

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-518
OCTOBER 20, 1997 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:

**REQUEST FOR THREE-WAY STOP AT
PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE AND
WASHINGTON AVENUE**

SUBMITTED BY:

**HAROLD SMITH
CITY ENGINEER**

SYNOPSIS —

A three-way stop request at Pennsylvania Avenue and Washington Avenue has been reviewed by staff and the Traffic Safety Committee.

At their October 14, 1997 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee recommended approval of a staff recommendation that additional signing be placed both in advance of and at the curve to provide more positive guidance by defining the curve in the roadway through this area of Pennsylvania Avenue, and that Traffic and Transportation closely monitor this area for future accidents. If the improved signing provides the expected reduction in accidents and run-off-the-road vehicles, all-way stop signs would not be needed. If the accident rate is not reduced by this signing, the all-way stop would be reconsidered.

FISCAL IMPACT —

N/A

RECOMMENDATION —

Approval of the Traffic Safety Committee recommendation to provide positive guidance by installing additional warning signs in advance of and at the curve, and to monitor the effectiveness of these signs in reducing accidents and run-off-the-road vehicles.

BACKGROUND —

On October 6, 1997, the City Council received a request from several residents near the

intersection of Pennsylvania and Washington Avenues, expressing concern over the number of accidents occurring on the curve of Pennsylvania Avenue at Washington Avenue. By Roll Call No. 97-3382, City Council referred this item to the Traffic Safety Committee for an expeditious review and also to consider a three-way stop on an emergency trial basis.

Staff has reviewed the accident history at this location, and also checked the current signing that is in place at this curve. There have been a total of 11 reported accidents resulting in 11 injuries between January 1993 to present. Eight of these involved vehicles losing control in the vicinity of the curve. The traffic volumes on Pennsylvania Avenue are approximately 7,500 vehicles per day, and are 1,500-2,000 vehicles per day on Washington Avenue.

In May 1996, additional signing was placed in this area warning motorists of this curve, and the street light levels were increased to provide better visibility at night. Three of the accidents have occurred since this signing was installed.

The placement of stop signs at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Washington Avenues is not the most appropriate corrective measure to alleviate the accidents at this location, since most of them are not intersection-related, but are due to the curve in Pennsylvania Avenue. Stop signs are most appropriate to assign the right-of-way at heavier-volume intersections, where there is limited sight distance, or where there has been a pattern of right-angle accidents. None of these conditions exist at this location. If stop signs were placed at this intersection, even on a temporary basis, it is expected that a significant percentage of stop sign violations would occur, which could result in other types of accidents.

Because accidents have continued to occur at this location, much better “ positive guidance” should be provided by installing additional warning signs consisting of advance “ 25 mph” turn arrows on both left and right sides of Pennsylvania Avenue and also large arrows at the curve. The signs at the curve would be much larger than the existing signs, providing much greater daytime target value. In addition, new high-tech sign material would be used, which is many times brighter at night than the existing signs.