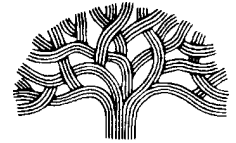


CITY OF OAKLAND



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Transportation Services Division

August 6, 2001

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Ms. Shelley I. Rowe
Director, Office of Transportation Operations
Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh St., SW (HOTO, Room 3401)
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Countdown Pedestrian Signals

Dear Ms. Rowe:

The City of Oakland requests permission to experiment with pedestrian countdown signals at ten (10) intersections. This request letter follows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines, including *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) 1A-10 Manual Changes, Interpretations and Authority to Experiment. We have already obtained authorization from the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC), contingent on a comprehensive evaluation and seeking federal authorization.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Improving pedestrian safety on city streets continues to receive one of the highest priorities in the City of Oakland. The City has a substantially large number of school age children, seniors and disabled citizens. These groups largely depend on walking as their primary mode of transportation. Although the City has developed and implemented many programs aimed at increased mobility and enhanced safety for pedestrians, more needs to be done since pedestrian accidents and resulting injuries continue to be a concern to the City and its residents.

It is anticipated that use of pedestrian countdown signal heads will clarify what conventional WALK and DON'T WALK signals do not necessarily convey. Since experimental pedestrian countdown signals have been installed in several California cities, including San Francisco, South San Francisco, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, and Monterey, we assume that FHWA is quite familiar with the devices and does not require a technical description or illustration.

PROPOSED LOCATIONS

Following an approval from the CTCDC, the City's Public Works Agency (PW A) has identified the following ten (10) locations for the experimental installations:

1. 40th Street/Telegraph Avenue
2. 14th Street/Madison Street
3. Broadway/MacArthur Boulevard
4. Fruitvale Avenue/MacArthur Boulevard
5. Foothill Boulevard/Fruitvale Avenue
6. Foothill Boulevard/Havenscourt Boulevard/Camden Street 7.
Edes Avenue/98th Avenue
8. International Boulevard/35th Avenue
9. 8th Street/Webster Street
10. *lih* Street/Broadway

These locations have been approved by the City Council at its July 24, 2001 Council meeting. The selection was based on the following criteria:

- Street width and crossing time issues
- High traffic and pedestrian volumes (with Average Daily Traffic volumes on each street generally over 10,000 and significant pedestrian peak hour volumes)
- Accident history indicating pedestrian injuries and fatalities
- Community input
- Proximity to specific land uses such as senior centers, visitor attractions, etc.
- High visibility to the public
- Variety of users and settings (for comparison purposes)

We will provide detailed information on these locations and selection criteria in the evaluation reports.

INSTALLATION AND EVALUATION

Currently, the City is exploring funding for these experimental installations. It is anticipated that adequate funding will be secured within the next several weeks. Once the funding is identified, we anticipate completing the installation in about six to nine months. A study of "before" conditions will be completed during this period.

Once the countdown signal heads are installed, an "after" study will be conducted to see how it has affected and benefited the driver and pedestrian behavior. This study will be conducted after 3-4 months of installation to assure that the data is collected after somewhat normal conditions resume after initial shift. A comprehensive report will be prepared and submitted to the FHW A and CTCDC once the study is complete.

The experiment, including preparation and submission of the report, will take approximately 18 months to complete. The City plans to provide regular status reports to FHW A and CTCDC.

We agree to monitor the impact of the experiment. If there are problems with the devices, we agree to remove them within three months of completion of the experiment. If the experiment directly or indirectly creates significant safety hazards, we will remove the equipment immediately.

We look forward to receiving FHW A's approval so that we can proceed with this experimental installation and evaluation. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at (510) 238-3469.

Very truly yours,

Amit Kothari, P.E. Transportation
Services Manager

Cc: Raymond Mellen, CTCDC Chairman
Merry Banks, CSAA