



MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE (TCC)

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA
Thursday, March 22, 2007 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

ROLL CALL:

TCC MEMBERS

William C. Boyd
Mark Bradley
Keith Coffman-Grey
Michael Cooper
Steve Mass
David Pritchett
David Tabor

Attendance

Excused
Present
Present
Present
Excused
Present
Present

CITY STAFF PRESENT :

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager
Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner
Teresa Martinez, Administrative Specialist

LIAISONS PRESENT:

Addison Thompson, Planning Commission Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michael Meyer of Meyer, Mohaddes Associates

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. None.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

2. Approval of TCC Minutes for February 22, 2007.
Mr. Coffman-Grey moved and Mr. Tabor seconded approving the Minutes from the February 22, 2007 meeting as amended.

Ayes: 5 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 2

REPORTS

3. **Upper State Street Study – Rob Dayton**

Rob Dayton gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Upper State Street Study. Discussed in the presentation were the Upper State Street (USS) area, major pending projects, and the study scope and process. The requested actions of the TCC include providing Committee comments to be forwarded to the Planning Commission (PC) and City Council (Council) and electing a representative to attend the PC hearing on April 12, 2007, and Council on May 8, 2007. Public comments and input gathered at community workshops include consensus that the corridor is congested, the pedestrian environment should be enhanced, there is support for improved bicycle facilities and improved bus service and facilities, and there is also support for parking policy changes. The history of USS includes, in the 1970s, State Street being widened from two lanes to four, and the La Cumbre Bridge was also constructed with a two lane section. 1980s brought changes with the Las Positas interchange, the second half of the La Cumbre Bridge was constructed, Hitchcock and Hope were extended, there was new access at Hope, and the freeway was widened by two lanes which decreased the congestion on State Street. A common theme throughout the study is that USS is at the mercy of freeway congestion because it is a corridor that has fewer access points to the freeway. In the 1990s, improvements at La Cumbre were made, the signals were coordinated on State Street, the La Cumbre Bridge was widened, and the intersection at Calle Real and Highway 154 was also improved. The near-term improvements presented were maintaining and improving vehicle traffic flow and intersection level of service, reducing access points that conflict with through travel; improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the corridor and connecting connectivity; improving transit facilities and service; and developing parking policies and management strategies that help reduce congestion. Longer term recommendations include identifying alternative East-West routes, creating new off-street pedestrian bike trails, constructing parking structures and another transit center, having a "shopper hopper" shuttle service between La Cumbre Plaza and Paseo Nuevo, and creating a dedicated transit lane. The discussion was then opened up to Public and Committee Member comments.

Public Comment

Gil Barry advocates for long range transportation planning looking at 20 years, not 10 years. He commented that City residents have a desire to live within our resources and in the capacity of the infrastructure. He feels that we can't plan to live within that capacity if we don't know what the capacity is. He suggests approving smaller buildings slowly over a 30-year period than to have massive new projects taking up all the capacity on a first come, first serve basis. He also feels that the Upper State Street Traffic, Circulation, and Parking Study (Study) prepared by Meyer, Mohaddes Associates is extremely faulty for two reasons. The first reason is that the time period used was only 10 years. He feels that it should have been to project the traffic up to the year 2030 to match our planning for the upcoming General Plan Update. He referenced the two studies done by SBCAG that projected traffic until the year 2030, the Old Regional Transportation Planning completed in 2004 and the 101 In Motion completed in August, 2006. These studies have determined that all City freeway interchanges will be at Level F, and arterials and intersections leading to them will be at Level E which is not consistent with the findings of this Study. The second fault with the Study is using a background traffic growth rate of .25% per year. He feels that it should be revised to 1% per year due to California's population doubling over the next 40 years. Job growth is also growing at a rate of 2% per year with 20,000 more employees than housing who are commuting on Highway 101 and using arterials as well. The .25% does not take into account those who come from Goleta. The Study only considers the projects in the pipeline, not the unknown.

Paul Hernadi made three points. His first point was in response to the intersection turning movement counts being accepted as the main measure in growth for traffic congestion. The Upper State Street Study Report (Report) and Study take mid-block congestion much more seriously than recent documents, which he appreciates, but the conclusions are based on intersection turning movement counts many of which are projected on the basis of nation-wide evidences; therefore, the conclusions diverge significantly from the community's site-specific sense in the uptown district. The divergence from the September 2006 version of the Study to the current version leads him to believe that the actual congestion projected is anecdotal. His second point regarded the 386 collisions over four years that are referenced in the Study. He feels that this number is encouraging until it is realized that 386 only refers to the number of collisions that are recorded by the police department due to the severity of the collision. He believes that the unrecorded collisions also merit attention. His third point is that the traffic counts taken are unrepresentative due to them not being done on the right days of the weeks, at the correct times of days, or during the busiest time of year. He would like the traffic counts to be redone to include the 52 Fridays and to include the busiest part of the holiday shopping season in November and December.

Michael Meyer of Meyer, Mohaddes responded the charge of the study was to focus on a 10-year horizon looking at the short-term, cost effective improvements as development projects came forward because Plan Santa Barbara was going to look at the 20-year horizon. In response to the comment that intersections were not the best measure of congestion, time was spent in the report acknowledging that much of the congestion is not just at intersections, but it is more difficult to quantify mid-block congestion because of the variances of the day-to-day activity relating to conflicting turning movements and buses stopping and pulling out of their stops. Meyer also responded that changes were made from the previous draft of the study due to varying traffic counts from different sources. His organization took counts along the corridor, the City provided counts, and consultants working on different projects throughout the corridor also provided counts. As a result, there was concern that some of the numbers were too high in terms of the levels of congestion that were forecast. For the current version of the Study, additional counts were gathered and all of the counts were averaged and resulting in the reflection of congestion over a number of months, not just with individual spot counts at each location. A range of service was also taken into account, such as right turn on red where the initial level of service calculations provided did not discount traffic volumes for people turning right on red, but essentially assumed that people were going on the greens. In response to this concern, a range of levels of service showed a worst case scenario if there wasn't much right turn on red and showed what would happen if you went to a right turn overlap phase with a right turn arrow to provide that service in order to show how many and how often people make a right turn on red.

Committee Comments

Mr. Pritchett asked if the Study indicated the time horizon that is applicable. Mr. Meyer answered that on page 131 of the Study, the final cumulative traffic analysis table labeled *Year 2016 Intersections*, included known development projects, ambient growth, and also reflects short term improvements over the next ten years. Also earlier in the report, it states that this Study is for a ten-year period. Pritchett asked for a response to the public comment regarding the growth rate figure of .25% versus the suggested figure of 1%. Meyer responded that a traffic study like this should reflect the unknown, but the known cumulative projects were taken into consideration in the analysis. The .25% is additional to account for what is unknown. Total growth in traffic will be more than the .25% per year due to development projects adding traffic

and more people moving into the area to work or shop. The Study is not stating that the traffic grows at a rate of only .25% per year. Pritchett asked if the .25% annually was baseline plus the growth of projects that are known. Meyer answered yes, but it varies by location. Meyer referenced the Study, specifically Table 4, on page 19, the cumulative list of projects for which traffic was generated on page 20, and Table 6 on page 21 for an explanation of what was considered in the analysis. Pritchett commented that .25% seems low. Meyer answered that .25% is not all growth, just what is unknown. Pritchett asked if the long-term was morphed in the General Plan Update and requested that Rob Dayton advise how to get closer to the baseline assumption figure. Mr. Dayton answered that based on the cumulative analysis that shows several intersections beyond their thresholds, a commercial development will not be approved if it adds traffic to a street based on those thresholds unless there is mitigation made to specific intersections. Pritchett then asked about overriding consideration. Dayton responded that overriding consideration can only be made on residential projects, not commercial.

Mr. Bradley commented that the Report was very good and clear. He commented that the bike paths were important because of public support and in mitigating traffic caused by development projects. He also asked why, in the Report, the bike path at McCaw was listed as a near-term project, but the pedestrian paths along the creeks were classified in a different category. Dayton answered that due to costs, ability, and existing bike lanes it was a near-term project, but the pedestrian path was more controversial because of the location near the creeks and going behind homes. Bradley then asked what the bike path will look like. Dayton answered that there are 12-foot standards for bike paths. There are also issues with grading and hills, but there has not been a detailed look yet. Bradley also commented that he felt the medians in the west corridor were a good idea. He also asked about bus turnout and the legislation for bus priority and if one had priority or needed priority over the other. Dayton responded that there was a balance, there is a bus pocket, but MTD likes the turnouts. Bradley commented that he thought having the turnouts after the signal made it easier for buses to reenter into traffic. Dayton agreed. Bradley agreed with looking at the longer-term and using SBCAG's numbers with scenario analysis, such as, the freeway being widened. He would also like to have a table with not only actions, but also costs and time. He also commented that he appreciated the fine line between providing more parking and not wanting to add to more congestion. Parking share ideas will create more parking and, in consequence, create more congestion.

Mr. Coffman-Grey commented that the Report was very well done and he appreciated seeing the public's comments and concerns incorporated in the Report. He feels that Upper State Street is not downtown. It is where locals go to shop and it needs to remain as such in order to retain business for restaurants and shops or the City will lose tax revenue. He favors medians and feels that they will help congestion mid-block, but he is concerned with medians in regards to preventing the left turn out of Five Points. He feels that an easier, long-term solution is to put in a signal like La Cumbre Plaza's to help congestion. He is concerned with making Five Points more difficult to navigate because of the already congested parking lot. He does not want the businesses to suffer. He also feels that in other areas, mid-block medians enhance the beauty of the street, but is concerned with impeding emergency vehicles. He would like to see more information regarding medians and emergency vehicles before he can support them. He also stated that pedestrian paseos and bike improvements encourage alternative transportation because if it's a nicer walk or an easier route to take a bike or to walk, then a person will be more inclined to leave their car at home. Incorporating paseos and bike paths are critical when redeveloping especially at the north-end, west suburbia and central suburbia; for example, access from Via Lucero and San Remo to State Street. He also stated that transit improvements in regards to bus turnouts might slow down bus traffic, but he still leans towards favoring them.

In regards to parking improvements, he also feels reducing parking will cause people to go elsewhere, but if its easier to park then people will be more inclined to drive. Regarding the question of are parking supplies more important than traffic flow, his answer is to reduce current large projects to keep State Street where it is. Some of these projects are incorporating housing, which comes with mitigation for traffic. He favors workforce housing, but cautions making it too difficult to access Upper State Street because the City would loose tax revenue.

Mr. Tabor thanked the consultants for the information. He stated that he appreciated the Study breaking up the area into the three sub areas because he feels that Upper State Street is a misnomer. The east subdivision is an extension of De La Vina. He likes the alley access behind the businesses and feels that there is more pedestrian activity in this area than anywhere else. He feels that alley access would also benefit the central sub area. He commented that the central sub area feels like a strip mall. The west sub area feels like 1980s suburbia with the office buildings in the distance. It is more an employment center, than a neighborhood, and it needs more pedestrian friendliness. State Street being an arterial is the key. He thinks transportation experts did an excellent job of moving cars along that arterial in a mostly free flowing manner, but freeway congestion is looming so more east/west connectors are needed. He referenced the congestion at the Waterfront and he feels that what really helped to alleviate that was opening up Yanonali Street. He appreciates the comments about the mid-block issue. He would like Upper State Street to flow like Anacapa. He also commented that Upper State Street is known for not seeing bicycles and pedestrians, which needs to be improved. One way to improve it is by breaking up the large blocks in the western sub areas and getting more connections. He does not know that a transit center is necessarily the answer. He thinks he would rather see funds go towards enhanced bus transit rather than to another transit center. He also commented that in the projections, the trends to be seen could be entirely different from what is predicted. In the 1960s, it was predicted that in the 21st century, people would be getting around with rocket packs, not in cars. In the future, people might be driving electric golf carts as gas prices increase and people become more environmentally aware. It needs to be thought of in terms of sociological, economical, and demographic trends that long range vision needs to take into account.

Mr. Pritchett asked what the timeline was in the Upper State Street Study Report in terms length. Mr. Dayton answered that the timeline for short and long term projects depends on time and costs. Short-term projects would be about 5 years and long-term issues could be discussed in a different process so definitely more than 10 years and probably more than 20 years. Pritchett asked if these questions will be left to the General Plan Update to solve all of the problems and questions because it cannot be said that the State Street Study answered anything. Pritchett also had a question on the near term improvement exhibits regarding the two paseos on the north side of State Street. He asked if those paseos were on there because other urban development projects already planned for those sights. He also asked if the urban building proposals begot the paseos or if the paseos drove the urban building project. Dayton answered that the goal is not to designate a specific path, although the sections that are sighted do have some potential development, but rather to look for opportunities for additional connections as sighted in the Pedestrian Master Plan. Pritchett asked why the Staff suggestions to retain on-street car parking on State Street was in the presentation because eliminating on-street parking might help with traffic flow especially in regards to buses pulling back into traffic. Dayton answered the east sub area is the only area with the on-street parking. This area also has older buildings with limited parking and with the access points to that parking from the alleys only. Mid-block congestion is not present like in other areas; and since on-street parking works in this area and is important to the businesses due to their limited supply, it

should remain. Pritchett then asked if there were studies or models that showed that traffic is not slowing down with the on-street car parking. Dayton answered no because that is not something that you can study or model due to mid-block congestion being measured by the number of conflict points. Without driveways and left turns, conflicts do not occur. Pritchett asked if the statement that bigger building projects generate more traffic could be found in the report as a policy statement. Before he responded to that question, Dayton stated that on-street parking is a buffer for pedestrians as outlined in the Pedestrian Master Plan. Dayton then responded that there was not a policy statement in the Study because the Study does not address new developments. It only addresses existing baseline report projects that are already approved. Pritchett asked if the effects of traffic a new project would generate were addressed in the Report. Dayton answered that the baseline is established for the near term, and the darker ominous pictures of traffic are talked about because of the reasons. Pritchett then asked if the proposed San Roque Creek Trail, from State to Hope, required a Right of Way (ROW) or if it was already an access way. Dayton answered that some ROW was needed, but walking in the creek corridor is not wanted. The corridor available for creeks is not available for walking so there may be places where new developments are needed for access. Pritchett then commented the connector doesn't need much for a creek buffer and he feels it is more near term.

Mr. Tabor commented on the irony of the Capital Improvement Project presentation that was given by John Ewasiuk a few meetings ago in regards to there not being much money for discretionary projects; therefore, funds will need to be found.

Mr. Coffman-Grey commented on the consistency of sidewalks. He cited Chapala Street as setting the standard for sidewalks; and Upper State Street is not conforming. An example of this is the Burger King driveway—it is sharp and dangerous for those in wheelchairs. He mentioned mid-block cutouts and doing whatever is necessary to consolidate mid-block driveways.

Dr. Cooper asked if the funding was going to come from developers. Mr. Dayton replied yes. Cooper then asked if there was a feasible plan for sidewalks for the entire length of the street. Dayton replied that there is a plan that was approved in the Pedestrian Master Plan which identified State Street specifically for a 4 foot parkway and an 8 foot throughway equaling 12 feet total. The sidewalk portion would remain unobstructed. The parkway or what was called the "furniture zone" would have the plantings, equipment for signals, benches, streetlights, and utilities; and the frontage zone would have, for example, the seating for restaurants, advertisements and goods for businesses, or a building entrance or plaza. There are guidelines for all three spaces. Cooper then asked if that would cause encroachment onto private property. Dayton answered that it would need City ROW. Cooper also asked about bus turnouts and if making them longer was possible as bus service improves and there is more public demand. Cooper also asked about getting the bike lanes off of State Street and onto the back roads alternate route through the neighborhoods so those who are not comfortable using State Street will have other options. Dayton showed in the PowerPoint presentation the system of paths created since 1991 with bike lanes on State Street and also with a sign route through the neighborhoods. Cooper asked what it would take for there to be no business access from State Street. Dayton replied that there are some guidelines in the report that address driveway spacing. An ideal condition for this type of boulevard would be to eliminate all driveways, but there has to be some access points in between signals due to the lengths of some of the blocks, but the concept is to minimize those to minimize conflict points and to make them right-turn only so the left-turn conflicts are eliminated. The downside to this is emergency access. If it is

decided to lean in the direction of medians, the fire department needs to be included in the discussions. Cooper then mentioned the light rail concept or having a dedicated transit lane that was brought up at the February 22, 2007 meeting of the TCC. He asked where that would be located. Dayton responded that for the purpose of the Report, they didn't want to specify a location for a dedicated corridor. The likelihood of the corridor shutting down due to congestion would also prevent buses from being a solution for moving people because the bus would also be caught in traffic. There are many locations that could be looked at, such as the frontage on the south with the armory at the park, or La Cumbre Plaza if it ever develops into a point where you could put a street grid system. There are many options that will be discussed in Plan Santa Barbara. Cooper then suggested Santa Barbara getting a monorail like the one in Seattle. He feels that it is not an impossible thought for the future. He also commented that the growth population forecasts that as global economy and personal economy improves there will be lower birthrates so in the year 2030 there may be fewer people.

Mr. Bradley asked about the south section in the central area where there is parking in front of the buildings and if that parking would have to be removed in order to have the ten foot sidewalks. Mr. Dayton responded he thinks redevelopment would need to be looked at to foresee options that seem impossible now, such as, relocating a building or putting parking in the back or underground. The street in that area is used for parking circulation. For example, at the Tee-Off parking lot, if one can't find a spot; one must go back out on the street. As a result, circulation would also have to be improved with a building replacement. Bradley also suggested instead of making a left out of Five Points, to make a right onto the freeway off-ramp from the Five Points parking lot. Dayton responded that a number of options could be designed that compromise but don't completely eliminate access. One option is to look at eliminating access to the businesses on the north end of the street with left in and left out while reserving access for Five Points Shopping Center. Because there is a safety issue, that solution is more inclined than others. Coffman-Grey mentioned that many businesses on the north side are accessible and connected by back streets except for McDonalds. Dayton replied that the lefts involved are primarily about McDonalds.

Motion 1: To forward the Minutes organized by subject, using the Staff Report as a guide, to the Planning Commission and Council.

Motion made by David Pritchett and seconded by Keith Coffman-Grey.

Motion 2: To elect Keith Coffman-Grey to represent the TCC at the Planning Commission's April 12, 2007, meeting and City Council's May 8, 2007, meeting.

Motion made by David Cooper and was seconded by affirmation of the Committee.

4. **Staff Briefing on Current Topics.**
There were no Staff Briefings on Current Topics.

5. **Review of Upcoming Agenda Items.**

On April 5, 2007, at 3:30p.m. in Council Chambers, there will be a joint meeting with the TCC and Planning Commission regarding parking standards. The Planning Commission will still hear the item if there is not a quorum of the TCC.

The April 26, 2007, regular meeting of the TCC will be dedicated to the consideration of the Prioritization of the Circulation Element to be included in Plan Santa Barbara, formerly known as SB 2030. Also SBMTD will also be asked to be present to discuss the fluctuation in ridership of the Shuttles.

On May 10, 2007, at 8:15 a.m. in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, there will be a joint meeting with the TCC and the DPC regarding Transit Village that went before Council at a joint meeting with the MTD Board of Directors in February, 2007. Dr. Cooper asked if the Minutes from the February 8, 2007 joint meeting of the DPC with the TCC had been finalized. Mr. Allen responded that they had not and the finalized Minutes would be included with the April 26, 2007, mailing. Dr. Cooper then advised the Committee that if any member had a topic they would like to see on the agenda, to let him know.

6. Committee Member/Subcommittee Member Comments.

Mr. Pritchett commented that the agendas have been very good.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:01 PM

Committee Members: Bill Boyd, Mark Bradley, Keith Coffman-Grey, Michael Cooper (Chair), Steve Maas, David Pritchett, and David Tabor (Vice-Chair)

Liaisons: Roger Horton (Council Liaison), Addison Thompson (Planning Commission Liaison)