



DATE: May 27, 2021

TO: Transportation Advisory Commission

FROM: Laura Rubio-Cornejo, Director of Transportation 

SUBJECT: Roadway Reclassification

BACKGROUND:

All highways and roads in the United States are functionally classified using a common nomenclature developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide a consistently-defined roadway network across the country. State Departments of Transportation are charged with ensuring that the functional classification of their roadways is kept up-to-date. In addition, FHWA recommends that States update their functional classification system continually as the roadway system and land use developments change. In California, functional classifications are determined in conjunction with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and local officials based on the criteria established by the FHWA. The FHWA, per the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, is responsible for and has final approval of all streets that are functionally classified. Agencies can submit street classification changes to the FHWA for approval whenever deemed necessary.

Staff periodically analyzes city streets and applies the specified criteria to the Pasadena roadway system to determine the appropriate FHWA roadway classification and ensure the classification accurately reflects the current usage and function of existing roadways and classify any new roadways. Based on the most recent review, staff determined that the functional classifications of the eleven street segments listed below should be updated.

Reclassify to a Local Roadway from Major Collector Roadway:

1. Howard Street from Los Robles Avenue to Lake Avenue
2. Howard Street from Arroyo Boulevard to Forest Avenue
3. Lombardy Road from Arden Road to 200' west of Allen Avenue
4. Lombardy Road from 400' west of La Presa Dr to 650' east of La Presa Dr
5. Montana Street to Marengo Avenue to Los Robles Avenue
6. Sierra Bonita Avenue from Washington Boulevard to Villa Street
7. Sunnyslope Avenue from Foothill Boulevard to Del Mar Boulevard
8. Villa Street from Sierra Madre Boulevard to Sunnyslope Avenue

Reclassify to a Local Roadway from Minor Arterial Roadway:

9. Marengo Avenue from 230' north of Montana Street to Washington Boulevard

Reclassify to a Major Collector Roadway from Local Roadway:

10. Walnut Street from Foothill Boulevard to Kinneloa Avenue
11. Kinneloa Avenue from Foothill Boulevard to Walnut Street

EFFECTS OF ROADWAY RECLASSIFICATION:

The reclassification of roadway segments to local streets allows for the speed limit to be set at 25 mph without the need to conduct an Engineering and Traffic Survey which is required to establish speed limits on non-local streets. In addition, this reclassification allows the City to potentially apply various traffic calming treatments that are reserved for local streets through City policies.

The reclassification to major collector for Walnut Street and Kinneloa Avenue will match the existing roadway characteristics such as number of travel lanes, speed, traffic volume, distance, and access points to the proper roadway classification. In 2010, Walnut Street was extended to connect to Kinneloa Avenue, creating a through street. In addition, Kinneloa Avenue was extended from Walnut Street to Foothill Boulevard, crossing under the I-210 freeway and connecting to what was previously Titley Avenue. New development in this area during the last two years has also changed the traffic circulation in this area, with more vehicle trips using Walnut Street and Kinneloa Avenue. This reclassification to major collector is consistent with the surrounding land use and allows the City to potentially apply various engineering treatments that are reserved for non-local streets.

NEXT STEPS:

Pending City Council approval, staff will proceed onto the next step in the reclassification process. The process of reclassifying a street requires four steps as listed below:

1. The City submits the following information to Caltrans:
 - a. A City Council resolution to reclassify the street.
 - b. A concurrence letter from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) as our Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
 - c. Functional Classification Change Request Form and map
2. Caltrans District Coordinator reviews and provides a District concurrence letter.
3. Caltrans headquarters presents the proposed changes to FHWA for approval.
4. The Functional Classification Map is updated.

The City is currently in the first step of this process, requesting that the Transportation Advisory Commission support the City staff recommendation to reclassify the streets as listed. This item would be presented to City Council in June 2021, and should the resolution pass, the complete reclassification process, including the update of the Functional Classification map could take up to six months.