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Tweaking Signal Timing on Pleasant Hill Road

By Cathy Tyson



Photo C. Tyson

Looking to reduce overall travel time along the Pleasant Hill Road corridor, Lafayette lawmakers recently approved a three month, \$20,000 study to "enhance operations" on the northern portion of this busy thoroughfare. The study will look at existing conditions during the peak morning and afternoon commute timeframes and develop ways to improve the frustrating situation.

Analysis of peak hour car volumes, along with pedestrian and bicyclist counts will be made at five intersections along Pleasant Hill Road: at Deer Hill Road and Stanley Boulevard, at Springhill Road, at Reliez Valley Road, at Greenvalley Drive and at Rancho View Drive.

Delays, queue lengths, individual cycle length for traffic lights at each intersection, along with coordinating signal timing along Pleasant Hill Road to help alleviate congestion, will all be examined by consultant TJKM to find the best solution for optimal traffic signal timing that is specific to the time of day.

"Congestion on both Pleasant Hill Road and Deer Hill Road has gotten noticeably worse than it was even two or three years ago, and it's not because of development in Lafayette, because we haven't developed that much in the last couple years," said Council Member Don Tatzin. "It's really traffic coming in from other communities." He suggested holding a workshop with the Circulation Commission at Springhill Elementary School and inviting the neighborhood to share their observations and feedback with the study consultants.

In addition to traffic coming from beyond the city limits, Acalanes High School and Springhill Elementary School have a combined total of over 1,800 students, as well as teachers and staff that add to the gridlock on a daily basis.

School start times will be part of the mix that consultants need to consider to figure out the best congestion solution, however both nearby campus start times are fairly close together. Learning begins for Period 1 at Acalanes promptly at 8 a.m., while just up the street at Springhill Elementary, kindergarteners in the early section start at 8:15 a.m. and students in first through fifth grade start at 8:30 a.m. ... continued on page A12

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