

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

City of Huntington Beach General Plan Circulation Element Update

To: From: City of Huntington Beach
Planning Department
2000 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Huntington Beach, California 92648

Date: July 30, 2009

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report

The City of Huntington Beach is the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the project named above. The City requests a written response explaining the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering your permit or other approvals for the project. If you are not a public agency with any statutory responsibility concerning this project, please identify your environmental concerns and any suggested ways to avoid or reduce the impacts that pertain to this project.

The project description, location, and exhibits showing key aspects of the updated Circulation Element are provided in the attachments. A copy of the Initial Study is also attached. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, the City has identified the following topics for further analysis in an environmental impact report (EIR). Other impact issues were found to have no effects or would result in less than significant impacts.

Section	Topic	Question	Issues to be Addressed in EIR
I	Land Use and Planning	a	Consistency with the City's General Plan and Local Coastal Program
II	Population and Housing	b,c	Additional right-of-way impact on residential properties
V	Air Quality	a	Contribute to existing or potential violations of federal or state air quality standards
		b	Effects of vehicular emissions on sensitive receptors
		d	Consistency with the Transportation Control Measures in the Air Quality Management Plan
		e	Cumulative effects of emissions of criteria pollutants
VI	Transportation and Traffic	a	Potential traffic congestion impacts, consistency with Master Plan of Arterial Highways
		b	Effects on Congestion Management Plan facilities
		e	Potential emergency access impacts associated with deletion of roadways.
VII	Biological Resources	b,c	Potential adverse impacts to wetlands and riparian habitat due to roadway footprint expansion
X	Noise	a,c	Long range traffic volumes could generate roadway noise levels that exceed City's land use/noise compatibility standards
		b	Potential increase in groundborne vibrations due to truck traffic
XI.	Public Services	a	Potential response time impacts associated with deletion of planned roadways-need additional fire protection facilities?
XIV	Cultural Resources	b, c	Develop programmatic mitigation measure to ensure protection of important cultural and paleontological resources
XVII	Greenhouse Gases/Climate Change	b	Effects of proposed circulation system and traffic management plan on GHG emissions from transportation sources.

Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

In accordance with Section 15082(c)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City has scheduled a public scoping meeting to solicit comments on the scope and content of the Draft EIR. The meeting will take place on Thursday, August 20, 2009 (Session 1 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. and Session 2 from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. for your convenience) at:

City Council Chambers
City Hall
City of Huntington Beach
2000 Main St.
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than **30 days** after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to **Ricky Ramos, Senior Planner** at the address shown above. Please provide your name or the name of a contact person in your agency. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Ramos at (714) 536-5624 or via email at rramos@surfcity-hb.org.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit A: Project Description
- Exhibit B: Regional Location Map
- Exhibit C: Circulation Plan
- Exhibit D: Proposed Changes to Circulation Element
- Exhibit E: Proposed Changes to MPAH
- Exhibit F: Circulation Plan Proposed Improvements
Initial Study

Exhibit A

Project Description

The Project is the adoption and implementation of the City of Huntington Beach General Plan Circulation Element Update.

Purpose of the Circulation Element

The purpose of the Huntington Beach Circulation Element update is to evaluate the long-term transportation needs of the City and present a comprehensive plan to accommodate those needs. It is being designed to provide an efficient surface transportation system that will safely distribute the increased volumes of traffic forecast to occur over the next 20 to 25 years, and to achieve desired intersection levels of service that minimize congestion during peak travel periods. The Circulation Element is the foundation for the City's efforts to manage and minimize traffic congestion, manage safety on roadways, and provide travel alternatives to the automobile, as well as better access to regional travel routes. Accomplishing these objectives requires effective land use planning, roadway monitoring and improvement, transportation system and demand management, regional coordination, and commitment of resources.

Scope and Content of the Circulation Element

California Government Code Section 65302(b) requires a circulation element in all general plans, as follows:

A circulation element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan.

The proposed updated Circulation Element encompasses streets, highways, bicycle routes, equestrian facilities, paths, and sidewalks, as well as alternative modes of travel, including cars, buses, bicycles, and walking. Utilities systems are addressed within the Utilities Element of the General Plan. All other required circulation issues are addressed in this Element, organized into the following topics:

- Regional Mobility
- Roadway Circulation
- Neighborhood Traffic Management
- Public Transportation
- Transportation Demand Management and Air Quality
- Parking
- Pedestrian, Bicycle, Equestrian, and Waterway Facilities
- Scenic Corridors

Circulation Plan

The proposed Circulation Plan is attached as Exhibit C (Proposed Circulation Plan), and includes six roadway classifications, summarized in Table 1 (Roadway Characteristics). Some of the proposed classifications represent changes from the existing Circulation Element and the Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH), as summarized in Table 2 (Roadway Classification Changes). Proposed changes to the City's existing Circulation Element and the MPAH are mapped on Exhibit D (Proposed Changes to Circulation Element) and Exhibit E (Proposed Changes to MPAH).

Table 1 Proposed Roadway Classifications

Roadway Type	Right-of-Way (ROW)		No. of Lanes	Maximum Volume
	Total	Pavement		
Smart Street Arterial	Varies (120'-144')		6-8, divided	79,000
Principal Arterial	120'	104'	8, divided	65,000
Major Arterial	120'	104'	6, divided	50,000
Primary Arterial	100'	84'	4, divided	35,000
Secondary Arterial	80'	64'	4, undivided	25,000
Collector Arterial	Varies		2, undivided	12,500

Table 2 Proposed Roadway Classification Changes

Roadway Segments			Classifications		MPAH Facility?
Roadway	From	To	Current	Proposed	
17th St	PCH	Main St	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Algonquin St	Heil Ave	Warner Ave	Secondary Arterial	Aug. Collector	No
Argosy Ave	Bolsa Chica Ave	Graham St	Primary Arterial	Collector	Yes
Bolsa Chica Ave	Warner Ave	South City Limits	Major Arterial	Aug. Collector	No
Coldwater	Yorktown	Adams	Local	Collector	No
Delaware St	Ellis Ave	Atlanta Ave	Secondary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Edinger Ave	City limits	Bolsa Chica Ave	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Edinger Ave	Springdale St	Newland St	Major Arterial	Aug. Primary	No
Ellis Ave	Edwards St	Gothard St	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Ellis Ave	Gothard St	Delaware	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Garfield Ave	Edwards St	Goldenwest St	Major Arterial	Primary	Yes
Garfield Ave	Ward St	Santa Ana River	Primary Arterial	Reserved	No
Goldenwest St	Bolsa Ave	Garfield Ave	Major Arterial	Aug. Primary	No
Gothard St	Garfield Ave	Main St	Primary Arterial	Secondary	Yes
Graham St	Warner Ave	Slater Ave	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	No
Lake St	Yorktown Ave	Orange Ave	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Orange Ave	6th St	1st St	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Orange Ave	Goldenwest St	6th St	Collector-Secondary	Aug. Collector	Yes
Pacific View	1st St	Huntington St	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Palm Ave	Goldenwest St	17th St	Secondary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Saybrook Ave	Edinger Ave	Heil Ave	Secondary Arterial	Collector	No
Springdale St	Warner Ave	Talbert Ave	Primary Arterial	Secondary	Yes
Summit	Seapoint	Goldenwest St	Local	Collector	No
Talbert Ave	Springdale St	Edwards St	Primary Arterial	Collector	Yes
Varsity	Talbert Ave	Edwards St	Local	Collector	No
Walnut Ave	6th St	1st St	Primary Arterial	Aug. Collector	Yes
Warner Ave	PCH	Algonquin St	Major Arterial	Primary	Yes

* Aug. is an abbreviation for 'Augmented', which signifies flexibility in roadway design to be "context sensitive," while retaining the basic qualities of the classification.

Changes in roadway classifications are proposed to correspond more effectively to traffic volumes forecast for the year 2030. In addition to the proposed roadway classification changes, future intersection capacity improvements will be needed at the following locations, to meet the City's level of service performance standards:

- Gloldenwest St. @ Bolsa Ave.
- Beach Blvd. @ Heil Ave.
- Newland St. @ Warner Ave.
- Beach Blvd. @ Talbert Ave.
- Brookhurst St. @ Adams Ave.
- Beach Blvd. @ Warner Ave.
- Beach Blvd. @ Yorktown Ave.
- Gothard St. @ Talbert Ave.
- Wart St. @ Garfield Av.
- Brookhurst Street @ SR-1
- Beach Blvd. @ Edinger Ave.
- SR-1 @ Warner Ave.
- Goldenwest St. @ Slater Ave.
- Beach Blvd. @ Garfield Ave.
- Goldenwest St. @ SR-1
- Beach Blvd. @ Slater Ave.
- Gothard St. @ Slater Ave.
- Newland St. @ Talbert Ave.
- Newland St. @ Yorktown Ave.

Alternative Travel Modes

Bus Transit: Public transportation in the City of Huntington Beach mainly consists of bus service operated by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). In 2006, OCTA operated 19 routes through the City. The number of lines and routes are adjusted as needed in response to ridership patterns. OCTA and the City both operate demand response services. OCTA operates the ACCESS program. The City, with the aid of OCTA, operates the Senior Services Mobility Program. Future development of all or portions of the Southern Pacific Railroad corridor, including the existing active rail section, for transportation purposes may be pursued by the City in the future. Potential uses include development of a bicycle or multi-purpose trail or to function as an exclusive transit corridor. These options may be limited in some areas where portions of the corridor are no longer available for public use.

Pedestrian: Areas eligible for pedestrian focused improvements will be designated as Pedestrian Enhancement Zones (PEZs). PEZ improvements may include widened sidewalks, crosswalks, trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, and traffic calming measures. The City will establish a designation process for PEZs, coordinating with County and regional transportation agencies to assess the need for improved facilities and balance the demand for pedestrian facilities with the need to maintain adequate vehicular traffic flows. An expanded focus on pedestrian mobility and the creation of PEZs are new components of the Circulation Element, when compared to the existing 1996 Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter of the General Plan.

Bicycle: The proposed Circulation Element identifies a planned system of bikeways to accommodate growing demand and provide another alternative to the car for local trips. The plan establishes three classes of bicycle routes: Class I Bike Paths for off-road routes located along designated multi-use trails or vacated rail lines separated from streets, Class II Bike Lanes for on-road routes delineated by painted stripes and other identifying features, and Class III Bike Routes for on-road routes sharing use with pedestrians or motor vehicle traffic that are signed but not striped. The proposed Circulation Element expands on the existing bikeway plan by identifying bikeways that have been constructed since the adoption of the 1996 General Plan and designates additional routes that were not previously identified in the 1996 Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter.

Equestrian: Huntington Beach, despite its generally suburban character, has managed to retain a few residential neighborhoods where keeping horses is permitted, in the central portion of the City near Central Park and the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. To support equestrian activities, the City has developed horse trails around and through those neighborhoods, with a planned route west to Pacific Coast Highway. Visitors can use the trails on rented horses available at the Huntington Central Park Equestrian Center. The Circulation Element update does not propose any changes to the existing or planned equestrian trail system when compared with the existing Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter of the General Plan.

Scenic Corridors

Scenic corridors in Huntington Beach consist of roads that offer motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians attractive vistas and pleasing street scenes. The City has established policies regarding treatment of scenic corridor right-of-ways, selection criteria for appropriate surrounding land uses, and rigorous development review procedures to protect the aesthetic appeal of these corridors. The City defines three types of scenic corridors: Major Urban Scenic Corridors that offer views of either natural or built environments, Minor Urban Scenic Corridors that carry less traffic than Major corridors, and Landscape Corridors that require specific treatment of signage, landscaping, or other details to reinforce the design continuity of the area. Scenic corridors are regulated by design standards contained in the existing Urban Design Element. The proposed Circulation Element includes reclassification of secondary entry nodes to primary entry nodes at the intersections of Magnolia Street at Garfield Avenue and Magnolia Street at Pacific Coast Highway and the designation of Garfield Avenue as a landscape corridor.

Implementation Programs

The primary implementing programs of the existing General Plan are proposed to remain in place in the Circulation Element update. These programs include monitoring of land use changes that affect the circulation system, the adequacy of emergency response, and intercity and regional bikeway connectivity. Programs related to development review and implementation of scenic highway planning, transportation demand management, parking, interagency cooperation, regional planning, and signage will also remain in place. Additional implementing programs, referred to as "Technical Administrative Reports," or "TAR's," are now proposed to support the proposed PEZ policies, to solve neighborhood level traffic problems, enhance maintenance of scenic corridors, monitor traffic conditions and ensure timely intersection and roadway improvements.



Regional Context Map

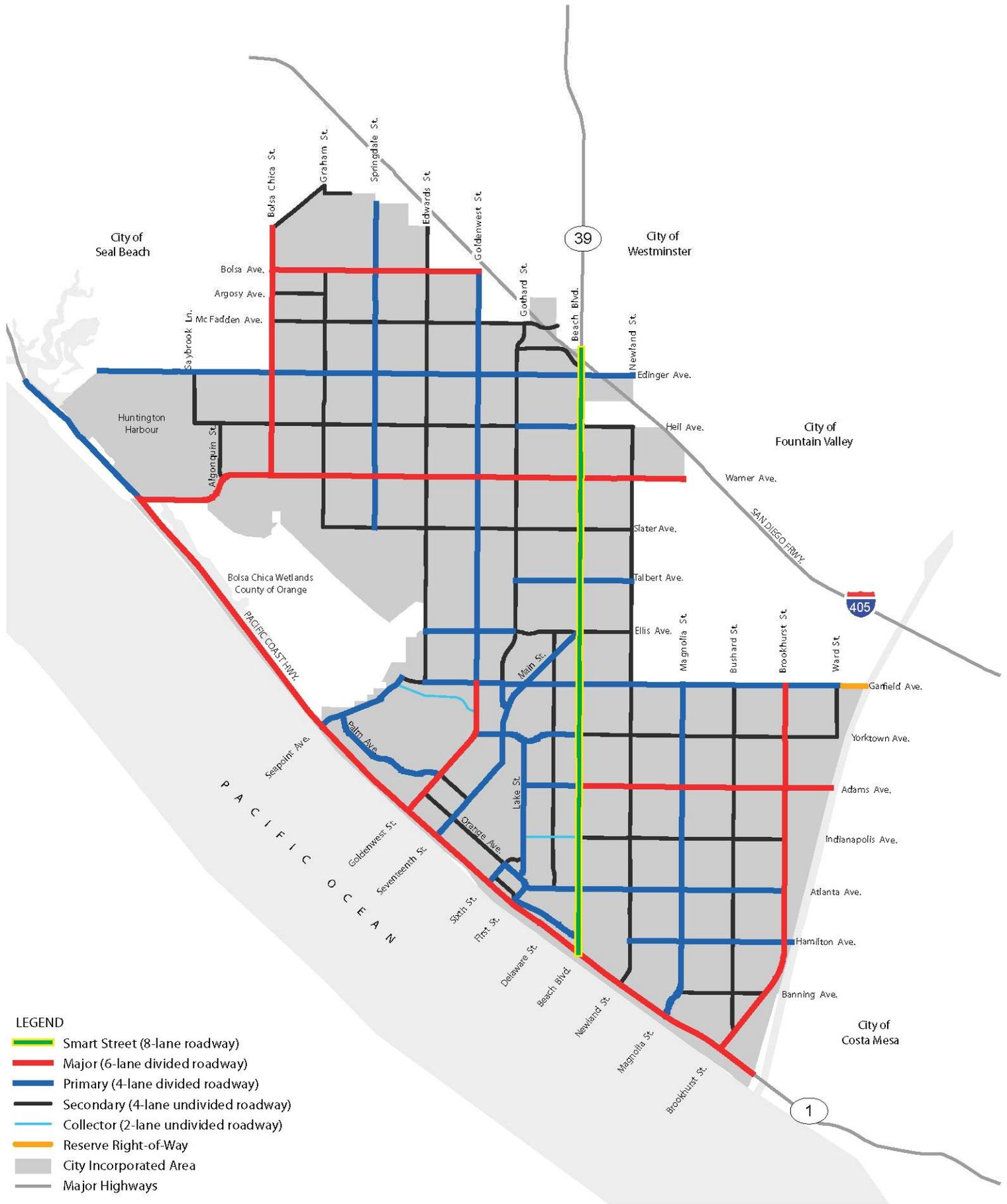


Vicinity Map



Exhibit B: Regional Context & Vicinity Maps

Huntington Beach Circulation Element
Huntington Beach, CA



- LEGEND**
- Smart Street (8-lane roadway)
 - Major (6-lane divided roadway)
 - Primary (4-lane divided roadway)
 - Secondary (4-lane undivided roadway)
 - Collector (2-lane undivided roadway)
 - Reserve Right-of-Way
 - City Incorporated Area
 - Major Highways



Exhibit C: Proposed Circulation Plan

Huntington Beach Circulation Element
Huntington Beach, CA

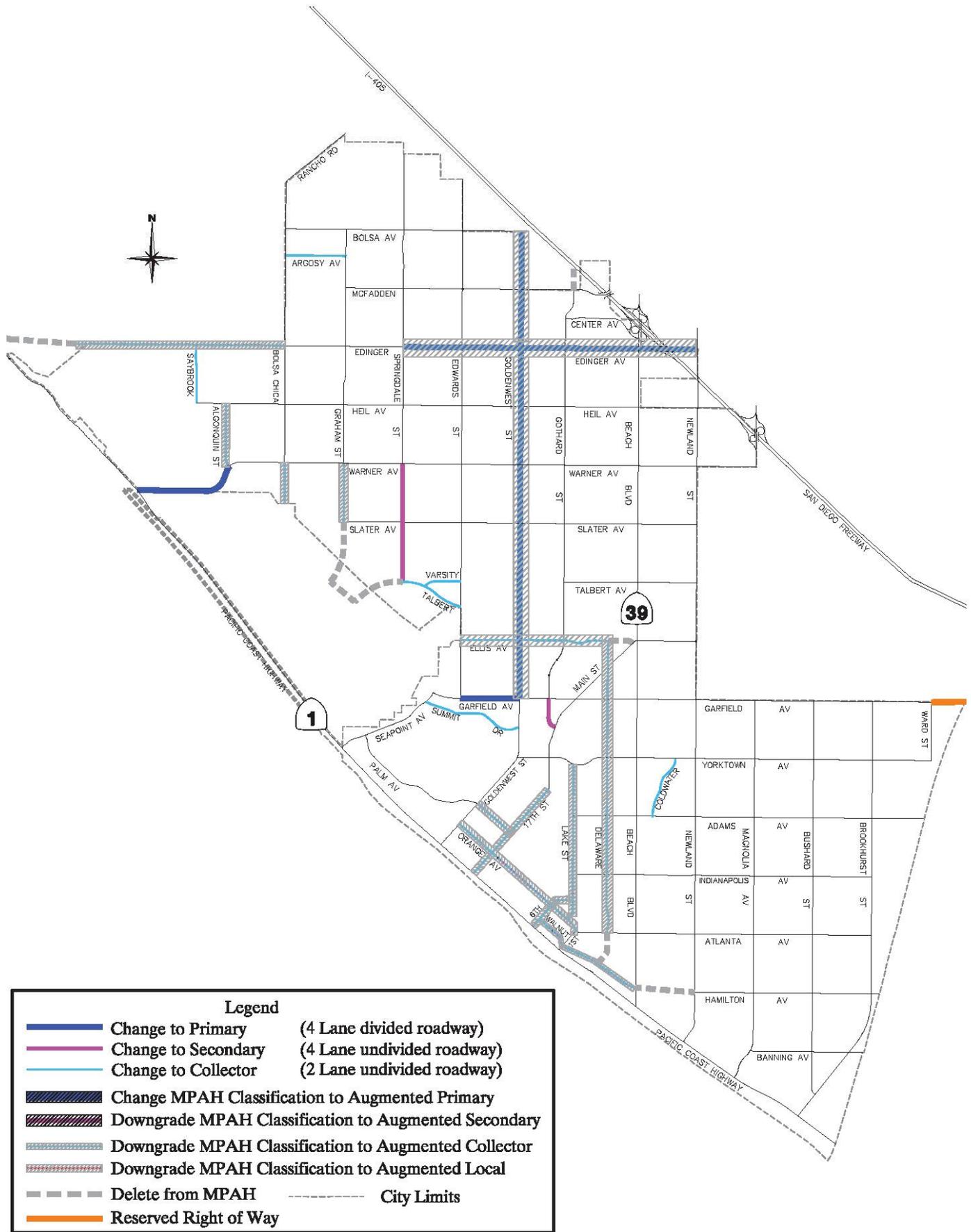


Exhibit D: Proposed Changes to Circulation Element

Source: Austin-Foust Associates, Inc. 2009

Huntington Beach Circulation Element
Huntington Beach, CA



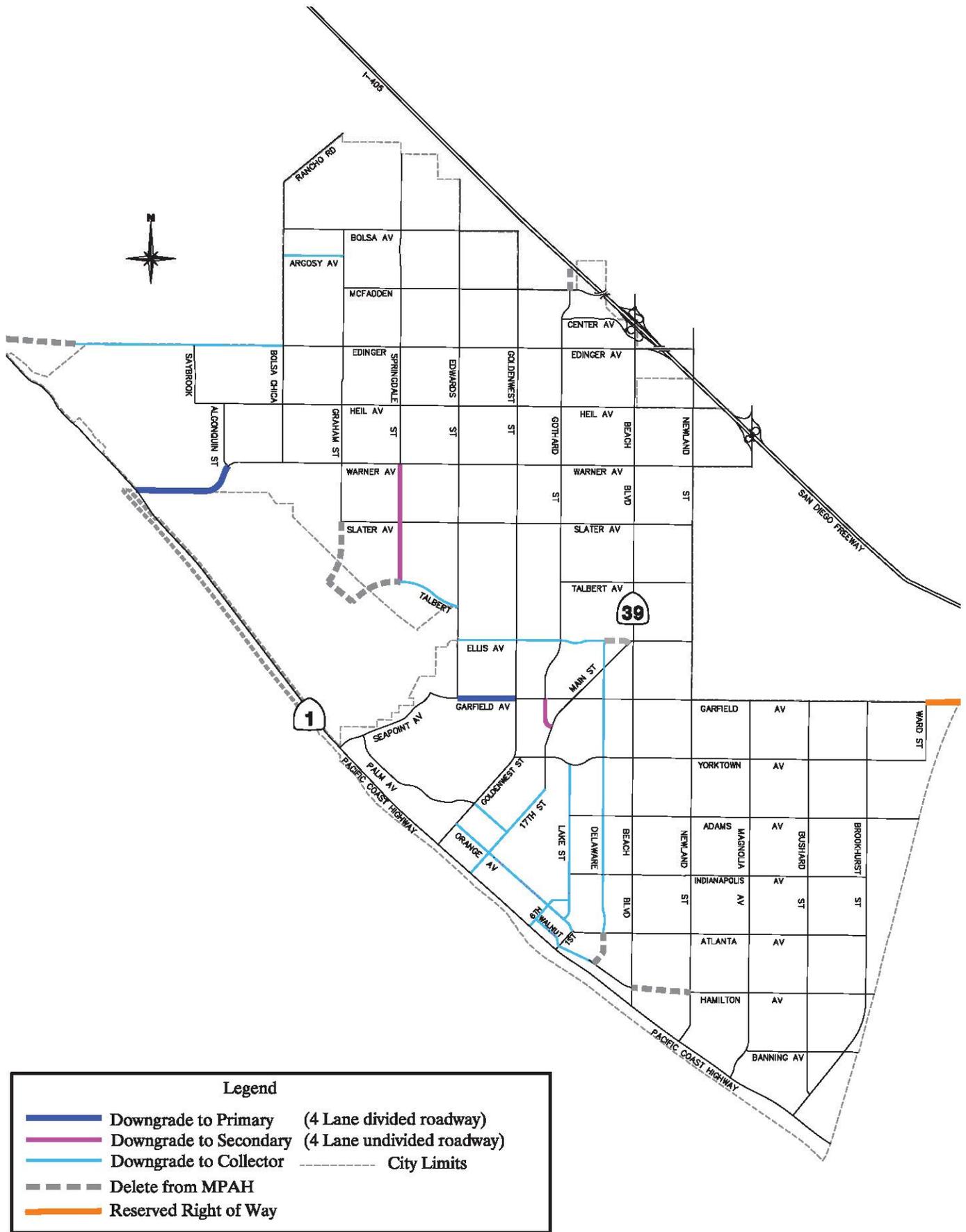


Exhibit E: Proposed Changes to MPAH

Source: Austin-Foust Associates, Inc. 2009

Huntington Beach Circulation Element
 Huntington Beach, CA



