City Council Report

City Council Meeting: February 24, 2026
Agenda Item: 11.A

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Anuj Gupta, Director of Transportation, Mobility (DOT)

Subject: Receive and Adopt the Santa Monica Blvd Safety Study, funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant

Recommended Action

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve the recommendations outlined in the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study;
2. Direct staff to proceed with the phased implementation of the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study recommendations; and
3. Adopt a finding that this safety study is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

Summary

The City of Santa Monica (City) continues to advance transportation safety improvements to advance the City's priority of ensuring Clean Streets and Safe Neighborhoods, and the City Council's Vision Zero commitment to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries caused by traffic collisions. As a result of prior studies such as the Vision Zero Action Plan and the Local Roadway Safety Plan, Santa Monica Boulevard emerged as a high priority corridor that has seen severe traffic related injuries and one fatality over the past ten years. To further study this corridor, staff secured a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Sustainable Communities planning grant, which provides funding for transportation and land use planning projects to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and projects that enhance safe use of roadways.

The Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study (Attachment A) (Study) began in October 2024, engaging stakeholders and residents about how to reduce crashes along this corridor. During this time, City staff have been working with a consultant team to analyze the previous ten years of reported crash data along the corridor and pairing crash trends with community feedback to establish a set of safety and transit recommendations for Santa Monica Boulevard from Ocean Avenue to Centinela Avenue (the eastern city limit). On June 10, 2025, City staff presented initial recommendations to City Council in a Study Session. Informed by Council feedback and direction, staff then presented a full suite of design recommendations to the broader public in an open house community meeting on September 6, 2025.

Using final input from City leadership and the community, the Study identifies a series of phased improvements for the corridor. If approved and adopted, City staff will begin identifying funding for initial rollout of phase 1 improvements as well as larger grant opportunities to fund longer-term phase 2 implementation. This staff report summarizes the Study's key findings, community outreach approach, and recommendations.

Background

On February 23, 2016, the City Council adopted the Pedestrian Action Plan, which included the Vision Zero commitment to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries caused by traffic collisions on Santa Monica roadways. In 2017, the City analyzed 11 years of crash data (2006 to 2016) to create a "Priority Network" (representing the 10% of City streets that account for 50% of severe and fatal crashes) to focus the City's future roadway safety enhancements. In 2022, the City renewed its analysis by completing the Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP), which analyzed the most recently available crash data (2015 to 2019) to further prioritize safety improvements (Attachment B).

These efforts enabled the City to receive state and regional grant funding for numerous roadway design improvements targeted at addressing specific roadway challenges identified in the data, such as the Wilshire Boulevard Safety Study and Improvement projects, the East Pico Safety Study quick-build project, and smaller interventions such as crosswalk modernization, daylighting efforts, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs), and all-way stop implementation. Both the 2017 Vision Zero analysis and the 2022 LRSP identified Santa Monica Boulevard as a priority corridor that experienced

eight fatal or severe injury crashes in the 2017 analysis, and 206 total crashes resulting in one fatality and nine severe injuries in the LRSP analysis.

On March 9, 2023, staff applied to Caltrans for the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Enhancement Study to evaluate collisions and identify targeted safety enhancements along the Santa Monica Boulevard corridor. The application was prepared based on the priorities of the City Council's adopted plans and programs. On August 31, 2023, the City was awarded $522,327 in grant funds, and on November 14, 2023, the Council adopted a resolution to accept the awarded Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant with a required $67,673 in matching funds from Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) revenues, for a total project cost of $590,000 (Attachment C). On June 10, 2025 (Attachment D), City staff conducted a study session for the Study and presented preliminary recommendations to City Council. Council direction supported the approach for a final open house community meeting, hosted on September 6, 2025, at the Santa Monica Family YMCA, before returning to City Council for final adoption.

Discussion

The project approach of the Study was to:

1. Gather existing conditions information to understand the context of the corridor,
2. Gather community feedback through a robust public outreach process, and
3. Identify targeted countermeasures through a detailed and data-driven process.

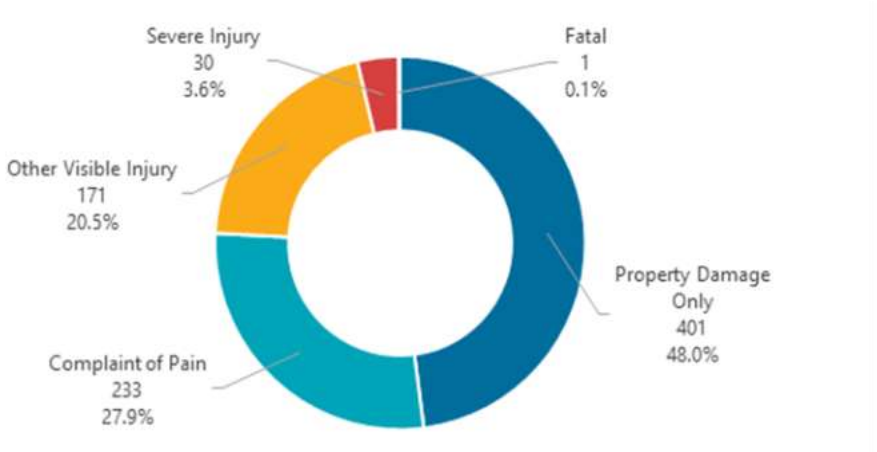
Two major components of the Study included an in-depth crash analysis and a strong community engagement process to better understand crash patterns, safety concerns, and the community's lived experiences/observations while traveling on Santa Monica Boulevard. Based on this process, the project team developed recommendations and roadway enhancements to help address identified challenges. The recommended enhancements serve to better connect adjacent residents to major destinations and job centers, while reducing crashes for people walking, cycling, driving, and taking transit. The Study does not determine the cause(s) of the referenced collisions, nor does it assign fault or liability to any individual or entity. The review was limited to evaluating existing roadway conditions and identifying potential improvements. All recommendations are prospective in nature and are intended solely to enhance traffic

operations and safety, not to reach conclusions regarding causation. Notably, not all incidents are preventable from a roadway design and/or safety enhancement process.

Crash Analysis

In winter 2024/2025, the project team conducted a comprehensive crash analysis of Santa Monica Boulevard focused on the last 10 years of crash data and recent transit data (Attachment A, Appendix B). During 2015-2024, 435 injury crashes and 401 Property Damage Only (PDO) crashes in which no one is injured but damage occurs to vehicles or other property—were recorded along the study corridor. Figure 1 illustrates the number of crashes and their distribution by injury severity.

Figure 1 - Distribution of Severity for all Crashes



Below are key trends identified in the crash analysis:

- The two most common age groups for people involved in crashes are between 26–35 and 36–45, accounting for 24% and 17% of those involved, respectively. Moreover, adults aged 65+ make up 23% of all pedestrians involved in injury crashes, a higher proportion than the 13% of drivers in this age group.
- Pedestrians are overrepresented in fatal and severe injury crashes, making up 29% of such incidents compared to 11% in all crashes. Bicycle and scooter crashes are also overrepresented in serious injury crashes (26%) compared to all crashes (8.4%).
- The analysis found that 83% of all crashes occur at intersections, while the remaining 17% occur at midblock locations. Crashes also occur most frequently

at signalized intersections, but injury severity is highest at unsignalized intersections where the side streets are stop-sign controlled.

- In the past 10 years, one fatality along the corridor has occurred at the intersection of 18th Street.
- The most common vehicle to vehicle crashes involves two vehicles proceeding straight. These movements are typical for broadside crashes. Other common scenarios include a vehicle proceeding straight colliding with a vehicle making a left turn, or a vehicle proceeding straight into a stopped vehicle.
- The dominant movement preceding vehicle to pedestrian crashes involves a vehicle making a left turn into a pedestrian crossing in a crosswalk at an intersection.
- The most common preceding movement in vehicle to bicycle crashes involves a vehicle making a right turn, making a left turn, or proceeding straight, while the bicycle was proceeding straight in all instances.

Given the crash analysis' focus on vulnerable road users and severe injury crashes, the analysis includes a list of intersections organized by weighted crash severity. This weighting exercise served as a reference for selecting improvements at intersections but is not the sole determining factor since some intersections may have more desirable destinations, greater community feedback, or opportunities to actualize roadway improvements.

Community Engagement and Interdepartmental Coordination

The Safety Study Team applied a robust community engagement process and key tactics to reach a broad audience of stakeholders and community members. This included presentations to stakeholder groups including the Pico Neighborhood Association, Mid City Neighbors, and Downtown Santa Monica, Inc., as well as a presentation to the City's Planning Commission. Other major milestones included a three-week pop-up installation at the Santa Monica Main Library (Touchpoint #1), a community walk audit co-hosted by Providence St. John's Health Center (Touchpoint #2), a community open-house workshop at the YMCA (Touchpoint #3), 10,000 mailed postcards with project information to residents and businesses within a half-mile radius of the corridor, door-knocking and speaking with businesses along the corridor, and a

robust online survey that received more than 350 comments. Key themes that emerged from the community regarding desired improvements included:

- Improving crossing conditions for pedestrians, especially at uncontrolled intersections;
- Addressing vehicles speeding and failing to yield;
- Addressing vehicles parked in red curb zones and trucks loading outside of designated loading zones;
- Addressing decreased visibility at dusk and at night for people walking and driving;
- Narrowing travel lanes through restriping or installation of medians; and
- Reducing turning movements conflicts at intersections.

The project team also established a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of representatives from DOT's Mobility Division, Traffic Management, Public Works, Santa Monica Police Department, Santa Monica Fire Department, and Big Blue Bus. The TAC supported the development of this study at each milestone, including the traffic operational analysis, to ensure that recommendations in this project support the optimization of traffic signals. The TAC also supported the development of a marked crosswalk guidance report which outlines the justification for where crosswalks are selected, which treatments accompany new crosswalks (e.g., Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, or RRFBs), and how many crosswalk legs are recommended based on local expertise.

Traffic Operations Analysis

In addition to the detailed safety analysis and the community feedback, the recommended improvements for Santa Monica Boulevard were also informed by a detailed level of service (LOS) operations analysis that evaluated each of the signalized and unsignalized intersections along the corridor. While this safety study focuses on improvements that address documented crash patterns, vehicular operations should also be considered in conjunction with the crash data. Through this analysis, the study team was able to set the foundation for coordinating and optimizing signal timing, especially for the section between 20th Street and 26th Street.

Results from the crash analysis, community engagement, and traffic operations analysis ultimately support recommendations at every intersection of Santa Monica Boulevard.

Recommendations and Phasing

One of the intentions of the Santa Monica Safety Study is to identify the lowest cost/highest impact approach to improving the corridor considering both design and timeline of implementation. The Study recommends a phased approach so that enhancements can be deployed quickly with available funding, tested and evaluated, and modified as required before more permanent and capital-intensive measures are designed and constructed. Phase 1 improvements could be implemented within two to five years and rely on local funding sources (e.g. Measure K, Measure M, Transportation Impact Fees (TIF), or the City General Fund), or in coordination with other planned improvements along Santa Monica Boulevard such as private property development or planned annual repaving of the corridor. These improvements could include, but are not limited to:

- Consistent pavement markings and signage,
- Right-Turn-Only-Restrictions from side streets at unsignalized intersections,
- Bicycle crossing improvements such as bike detection and carrying bike lanes through intersections,
- Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPIs),
- Signal timing coordination at all signalized intersections that will help mitigate congestion and ensure speed limit adherence (with a particular focus on the segment between 20th and 26th Streets),
- Marking new crosswalks (where adequate curb ramps are present), and
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

Phase 2 improvements are long-term projects that require more significant design/civil engineering work, change curb lines, and/or impact utilities. These projects would be informed by and modified in accordance with lessons learned from the Phase 1 implementation and are designed thoughtfully before constructing. The scale and cost of Phase 2 projects would necessitate additional funding from local, state, or federal grants, and should be prioritized when funding opportunities are presented. Phase 2

improvements could be implemented in three to ten years and could include, but are not limited to:

- New signals or left turn phasing,
- Concrete curb extensions and median refuge islands, and
- Improved street lighting.

As a result of the community engagement feedback, crash analysis, and lessons learned from the Wilshire Boulevard Safety Study project, the project team identified three categories for improvements: 1) corridor-wide needs that can be applied throughout Santa Monica Boulevard, 2) transit improvements to enhance transit speed and efficiency along the corridor 3) focus intersection recommendations-- priority locations identified for targeted enhancements. The recommendations will be subject to engineering review in the design phase to determine feasibility considering existing structures, traffic patterns and consistency with Caltrans or other governing design requirements

Corridor-wide Recommendations

Corridor-wide recommendations would include the installation of low- to moderate-cost countermeasures consistently throughout the corridor with an emphasis on locations with a high risk of severe crashes. Many of these improvements are identified as Phase 1 improvements and include:

- Consistent pavement markings and signage,
- Right-Turn-Only-Restrictions from side streets at unsignalized intersections,
- Bicycle crossing improvements such as bike detection and carrying bike lanes through intersections,
- Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPIs), and
- Signal timing coordination at all signalized intersections.

Transit Improvements

Transit improvements were identified throughout the corridor to improve reliability and frequency. The analysis also looked at transit performance for Big Blue Bus (BBB) Route 1 and Metro Line 4, both of which travel the extent of Santa Monica Boulevard. Beyond focusing on traffic safety, the study includes a traffic analysis to better manage overall traffic flow, which supports transit service. Transit improvement

recommendations for Santa Monica Boulevard include the relocation of bus stops from the near side to the far side of the intersection at 11th Street, 14th Street, and Berkeley Street. Relocating the bus stop to the far side of the intersection can reduce pedestrian crashes since it eliminates the sight distance restriction caused by the bus at intersections.

For bus stops at nearside locations that cannot move far side due to existing conflicts (driveways, etc.), queue jumps are recommended. Queue jumps allow buses to bypass congested traffic at intersections, reducing delays and improving transit reliability. Queue jumps are recommended at Lincoln Boulevard and 26th Street. Peak-hour bus only lanes are recommended and conceptually feasible in the section from Princeton Street to Centinela Avenue, where the profile of the street and presence of parking lanes are sufficient enough to carry dedicated bus lanes without necessitating the removal of vehicle travel lanes. This can serve as a half-mile extension for a bus-only lane project that Caltrans is currently implementing from I-405 to Centinela Avenue (1.4 miles).

Focus Intersection Improvements

As part of this project's scope of work, staff have recommended 14 focus intersections where unique concept-level design plans are required and applied the following approach to determine these locations:

- Crash History – Given the focus on vulnerable road users and severe injury crashes, the analysis includes a list of intersections organized by weighted crash severity.
- Community Feedback and Response – with hundreds of comments received through the engagement process, the project team drew from the public's detailed experiences to support and confirm improvement types and locations.
- Land Use and Proximity to Community Resources – many locations along Santa Monica Boulevard are known pedestrian generators or natural desire lines. For example, 15th, 16th, 17th streets are known paths connecting the 17th St./SMC Metro E Line Station to UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center.
- Field Observations – Observations from both the community walk audit (Touchpoint #2) and the walk audit with the TAC gave insight to how people are

using Santa Monica Boulevard. For example, pedestrians were observed crossing at Chelsea Avenue during all times of the day, a location without a marked crosswalk.

Using this framework, staff recommend the following improvements at focus intersections that respond to the crash history, community feedback, and observed desire lines of the residents. Recommendations also include feedback from City Council during the June 10th, 2025, Study Session to reduce speeds by narrowing travel lanes, ensure directional curb ramps are installed, and to include landscaped median islands on the eastern end of the corridor to create a gateway treatment and beautify the corridor. These concept-level plans shall be further developed and leveraged for funding and construction.

6th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is a busy Downtown intersection near community anchors including the Main Library, the Santa Monica Family YMCA, and many businesses. There are also key bicycle and bus routes at this intersection, and high pedestrian traffic. Between 2015 and 2024, a total of 20 crashes occurred at this intersection, including three that resulted in serious injuries. The recommendations for 6th Street include:

Phase 1- A new scramble intersection with diagonal pedestrian crossings, “No Right on Red” turn restrictions, and new audible pedestrian push buttons. Bicycle enhancements include new striping on the approaches as well as bike boxes to allow cyclists to bypass vehicle queues. Relocating the westbound BBB Route 1 bus stop to the northeast corner in front of the Downtown library can support transit route optimization though it would require the installation of a bus pad (as a phase 2 effort).

Phase 2 - Curb extensions at two corners to enhance pedestrian visibility, reduce crossing distances, and reduce the speeds of right-turning vehicles approaching the intersection. The curb extension at the southwest corner includes a near-side bus stop and expanded sidewalks for transit passengers.

Lincoln Boulevard at Santa Monica Boulevard was identified as a focus intersection based on comments throughout the engagement process and crash history. Between 2015 and 2024, 38 crashes were reported with two serious injuries. In addition, Lincoln

Boulevard serves as a truck route with large vehicle traffic in the north-south directions. The recommendations for Lincoln Boulevard include:

Phase 1- Modifying the existing traffic signal at the intersection to include leading pedestrian intervals and new pedestrian-activated push buttons. Since the eastbound left-turn movement currently operates with a permissive movement, it's recommended this be converted to a protected left turns to reduce vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. Installation of painted curb striping and bollards can help narrow travel lanes close to the intersection.

Phase 2 - A modified curb extension on the southwest corner of the intersection would continue west to include the near-side bus stop and allow expanded sidewalks for passenger pickup and drop-off. On the other side of the street in the westbound direction, traffic signal modifications with signage enhancements would include transit signal priority, allowing buses to bypass vehicle queues.

10th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is a two-way stop-controlled intersection with no marked crosswalk. This location is adjacent to the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center and several small businesses. Crash history at this intersection includes two pedestrian crashes (one injury and one severe injury) for people crossing Santa Monica Boulevard. Considering this, the following improvements are recommended:

Phase 1 – A new crosswalk and flashing beacons at the west leg of the intersection to support crossings. To minimize conflicts with turning vehicles, a right turn only requirement from the side streets is also recommended. Curb extensions using paint and bollards as well as hardening center lines help slow turning vehicles at the intersection.

Phase 2 – Concrete curb extensions at the new crosswalk leg are recommended with directional curb ramps. This may require relocation of catch basins and other existing utilities.

11th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is a signalized intersection with class 2 bike lanes in the northbound and southbound approaches, and a pair of bus stops. Of all the intersections along Santa Monica Boulevard, 11th Street ranked number 11 for weighted crash severity. Recommendations at this intersection include:

Phase 1 – Extending bicycle lanes to the intersection and adding bicycle conflict markings through the intersection to support connecting with the broader bike

network. Since the eastbound left-turn movement currently operates with a permissive movement, it is recommended this be converted to a protected left turn to reduce vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. Staff also recommend relocating the eastbound bus stop at 11th Street to the far side of the intersection.

Phase 2 – Additional recommendations include reconstructing the curb ramps so they are directional and including a bus pad for the relocated bus stop.

14th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard was identified as a focus intersection because of the multiple bicycle and pedestrian involved crashes and volume of comments received by the community. 14th Street also has a Class II bike lane that intersects Santa Monica Boulevard and the community expressed interest in enhancing cyclist comfort at this location. The recommendations for 14th Street include:

Phase 1 – Adding leading pedestrian interval signal phasing and new audible pedestrian-push buttons. Enhanced bicycle accommodation is also recommended at the intersection approaches via conflict striping across Santa Monica Boulevard; supporting connections to the bike network. The westbound bus stop is recommended to be relocated to the far-side to improve transit operations.

Phase 2 – The existing curb ramps are also recommended to be reconstructed directional ramps, providing clear, more direct pedestrian crossings. Lastly, to accommodate the bus stop relocation, a bus pad shall be installed.

15th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard experienced 24 crashes between 2015 and 2024 with two crashes involving a pedestrian, and two crashes resulting in severe injuries. Recommendations at this intersection include:

Phase 1 – Installing painted curb extensions at the existing flashing beacon as well as painted curb extensions into Santa Monica Boulevard, and into 15th Street on the northeast corner. Additional daylighting treatments like painted red curbs and buffered striping are recommended on the westbound approach and eastbound departure. The right-turn only restriction from 15th Street onto Santa Monica Boulevard will be reinforced with pavement markings and flex posts as well as hardened centerlines to prevent left-turn movements from the minor

street. The centerline hardening also helps to reduce left-turn turning speeds from Santa Monica Boulevard onto the minor street.

Phase 2 - With the construction of new concrete curb extensions, the existing curb ramps would be reconstructed to be directional ramps, providing clearer, aligned crossings. Constructing curb extensions and ramps will require relocation of catch basins at this location.

16th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard is the primary pedestrian crossing connecting 17th Street/ SMC Metro station to the UCLA Medical Campus located one block to the north. Between 2015 and 2024, 37 crashes were reported at Santa Monica Boulevard and 16th Street. Five of those crashes involved a pedestrian and four involved a bicyclist. Community engagement efforts highlighted that this intersection has experienced corner sight issues and difficulties crossing the street. While there is an existing flashing beacon across Santa Monica Boulevard on the east side of the intersection, the recommended improvements include:

Phase 1 – Refreshing the high visibility crosswalk and including painted curb extensions. Installing right-turn only restrictions from 16th Street onto Santa Monica Boulevard and hardened centerlines will be reinforced with pavement markings and flex posts to limit left-turn movements from the minor street.

Phase 2 – Installing concrete curb extensions and removing the median refuge island, which is currently under sized to act as a refuge. The new curb extensions would allow for new directional curb ramps. Constructing curb extensions and ramps will require relocation of catch basins at this location.

18th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is an unsignalized intersection with an existing marked crosswalk and flashing beacon at the west leg of the intersection. Of all the intersections along Santa Monica Boulevard, 18th Street ranked eighth when looking at crash severity, and many vehicle crashes at this intersection occur with vehicles proceeding through from the side streets, resulting in broadside injury crashes. Considering the existing crosswalk and flashing beacon, the following improvements are recommended:

Phase 1 – Painted curb extensions to shorten the crossing distance for people walking, as well as right-turn only restrictions from the side streets to minimize conflicts with turning or through vehicle movements. Recommended centerline

hardening can also help reduce left-turn turning speeds from Santa Monica Boulevard onto 18th Street.

Phase 2 – Installing concrete curb extensions and directional curb ramps. Constructing curb extensions and ramps will require relocation of catch basins at this location.

19th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is a two-way stop-control intersection, like 18th Street, with a documented crash history. The recommendations at this intersection include:

Phase 1 – A new crosswalk at the east leg with a flashing beacon and painted curb extensions to support pedestrian crossings. Additional right-turn only restrictions from 19th Street onto Santa Monica Boulevard will be reinforced with pavement markings and flex posts as well as hardened centerlines to prevent left-turn movements from the minor street.

Phase 2 – Concrete curb extensions into Santa Monica Boulevard are also recommended at the southeast and northeast corners as well as curb extensions into 19th Street on the southwest corner only. The new curb extensions allow for directional curb ramps to be installed, providing more direct crossings for pedestrians. Constructing curb extensions and ramps will require relocation of catch basins at this location.

Chelsea Avenue at Santa Monica Boulevard stands out as a key location for improvement throughout this project. It serves McKinley Elementary School students, parents, and staff connect to and from school. During the Community Walk Audit (Touchpoint #2), community members experienced high vehicular speeds along Santa Monica Boulevard in front of the school as well as the long distances between pedestrian crossing opportunities. Through discussions with the school, teachers, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), crossing guards, and community members, there was a strong desire for a robust crossing opportunity at this location.

In the Spring of 2025, after the Walk Audit and Social Pinpoint survey, the City of Santa Monica implemented Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Pedestrian Improvements at Six Schools, which included McKinley Elementary. These improvements included traffic signal modifications as well as new curb extensions, curb ramp improvements, and crosswalk renewals at Cloverfield Boulevard. The project also included crosswalk

renewals across Chelsea Avenue, and addition of a center two-way left turn lane at Chelsea Avenue. The improvements that are recommended as part of this Study include:

Phase 1 – installing right turn only restrictions from the side street (southbound from Chelsea Avenue). The remaining recommendations at this intersection are dependent on each other and require constructing improvements all at once in phase 2.

Phase 2 - Installing a new pedestrian traffic signal, a raised median with low-lying native vegetation, and a high visibility crosswalk with directional curb ramps. The pedestrian signal can be synchronized with the nearby signal at Cloverfield Boulevard and stop traffic along Santa Monica Boulevard to allow school children to cross. The raised median enforces the right-turn only restriction and would eliminate the left-turn conflicts from Santa Monica Boulevard onto the side streets; minimizing the number of potential conflicts at this intersection. The City's Bicycle Action Plan also identifies Chelsea Avenue and Park Drive as a future priority connection. The recommended improvements include bicycle conflict striping through the intersection as well as bicycle detection for the pedestrian signal. The new raised median includes an opening to connect the Class III sharrow on Chelsea Avenue to the Class II receiving bike lane segment on Park Drive, facilitating connections to the forthcoming protected bike lane along Broadway.

26th Street at Santa Monica Boulevard is a signalized intersection with critical north-south connections for many residents. During the Safety Audit, the project team observed drivers who were attempting left turns from Santa Monica Boulevard onto 26th Street during the permissive phases and could not find an adequate gap in oncoming traffic to complete their turns. Vehicles were also seen blocking the crosswalks due to the upstream queueing. Considering this, the following improvements are recommended:

Phase 1 – Implement signal upgrades including protected-left turn signals to reduce conflicts with vehicles waiting in the middle of the intersection, and leading pedestrian intervals to support pedestrians crossing.

Phase 2 - Additional recommendations include installing enlarged bus bulbs (curb extensions) which facilitate nearside pickup/drop off and offer larger areas for pedestrians and street furniture in a currently constrained space. These bulbs are recommended at the current bus stop locations and shall be paired with transit signal priority in the westbound direction and require new bus pads. Concrete curb extensions at this intersection will also help with shortening crossings and redirect curb ramps so they are directional (in-line with sidewalk paths). Constructing curb extensions and ramps will require relocation of catch basins at this location.

Princeton Street at Santa Monica Boulevard has an existing marked crosswalk and flashing beacon to support pedestrian crossings. The crash analysis memo showed there have been 18 crashes at this intersection over the last decade, and there was an additional recent notable crash in late 2025 that severely impacted a local business and a family's residence. Considering this, the recommendations serve to further enhance the pedestrian crossing and reduce turning movements for vehicles at this intersection. Improvements at Princeton Street include:

Phase 1 – Refreshing the existing marked crosswalk and adding right-turn only restrictions from Princton Street onto Santa Monica Boulevard, reinforced with pavement markings and flex posts. In addition, a new median island implemented with paint and bollards can shorten the profile of this intersection so that pedestrians would only need to cross one direction of traffic at a time and restrict left turn movements from Santa Monica Boulevard onto Princeton Street from the eastbound direction, but still allows them in the westbound direction.

Phase 2 - The painted median shall be constructed as a landscaped median with an additional flashing beacon in the center as well as pedestrian-level lighting. Curb ramps shall be reconstructed along the side streets to align pedestrian crossings.

Stanford Street at Santa Monica Boulevard was highlighted during the walk audit as having pedestrian-generating land use, such as small businesses near high density residential housing. There have been 15 collisions at this intersection over the last decade and the profile of the street at this intersection is the widest, approximately 76

feet (a width similar to Lincoln Boulevard). To support pedestrian activity and deter speeding drivers, recommendations at the intersection include:

Phase 1 - A new crosswalk at the east leg with flashing beacons and a median refuge implemented with paint and bollards. The median by-nature restricts one left turn lane on Santa Monica Boulevard which reduces turning movement conflicts much like the proposed right-turn only restrictions from the side streets.

Phase 2 – Formalizing the median refuge as a landscaped median and elongated to the entire profile of the center left turn lane, approximately 180 feet in length, and include low lying native vegetation as well as pedestrian level lighting at the crosswalk. These improvements are similar to unsignalized crossings along Wilshire Boulevard and can help narrow travel lanes; serving as a gateway feature as drivers enter Santa Monica. The design for this intersection and the eastern segment of Santa Monica boulevard (from Princeton Street to Centinela Avenue), supports a forthcoming peak-hour bus-only lane that is a portion of the full Santa Monica Boulevard corridor being studied under a separate project and coordinated by the Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSSCOG).

Franklin Street at Santa Monica Boulevard was identified as an area of focus through the online social pinpoint mapping survey where community members noted absence of crossing opportunities across Santa Monica Boulevard. According to the crash analysis, between 2015-2024, Franklin Street saw a total of 14 crashes at the intersection with one crash causing serious injury and 3 total crashes involved pedestrian, bicyclists, and/or scooters. Recommendations at Franklin Street are similar to Stanford Street and include:

Phase 1 - A new crosswalk at the west leg with a painted median refuge and flashing beacons. This intersection design also includes right-turn only restrictions from the side streets and removal of the eastbound left turn lane for the median.

Phase 2 – Formalizing the median refuge as a landscaped median and elongated to the entire profile of the center left turn lane. Curb ramps shall be reconstructed along the side streets to align pedestrian crossings.

While every intersection along Santa Monica Boulevard has recommended enhancements, the focus intersections require concept-level design plans to support funding applications.

Next Steps

The total estimated cost for design and construction of all improvements recommended in the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study is approximately $11,061,000 depending on materials, time frame, and other factors. If adopted, staff will identify local funding sources and opportunities (e.g. Measure K, Measure M, Transportation Impact Fees (TIF), Annual Repaving, the City General Fund, etc.) to roll out elements of the study with a focus on Phase 1 implementation. In a parallel effort, staff would prioritize recommended Phase 2 improvements for future grant funding opportunities. The Study concludes with an outline of potential competitive grant funding opportunities to support the implementation of this project (i.e. Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP), Caltrans Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Measure M, FTA Safe Streets for All (SS4A), etc.). As with most grant program requirements, adoption of a project plan such as the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study by City Council is an essential step for securing grant funds.

As Staff advances the Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study recommendations, staff will continue to provide project updates through the Take the Friendly Road Newsletter as well as the City's website and social media channels.

Environmental Review

The Santa Monica Boulevard Safety Study is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the CEQA Guidelines. Section 15301 exempts Class 1 (Existing Facilities) projects from CEQA, which includes the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The study identifies safety enhancements on existing street network, such as curb extensions, medians, crosswalk markings, and signal change, and would not expand or materially increase the capacity of the City's street network. Therefore, the safety study is categorically exempt as set forth in Section 15301 of the CEQA guidelines.

Financial Impacts and Budget Actions

There is no immediate additional financial impact or budget action necessary as a result of the recommended action. Staff will return to Council with specific budget actions associated with implementation and ongoing costs associated with the phased recommendations in the future.

Prepared By: Carlos Hernandez, Senior Transportation Planner - Bicycle Program

Approved	**Forwarded to Council**
Anuj Gupta, Director of Transportation 2/18/2026	Oliver Chi, City Manager 2/18/2026

Attachments:

A. A. Santa Monica Blvd Safety Study and Appendices
B. B. Santa Monica Local Roadway Safety Plan
C. C. SMBSS Funding Resolution
D. D. Santa Monica Blvd. Safety Study City Council Study Session
E. Written Comments
F. PowerPoint Presentation