



PRESS RELEASE

CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL

30111 Crown Valley Parkway
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
(949) 362-4300
cityoflagunaniiguel.org

August 16, 2023
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Laguna Niguel City Council Approves Interim Plan to Restore Two-Way Traffic Along Northbound La Paz Road



Laguna Niguel, CA – At the Tuesday, August 15, 2023, City Council Meeting, the Laguna Niguel City Council approved a contract with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. to provide engineering design services for the restoration of interim two-way traffic along La Paz Road. Additionally, the City Council allocated \$1.5 million from the Deferred Maintenance, Capital Assets, & Infrastructure Reserves Fund to the Capital Improvement Program for the construction phase of the project.

Shortly after the City's May 5, 2023, declaration of a local emergency due to the earth movement under La Paz Road, a new traffic control pattern, called the 'Short-Term Phase I Plan', was implemented to close the two southbound travel lanes on La Paz Road at Rancho Niguel Road. The closure and associated detour were implemented as a precautionary measure to ensure public safety. During this closure, the City's Public Works Department worked closely with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc to identify a 'Long-Term Phase II Plan' that would safely allow a single travel lane in each direction for both northbound and southbound traffic on La Paz Road. The 'Long-Term Phase II Plan' that has been identified to reopen southbound traffic addresses critical elements such as providing adequate roadway width to meet emergency vehicle access standards, preserving the northbound bike lane and adding a southbound bike lane, and eliminating the current detour onto Rancho Niguel Road.

"We recognize that La Paz Road serves as a vital route for many residents and commuters," said Mayor Kelly Jennings. "However, it was imperative to identify a plan that not only can be implemented in a timely manner but also addresses the various safety requirements. I am confident that the identified 'Long-Term Phase II Plan' accomplishes both. We appreciate the public's patience and understanding as we navigate this complex process, and we remain committed to ensuring public safety while striving to minimize disruptions to the community."

The engineering design work being provided by Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. will require approximately three months to complete and will begin immediately. Once completed and approved, the construction phase of the project, including bidding, award of contract, and construction, will require approximately six months to complete, as the center median along La Paz Road (from Rancho Niguel Road to Kings Road) will have to be removed and replaced with new pavement. However, staff will continue to explore options to further expedite the implementation of the 'Long-Term Phase II Plan'.

The ‘Long-Term Phase II Plan’ for La Paz Road will serve two-way traffic for an estimated three to five year period while the City continues to aggressively seek grant funding to design and construct the expansive permanent repairs to the roadway and earth movement areas. The public is encouraged to visit the City’s dedicated La Paz Road webpage at www.cityoflagunaniquel.org/lapaz for the most up-to-date information including staff reports, video, maps, and frequently asked questions.

#####