



December 2005

Dear Neighbors:

This letter is from the Core Group of the Oak Park Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. We are a group of twenty volunteer residents from the Oak Park and Samarkand neighborhoods that have been meeting with City staff and you, our neighbors, for the last year and a half. We look to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods by addressing traffic and mobility issues in the Oak Park/Samarkand area. We are seeking your support for the Oak Park Mobility Plan.

What Was the Process?

There have been numerous public meetings to determine the areas of concern to the greatest number of residents. Information on neighborhood concerns



was collected through surveys and neighborhood meetings. Though the desire of most people is to make the traffic as it was 30 or 40 years ago, the city continues to grow and change

and there are definite limits to what is practical. We cannot make the neighborhood a gated community. We cannot rearrange the freeway off ramps to make Calle Real a two-way street again. Although this is something Cottage Hospital is exploring as part of the conditions of approval for the modernization project, it is not expected in the near future, without Caltrans' assistance. The local changes, which were developed through our extensive public process, are based on sound traffic management engineering and are not expensive.

Is It Expensive?

These changes will cost less than 0.2% of a single year of the city's overall budget.

Will These Changes Work?

The measures proposed have been successfully installed throughout California and throughout the country. They are not designed to stop people from

using their cars or increase their auto travel time. They are designed to make it easier and more pleasant to walk or bicycle in the area, and to smooth the flow of traffic. These changes are not a zero-sum game; improvements in bicycle and pedestrian access do not necessarily come at the expense of auto travel time or parking. Even if you never plan to walk or bicycle, these changes will benefit you because every



person that walks or bikes is one less person who is driving on your street, competing with you for a parking place at Trader Joe's, or ahead of you in line at the gas station. And of course it benefits all of us to have neighborhoods where residents feel safe to walk their streets.

Is Restriping Chapala and De La Vina a Good Idea?

One particular area of concern for drivers appears to be the plan to re-stripe DeLaVina and Chapala, above Mission street, so that there is a single, wider traffic lane and a dedicated bike lane, rather than the two narrow lanes that exist currently. This change was proposed to address numerous comments regarding the difficulties for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers to cross De La Vina and Chapala at almost every intersection in the neighborhood. According to traffic engineering standards, a single lane on these streets can handle the traffic volume and the changes would improve circulation for bicyclists, pedestrian and cars. If this turns out not to be the case and there are traffic problems caused by this re-striping, the streets can and will be converted back to their current configuration. Neither Bath nor Castillo seem to suffer from traffic jams caused by conversion to one lane.

Why Is There Another Ballot?

City Transportation Department staff sent out a newsletter and ballot in June 2005 and learned several things. First, the proposed changes were not completely clear. The ballot included several proposed modifications which are occurring independently of the Oak Park Mobility Plan (see sidebar, next page).

These independent modifications are not included in this proposal. Second, we encountered considerable opposition to the traffic circle proposed for the intersection of Tallant and Samarkand. This circle has been eliminated from the present plan. If you have questions or comments about the plan, please contact the City or us directly.

What if We Do Not Like all the Proposed Changes?

One further thing to consider is that ALL of these changes are conceptual. They will not be implemented if detailed design work indicates a problem. Once any temporary modifications are in place, they will be studied by City staff. Any decision to make these area-wide improvements permanent will be based on engineering judgment and community input. Our neighborhood has the attention of the City leaders and the City has the resources and funding to address improvements now. This opportunity may not be repeated.

Please support our efforts to improve the livability of our neighborhood by returning your ballot and voting in support of the Oak Park Mobility Plan.

Sincerely,
The Oak Park Traffic Management Core Group

Please feel free to contact us with questions:
Wayne Beckman (waynebee@cox.net); Joddi Leippner (252-2857); June Pujo (687-3853); Arthea Hermann (athermann@cox.net)

Frequently asked questions:

Q: What are mini traffic circles?

A: Round islands placed in the middle of an intersection. They can replace traffic lights and stop signs at intersections, improve intersection safety and decrease speeds. Drivers proceed around the circle in a counter-clockwise direction until they get to the street where they want to turn. Large vehicles should use the full width of the intersection, rather than hugging the circle.

Q: What are "curb extensions" or "bulbouts?"

A: Extensions of the corner curbs that reduce pavement widths, discourage high speed turns, shorten the crossing distance and reduce pedestrian exposure to moving vehicles at crosswalks. Bulbouts allow pedestrians and vehicles to safely move closer to travel lanes, beyond parked cars, to look for oncoming traffic.

Q: Will I be assessed for these changes?

A: No.

A message to Oak Park residents and businesses from City Staff:

Due to the low response rate to our summer mailing requesting your feedback on the Mobility Plan generated by your neighbors, the City Transportation Planning Staff convened a late summer meeting of the Oak Park Core Group.

The Core Group's feedback was that the newsletter was confusing. With this in mind, this follow-up newsletter is intended to permit the Core Group to introduce you to the neighborhood planning process, and recommendations for your consideration.

The Mobility Plan has been a collaborative effort of City staff, Cottage Hospital, and members of your neighborhood. Many elements of the Mobility Plan are scheduled for construction late next year as part of the Cottage Hospital Modernization project. These are not under consideration at this time. Additionally, intersection changes on State at De La Vina and sidewalk on Las Positas Road will be developed as independent City capital projects. A detailed list of these improvements is available from our staff, who can be contacted at NTMP@SantaBarbaraCA.gov or (805) 564-5544.

The remaining improvements are shown on the next page, with some photos illustrating traffic circles, curb extensions and back-in diagonal parking. If there is 65% support for the plan from property owners and tenants who return the attached ballot, the plan can move on to the Transportation & Circulation Committee and the City Council for adoption. Without the requisite support, only the Cottage Hospital improvements and City identified safety improvements will move forward, and the \$300,000 allocated for implementation in this neighborhood will be transferred to the next Neighborhood Traffic Management Program in another neighborhood.

Q: How can mini traffic circles improve pedestrian crossings where 4 or 2 way stops are currently in place?

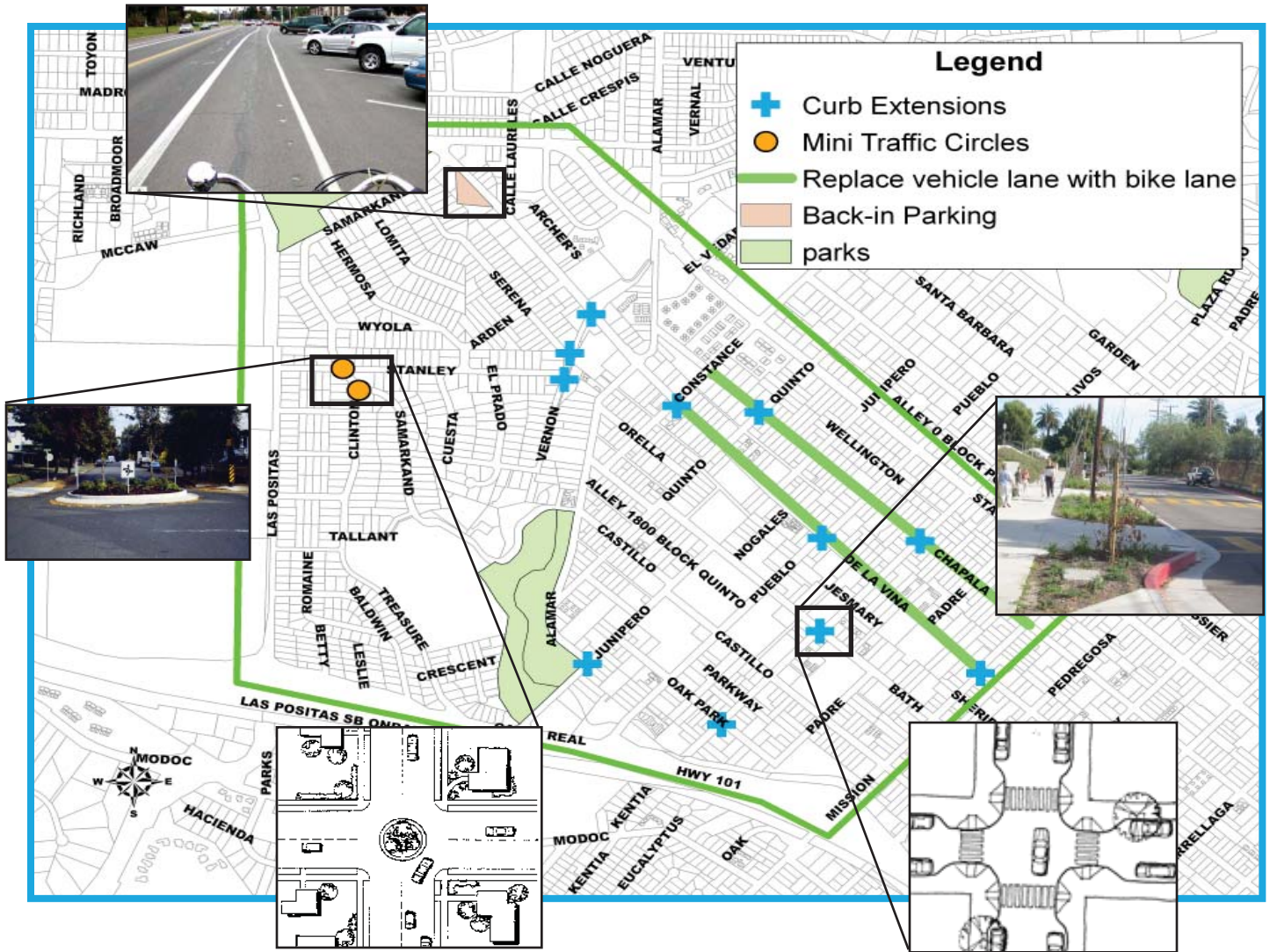
A: A pedestrian's ability to cross a street is dependent on two factors. (1) The availability of gaps most hours of the day and (2) Each motorist's willingness to yield to pedestrians, which is based on his/her speed. Mini-roundabouts bring speeds down to levels where yield rates are high.

Q: Where can I test these things out?

A: Temporary and semi-permanent installations are in place in the St. Francis neighborhood and on Sea Ranch Road.

Cut fold TAPE and drop in mail

Map of Revised Oak Park Mobility Plan Proposed Improvements



IMPORTANT!: Even if you submitted the ballot mailed to you in June, please return this second ballot on behalf of your household or business so that we can determine the level of support for this revised neighborhood traffic calming proposal.

As a member of this neighborhood, whether you are a property owner or tenant, indicate your support or opposition to the Mobility Plan improvements by checking a box below and signing here. Please use the comment line to express any opinion you have of specific plan elements.

I, _____, live / represent a business / own property at _____
 (PRINT NAME) (CIRCLE ONE) (PRINT ADDRESS)

- Support the Plan
- Oppose the Plan

COMMENTS: _____

Please send back this prepaid mailer page to PO Box 1990, Santa Barbara, CA 93102 or e-mail your vote to NTMP@SantaBarbaraCA.gov. You may also fax your decision to (805) 564-5467.

Sign Here _____ Date _____



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NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PO BOX 1990
SANTA BARBARA CA 93102-9960



New information about the Mobility Plan is inside. Even if you submitted the ballot mailed to you in June, please respond to this mailer by January 6, 2006.

Additional information about the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program is available at:
http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Departments/PW/programs_documents.htm

Additional information about traffic calming is available from:
The Federal Highway Administration-- <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/tcalm/index.htm>
The Institute of Transportation Engineers-- <http://www.ite.org/traffic/index.html>
The City of Seattle-- <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/transportation>
The City of Portland-- <http://www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/trafficcalming>



Please consider this newsletter to the residents and businesses of the Oak Park and Samarkand Neighborhoods. This is your opportunity to indicate your support or opposition to the traffic calming plan developed by your neighbors.



City of Santa Barbara, Transportation Planning
P.O. Box 1990, Sta. Barb., CA 93102
Please call us: (805) 564-5544
Para mas informacion: (805) 564-5385