

January 2, 1985

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CENTRAL AVENUE
SIGHT DISTRICT
AND PARKING
STUDY

367
The City Council was recently asked to improve the intersection of Eden Street and Central Avenue to make it safer for children using the intersection going to and from school. At the City Council's request, Public Works Department has been reviewing the sight distance problem in the area of Central and Eden, and in doing so has also, by necessity, observed other angle parking on Central Avenue.

Parking surveys were taken just prior to Christmas and after Christmas to determine the usage being made of the existing parking stalls. On December 18, 19 and 20, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, observations were taken of the area between Tokay and through Eden to Flora. December 28, 29, 30 and 31, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, observations were taken on all the angle parking between Vine Street and Lodi Avenue. The average occupancy was 17% and the maximum occupancy was 53%, with considerable differences from one area and the next. It was noted during these observations that:

- (1) At times some people parked parallel in the angle parking areas, particularly in front of residences.
- (2) Children have a difficult, and hazardous, time making the crossing of Central Avenue because of autos, vans, and pickups parked near the intersections.
- (3) Sight distances at all crossings was limited at times because of parked cars.
- (4) Some vehicles crossed over the center line in normal driving because of the proximity of parked cars in angle stalls.
- (5) Church attendance in the area does not appear to increase parking on either Saturday or Sunday.

The Average Daily Traffic on Central Avenue in this area is

3,200 to 4,000. The street has a curb to curb width of 55 feet, the same as the widest portions of School Street in the downtown area where parallel opposite angle parking has recently been installed. Field measurements of standard automobiles on Central Avenue give a clear distance between automobiles of 24 feet, tip of bumper to tip of bumper. While this may be reasonable for two lanes in a minor residential area, it is narrow for the through traffic which Central Avenue carries as a collector, particularly when one considers the "shy" distance that drivers normally use in passing parked vehicles.

Traffic records were reviewed to determine the effect of the angle parking on vehicular movement in the area and between January, 1983, and September 30, 1984, approximately 13 accidents attributable to angle parking were reported during 1983, and 7 during the first 9 months of 1984.

Consideration was given to the possibility of angle and parallel parking on opposite sides of the street in the business areas, but because of the number of angle stalls that would be eliminated to provide comparable sight distance at the intersections, the net stall loss is near that for parallel parking.

Based on usage, accidents and sight distance for pedestrians it was Staff's recommendation that the City Council consider the replacement of all angle parking in the area with parallel. Notices have been sent to the owners of the property fronting on the street where angle parking is presently in use notifying them of this possibility. While there are many alternates to total elimination of angle parking, it would appear that other alternates are only a partial solution.