

## **Goal 5      *INCREASE WALKING AND OTHER PATHS OF TRAVEL***

*Develop a comprehensive system of pedestrian routes which are integrated with other modes of transportation and which provide safe and efficient paths of travel.*

### **BACKGROUND**

This Chapter discusses methods to identify and build on the City's existing positive pedestrian environment in order to enhance and increase opportunities for pedestrian travel. The term "paths of travel" describes the City's walking environment, with its network of sidewalks and pathways, and conveys a recognition of the diverse abilities, needs, and interests of its businesses, residents, and visitors.

### **CONSTRAINTS**

Some developed areas of the City and the foothills are not pedestrian-friendly because of the topography, lack of pedestrian amenities, and difficulty in accessing needed but distant services. Attempts to retrofit these areas to accommodate walking may be inhibited by these challenges.

It is also difficult to create a pedestrian-friendly environment in areas with high traffic volumes or high speeds, such as freeway interchanges, wide traffic corridors (e.g. Cabrillo Boulevard), and streets with frequent or wide curb cuts and wide or skewed intersections. Pedestrian safety is often in conflict with vehicles exiting from both large and small parking lots because of inadequate visibility and warning signs.

Highway 101 limits interaction between neighborhoods and poses a significant automobile-dominated barrier to pedestrians, except at the State Street underpass, where transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians are simultaneously served successfully. Conversely, many of the Highway 101 crossings (e.g. Ortega, Anapamu, and Butterfly Lane) are under-utilized because of a sense of isolation created by poor visibility and a lack of lighting, identification signage, and aesthetic treatments.

Conflicts between uses can occur in paseos (see Glossary) located to the rear of commercial properties due to safety hazards (e.g. delivery trucks) and nuisances (e.g. noise and trash odors).

**OPPORTUNITIES**

The City of Santa Barbara's historical compact development grid pattern created the Downtown area with its narrow streets and wide sidewalks and a successfully integrated pedestrian circulation system that allows easy access to businesses and services. By expanding the existing positive pedestrian environment, the City could encourage housing within the Downtown area to enable employees to live near where they work.

Santa Barbara is also unique in that the paseo system is well established. Paseos are a series of connecting private and public walkways joined to streets, parking facilities, open plazas, courtyards, cafes and shops through the central portions of city blocks. Please note that alleys are different from paseos in that they are primarily automobile oriented. Paseos generally promote pedestrian use and buildings that are oriented in size, entrances, amenities, and signage to the pedestrian. Paseos provide a pleasant experience for the user and open up an increased number of facades of commercial buildings. This promotes increased pedestrian access to Downtown, which in turn supports the economic vitality of the area.

The pedestrian environment could be enhanced, where appropriate, by better lighting and security, shade trees, street furniture, and landscaped parkways to separate pedestrians and traffic. The continuation and expansion of the existing American with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrade program, which requires physical improvements to facilitate the access by persons with disabilities, is also important.

A sign program would also help identify walking routes to various attractions around the City for those who are unfamiliar with the City. Directional signs would also improve the connections between different areas of the City by creating well-traveled routes. Designated walking routes and directional signs could encourage higher pedestrian use, a greater perception of safety, and improved connections between different areas of the City.

## POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### INCREASE ACCESS AND WALKING OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 The City shall create an integrated pedestrian system within and between City neighborhoods, schools, recreational areas, commercial areas and places of interest.**
- 5.1.1 Establish an annual sidewalk expansion and improvement program with a designated source of funding and update the Sidewalk Inventory Study to develop a process for funding priorities for improvements. Incorporate the expansion and improvement program into the Capital Improvements Program.
- 5.1.2 Identify and link major activity centers and destinations with walkways. This will consist of the following:
- surveying existing connections between neighborhoods and identifying opportunities and constraints for new pedestrian connections,
  - identifying existing barriers to walking to school and where feasible eliminating those barriers,
  - providing improved access for pedestrians (for example, between such areas as the Eastside, Westside, Mesa, Lower State, Upper State and Waterfront areas, major attractions, recreation, cultural, and commercial areas),
  - working with neighborhood markets and grocery stores to identify ways to encourage walking trips to the market from surrounding neighborhood areas,
  - improving pedestrian access in and around the Mission by providing safe and attractive walking connections between the Mission, Rose Garden, Rocky Nook Park, Natural History Museum and Alameda Padre Serra, and
  - creating an integrated pedestrian system linking the Franklin Center, Franklin School, the Eastside Library and the community gardens.
- 5.1.3 Work with local merchants to create a package delivery system.

- 5.1.4 Work with Caltrans to improve and maintain Highway 101 pedestrian over/undercrossings to promote increased pedestrian use. This may include adding amenities such as lighting, landscaping, and identification signage.
- 5.1.5 Encourage newly proposed developments to include pedestrian connections to surrounding areas, adjacent transit facilities, or other travel facilities during development review.

## **LINKING PEDESTRIAN PATHS TO ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**

### **5.2 The City shall link pedestrian paths with other alternative modes of transportation.**

- 5.2.1 Work with all transit providers to develop links between different transit services. This may include providing route information along pedestrian routes, improved transit stops, and providing pedestrian connections to alternative forms of travel.
- 5.2.2 Continue to provide information on popular bike and walking routes to the transit providers so that their services can be linked with these routes.

## **UPDATE AND EXPAND THE PASEO SYSTEM**

### **5.3 Protect and expand existing paseos and acquire new paseos in the Downtown.**

- 5.3.1 Develop conceptual designs and guidelines for new paseos.
- 5.3.2 Establish protective mechanisms such as land acquisitions, historic designations, use of easements, private development cooperation, and development controls for the paseo system.
- 5.3.3 Encourage private development to incorporate public paseos by offering increased density and other incentives for providing or improving paseos and paseo connections.

- 5.3.4 Consider closing streets to create pedestrian plazas if, upon consultation with a broad segment of the community and general agreement of the affected business owners and property owners, it can be demonstrated that it would improve pedestrian access and enhance the Downtown business environment.
- 5.3.5 Encourage business owners to keep paseos in the rear of commercial buildings free of trash and limit deliveries to hours when the paseos are not heavily traveled.
- 5.3.6 Provide mid-block crossings to connect existing paseos, if appropriate and feasible.

## DESIGN STANDARDS

- 5.4 The City shall revise and enhance design guidelines and standards for the City's pedestrian system.**
- 5.4.1 Work with the Architectural Board of Review and Historic Landmarks Commission to revise and enhance City design standards for all sidewalks and paths of travel. Standards should address width of paths, safety, lighting, landscaping, location, street furniture, the availability of alternate pedestrian access-ways, and the provision of kiosks or other methods to exchange public information.
- 5.4.2 Provide parkways or tree wells and develop other innovative methods where appropriate to separate and/or protect pedestrians from traffic.
- 5.4.3 Revise Outer State Street Design Guidelines and Haley Milpas Design Guidelines to emphasize pedestrian friendly design.
- 5.4.4 Update and revise the Public Works Street Design Standards to include the following standards:
- sidewalks should be wide and shaded by trees,
  - trees should be placed at the curb-side of the sidewalk to provide a psychological and physical separation between pedestrians and auto traffic. Adequate room for growth should be given to avoid sidewalk damage by tree roots, and
  - the width and number of curb cuts (driveways) on City streets should be kept to a minimum or designed in a manner that protects the safety of pedestrians.

- 5.4.5 Improve design for disabled access by providing more ramps, providing more repair to cracked and heaved sidewalks, filling in gaps in existing sidewalks, identifying and relocating obstructions (fire hydrants, telephone poles, light poles) in narrow sidewalks or providing paths around obstructions, and using paving materials which are conducive to wheelchairs and those who have difficulty walking.
- 5.4.6 Require striping/signage, crossing guards, stop signs, and other devices to improve safety near schools and parks.
- 5.4.7 Notify and work with affected property owners, user groups, and tenants prior to the adoption of any design standards for pedestrian oriented improvements.
- 5.4.8 During the development review process, identify all sidewalk obstructions (e.g. fire hydrants, telephone poles, utilities, etc.) on development plans and, if feasible, locate or relocate them in such a way so as to remove the obstruction and to enhance visual aesthetics.

## PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND AMENITIES

- 5.5 The City shall create and foster a pedestrian friendly environment through physical and cultural improvements and amenities.**
- 5.5.1 Provide street furniture, especially benches for resting and shade trees along streets, where appropriate. Look for opportunities for new resting spots, plazas, placitas, small squares, and landscaped areas in all areas of the City which should include focal point(s), opportunities for people watching, and/or attractive natural surroundings. These areas will encourage gathering, public and social interaction and could be used for cultural events and activities. An example could be the placement of benches and street furniture in Chase Palm Park.
- 5.5.2 Identify areas where additional street and paseo lighting is appropriate and implement methods to provide that lighting.
- 5.5.3 Improve sidewalk conditions to increase ease of use for all pedestrians including those with strollers, wheelchairs, carts, walkers, and other walking assistance devices.

- 5.5.4 Encourage plazas, courtyards, cafes, shops, and restaurants along walkways in commercial areas to encourage a mix of private business and public uses. Adequate width should remain for pedestrian travel.
- 5.5.5 Consider public plazas, restrooms, resting spots, or gathering places in all commercial areas of the City, especially in the following areas:
- Milpas Street from Cabrillo Boulevard to Anapamu Street, and
  - the Eastside near Milpas Street starting temporarily by blocking off parts of streets such as Montecito Street, Calle Puerto Vallarta, Alphonse or Jennings for special events.
- 5.5.6 Look for opportunities to connect placitas to public, private and institutional uses. Include signage, as appropriate.
- 5.5.7 Develop procedures that improve the City's infrastructure by incorporating the new sidewalk design standards into street maintenance projects.
- 5.5.8 Prior to creating any plaza areas conduct a noticed public hearing.
- 5.5.9 Improve the beachway to increase safety for all users.
- 5.5.10 Adequately fund programs for regular maintenance of heavily used pedestrian amenities, including sidewalks, under/overpasses, and footbridges. Programs should include litter removal, graffiti removal, steam cleaning, and landscape maintenance.
- 5.5.11 Create incentives and opportunities for private property owners to make incremental improvements to enhance the pedestrian environment surrounding their properties, such as widening sidewalks and planting street trees. Any improvements should comply with relevant design guidelines and standards.
- 5.5.12 Consider the creation of mercados, or markets, in appropriate commercial areas of the City.
- 5.5.13 Install small segments of sidewalks in selected areas, especially on blind curves or in hilly areas with narrow streets, to help improve the safety of pedestrians.

## STREET CROSSINGS

- 5.6 The City shall make street crossings easier and more accessible to pedestrians.**
- 5.6.1 Where necessary, allow all-way crossings or adjust signal timing to allow more time for pedestrians to cross the street. Priority should be given to areas with high pedestrian activity as identified in the Sidewalk Inventory Study. Possible areas include Cabrillo Boulevard/State Street, Carrillo Street/Chapala Street and along Milpas Street near Santa Barbara Junior High School, Santa Barbara High School, and Montecito Street.
- 5.6.2 Widen sidewalks and add medians and other means at intersections to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians, where appropriate.
- 5.6.3 Reduce the speed limit in targeted pedestrian areas (e.g. near parks, schools, and hospitals) to 25 miles per hour.

## LAND USE AND ZONING

- 5.7 The City shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that land use planning and zoning encourage pedestrian uses.**
- 5.7.1 Include sidewalks, landscaping, and other facilities in new public and private construction to promote pedestrian activity where appropriate and consistent with the policies contained in this element.
- 5.7.2 Review, and revise where appropriate, the Zoning Ordinance to allow more small/compact residential neighborhood services (e.g. corner markets, medical and professional offices) within walking distance of existing residential neighborhoods (see Implementation Strategies 13.5.1 and 13.5.2).
- 5.7.3 Continue to implement zoning practices that encourage mixed use developments in order to improve opportunities for pedestrian access and decrease dependency on the automobile.
- 5.7.4 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage property owners to avoid situating parking lots between the street edge/sidewalk area and storefronts.
- 5.7.5 Continue to ensure that private and public developments, as well as capital improvements, are designed to accommodate the elderly, the handicapped, the disabled, and the blind.

**EDUCATION/OUTREACH/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 5.8 The City shall encourage community involvement in effectively promoting the benefits of walking and identify opportunities for improving the pedestrian system.**
- 5.8.1 Establish a signage program for pedestrian routes throughout the City that link various neighborhoods and attractions.
- 5.8.2 Enhance existing or develop new partnerships with civic organizations to promote walking tours of Santa Barbara and provide brochures and signage to advertise these tours.
- 5.8.3 Encourage public and private schools, from pre-school through high school, to promote walking through methods such as walking field trips.
- 5.8.4 Work with public and private schools to identify and expand safe routes to school.
- 5.8.5 Consider establishing a hotline to report pedestrian trouble spots.
- 5.8.6 Continue a Traffic Safety Committee comprised of residents, the Assistant Traffic Engineer and business representatives for the purpose of studying matters of traffic and pedestrian safety, traffic calming, and making recommendations to the City Council regarding measures to promote and improve traffic and pedestrian safety.
- 5.8.7 Coordinate a "Walker's Appreciation Day" with Downtown retailers. Co-sponsor a "Walk to Work", "Take a Walk", or "Walk to School" day.
- 5.8.8 Work with community groups to encourage neighborhood walk-about activities.
- 5.8.9 Work with the Police Department to improve pedestrian safety at night (in areas including paseos and placitas) through such methods as increased bicycle patrols.
- 5.8.10 Encourage public and private schools to implement pedestrian safety education programs for all ages.
- 5.8.11 Encourage community groups, business groups, and individuals to assist in the cleaning and maintenance of sidewalks, sidewalk furniture, landscaping, and pedestrian overpasses, including graffiti removal and litter pickup.