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August 19, 2021

## **FOOTHILL TRAILS DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

Ms. Seleta Reynolds, General Manager  
Los Angeles Department of Transportation  
Via email: [ladot@lacity.org](mailto:ladot@lacity.org)

Re: Foothill Blvd. Equestrian Safety Shoulder Expansion Project – Lake View Terrace

Dear Ms. Reynolds,

At the Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council General Board meeting held on August 19, 2021, the Board voted \_\_\_For, \_\_\_Against,\_\_\_Abstain, to submit the following comments regarding the Equestrian Safety Shoulder Expansion project on Foothill Blvd. in Lake View Terrace.

The safety of equestrians on our streets is of utmost importance to our community. The Equestrian Safety Shoulder Expansion project on Foothill Blvd. was initiated by Councilwoman Rodriguez, in order to increase safety for equestrians on Foothill in light of the accident where two equestrians were struck by a vehicle and seriously injured, and the horses they were riding were tragically killed. Foothill Blvd. through Lake View Terrace is an Official Equestrian Trail, which means equestrians will be riding horses along this street, and their protection while doing so is important. While we are grateful for the efforts to increase safety for riders through the expansion of the shoulder, we feel some parts of the project have created unintended consequences, unfortunately resulting in some negative impacts on equestrians, and the greater community:

1. Upon approaching Wentworth Street while heading east on Foothill, the street is now reduced to one lane, prior to reaching Wentworth Street. Prior to the change, the right lane was continuous until the Wentworth intersection where it became a right turn only lane. This allowed vehicles turning right to proceed through without waiting behind vehicles going straight on Foothill. The community was promised no lane reductions would be part of this project, but in this short stretch, the street does in fact reduce to one lane in this direction. This creates a bottleneck situation right before the intersection where all vehicles must merge into one lane. This lane reduction is causing

traffic to back up during normal commuting hours on weekday mornings. In the event of an emergency, like what was experienced during the Creek Fire, the backup caused by this lane reduction, will have an adverse impact on evacuees, particularly with horse trailers. The second lane going all the way through and becoming the right turn lane needs to be restored.

2. Most of the area where the shoulder has been expanded is now designated as no vehicle parking on the street in order to leave that shoulder space open for horses and other users of the shoulder. A large portion of the south side of Foothill between Christy and Wheatland, which is the exact location where the tragic accident took place, does not currently have no parking signs, which has resulted in many vehicles, including large trucks, continuing to park in the shoulder on a daily basis. As a result, the newly expanded shoulder in this location is not passable without entering into the vehicle traffic lane. No parking signs need to be installed and enforced at this location.
3. On the north side of Foothill between Wentworth and Wheatland, a designated bike lane has been installed instead of an expanded shoulder. Unfortunately this has created a hazard for equestrians on the street because more bicyclists are now riding on this street, and there is not a safe separate path for equestrians. There have already been a number of incidents where horses have been spooked by bicyclists, which has caused some horses to step out into the traffic lane, or to bump into the bollards, which only increased the panic of the horses. Another point to be aware of is that horse riders will typically travel in both directions on a bridle path, but now that the shoulder space has been turned into an official bike lane, it's particularly dangerous to ride in the direction opposite traffic, because a bike can be heading straight towards a horse in a narrow space. The stretch between Esko and Wheatland has particularly heavy equestrian traffic as there are a number of ranches on the north side of Foothill in this location, and the riders must make their way to Wheatland in order to access the Hansen Dam Trails.
4. The "HORSE XING" text painted on the road at the current crossings is noted on the plans to be removed. We would like to see the text remain as it increases awareness that horses are on the street in the area.
5. The shoulder area approach to Osborne heading west is particularly wide, and there doesn't appear to be any reason for it, because there is an existing bridle path in this location. This reduces the size of the traffic lane significantly making it difficult to drive a horse trailer or other large vehicle through this section.
6. The left turn lane heading onto Orcas Avenue from Foothill is not wide enough for most standard trucks to fit within the space. This turn lane should be restriped to expand the width.
7. Upon turning right from Orcas Ave on the north side, heading West on Foothill, the first bollard is too close to the intersection, causing larger vehicles to swing further out into Foothill Blvd, when exiting. This could be remedied by removing the first bollard.

We appreciate your attention to these areas of concern. We look forward to working with you to continue to improve safety for all users of Foothill Blvd., in particular for equestrians, as this is one of the few remaining horsekeeping areas in the city.

Sincerely,

Kevin Davis  
President FTDNC

cc: Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez