



## **STAFF REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

**DATE:** Regular Meeting of June 23, 2026

**TO:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Patrick Tang, Interim City Manager  
Chris Morris, Acting Public Works Director

**SUBJECT:** Installation of Stop Signs at Intersections on John Muir Parkway to Increase Traffic and Pedestrian Safety.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Approve a resolution directing the installation of stop signs as follows: 1) change the intersection of Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way and John Muir Parkway from a 2-way stop to a 4-way stop; 2) place a stop sign at the end of John Muir Parkway before the left turn onto Bayfront Boulevard; and 3) place a stop sign at the end of Bayfront Boulevard before the right turn onto John Muir Parkway. The benefits of placing stop signs in these locations include slower auto speeds, increased visibility for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians, safer crossing of streets for pedestrians at identified crosswalks, and increased driver courtesy and awareness.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The related issues of pedestrian safety and the mitigation of traffic speed have been a concern for the residents of Hercules who live in the vicinity of John Muir Parkway. As a response, staff consulted with Kimley-Horn, an independent traffic engineering firm, to study the data and make recommendations, particularly in regard to the intersection of John Muir Parkway and Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way (Attachment 1). The study concluded that the conditions at the intersection of John Muir Parkway and Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way did not meet the strict warrant requirements for placement of the proposed additional stop signs and recommended other traffic calming measures which involved significant construction costs.

Kimley-Horn's memorandum and recommended improvements were presented to the City Traffic Safety Subcommittee at their April 2, 2025, meeting. The subcommittee recommended the installation of the proposed improvements, including new striping, pavement markings, and speed feedback signs as described and shown in Attachment 1. The anticipated work has been postponed due to the cost of the project.

The result of not receiving a “warrant” pursuant to an independent traffic study is that a citation issued for failure to stop might be subject to challenge and could be dismissed at the discretion of the traffic court. Despite this, City staff believes that placement of the proposed 4-way stop signs at this location is prudent and justified by local knowledge of site-specific conditions. Furthermore, staff’s research into similar practices in other Bay Area cities indicates that other cities have installed all-way stops without engineering studies because they have made the same determination that increased pedestrian and vehicular safety is of greater importance.

In addition to the intersection of John Muir Parkway and Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way, staff have identified two other locations that were not part of the Kimley-Horn study but which in the opinion of City staff, require single stop signs to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety. These two additional locations are included in the discussion below.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The Police Department and Public Works have made it a priority to continually collaborate on issues related to pedestrian safety and mitigation of traffic speeds. On the enforcement side, the Police Department considers traffic safety one of the highest priority public safety issues. The enforcement of traffic laws is key to ensuring residents, as well as those who may not live in the City of Hercules but travel through it, adhere to the rules of the road and operate their vehicles in a safe manner.

On the Public Works side, physical improvements to our street infrastructure are designed to promote higher levels of safety. Examples include the installation of a speed-reading sign on a long stretch of Sycamore Avenue leading to the Waterfront, intended to slow traffic just before the roadway bisects two busy parks frequented by families and children, and the placement of two traffic circles (roundabouts) on Hercules Avenue to reduce speed. However, more work is required as the discussion for improved pedestrian and vehicular safety continues. The proposed improvements detailed in this report have been selected on a priority basis. Ultimately, all the proposed locations were vetted by the Police Department and Public Works through a process of collaborative discussion and observations.

Proposed improvements on John Muir Parkway have also been discussed at the City Council’s Traffic Safety Subcommittee. Criteria for locations in need of traffic calming measures include known regular walking routes of residents seeking exercise, children on bikes and scooters, known problematic intersections, areas of roadway that are conducive to speeding due to their design and layout, city staff observations, and complaints from residents and businesses regarding speeding and reckless driving. The following is a brief analysis and justification for the installation of the proposed improvements at each intersection.

- 1) Intersection of John Muir Parkway and Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way. This intersection currently provides a two-way stop for traffic entering John Muir Parkway from Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way. It has been one of the most discussed intersections by the local neighborhood. John Muir Parkway is a convergent point for traffic from multiple directions, it is a through-route for vehicular traffic to major destination points in and out of town, and because it is a wide roadway, tends to promote high traffic speeds. It has been problematic for pedestrians from the adjacent Muir Point and Bayside neighborhoods who are crossing John Muir Parkway at Tsushima Street/Yosemite Way, primarily due to traffic speeds.

An all-way stop at this intersection would slow traffic speed as vehicles come from and head towards San Pablo Avenue and connections to I-80 and Highway 4. This proposal would add two (2) new stops on John Muir Parkway to create the all-way stop at the intersection of John Muir Parkway and Tsushima Street.

- 2) John Muir Parkway Left Turn onto Bayfront Boulevard. Currently, vehicles travelling down John Muir Parkway to its endpoint at the Waterfront must make a 90-degree turn onto Bayfront Boulevard. There is no stop sign in this location. However, there is considerable pedestrian traffic entering and exiting The Exchange, a multi-story mixed use development spanning the block with its main entrance on the corner of Bayfront and John Muir Parkway. In addition, there are customers frequenting various commercial establishments that are close to the intersection who enter and exit their parked vehicles along both sides of the street. At any given time, there are vehicles driving slowly with drivers looking for limited parking spaces along Bayfront and John Muir Parkway, while through-traffic travelling at higher speeds attempts to maneuver around the slower traffic. A pedestrian crosswalk spans Bayfront Boulevard, near The Exchange entrance, located just past the point vehicles make the left turn from John Muir Parkway onto Bayfront Boulevard.

Based on valuable input from the neighborhood, shop owners, and the observations of city staff, it has been pointed out that delivery vehicles are frequently parked around the entrance to The Exchange and on either side of the pedestrian crosswalk, obscuring visibility and leaving pedestrians vulnerable to through-traffic turning left unimpeded onto Bayfront Boulevard. Add to this a concentration of pedestrians and bicyclists accessing the trailhead to the Bay Trail, also located adjacent to this intersection, and it presents a challenging environment for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians converging on and around this intersection.

It should be noted that without a stop sign at the end of John Muir Parkway, through-traffic currently proceeds through the left hand turn directly into the pedestrian crosswalk which, as previously mentioned, may be partially obscured by the presence of delivery trucks. Through-traffic travelling in excess of the speed limit towards the terminus of John Muir Parkway and turning left onto Bayfront Boulevard has been frequently observed, and with no stop required, drivers often maintain a high rate of speed through the left turn onto Bayfront, putting pedestrians and bicyclists at risk. Even when negotiating the turn at the speed limit, there is the potential for blocked views of pedestrians attempting to cross Bayshore Boulevard at the existing crosswalk when delivery trucks are double parked. A stop sign at the end of John Muir Parkway where it meets Bayfront Boulevard is required in order to avoid vehicles from turning left onto Bayshore Boulevard unimpeded.

3) Bayfront Blvd right turn onto John Muir Parkway Currently, vehicles travelling down Bayfront Boulevard to its endpoint must make a 90-degree right turn onto John Muir Parkway. There is no stop sign in this location. This presents the same situation as the left turn onto Bayfront Blvd from John Muir Parkway discussed in No. 2 above; indeed it is the same intersection approached from the opposite direction. For all the reasons discussed in No. 2 above, a stop sign in this location would prevent through traffic from travelling unimpeded through an often crowded and confusing intersection with visibility of pedestrians and other vehicles potentially blocked by commercial vehicles loading or unloading close to the crosswalks, and food delivery drop offs to residents of The Exchange.

If the Council authorizes the placement of additional stop signs in the above identified locations, staff will provide notice to adjacent residents at least 10 business days prior to installation. In addition, Staff will continue to work on additional roadway improvements in the area, including but not limited to those recommended in the Kimley- Horn traffic study such as restriping and road narrowing options to provide additional traffic calming along the length of John Muir Parkway.

Section 3-4.401 of the Hercules Municipal Code grants the Public Works Director the authority to install traffic control devices if the Council does not require its own express authorization. While the Hercules Municipal Code does not expressly require City Council authorization for stop sign placement at this location, the Public Works Director has not historically placed stop signs absent support of a warrant study. Accordingly, staff accordingly desires that the City Council confirm that stop signs are appropriate for these locations to protect public health and safety.

## **CONCLUSION**

To enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists alike, staff recommends that the Council approve placement of the proposed additional stop signs at the areas identified in this report.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed installation of stop signs at various locations is intended to enhance traffic safety and improve pedestrian protection within the community. The estimated cost for this project is \$5,000. Funding for this initiative has been allocated within the Annual Street Repair segment of the FY 2025-26 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). There is adequate budgetary balance to cover the expenses associated with this project.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Kimley-Horn Report
2. Resolution