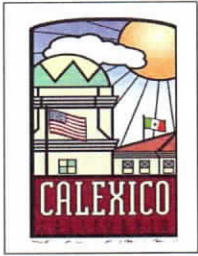


**AGENDA
ITEM
2**



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 7, 2022

TO: Mayor and City Council

APPROVED BY: Esperanza Colio, City Manager *Esperanza Colio*

PREPARED BY: Jesus J. Serrano, Interim Police Chief *JJS*

SUBJECT: Approve the Calexico Police Department to Implement Traffic Management Plan for Second Street

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Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Council of the City of Calexico approve the following:

- Approve the Calexico Police Department to Implement Traffic Management Plan for Second Street.

Background:

In 2018 the existing West Port of Entry (POE) located in downtown Calexico ceased processing vehicle crossings. A new POE was opened immediately west of the existing site. The new site entrances no longer connect to Imperial Avenue (SR 111), resulting in changing travel patterns.

The movement of operations from the old POE to the new POE was completed in phases, and temporary traffic circulation plans were prepared for the interim and final construction phases. The new POE directly lines up with Cesar Chavez Boulevard, a local street under the jurisdiction of the City of Calexico. SR-111 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard connections between these routes (SR-98, 2nd Street, and Grant Avenue) were analyzed in this Traffic Control Plan (TCP).

Discussion and Analysis:

The Mexico-bound traffic uses two primary routes of travel. The two roadways are state route 111 to Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard. All southbound traffic funnels to the intersection of Second Street and Cesar



Chavez Boulevard. Currently, the intersection is controlled by a signal light. However, during peak hours, motorists do not respect or follow the signal sign, and this causes significant traffic issues at the intersection and the area around the intersection. The following issues have been identified when the intersection is controlled only by the signal light:

- Traffic congestion
- Traffic delays
- Traffic collisions
- Failed to yield violations
- Gridlock intersection
- Paralyzing the flow of traffic
- Criminal Violations

Fiscal Impact:

The financial impact would be significant to the Calexico Police Department budget if the Police Officer Personnel and Additional Traffic Control Officers were added to monitor and control the safety and traffic issues in the area.

- Police Officers at an average of \$60.00 per hour per officer.
- Traffic Control Officer at an average of \$28.47 per hour per officer.

Coordinated With:

City Manager's Office

Attachment(s):

Traffic Management Plan



Calexico Police Department

Inter-Department Memorandum

To: City Manager Esperanza Colio-Warren **Date:** November 3, 2022
From: Interim Police Chief Jesus J. Serrano
Subject: **Traffic Management Plan for Seconds Street**

The Mexico-bound traffic uses two primary routes of travel. State Route 111 to Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard are the two roadways. All southbound traffic funnels to the intersection of Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard. Currently, the intersection is controlled by a signal light. However, during peak hours, motorists do not respect or follow the signal light, and this causes significant traffic issues at the intersection and the area around the intersection. The following issues have been identified when the intersection is controlled only by the signal light:

- Traffic congestion
- Traffic delays
- Traffic collisions
- Failed to yield violations
- Gridlock intersection
- Paralyzing the flow of traffic
- Criminal Violations

Therefore, the Calexico Police Department deploys Traffic Control Officers to direct traffic at Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Second Street intersection. The Traffic Control Officers manage the flow of traffic. The officer's primary responsibility is to control the intersection and create a safe environment for them and the public traveling on the city of Calexico Streets. However, the intersection of Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Second Street presents many challenges for motorists and Traffic Control Personnel. The following are the significant challenges that have been identified:

- Motorists not obeying Traffic Control Officers
- Tempers and attitudes of the motorist
- The impatient motorist who does not wait in line to get to their destination
- A large volume of vehicles funneling to a small number of lanes into Mexico

Therefore, the Traffic Control Officers, in conjunction with the Calexico Police Department, have developed traffic management plans to mitigate the traffic and reduce the number of traffic controllers required to manage the large volume of traffic heading into Mexico over the years. The following traffic mitigation devices and strategies have been successful in mitigating the primary traffic issues:

- Assigning Traffic Control Officers at the major intersections
- Closing and rerouting intersections to limit vehicle's access to Mexico-bound traffic

- Redirecting and detouring of vehicles to reduce the access of Mexico-bound traffic
- Closure of business driveways to vehicular traffic and deny access to the Mexico-bound traffic lanes.

The Calexico Police Department and Traffic Control Officer have tried additional management plans and used traffic-controlled devices to control the traffic. However, these plans have not positively impacted vehicular traffic control, so they are no longer being used.

The Calexico Police Department has seen an increase in incidents where Traffic Control Officers have become injured or assaulted by a vehicle attempting to get into the line to travel into Mexico. Especially at the intersection of Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Second Street.

Just recently, On October 14, 2022, at approximately 1800 hours, Officers from the Calexico Police Department responded to the area of Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard regarding a report of an injury traffic collision.

Once officers arrived, they determined that a vehicle was traveling eastbound on Second Street, approaching the intersection of Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Second Street. A Traffic Controller Officer was located in the southwest area of the intersection, monitoring vehicles traveling in the number two lane of eastbound Second Street and waiting to turn southbound into Mexico. The Traffic Control Officer observed the vehicle attempting to turn southbound from the number one lane of eastbound Second Street. The Traffic Control Officer saw the vehicle making the right turn into Mexico, and she attempted to move out of the vehicle's path. She could not move quickly enough and was struck on the forearm by the passing vehicle's drivers side view mirror. The vehicle fled the scene southbound into Mexico.

Calexico Fire Department was dispatched to the scene to evaluate the Traffic Control Officer's injuries. There were no visible injuries to the Traffic Control Officer, and the Traffic Control Officer refused medical attention. Calexico Police Officer investigated a crime of 245 PC-Assault with a Deadly Weapon on the Traffic Control Officer.

Calexico Police Officers continue investigating the traffic collision where a driver struck a Traffic Control Officer. The driver was identified as a Customs and Border Protection Officer assigned to the San Luis Port of Entry.

In addition to Traffic Control Officers being assaulted by vehicles at the intersection, there have been several complaints when vehicles make illegal U-turns in the 300 block of West Second Street. The vehicles merged unsafely into the eastbound lanes of eastbound Second Street, attempting to enter the eastbound travel lane in an attempt to merge into the right turn pocket to make the turn into Mexico. Vehicles also make right turns from the eastbound lanes of Second Street in violation of the California Vehicle Codes, posing a significant hazard to traffic control personnel in the intersection. The intersection of Second Street and Cesar Chavez has become increasingly dangerous for Traffic Control Officers. Traffic Control Officers have to monitor and control four directions of travel and four turning pockets at the intersection. The vehicles making the right turn into Mexico from any of the traffic lanes of Second Street and Cesar Chavez have posed a traffic hazard for the motorist and the Traffic Control Officers in the intersection.

The Calexico Police Department has employed all potential traffic management plans that do not require extra personnel or police officer to be present and conduct direct enforcement operations. The traffic management plans reduce the number of Traffic Control Officers at the intersection of Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard from three to two. Reducing Traffic Control Officers from three to two reduces total personnel or allows the redeployment of personnel where needed. Additionally, the traffic management plan reduces the need for at least two full-time Police Officers to mitigate the traffic violations that occur in the area of west Second Street.

The Calexico Police Department does not have the funding or personnel to assign additional Traffic Control Personnel or Police Officers to mitigate the traffic issues on State Route 111 (Imperial Avenue), State Route 98 (Birch Street), and Cesar Chavez Boulevard. In order to mitigate the traffic control issues, there would be a need for at least 18 Traffic Control Officers and Four Police Officers to be assigned to the traffic area to assist with the significant traffic violations that occur when the traffic is backed up.

The traffic management plan was implemented on October 15, 2022. It restricted the southbound traffic from eastbound Second Street and Cesar Chavez Blvd. (traffic coming from the Gran Plaza Outlets) and only allowed the eastbound traffic to make a left turn onto northbound Cesar Chavez Boulevard. This plan has increased the number of vehicles traveling southbound into Mexico and positively reduced the time a motorist waits in line to go to Mexico. This traffic management plan maximizes the continuous southbound traffic flow from the two major traffic arteries into Mexico. The traffic management plan has positively impacted the issues at the intersection. Additionally, the plan has reduced the wait times for southbound traffic. The plans have also shown the reduction of California Vehicle Code violations at the 300 block of west Second Street area.