



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING: October 11, 2011
SUBJECT: Consider amending the truck route system and the Circulation Element of the General Plan
APPLICANT: City of Carson
REQUEST: Open the public hearing, take public testimony, close the public hearing, and direct staff to prepare a resolution regarding the truck route system
PROPERTIES INVOLVED: Citywide

COMMISSION ACTION

- Concurred with staff
 Did not concur with staff
 Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

| AYE | NO | | AYE | NO | |
|-----|----|-------------------|-----|----|----------|
| | | Chairman Faletogo | | | Saenz |
| | | Vice-Chair Gordon | | | Schaefer |
| | | Brimmer | | | Verrett |
| | | Diaz | | | Williams |
| | | Goolsby | | | |

Item No. 11-C

I. Background

Joint workshops of the Planning Commission and Public Works Commission were held on March 23 and June 14, 2011, to discuss the feasibility of modifying the truck route system in Carson. The modifications that were considered were the possible elimination of portions of Victoria Street, Main Street, and Santa Fe Avenue from the list of legal truck routes. Subsequent to the workshops, a request was received to add Carson Street to the list of roadways under consideration for the possible elimination from the truck route system.

If changes are made to the truck route system, the General Plan Circulation Element and the Carson Municipal Code would have to be amended, which would require that public hearings be conducted by the Planning Commission and the City Council. After hearing public testimony and discussing the issues at the joint workshops, the Commissions requested that a public hearing be held to consider amending the truck route system and the Circulation Element of the General Plan. It is intended that the Planning Commission consider the broad range of transportation needs and land use patterns to address both short term and long term goals and objectives related to the truck route issue.

II. Truck Route Discussion

Victoria Street and Main Street

Background

On December 7, 2010, the City Council considered a letter/petition from residents stating that trucks operating on Victoria and Main Streets are creating nuisances for residents of the neighborhood south of Victoria Street and east of Main Street. The letter indicated that problems with noise, structural shaking, rattling windows, and emissions of dirt/soot from trucks traveling and parking on Victoria Street particularly affected properties whose back yards abut the arterial street. It was requested that the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard be eliminated from the truck route system.

At the above noted meeting the Council directed staff to:

1. Install "No Stopping Any Time" signs on the south side of Victoria Street between Main Street and Coleman Avenue;
2. Continue coordinating with the truck-oriented commercial operations near the intersection of Victoria and Main Streets to discourage their customers and employees from generating unnecessary noise; and
3. Schedule a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Public Works Commission to consider an amendment to the Circulation Element of the General Plan to remove part of Victoria Street from the list of streets designated as truck routes.

On February 16, 2011, it was reported to the City Council that "No Stopping Any Time" signs had been installed on the south side of Victoria Street and that representatives of the truck-oriented operations had been contacted regarding the noise concerns. Additionally, the city's Public Works Street Maintenance Division



conducted grinding operations on Victoria Street east of Main Street and on Main Street south of Victoria Street to eliminate bumps and smooth out the pavement, thereby reducing the vibration impacts associated with trucks. It was also reported at this City Council meeting that a letter had been received from a resident of Colony Cove Mobile Home Estates indicating that trucks traveling on Victoria Street create noise, air pollution, and shaking for the residents near Victoria Street. It was requested that the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Central Avenue be eliminated from the truck route system.

Discussion

Victoria Street is an east-west truck route that extends from the east boundary of Carson at Wilmington Avenue to the west boundary of Carson at the I-110 freeway. It provides access to major industrial uses in the Dominguez Technology Center, which is located on the east end of Carson between Central and Wilmington Avenues, and to industrial uses west of Main Street. Main Street is a north-south truck route that extends from Torrance Boulevard to the north boundary of Carson at Alondra Boulevard. The city of Carson's current truck route system is illustrated on Exhibit No. 1. There are numerous industrial properties in the vicinity of these streets in addition to the residential neighborhoods that abut the two truck routes.

Based on the locations of these industrial areas and the volumes of truck traffic observed on Victoria and Main Streets, it is clear that these streets serve as key truck routes through Carson. If the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard or between Main Street and Central Avenue were to be eliminated from the truck route system as requested, trucks that would otherwise use Victoria Street as a travel route would be shifted to other streets. It is anticipated that the streets that would be most-directly affected would be Albertoni Street and Del Amo Boulevard, both of which run adjacent to residential properties.

Albertoni Street abuts Carson Harbor Village, Colony Cove Mobile Estates, and the north edge of Stevenson Village. Del Amo Boulevard abuts the residential neighborhood on the north side of Del Amo Boulevard between Avalon Boulevard and Wilmington Avenue as well as Del Amo Park and the South Bay Pavilion. The requested elimination of Victoria Street from the truck route system could adversely affect the residential properties and other sensitive uses along Albertoni Street and Del Amo Boulevard because truck volumes would increase on these alternate truck routes. In addition, it is likely that some of the re-routed trucks would use Avalon Boulevard, University Drive, and Central Avenue, which also run adjacent to residential properties and parks. While these roadways are not designated truck routes, they are frequently used illegally by truck drivers according to reports by concerned citizens and the Sheriff's Department.

At the March 23, 2011, joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Public Works Commission, it was stated that the segment of Main Street between Broadway and Victoria Street should also be considered for elimination from the truck route system. If this request were to be implemented, trucks that would otherwise use Main Street as a travel route would be shifted to Broadway. The truck volumes would decrease on Main Street, which abuts residential properties on the east side of the street, and



truck volumes would increase on Broadway, which abuts only industrial and commercial properties.

It should be noted that the truck route system cannot have dead-end street segments whereby a legal truck route feeds only into non-truck route roadways. So if the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard is eliminated from the truck route system, there would be two options for avoiding a dead-end truck route that would be created on Victoria Street between Avalon Boulevard and Central Avenue. The first option would be to designate the segment of Avalon Boulevard between Victoria Street and Albertoni Street as a truck route. The second option would be to eliminate the entire segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Central Avenue from the truck route system.

While the requested elimination of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard or between Main Street and Central Avenue from the truck route system would result in a decrease in truck traffic along this segment of Victoria Street, it would result in an increase in truck traffic on streets that run adjacent to other residential properties. The truck-related impacts such as noise, vibration, and pollution would be reduced along Victoria Street; however, they would increase along other affected roadways such as Albertoni Street, Del Amo Boulevard, University Drive, and Central Avenue. It would also result in an inconvenience, an increase in costs, and an increase in travel time for the truck operators and businesses that use Victoria Street as a truck access route.

Santa Fe Avenue

Background

Another roadway that has often been discussed as a candidate for elimination from the truck route system is Santa Fe Avenue. While the segment of Santa Fe Avenue between Dominguez Street and Del Amo Boulevard runs through an industrial area, the segment south of Dominguez Street runs adjacent to residential properties, an elementary school, a middle school/high school, and a park.

Discussion

Santa Fe Avenue is a north-south truck route that extends from the north boundary of Carson at Del Amo Boulevard to the south boundary of Carson at the I-405 freeway. It provides access to the industrial area between Dominguez Street and Del Amo Boulevard and the industrial area of Long Beach east of Santa Fe Avenue. It also serves as a link between these industrial areas and the I-405 freeway via Wardlow Road in Long Beach.

While Santa Fe Avenue is a legal truck route, it runs adjacent to uses that are not necessarily compatible with the truck route designation; i.e., residential properties, Dominguez Elementary School, the new middle school/high school, and Dominguez Park. The trucks that travel on Santa Fe Avenue generate noise, vibration, and pollution as well as potential safety issues during student arrival and departure times.

If the segment of Santa Fe Avenue between Del Amo Boulevard and the I-405 freeway were to be eliminated from the truck route system, trucks that would



otherwise use Santa Fe Avenue as a travel route would be shifted to other streets. It is anticipated that most of this truck traffic would shift to Alameda Street, which runs primarily along industrial and commercial properties.

As noted above, the truck route system cannot have dead-end street segments whereby a legal truck route feeds only onto non-truck-route roadways. So if Santa Fe Avenue is eliminated from the truck route system, there would be two options. One would be to eliminate the entire segment of Santa Fe Avenue between Del Amo Boulevard and the south city boundary. The other option would be to eliminate the segment of Santa Fe Avenue between the south city boundary and Dominguez Street or El Presidio Street from the truck route system and to add the segment of Dominguez Street or El Presidio Street between Santa Fe Avenue and Alameda Street to the truck route system.

It should be noted that if Santa Fe Avenue were to be eliminated from the truck route network, businesses that are located along Santa Fe Avenue would still be able to legally use Santa Fe Avenue as a travel route to and from the I-405 freeway. Vehicles can use a roadway that is not a truck route if it is a direct route between the property and an unrestricted roadway.

Carson Street

Background

Subsequent to the workshops regarding the possibility of modifying the truck route system, a request was received to also consider eliminating Carson Street between the I-405 freeway and Wilmington Avenue from the truck route system. This segment of Carson Street runs adjacent to commercial, residential, and light industrial properties. The request was received from a resident who stated that trucks on Carson Street cause noise, vibration, and structural damage to the residential properties that abut Carson Street.

Discussion

Carson Street is an east-west truck route that extends from the I-405 freeway to Alameda Street. The segment of Carson Street between the I-405 freeway and the west boundary of the city at the I-110 freeway and the segment of Carson Street between Alameda Street and the east city boundary at Santa Fe Avenue are not included in the truck route system. The segment of Carson Street that is designated as a truck route provides access between the Carson Street/I-405 freeway interchange and the industrial areas along Carson Street east of Wilmington Avenue.

If the segment of Carson Street between the I-405 freeway and Wilmington Avenue were to be eliminated from the truck route system, trucks that would otherwise use this segment of Carson Street as a travel route would be shifted to Wilmington Avenue. Additional trucks on Wilmington Avenue would adversely affect traffic conditions on Wilmington Avenue, which is already congested and currently carries a substantial volume of truck traffic. The area of Wilmington Avenue between 220th Street and 223rd Street, which includes the on and off-ramps to the I-405 freeway is typically the most congested street segment in Carson. The removal of Carson

Street from the truck route system would add trucks to this currently-congested area and thereby result in adverse impacts to delay and congestion.

Additional Technical Information Requested at the Workshops

Truck Volumes

It was requested that additional traffic counts be taken to quantify the existing truck volumes on the truck routes that would be affected by revisions to the truck route system. The truck counts were taken during the afternoon when truck volumes are typically at their peak, as verified by 24-hour truck counts that were taken on Victoria Street. The existing truck volumes are shown on the table below.

| Peak Hour Truck Volumes | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Roadway | Location | Truck Volume (trucks per hour) |
| Victoria Street | Main Street to Avalon Boulevard | 116 |
| Victoria Street | Avalon Boulevard to Central Avenue | 132 |
| Main Street | South of Victoria Street | 54 |
| Albertoni Street | Main Street to Avalon Boulevard | 156 |
| Del Amo Boulevard | East of Avalon Boulevard | 114 |
| Broadway | South of Victoria Street | 68 |
| Santa Fe Avenue | Carson Street to Dominguez Street | 92 |
| Alameda Street | Carson Street to Dominguez Street | 414 |
| Carson Street | I-405 freeway to Wilmington Avenue | 105 |

Enforcement of Truck Route Regulations

Enforcement activities relative to the city’s truck route regulations are conducted by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department. The primary type of enforcement activity is issuing citations for truckers who are traveling on non-truck-routes without having a destination along these streets. As there is no way for an officer to know if a particular truck is illegally using a non-truck-route when the truck passes by, the officer has to stop the truck and ask the driver to produce documentation to prove that the truck was being used for picking up or dropping off goods or providing a service in the area served by the street. If such documentation cannot be provided, then the truck driver can be cited for a truck route violation. With regard to trucks traveling on a legal truck route, the primary type of enforcement activity is issuing citations for overweight or oversized trucks.

Designated Hours for Truck Routes

There was an inquiry at the workshops as to whether or not truck route restrictions could be designated for specific times of the day. For example, would the city have the right to designate Victoria Street as a truck route from 7:00 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. and as a non-truck-route from 8:00 p.m. till 7:00 a.m. Research conducted by staff indicates that two cities in California have implemented time limits for specific truck routes. The city of San Mateo has designated East Third Street as a truck route between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and Kehoe Avenue as a truck route between 6:00



a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The city of Palo Alto has designated Hillview Avenue as a truck route between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Truckers using these roadways at times outside of these hours are subject to citation. So a precedent has been established in California for "part time" truck routes, although the practice is not common. Oregon, Arizona, Canada, and New York City have also used time limits on truck routes.

Measures to Reduce Truck Impacts

It was suggested at the workshops that various measures could be implemented to reduce the noise and vibration impacts generated by trucks, such as constructing a sound wall, installing rubberized asphalt, and modernizing the truck fleets with less impactful vehicles. With regard to a sound wall, the existing walls along Victoria, Main, and Carson Streets could potentially be heightened; however, these walls are on private property and any modifications would be the responsibility of the property owner. There is insufficient right-of-way to construct a sound wall on public property at these locations. With regard to the use of rubberized asphalt, the City Engineer and the Public Works Superintendent have indicated that this type of asphalt will be used when the next resurfacing project is implemented on any truck route that runs adjacent to residential uses. While this type of surface is more costly than conventional asphalt, it results in a reduction in noise and vibration. With regard to the use of modernized truck fleets, the trucks will gradually become quieter and cleaner; however, any noticeable improvements to noise, vibration, and emissions are probably years away. Also, the city has no practical means to control the type of trucks that operate on the public streets other than to ensure that the vehicles are within the legal weight and size in accordance with the California Vehicle Code.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, there are several options relative to the possibility of revising the truck route designations on Victoria Street, Main Street, Santa Fe Avenue, and/or Carson Street. The options are outlined below.

Victoria Street

- V1 Maintain status quo by keeping the truck route designation on Victoria Street.
- V2 Eliminate the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard from the truck route system and add Avalon Boulevard between Victoria Street and Albertoni Street to the truck route system.
- V3 Eliminate the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Central Avenue from the truck route system.
- V4 Keep the truck route designation on Victoria Street between Main Street and Central Avenue, but designate it as a truck route only from 7:00 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. (or whatever times are deemed appropriate).

Main Street

- M1 Maintain status quo by keeping the truck route designation on Main Street.



M2 Eliminate the segment of Main Street between Broadway and Victoria Street from the truck route system.

M3 Keep the truck route designation on Main Street between Broadway and Victoria Street, but designate it as a truck route only from 7:00 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. (or whatever times are deemed appropriate).

Santa Fe Avenue

S1 Maintain status quo by keeping the truck route designation on Santa Fe Avenue.

S2 Eliminate the entire segment of Santa Fe Avenue from the truck route system between Del Amo Boulevard and the south city boundary at the I-405 freeway.

S3 Eliminate the segment of Santa Fe Avenue between the south city boundary and El Presidio Street (or Dominguez Street) from the truck route system and add El Presidio Street (or Dominguez Street) between Santa Fe Avenue and Alameda Street to the truck route system.

Carson Street

C1 Maintain status quo by keeping the truck route designation on Carson Street.

C2 Eliminate the segment of Carson Street between the I-405 freeway and Wilmington Avenue from the truck route system.

C3 Keep the truck route designation on Carson Street between the I-405 freeway and Wilmington Avenue, but designate it as a truck route only from 7:00 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. (or whatever times are deemed appropriate).

The implementation of route changes to any designated truck route would require an amendment to the Carson General Plan Circulation Element. A public hearing would also be held with the City Council and an amendment to the Carson Municipal Code would be required. It should be noted that the Carson Chamber of Commerce and several major industrial businesses are opposed to any reductions to the truck route system (Exhibit No. 2).

Based on the information provided above, the staff recommendation is to maintain status quo with regard to the truck route designation on Victoria Street, Main Street, and Carson Street (Options V1, M1, and C1 above) and to eliminate the entire segment of Santa Fe Avenue between Del Amo Boulevard and the south city boundary from the truck route system (Option S2 above).

III. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

1. OPEN the public hearing, TAKE public testimony, and CLOSE the public hearing; and
2. TAKE one of the following actions:




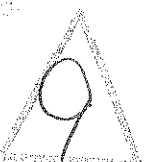
- a. DIRECT staff to prepare a resolution to amend the truck route system and the General Plan Circulation Element in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission; or
- b. DIRECT staff to prepare a resolution to maintain status quo regarding the truck route system.

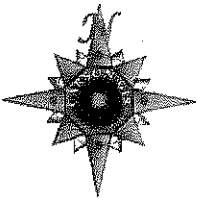
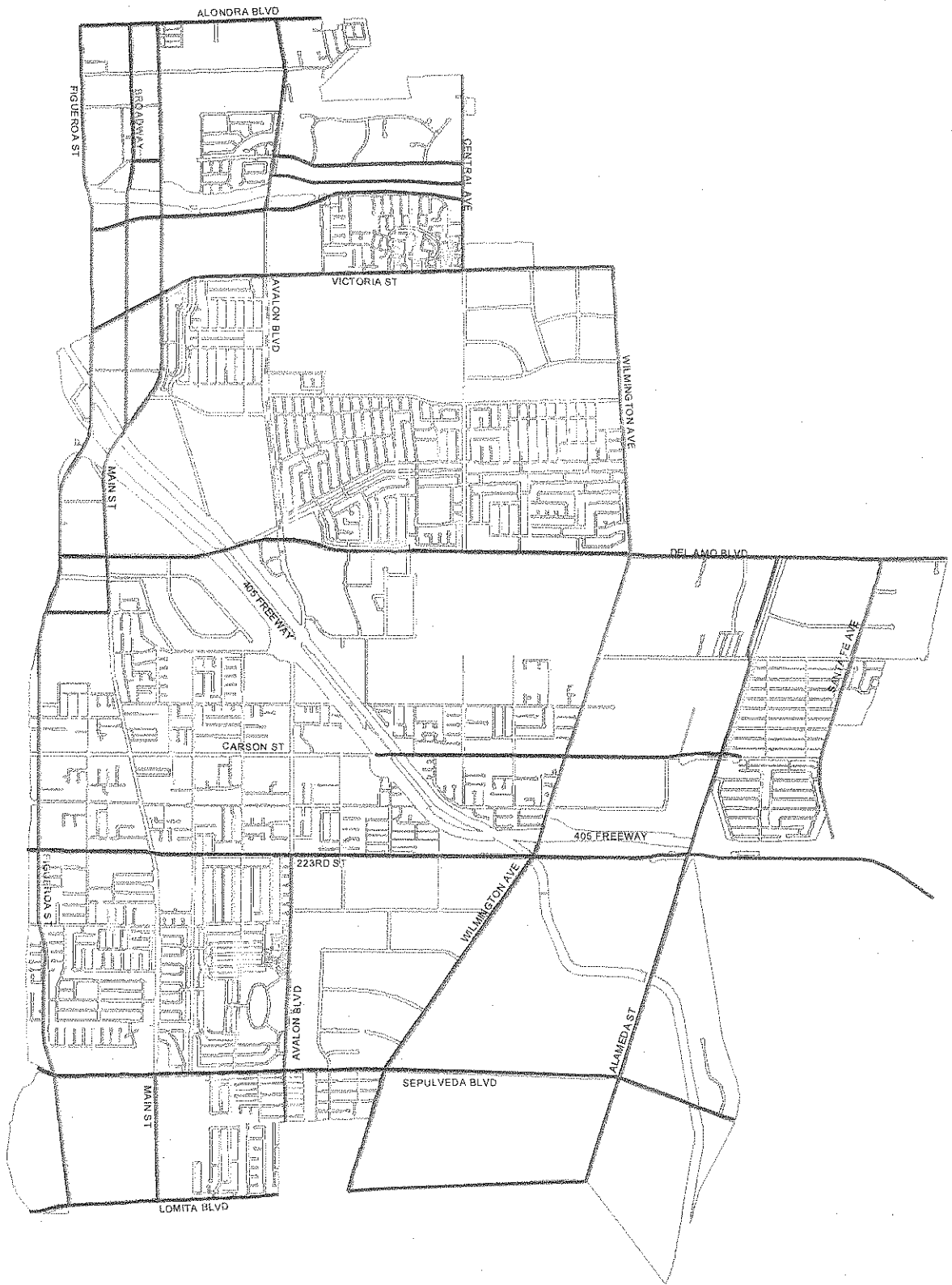
IV. Exhibits

1. City of Carson Truck Routes Map
2. Letter from Carson Chamber of Commerce

Prepared by: 
Richard Garland, Traffic Engineer

Reviewed by: 
Sheri Repp Loadsman, Planning Officer



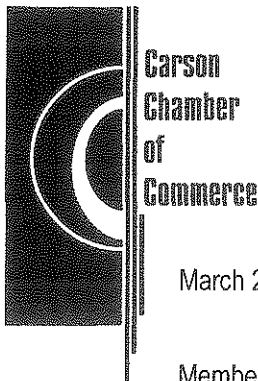


City of Carson Truck Routes

Updated: 05/15/2007
Z:\GIS\Projects\159\TruckRoutes.mxd

EXHIBIT NO. 01

10



March 21, 2011

Members of the Carson Planning Commission
Members of the Carson Public Works Commission
Carson City Hall
701 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90745

RE: Item to Consider Amending the Truck Route System to Eliminate Victoria Street Between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard

Dear Members of the Planning Commission and Public Works Commission,

The Carson Chamber of Commerce understands that the Planning Commission and the Public Works Commission have been asked to consider whether or not to recommend that the Circulation Element of the General Plan be changed to remove the segment of Victoria Street between Main Street and Avalon Boulevard from the City of Carson Truck Routes. For reasons that are listed below, the Chamber respectfully requests that you DECLINE to recommend this change.

1. Removing this section of street from the city's Truck Route System will not do anything to diminish the amount of truck traffic. It will merely divert it through other areas of the city and increase the impact on residents and businesses in those neighborhoods. Furthermore, as truckers seek shortcuts, the elimination of this portion of the truck route may actually increase the illegal use of roadways that abut area parks and residences.
2. Industrial and warehouse operations represent an important percentage of Carson's business demographic. When selecting a location these businesses, which depend on trucks to move material in and out of their facilities, consider the ease with which these movements can occur. Moving the truck route will result in additional time, expense, and inconvenience for Carson's businesses as well as for an already strained city staff which must implement and enforce the proposed new route.
3. The city is currently facing serious economic challenges. Successful businesses pay more fees and taxes into the city's treasury and contribute generously to local philanthropies. Carson, which prides itself on being a business friendly city, should not impose hardship on its business community when no net benefit will be realized.
4. City staff has already acted on several other mitigation measures requested by the petitioners.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John Wogan
President

EXHIBIT NO. 02

