

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: February 12, 2020
TO: Mayor and Councilmembers
Cc: Jerene Watson, City Manager; Dawn Prince, Deputy City Manager; Leadership Team
FROM: Kraig Fullen, Chief of Police
SUBJECT: Background on Unified Cargo/Transit/Taxi

The following information is being provided for background regarding traffic control changes that were implemented to support the Unified Cargo Inspection Program for Customs Border Protection in 2016/2017.

DISCUSSION:

In late 2016 City staff worked with CBP officials to identify a suitable location to support the Unified Cargo Inspection Program at the Raul Castro Port of Entry. The location had to provide ample space for staging of commercial truck traffic while also providing direct line of sight for Mexican Officials to witness the trucks entering the queue southbound into Mexico and without creating additional traffic concerns or hazards to the southbound traffic queue. The 200-300 block of 1st Street was identified as a suitable location.

In implementing the change, the existing Transit stop which was located in front of the former City Parking Lot (which had since been donated to CBP) had to be relocated. In reviewing the available options, the existing pull-out located on the west side of the parking lot, adjacent to Customs Avenue, proved to be the best option. The relocation resulted in the displacement of the various taxi companies using the pull-out for staging. The southeast corner of 1st Street and Customs Avenue was identified as a suitable location and directly across from where they had been staged previously. The area was formerly designated as 30-minute parking. At the time the building at this location was unoccupied.

Following the changes, taxi owners expressed concerns that they are no longer visible to pedestrians entering the US from Mexico which they report has had a negative impact on their business. They have also had issues with their designated parking space being utilized by other motorists. Most recently, the building at the southeast corner of the intersection is now occupied and there is conflict between the owner and the taxis for customer access and access for the business owner.

Some of the challenges and barriers existing at the time were:

- The immediate area provides few options for on-street parking.
- Off-street parking was/is available on City controlled property immediately behind the O'Reilly's Auto Store, but the area would require extensive work for use by either Transit, taxis or the public.

- Off-street parking on the west side of Pan American was/is available on City controlled property but would also require extensive work. Additionally, there are concerns with easement access as some of the adjacent properties are privately owned.
- At the time, Pan American Avenue was still ADOT controlled.
- GSA controls a portion of the right of way on 1st Street between Customs Avenue and Pan American Avenue. At one time westbound travel on 1st Street was restricted to federal employees and not open to the public. This changed sometime in the 2000's although the reasons behind it are not known. The taxi relocation proposals presented to the City Planner both assume continued westbound access through 1st Street, which may not be guaranteed.

RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION: This report is for information only.