

Folsom Street Living Lab - Corridor Refinements

Based on feedback from City Council at the Aug. 25 study session, the Transportation Division is making several refinements along the Folsom Street corridor, including adjustments to the painted pavement markings, bollard placements, vegetative landscaping, and traffic signal timing. These strategic modifications will clarify and facilitate turning movements at key intersections and driveways that some users have reported to be confusing or challenging. These refinements are scheduled to begin the night of Tuesday, Sept. 8, and are expected to be substantially completed by the end of next week.

Traffic Signal Timing

After the first two weeks of observations, the city modified the timing of the traffic signal at the intersection of Folsom and Pearl streets during the p.m. peak period (3 to 7 p.m.) to shift several seconds of green lights from Pearl to Folsom streets.

Removing Vegetation

Following the Aug. 25 City Council Study Session, the city removed overgrown vegetation from the median at the Folsom and Walnut streets pedestrian crossing treatment. The vegetation at this location had blocked visibility for southbound vehicles to see bikes and pedestrians crossing from the east, which required drivers to slow down and hold up traffic behind them whenever approaching this crosswalk because they couldn't be sure if a pedestrian or cyclist was crossing. With the vegetation removed, the sight distance is improved and drivers can now pass through the crosswalk with confidence when no one is crossing the street.

Restriping the Center Left-turn Lane

Additional modifications are scheduled during the night of Tuesday, Sept. 8. These refinements include restriping several of the painted median islands to create more center left-turn space, which will make it easier for vehicles to turn into and out of driveways and alleys along the corridor without blocking the through lanes. The pavement restriping will occur:

- North of the median on the north side of the Folsom Street and Canyon Boulevard intersection;
- South of the median at the Folsom and Walnut streets intersection; and
- On both the northbound and southbound approaches to the Folsom and Pine streets intersection.

Removal of About 200 Bollards

During the night of Tuesday, Sept. 8, staff will also remove about 200 of the bollards from the protected bike lane, which is expected to produce the benefits listed below.

- It will be easier for drivers making right turns into driveways, alleys and streets to do so without blocking traffic in the through lane.
- It will be easier for drivers to back out of several residential driveways along the corridor.
- There will be more space for drivers to pull aside to the curb to allow emergency response vehicles to safely pass by.
- The bike lane will be less constrained and it will be easier for one cyclist to pass another.
- The sense of clutter along the corridor will be reduced.

Traffic Signal Timing

The city continues to observe the operation of the traffic signals along the corridor during peak travel periods to identify any modifications to the signal timing that would be beneficial. In response to the feedback received to date, staff is also observing signalized intersections that might be affected by diverting traffic, such as Canyon Boulevard and 26th Street.

“Right-turn Overlap” Traffic Signal Displays

At three locations on the Folsom Corridor, staff is considering installing “right-turn overlap” signal displays to facilitate right-turning movements. An example of an existing right-turn overlap signal can be found on westbound Pearl Street at Folsom Street, where there is an exclusive right-turn lane. When the green arrow is being displayed for southbound left-turning traffic on Pearl Street, the westbound right-turning traffic can proceed without conflict, so a green arrow is provided for that movement. The Folsom Street Living Lab has created exclusive right-turn lanes on northbound Folsom Street at Canyon Boulevard, on southbound Folsom Street at Canyon Boulevard, and on northbound Folsom Street at Pearl Street, so the existing traffic signal displays could potentially be modified to provide right-turn overlap signals on those three approaches.