, which is parallel to Rowena Avenue, experienced no discernible increase or decrease in collisions after implementation of the road reconfiguration.

Option 2 recommends removing bike lanes in both directions to accommodate a second eastbound vehicle travel lane in order to reduce cut-through traffic on adjacent side streets. There is no indication that this option will reduce cut-through traffic or improve safety along Rowena. Instead, introducing an additional eastbound travel lane would restore the total number of vehicular lanes in one direction to pre- reconfiguration but offset the safety benefits from the current configuration.

Option 3 recommends replacing the eastbound parking and bike lane with a shared travel lane marked by sharrows. This option eliminates approximately 50 parking spaces, including three loading zones, which may increase traffic on side streets as people search for available parking to patronize businesses along the corridor. Unlike peak-hour cut-through traffic, which is limited to a comparatively small window of time, reduced parking may create more persistent neighborhood intrusion throughout the day. The recommended shared travel lane may encourage lane weaving as drivers attempt to bypass bicycle users, reducing safety benefits provided by the existing bike lane. There is also no indication that this option will reduce cut-through traffic on adjacent side streets.

Option 4 recommends removing bike lanes and restricting street parking during peak AM/PM commute hours to accommodate additional shared travel lanes marked by sharrows. This option would restore the total number of travel lanes along Rowena, thereby offsetting the safety benefits from the current reconfiguration and would eliminate parking on Rowena which may increase one type of neighborhood intrusion in attempts of alleviating another.

Additional Proposed Modifications

In addition to the four options summarized above, the Kimley-Horn report makes several recommendations to mitigate neighborhood traffic and identifies capital improvements to address pedestrian safety issues. Attachment A includes a table of these improvements with an associated cost estimate and the feasibility of each. Below are the recommendations LADOT finds feasible:

- Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) at Rowena Avenue and Silver Lake Drive;
- New marked crosswalk with control at Rowena Avenue and Herkimer Street;
- High visibility crosswalks throughout project area;
- Added striping to bike lane at intersections and conflict points;
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting along Rowena Avenue (requires successful Prop 218 ballot);
- Updated curb access ramps at Griffith Park Boulevard and Hyperion Avenue;
- Continuous sidewalk along upper Angus Street and Waverly Drive;
- Bulb-outs along key intersections along Rowena Avenue.

Additional Measures

LADOT has identified additional measures that could further reduce conflict and improve user predictability. These include:

- Turn Restrictions: A large portion of cut-through traffic in the project area consists of eastbound traffic using Angus Street, a narrow residential street, instead of Rowena Avenue, a primary

commercial corridor. Eastbound peak-hour turn restrictions at Griffith Park Boulevard and Angus Street can keep traffic on primary corridors but would require additional outreach to the community.

- Enhanced Bikeway: Installation of the Rowena reconfiguration was intended to improve safety for all road users. Based on the growth in bicycle use along Rowena, upgrading the existing striped bike lane to accommodate a wider Class II buffered bike lane, or Class IV separated bikeway may provide additional safety to people bicycling. The street width can accommodate this facility without additional changes.
- More Pedestrian Upgrades: In addition to the pedestrian improvements recommended in the Kimley-Horn report, additional signal work, signs, and marked crosswalks can potentially improve safety.

CONCLUSION

Upon reviewing collision and traffic patterns in pre- and post- road reconfiguration conditions, LADOT concurs with the findings from the Kimley-Horn report, supports Option 1 to retain the existing road design, and recommends identifying funding to implement capital improvements that further the safety objectives of this project.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Retaining the existing road configuration has no immediate fiscal impact. However, additional complementary measures such as constructing new sidewalks and curb extensions, enhancing striping, and adding turn restrictions, will have fiscal impacts ranging from approximately \$10,000 to \$2,748,000 (see Attachment A). Funding is not identified or readily available for all measures.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Table Assessing Kimley-Horn Report Project Area Recommendations

Attachment B: Summary Collision Data for Rowena Ave, Angus St, and Waverly Dr with Key Findings

Attachment C: Summary of Automated Vehicle Traffic Counts, Manual Bicycle Counts and Speed Surveys Along Rowena Corridor

Attachment A: Table Assessing Kimley-Horn Report Project Area Recommendations

Location	Proposed Improvement	Time Frame	Feasible	Lead Department	Estimated Cost
Proposed Improvements in conjunction with Option 1 along Rowena					
Rowena Ave between Hyperion Blvd and Glendale Blvd	Pedestrian scaled lighting	Long-range	Yes ⁵	LABSL	\$440,000
	Bulb outs at key intersections	Long-range	Yes	DPW	\$2,748,000
	Crosswalk at Rowena Ave and Herkimer St	Mid-range	Yes	LADOT	\$200,000
	Crosswalk at Rowena Ave and Avenal St	N/A	No	LADOT	N/A
	Striping at intersections and conflict points	Mid-Range	Yes	LADOT	TBD
Proposed Improvements in general project area					
Griffith Park Blvd and Hyperion Ave	High visibility crosswalks	Short-range	Yes	LADOT	\$10,000
	Enhanced pedestrian access ramps	Mid-range	Yes	BOE	\$80,000
	Bulb outs	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
Rowena Ave and St. George St	Reconfigure intersection to add right turn only lane plus left/through for northbound, east/westbound travel	Short-range	Yes ¹	LADOT	TBD
Rowena Ave and W. Silver Lake Dr	Signal phase improvement	Mid-range	Yes	LADOT	\$10,000

	(Leading Pedestrian Interval)				
Upper Angus St	Add continuous sidewalk	Long-range	Yes	DPW	\$1,013,000
	Add stripe edgeline	Short-range	Yes ²	LADOT	TBD
	Convert Angus St between Moreno Dr and Kenilworth Ave to one-way westbound	Short-range	Yes ³	LADOT	TBD
	Restrict right turn movements from Moreano Dr onto Angus St	Short-range	Yes ³	LADOT	TBD
Waverly Dr	Add continuous sidewalk along one side of Waverly Dr	Long-range	Yes	BOE	\$1,443,000
	Install angled parking and add sidewalk and curb	N/A	No	LADOT	NA
	Close northern portion of Rokeby St at the intersections with Waverly Dr and Glendale Blvd	Long-range	Yes ⁴	LADOT	TBD

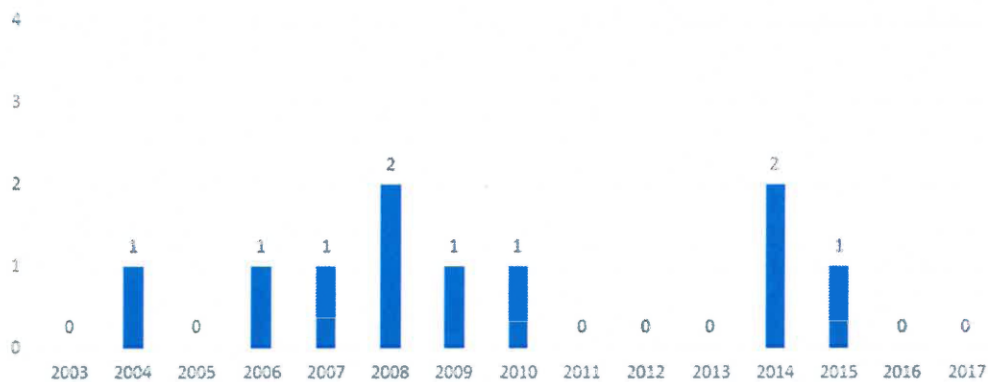
1. Unclear nexus to project area and goals. Would result in loss of parking and requires additional outreach.
2. Would result in loss of parking and requires additional outreach.
3. Creates circulation problem and requires additional outreach. Due to location it is also difficult to enforce.
4. May result in additional cut-through on Waverly Dr.
5. Requires Prop 218 Assessment.

Attachment B: Summary Collision Data for Rowena Ave, Angus St, and Waverly Dr with Key Findings

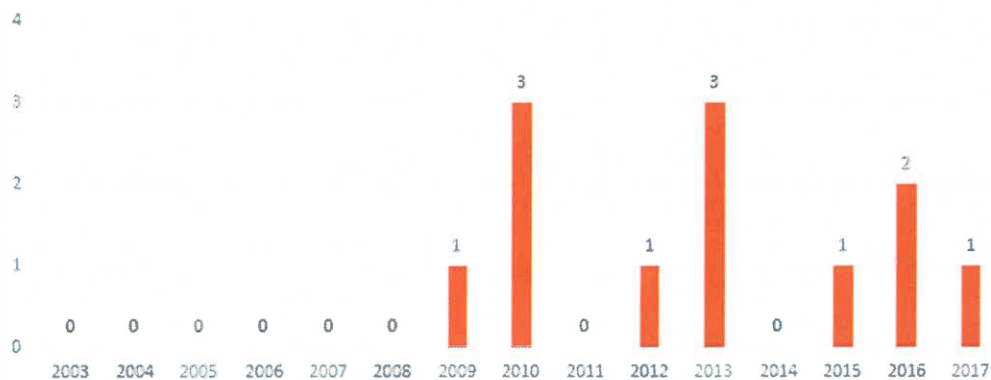
Rowena Ave total crashes over time



Angus St total crashes over time



Waverly Dr total crashes over time



The methodology LADOT applied involved analyzing all crashes along the following corridors where Rowena, Angus or Waverly were the primary streets in recorded collisions:

- Rowena Avenue between Hyperion Avenue and Glendale Boulevard
- Angus Street between Griffith Park Boulevard and Silver Lake Drive
- Waverly Drive between Hyperion Avenue and Rokeby Street

Because the road reconfiguration was implemented on March 11, 2013, the collision data are reported to conform to the “project year” of the reconfiguration (March 11 - March 10) rather than calendar year in order to better understand the pre- and post- condition trends. In the interest of full disclosure, the collision chart for Rowena Avenue acknowledges the road work that occurred on the street beginning part way through 2010 and continued throughout most of 2013.

In addition to analyzing collision trends by year, LADOT found the following:

- Collisions caused by unsafe speeds decreased by 65.4%
- Rear-end collisions decreased 54.5% from 22 to 10
- Sideswipe collisions decreased 50% from 14 to 7
- The number of collisions involving people walking and bicycling has decreased from 9 to 6
- Collisions rates at Hyperion Ave, Avenel and Auburn have gone down substantially.
- Collisions rates at Silver Lake Dr, Lakewood Ave and Herkimer St have gone down as well but not as drastically as Hyperion, Avenel, and Auburn.

Attachment C: Summary of Automated Vehicle Traffic Counts, Manual Bicycle Counts and Speed Surveys Along Rowena Corridor

Average Daily Traffic (ADT)

Intersection	Date	ADT
Glendale Blvd	10/22/2008	27,938
Rokeby St	10/27/2008	24,895
Rokeby St	2/24/2014	24,832
Silver Lake Dr	June 2006	25,112
Avenel St	12/9/2002	24,731
	1/14/2004	25,807
	2/24/2014	23,335
Rowena Between Glendale Blvd and Hyperion Ave	3/16/2017	25,550

Bicycle Counts*

Implementing bike lanes was not a primary motivating factor for the road diet. Nonetheless, LADOT also reviewed bicycle counts along Rowena Avenue and found an increase in bicycle use during peak periods from a high of 14 to an average of 71 bike trips after the reconfiguration.

Intersection	Date	Count
Glendale Blvd	9/11/2013	50
Rokeby St	9/26/2018	61
Silver Lake Dr	9/25/2013	90
Herkimer St	4/20/1994	14
Herkimer St	10/10/1997	0
Herkimer St	12/2/2015	77
Avenel St	3/14/2006	0
Avenel St	10/11/2018	72

* Manual bicycle counts conducted between 7AM-10AM and 2PM-5PM. Above values combine the morning and afternoon counts.

Speed Surveys

Year	Westbound	Eastbound
2002	39 mph	39 mph
2015	36 mph	35 mph
2018	38.5 mph	36.2 mph

85th percentile speeds 11:30am-12pm, Mondays	2002	2015	2018	Net change (2002 v. 2018)	% change
Westbound general traffic speeds (mph)	39	36	38.5	-0.5	-1%
Eastbound general traffic speeds (mph)	39	35	36.2	-2.8	-7%