To All: Senior Managers
Division/District Managers
Group Managers

Subject: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING (BOE) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR
ESTABLISHING REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHWAY
DEDICATIONS AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS UNDER THE R3 ORDINANCE
AND DISCRETIONARY ACTION LAND DEVELOPMENT CASES (Supersedes
S.O. No. 005-0804, dated August 17, 2004)

The following list of Administrative Processes reflects the BOE interpretation of its
obligations and authority under the Los Angeles Municipal Code (L.A.M.C.) for establishing
requirements and recommendations for street dedication and public improvements in
building permits, discretionary and other land development cases and projects. The
purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency and equal treatment of all applicants in
applying the provisions of the L.A.M.C. at all of the various District Offices and the Land
Development Offices of the BOE. It is also intended to avoid any appearance of favoritism
or special treatment of any applicant.

The L.A.M.C. gives the BOE limited authority to modify or waive these requirements where
extreme hardship would result due to engineering infeasibility or physical restraints of
topography. Monetary considerations alone do not constitute extreme hardship under BOE
policy, and must be considered separately in public hearing by the decision makers
specified in the L.A.M.C., including the City Council and the Planning Commission.
Similarly, reduction of developable land area and reduction of economic benefit to a
development do not constitute extreme hardship under BOE policy, and must be
considered separately.

The L.A.M.C. names the Street Standards Committee, consisting of the Director of
Planning, the City Engineer and the General Manager of the Department of Transportation
as the determining body for establishing street standards. Two documents adopted by this
Committee are key to City Engineer policy; “Standard Street Dimensions” (City Engineer
Standard Plan S-470-0), and “Guidelines for Reduction or Waiver of Street Dedication”
prepared pursuant to LAMC Section 12.37-A.5. Both of these documents are available in
the Bureau’s “Technical Document Center” website. The first of these establishes minimum
street dimensions by street designation in the Transportation Element of the General Plan.
The second limits waiver or reduction of dedication, also by street designation. BOE
interpretation of the L.A.M.C. is that waiver of dedication and public improvements not
consistent with these two documents must be considered separately in a public hearing by
the decision makers specified in the L.A.M.C., including the City Council and the Planning
Commission. Following are the requirements of the L.A.M.C. and the BOE’s administrative
process for various types of applications.
1. **Type of Application: Building Permit (Highway Dedication)**

Ministerial Process: The project site may be developed by right without any discretionary City approval.

Limitation Criteria: These requirements are only applicable to projects sited in R3 or less restrictive zones, or on RD1.5, RD2 and RD3 zones, where the project site abuts a major highway, secondary highway or Collector Street.

Public Street Dedication Requirements: If the existing half street dedication width of the adjoining public street is less than the standard half street dedication width of the street based on the City’s Street Standard Dimensions, additional street dedication to bring the half street dedication width to City Standards will be required with this application. Dedication of public alley is not required under this application. Under L.A.M.C. Section 12.37 the City also established limitations on the amount of street dedication under this process. These limitations are: 1. The maximum area of land to be dedicated shall not exceed 25 percent of the lot area; 2. The street dedication shall not reduce the lot below a width of 50 feet or an area of 5,000 square feet; 3. Street dedication shall not be taken over an existing building or structure; and 4. The additional street dedication is not necessary to meet the mobility needs for the next 20 years.

In order to qualify for the “mobility needs” limitation waiver from Highway Dedication under L.A.M.C. Section 12.37, the applicant will have to submit a Traffic Study showing the current and anticipated future traffic volumes approaching, exiting and adjacent to the project site. This Traffic Study must be approved by the Department of Transportation. The study must demonstrate that the existing facilities will handle the 20-year projected traffic's volume.

The most common limitations on projected traffic volume are physical limitations. Examples includes existing historical or other substantial buildings that prevent widening of the street in adjacent blocks, a mid-block improvement where there is very little likelihood of the adjacent structures being replaced in the foreseeable future, or an obstruction such as a dead end or existing fixed width bridge where the widening of the approach roadway would serve no useful purpose.

Public Street Improvement Requirements: If the adjoining public street is improved with concrete curb, gutter, sidewalk and roadway, the public street improvement requirements for this application will be limited to repair or reconstruction of existing improvements. If any of the adjoining public streets are not improved with curb, gutter, sidewalk and roadway, the construction of new public improvements to City Standards will be required with this application. Improvement of public alley is not required under this application. The relocation or reconstruction of existing facilities such as power poles and traffic signals may be required in conjunction with the construction of new public improvement.

BOE Role: Sign off on building permit application and enforce the requirements of L.A.M.C. Section 12.37.

2. **Type of Application: Subdivision Tract Map and Parcel Map**

Discretionary action.

These requirements are applicable to any site over which a subdivision map application is filed. Public Street/Alley/Public Easement Dedication Requirements: If the existing half street dedication width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half street width, additional street dedication to bring the half street dedication width to City Standards will be required under this application. Dedication of new public streets and alleys, if applicable, will be required to serve the proposed development or surrounding sites. Additional public easements, such as alley, walk, sidewalk, sewer, drainage, water or public utility may also be required under this application to serve the proposed development or surrounding sites.

Public Street/Alley/Public Infrastructure Construction Requirements: If the existing half roadway width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half roadway width, construction of roadway widening to bring the half roadway width to City Standards will be required under this application. Where the existing half street was previously fully improved in accordance with Standard Plan D-22549 (superseded by Standard Plan S-470-0 on November 10, 1999), Engineering staff may exercise appropriate engineering judgment in not requiring the roadway widening to full half roadway standards if the existing half roadway width is within 2 feet of the standard half roadway widths for Local and Collector Streets or within 3 feet of the standard half roadway width for Secondary Highways. The construction of additional new public roadway to serve the development, together with appropriate roadway to provide adequate roadway access to the development may also be required under this application. The construction of other necessary public infrastructure such as alley, walk, sewer, storm drain, waterline, street light, fire hydrant, traffic signal will also be required under this application. The relocation of existing facilities such as power poles and traffic signals may be required in conjunction with the required public street construction.

**BOE Role:** Provide recommendations to the Planning Department Office of Zoning Administration on public infrastructure requirements in conjunction with this application.

**Code Authority:** L.A.M.C. Section 17.

3. **Type of Application: Planning Department Case Review**

Discretionary action.

These requirements are applicable to any site over which a City Planning Department case such as zone change, site plan review, variance, conditional use, coastal development permit and certificate of compliance is filed.
Public Street/Alley/Public Easement Dedication Requirements: If the existing half street dedication width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half street width, additional street dedication to bring the half street dedication width to City Standards will be required under this application. Dedication of new public streets, if applicable, will be required to serve the proposed development or surrounding sites. Additional appropriate public easement, such as alley, walk, sidewalk, sewer, drainage, water or public utility may also be required under this application to serve the proposed development or surrounding sites.

Public Street/Alley/Infrastructure Construction Requirements: If the existing half roadway width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half roadway width, construction of roadway widening to bring the half roadway width to City Standards will be required under this application. Where the existing half street was previously fully improved in accordance with Standard Plan D-22549 (superseded by Standard Plan S-470-0 on November 10, 1999), Engineering staff may exercise appropriate engineering judgments in not requiring the roadway widening to full half roadway standards if the existing half roadway width is within 2 feet of the standard half roadway widths for Local and Collector Streets or within 3 feet of the standard half roadway width for Secondary Highways. The construction of additional new public roadway to serve the development, together with appropriate roadway to provide adequate roadway access to the development may also be required under this application. The construction of other necessary public infrastructure such as alley, walk, storm drain, sewer, waterline, street light, fire hydrant, traffic signal will also be required under this application. The relocation of existing facilities such as power poles and traffic signals may be required in conjunction with the required construction.

BOE Role: Provide recommendations to the Planning Department Office of Zoning Administration on public infrastructure requirements in conjunction with this application.

Code Authority: L.A.M.C. Sections 12.24, 12.27 and 12.32
State Government Code Section 66499.35

4. Type of Application: Vacation, Quitclaim of Public Easement

Discretionary action.

These requirements are applicable to the petitioner’s properties adjacent to the requested vacation or quitclaim area.

Public Street/Alley/Public Easement Dedication Requirements: If the existing half street dedication width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half street width, additional street dedication to bring the half street dedication width to City Standards will be required under this application. Dedication of new street, alley or other necessary public easements to replace the street, alley or other easement being vacated or quitclaimed may also be required under this application.
Public Street/Alley/Infrastructure Construction Requirements: If the existing half roadway width of any adjoining public street is less than the standard half roadway width, construction of roadway widening to bring the half roadway width to City Standards may be required under this application. The relocation of existing facilities such as power poles and traffic signals may be required in conjunction with the required construction. The construction of new street, alley or other public infrastructure facilities to replace the street, alley or other facilities being vacated or quitclaimed may also be required under this application.

BOE Role: Provide recommendations to the decision maker on public infrastructure requirements in conjunction with this application.

Code Authority: California Streets and Highways Code Section 8324
City Charter Section 556

Appeals of this policy may be made to the Planning Department Office of Zoning Administration, or must be approved by the City Council or other designated authority in a public hearing. For any discretionary action, if the City Council approves a motion to delete or modify project conditions, the BOE will abide by that decision. The role of the BOE is to point out to the “decision makers” the infrastructure needs in the project area, so the “decision makers” will have sufficient knowledge to make the appropriate decision.

( WHH CWR )

Approved by:

Gary Lee Moore, P.E., City Engineer