

# **Lompoc City Council Agenda Item**

**City Council Meeting Date: February 1, 2011**



**TO: Laurel M. Barcelona, City Administrator**

**FROM: Larry A. Bean, Public Works Director  
l\_bean@ci.lompoc.ca.us**

**SUBJECT: Purisima Road Safety Improvement Project**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Review Caltrans project information and consider sending a letter stating the City of Lompoc's position on the project.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Caltrans is proposing a safety project for the intersection of Purisima Road and State Highway 246. The purpose of the project is to eliminate the potential of broadside collisions and reduce the severity of other collisions by decreasing the intersection approach speed. The current collision rate at this intersection is four times the State average. After considering both a roundabout and signalized intersection, Caltrans chose a roundabout as the preferred design solution.

Public meetings were held at Lompoc City Hall on July 16, 2008, and April 22, 2009, to review the project and to receive public comment. The geometry of a roundabout includes a truck apron that accommodates vehicles with large turning radii, such as buses, trucks, tractor trailers, farm equipment, and emergency vehicles. The proposed design will accommodate vehicles from the local area, farms, businesses and Vandenberg Air Force Base. Caltrans has completed design on the project and is currently acquiring the necessary right-of-way for construction. They anticipate releasing the project for public bid in April 2011.

## **CALTRANS JUSTIFICATION OF ROUNDABOUT:**

The following is quoted from documents presented at the public meeting:

*"Numerous reports and data collected across the nation have identified roundabouts as a viable alternative to reduce the number and severity of broadside collisions. The modern roundabout is now recognized nationally as an intersection type and traffic control treatment capable of providing unique and significant operational and safety benefits over a wide range of traffic volumes and conditions. A roundabout at the project's intersection will have fewer conflict points and eliminate broadside impacts. The severity of the collisions will*

**FEBRUARY 1, 2011**  
**SUBJECT: PURISIMA ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**  
**PAGE -2-**

*decrease due to lower speeds within the circular roadway. High-speed broadside conflicts will be replaced with low speed merging conflicts, resulting in potentially fewer and less severe collisions.”*

Caltrans estimates presented to the public in 2009 say a traffic signal will cost over One Million Dollars more than a roundabout. The signal construction cost was shown as \$4,074,200 while the roundabout was listed as \$2,995,862. In a recent email, Paul Martinez, Caltrans Project Manager, further explained:

*“The cost difference is due to the project footprint of the signal being much larger than the roundabout. Accommodating the signal required additional vehicle storage during the peak hour by way of a second thru lane in each direction so that the volumes could be cleared in a signal cycle. About 2000 feet or more of additional lane in each direction really increased the project footprint. The amount of right-of-way was more than double as a linear piece along the additional lane in the eastbound direction rather than the spot location.”*

Mayor Linn, with the Council’s agreement, requested staff prepare a letter to Caltrans stating the City’s objection to a roundabout. A draft copy is attached for consideration.

**Larry A. Bean, P.E.**  
**Public Works Director**

Attachment: [Letter to Caltrans](#)

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR:**

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**Larry A. Bean, P.E.**  
**Public Works Director**

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:**

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**Laurel M. Barcelona**  
**City Administrator**