

Political Forum



In Battle for the NFL, Coliseum Pulls Out in Front

by Bernard C. Parks Councilman, District 8

It's that time of year again. Football season is approaching, and many of you are asking, will Los Angeles ever have an NFL football team again? Will the NFL return to one of the most historic sports venues in the world: The Coliseum? And, if the NFL returns, can it return without reaching deeply into taxpayers' pocketbooks? I'm very proud to say the answer to all three questions is: Yes!

Because of the importance to fans and our City's economy, I made the return of the NFL one of my top priorities, after being elected in 2003. The privately funded Coliseum Plan has gained steam with endorsements from the L.A. City Council, the Coliseum Commission and the Ad Hoc Stadium Committee. Despite mounting support, there were still hurdles. The failure to get a team in 1999 led to some far-fetched myths about the stadium and its surrounding area, which some believed was too crime-ridden or downtrodden to draw the NFL's interest. And, if that weren't enough, we had competitors. Pasadena's Rose Bowl and a site still yet to be constructed in Carson were also in the running and by all accounts, miles ahead of the Coliseum.

After being declared dead by several of our local sports reporters and other so-called experts, the Coliseum climbed past the other two prospective sites to become number one in the race to get an NFL franchise. One of the first major steps was the completion of the mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR is a document designed to inform public agency decision-makers and residents of the significant environmental effect of a project. Meanwhile, Pasadena and Carson are still in the starting blocks in the one-and-a-half to two-year EIR process.

The next move was even more monumental: The NFL confirmed its growing interest in the Coliseum by presenting the Coliseum Commission with a term sheet in May. The



The Los Angeles Coliseum

Coliseum is the only site that has received a term sheet from the NFL, setting the stage for what will be a very important negotiation process.

Though the effort to return NFL football to the Coliseum has gained a lot of ground in a short time, it is by no means complete. The responsibility of getting a deal done lies completely in the hands of the Coliseum Commission. And, as president of the Commission, it's a responsibility I gladly accept.

See you at the game!

Council District 8 includes these communities:

- Baldwin Hills
- Baldwin Vista
- West Adams
- Leimert Park
- Vermont Knolls
- Hyde Park
- Angeles Mesa
- Marlton Square
- South Los Angeles

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Mayor 'Keeps Things Moving' With 75 Major Intersection Improvements

Mayor Jim Hahn announced July 6 the completion of improvements to 75 of the City's worst intersections and the start of improvements to the next 25. The projects are part of Mayor Hahn's Traffic Safety and Operational Improvement Program, which enhances 25 priority intersections each year to ease traffic congestion and improve motorist and pedestrian safety. This fourth phase of 25 improvements follows 75 traffic safety improvements that have been implemented over the past three years.

"One of my top priorities is to promote driver and pedestrian safety and improve traffic conditions by reducing traffic congestion and improving traffic safety throughout the City," he said. "To help us meet that goal, we are fixing 25 of the worst intersections each year. I am pleased to announce that we have completed 75 intersections across the City and are here today to announce the next 25 improvements."

Improvements to the City's 25 worst intersections include new traffic signals, smart pedestrian crossings, left turn arrows and new left- or right-turn lane additions.

"Almost 1 out of every 5 crashes that happens on Los Angeles streets occurs due to a failure to yield on a left or U-turn. The improvements on Mayor Hahn's Top 25 list will go a long

way toward reducing that statistic," said Wayne Tanda, general manager of the Department of Transportation. The Venice and La Brea intersection, site of the announcement's press conference, was selected because of the high traffic volume and accident reports. Approximately 96,000 cars pass through this intersection each day. The most recent accident information shows eight left-turn accidents in the latest 18-month period in addition to many rear-end accidents and long delays at this busy signal location.

"The new left turn signals at the intersection of Venice and La Brea will promote driver and pedestrian safety, improve traffic conditions and make driving a more pleasant experience for the thousands of vehicles, bus patrons and pedestrians who pass through this intersection daily," Mayor Hahn added.

The first phase of Mayor Hahn's Traffic Safety and Operational Improvement Program began in summer 2001. This year, Mayor Hahn will continue to make improving the city's 25 worst intersections a priority to ensure the Department of Transportation designs and installs the improvements by the end of June 2005. DOT estimates the cost of the improvements will be approximately \$1 million.

Phase IV Projects:

VALLEY:

1. Coldwater Canyon Drive at Mulholland Drive, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Studio City
2. Laurel Canyon Boulevard at Mulholland Drive, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Studio City
3. Platt Avenue at Haynes Street, New Traffic Signal Project, Woodland Hills
4. Parthenia Street at Orion Avenue, Smart Pedestrian Warning Project, North Hills
5. Sherman Way at Kester Avenue, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Van Nuys
6. Sunland Boulevard at Fenwick Street, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Sunland
7. Tampa Avenue at Plummer Street, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Northridge
8. Valley Circle Boulevard at Calabasas Road, Right-Turn Lane Project, Woodland Hills
9. Vineland Avenue at Magnolia Boulevard, Left-Turn Arrow Project, North Hollywood

WEST:

10. Beverly Boulevard at Formosa Avenue, Smart Pedestrian Warning Project, Park La Brea
11. Inglewood Boulevard at Allin Street, New Traffic Signal Project, Mar Vista
12. Wilshire Boulevard at Bundy Avenue, Left-Turn Arrow Project, West Los Angeles

EAST:

13. State Street at Bridge Street, Smart Pedestrian Warning Project, Boyle Heights
14. Indiana Street at Percy Street, New Traffic Signal Project, Boyle Heights

CENTRAL:

15. Daly Street and North Broadway, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Lincoln Heights
16. Los Angeles Street and Winston Street, New Traffic Signal Project, Downtown
17. Hill Street between Temple Street and Ord Street, New Midblock Traffic Signal Project, Chinatown
18. San Fernando Road at Fletcher Drive, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Glassell Park
19. Venice Boulevard at La Brea Avenue, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Mid-City
20. Western at 37th Place, Smart Pedestrian Warning Project, Jefferson Park
21. Sixth Street between Park View Street and Alvarado Street, Left-Turn Lane Project, Westlake
22. Gower Street between Melrose Avenue and Willoughby Avenue, Left-Turn Lane Project, Hollywood

SOUTH:

23. First Street between Meyler Street and Western Ave, Left-Turn Lane, Traffic Calming Project, San Pedro
24. Gaffey Street/Palos Verdes Drive at Anaheim Street, Left-Turn Arrow Project, Harbor City
25. Normandie Avenue at 59th Street, Smart Pedestrian Warning Project, South Los Angeles