



CITY OF IONE CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



FOR THE MEETING OF: APRIL 7, 2009

DATE: APRIL 3, 2009

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: CHRISTOPHER JORDAN, AICP, CITY PLANNER
DANIEL HAMILTON, AICP, GENERAL PLAN PROJECT MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE - POLICY DISCUSSION ON
CIRCULATION: FOLLOW UP**

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Receive staff's presentation;
2. Take public comment; and
3. Provide policy direction to the General Plan team to lower the level of service (LOS) threshold for select roadways as follows:
 - Citywide – LOS E, if the circulation analysis indicates that LOS D will not be sufficient
 - Preston, Main, Church, and Ione Streets – LOS F
 - Parkways (Golf Links Drive, WIRIS Segments F, G, H, and I) – LOS D

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Plan Services Impact Fees; Loans from various other funds.

TYPE OF ITEM:
 _____ Consent
 _____ Departmental
 _____ Public Hearing
 _____ Other _____

City Council for the City of Ione
 Upon motion of Council Member
 Seconded by Council Member
 And carried _____ by those members present,
 The Council hereby adopts the recommended action contained in this report.

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Council Order No. _____

Dated: _____

Meeting of: _____

Janice Traverso, City Clerk

By: _____

BACKGROUND:

As part of the General Plan update, the City's circulation plans are being updated. The primary purpose of this circulation update is to ensure that future roadway planning recognizes and reflects decisions with regard to land use. However, it also provides an opportunity to critically evaluate the City's circulation policies for consistency with the overall vision of the community.

On February 17, 2009, staff presented the City Council and Planning Commission with an overview of circulation planning and key circulation policy issues. At the meeting, the Council identified a number of policy directions; in doing so, this enabled staff to continue work on the General Plan Update and advance the traffic analysis. This analysis looks at the potential impacts to the City's roadway system based upon the proposed land uses identified in the preferred land use plan. From this analysis, the necessary sizing of roadway facilities can be determined. These sizing needs are based upon the level of service (LOS) policies established by the Council.

ANALYSIS:

The quality of vehicle traffic operations is expressed in terms of level of service (LOS) ranging from LOS A (best) to LOS F (worst). Level of service is measured for a road segment in terms of the traffic volume in relation to its functional capacity. The capacity of a road segment is influenced by many factors including lane width, shoulder width, terrain type, proportion of trucks, peaking characteristics, and ability to pass. To determine LOS, the traffic volumes were compared to design capacity of a given roadway. The LOS thresholds are generally defined as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Level of Service Description

Level of Service	Description
A	Represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream.
B	Stable flow, but the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable.
C	Stable flow, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interaction with others in the traffic stream.
D	Represents high density, but stable flow.
E	Represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level.
F	Represents forced or breakdown flow.

At the February 17 meeting, the Council identified a tiered LOS policy as follows:

Table 2
LOS Policy Identified at February 17, 2009 Meeting

Location	LOS Policy
Generally Citywide	LOS D
Preston Avenue from Sutter Lane to Main Street Main Street from Sacramento Street to Ione Street Church Street from Main Street to just past Washington Street Ione Street from Main Street to just past Foothill Boulevard	LOS E
WIRIS Segments F, G, H, and I Golf Links Drive (referred to as “Parkways” at the February 17 meeting)	LOS C

Citywide Standard

Initial results of the traffic analysis indicate that the LOS C policy identified above might not create a significant demand for additional travel lanes on existing roadway segments as a result of the preferred land use plan. Additional analysis currently pending will finalize this assessment. More information will be presented when the Circulation Element is formally released in a few weeks. However, in the event that the analysis indicates that there will be an issue with the selected LOS level, staff recommends that the Council provide policy direction to staff to lower the threshold to LOS D, prior to finalizing the draft Circulation Element.

Preston/Main/Church/Ione Streets Standard

For Preston Avenue and Main, Church, and Ione Streets, in order to maintain a LOS policy of E, a minimum of four travel lanes would be required, particularly along the Preston Avenue Bridge. While the Council indicated a desire for the LOS E policy, staff also understood that maintaining the existing sidewalks and right-of-way widths in this area of the City to be of equal or greater concern. Given the initial results of the circulation analysis, these two directions are in conflict and staff needs additional direction from the Council in order to keep the process moving.

There are three options available to the Council.

1. First, the Council could direct staff to include more crossings of Sutter Creek within the circulation network – either east or west of the Preston Avenue Bridge. Doing so would provide more route options for residents and provide greater mobility within the community. However, the City has explored additional crossing in the past, such as part of the Edgebrook and Castle Oaks development projects, and these crossings were eventually removed for a number of reasons, most notably because of the potential impacts they would have on existing neighborhoods. Further, the cost associated with constructing any of these crossings are not fully known at this time but would likely cost several million dollars each. Funding for these crossings has not been identified and would need to be as part of the City’s next Capital Improvement Plan. Therefore, staff is not recommending this option.

2. The second option looks at modifying the previous Council direction and requiring nothing greater than LOS F on the Preston/Main/Church/Ione segments. In doing so, the City would be accepting increased traffic congestion on these roadways but clearly identifying that the benefits of doing so (e.g., eliminating the need for a new bridge, flexibility to maintain or expand sidewalks, no requirement for intersection signalization) outweigh the impacts. This would not preclude the City from adding additional travel or turn lanes or signalizing an intersection at a later date – rather it would ensure the City had the flexibility to decide on a case-by-case basis by not requiring it. *This is the option recommended by staff.*
3. A third option available to the Council would be a combination of the first two. This would give the City the flexibility to design and construct additional crossings if funding is identified at a later date, but also not box the City into a higher standard that would require roadway improvements that could impact the quality of life. If the Council would like to pursue this third option, the bridge crossings would need to be identified as part of the Circulation Plan. If the Council would like to move forward with this option, staff would recommend that the crossings included in the General Plan Circulation Plan include both of the following roadways:
 - Fairway Drive, extended south to West Marlette; and
 - North Arroyo Seco, extended north to Highway 124 (Alternatively, North Ione Street could be extended north to Highway 124, but it would require the demolition of a number of existing homes. This connection would be more natural from a circulation perspective.)

Parkway Standard

For the WIRIS Segments F, G, H, and I and Golf Links Drive (the Parkways), the Council has identified a policy of LOS C. In doing so, the Council identified a desire to ensure efficient vehicular mobility on these segments, but had also identified a desire, from a global, citywide, perspective, for a circulation system that reflected the values and scale of the community. The LOS C standard may be achievable without developing six-lane roadways for these segments; however the preliminary analysis has a borderline conclusion. Unless the Council identifies otherwise, staff's understanding is that six-lane roadways are not appropriate for Ione.

The Council could do one of two things:

1. Maintain the previous policy direction of LOS C and clarify for staff that efficient mobility, on these segments, is the paramount concern. There would likely be added costs to developers and local and regional traffic impact fee funds in order to implement this standard should the final analysis indicate that six-lane facilities for some segments may be needed. These costs are unknown at this time and would need to be determined as part of the City's next Capital Improvement Plan. Therefore, staff is not recommending this option.
2. Modify the LOS policy from C to D. Doing so will ensure that these facilities are sized to no more than four-lanes. Policies could be included to ensure that

adequate right-of-way is acquired as part of development projects for a larger future facility, but by lowering the standard the Council would be indicating that phased implementation of roadway improvements based upon demand is the preferred approach for future enhancements to these segments. *This is the option recommended by staff.*

FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs of completing the General Plan Update are being financed through the General Plan Services Impact Fee and loans from various other funds. The project remains on schedule and on budget.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Development of the new General Plan is a City-led effort. For purposes of circulation planning, while the City Planning and City Manager have had the most direct involvement, the City Engineer will provide review of the draft policies and programs. ACTC has been involved as the regional transportation planning agency, particularly as part of the WIRIS project. Staff from Caltrans have conducted a preliminary review of the traffic model methodology and will review the outcomes of the modeling when the draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report are publically available. City staff is working with Caltrans staff to addresses their concerns during the development of the General Plan so as to limit conflicts in planning facilities later on and ensure that the August 2009 deadline for project completion is maintained.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

There are no other alternatives to staff's recommendation.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the General Plan Update process focus on the public roll-out of the draft General Plan. This will occur at a joint City Council-Planning Commission meeting on April 21. Two additional joint meetings in May will focus on review of the elements. These meetings will occur on May 5 and May 19.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Circulation Map