



# MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE (TCC)

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room  
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA  
Thursday, December 11, 2008 6:00 PM

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CALL TO ORDER: Chair Tabor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

### ROLL CALL:

#### TCC MEMBERS

William C. Boyd  
Mark Bradley  
Keith Coffman-Grey  
Steve **Maas**  
David Pritchett  
David Tabor

#### Attendance

Present  
Excused  
Present  
Excused  
Present  
Present

#### CITY STAFF PRESENT :

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager  
Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner  
Dru Van Hengel, Transportation Operations Supervisor  
Sarah Grant, Mobility Coordinator  
Peter Doctors, Traffic Engineer  
Heather Gibb, Acting Administrative Specialist

#### LIAISONS PRESENT:

#### OTHERS PRESENT:

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None.

### PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Ralph Fertig commented that on April 7 Johann Montoya was hit at the Mission Street under-crossing by an SUV turning onto the freeway. He has recovered 90% with a full recovery expected within the next few months. Mr. Fertig is delighted that there are bike lanes being put in at the Mission Street under-crossing in order to increase the safety for bicyclists and pedestrians although it will still not help those who are injured by inattentive drivers. Committee Member Pritchett asked Mr. Allen if the City had a projected completion date for the other side of the Mission Street Bike Enhancement. Mr. Allen stated that Engineering Staff project the project to be finished at the end of the month.

Chair Tabor presented Committee Member Bill Boyd with a plaque for his service on the Committee. Committee Member Boyd expressed his joy of being a TCC member. Mr. Allen also voiced his appreciation of Committee Member Boyd's work on the Committee.

Mr. Allen stated that Committee Member Michael Cooper resigned his seat on the TCC effective Tuesday, December 09, 2008. His seat will be filled during the Spring recruitment due to noticing requirements.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

2. **Approval of Minutes from August 28, 2008 joint meeting with the Planning Commission**

Mr. Pritchett suggested that due to the incompleteness of the Minutes, they be brought back for approval during the January 22, 2009 meeting. He also commented that Mickey Flacks is not spelled F-L-A-X. Chair Tabor agreed to postpone the approval of the August 28, 2008 Minutes until the next meeting.

#### **REPORTS**

3. **Re-adoption of Bicycle Master Plan**

Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner, presented Sarah Grant, newly appointed Mobility Coordinator, to give the report on the Re-adoption of the Bicycle Master Plan. The Bicycle Master Plan was last updated in 2003. There is a supplement included in the Staff Report which includes major accomplishments. There are no policy changes to the Plan at this time. Staff recommends that the Committee recommends to Council the re-adoption of the Bicycle Master Plan for 2008. The Bicycle Master Plan will ultimately go to SBCAG for their review and approval.

#### Committee Member Comments:

Mr. Pritchett asked if the re-proposed plan had any new routes on the map. Ms. Grant answered that the map only reflects changes to those that were previously proposed and have now been completed.

Mr. Boyd asked why the proposed class 2 route on Flora Vista from Cliff to the top of the hill stops at Calle Montilla and does not continue down Calle Canon and down Valerio to Modoc. He suggested that Staff study the inclusion of that link. Mr. Pritchett commented that it was a very narrow road down the hill. Mr. Boyd suggested widening the road for bicycle purposes. Ms. Grant stated they would take that into consideration for linkages in the future. The design of the road and vehicle volumes and speeds would need to be assessed.

Mr. Coffman-Grey stated that the Bicycle Master Plan was a great success for the City and the City has greatly benefited from having bicycle paths around town. He looks forward to the completion of more paths as funds become available.

#### Public Comment:

**Faramarz Nabavi** spoke in support of adoption of the Bicycle Master Plan.

**Motion 1:** To adopt the Bicycle Master Plan as presented.

Motion made by David Pritchett and seconded by Mr. Boyd. Mr. Coffman-Grey supported the second.

Ayes: 4      Noes: 0      Abstain: 0      Absent: 2

**4. State and De La Vina Reconfiguration Project.**

Dru Van Hengel, Transportation Operations Supervisor, presented the State and De la Vina Reconfiguration Project. She addressed concerns heard since the project was before the Committee in November 2007, including concerns regarding funding, lack of collision history, satisfaction with the status quo, and level of service. Staff recommends that the Committee reaffirm its recommendation of November 6, 2007 for the modification to the State and De la Vina intersection which included the original proposal of eliminating the free right turn lane and not leaving an island. The Committee was provided written correspondence since the May 19, 2008 Architectural Board of Review (ABR) meeting. Transportation has received 19 letters of support and 21 letters of opposition.

Committee Member Comments

Mr. Coffman-Grey asked if the tree would be transplanted in Scenario 2 since the island would be smaller. Ms. Van Hengel responded that because of the reduction in size, it may be hard to maintain the tree, but Staff has not spoken with an arborist.

Mr. Boyd asked about the comparison of the costs of the different alternatives and the stop light configurations of the different alternatives. He also commented on the number of letters the Committee received from the public regarding this issue. He would have liked to see more dialogue between Staff and the Committee in regards to the public's concern, as well as the report from the ABR with its concerns. Ms. Van Hengel stated that the removal of free right turn is the principle concern of the ABR. Mr. Boyd then asked why there wasn't a weighted decision of the "do nothing" alternative. Ms. Van Hengel replied that Staff was given an assignment to improve the intersection in accordance with the City's operations and policies so it was assumed that Staff would do something.

Mr. Pritchett asked if the turning radius would be wide enough for fire engines. Ms. Van Hengel replied yes and the fire department also reviewed the intersection. He also asked what the Oak park Core Group was. Mr. Allen answered that it was a group of volunteers who live in the neighborhood who assisted Staff in between the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program meetings in 2003 to 2004. Mr. Pritchett then asked if the City has a policy regarding changes to an intersection that maintain the level of service as Level C or better. Ms. Van Hengel replied that there is not a policy to make a change like that, but if there was a change that decreased the level of service below a C, it would be brought to the Committee for their consideration. Mr. Allen also stated that a left turn from State Street onto De la Vina was not included because it would reduce parking and lower the level of service. Mr. Pritchett asked for clarification on which alternatives removed parking and for clarification in interpreting the metrics tables. He also asked what the pluses are that make the alternatives more expensive. Ms. Van Hengel replied that the pluses are the curb extensions at the right turn from De La Vina onto State Street intersection which eliminates one of the pedestrian crossings and reduces the distance for pedestrians overall. A second potential plus is the addition of pedestrian refuge and room for a curb extension which would reduce the pedestrian crossing and allow for better visibility. The proposal could move forward with a narrow free right turn plus either one of the alternatives, but the pedestrian refuge and curb extension is more cost effective than the right turn with the stop bar because of the signal modification.

Mr. Tabor asked about the 210 foot visibility distance. Mr. Doctors responded that visibility gets better because it pushes the vehicles further out into the street and then doing a bump out at Samarkand would also put the pedestrian further out improving visibility distance.

Public Comment:

Wilson **Hubbell**, Vice President Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, spoke in support of the recommendations to remove the free right turn lane onto De la Vina from State Street due to the potential dangers for bicyclists continuing eastbound on State Street. They are also in support of the TCC's November 2007 decision. He also stated that removing the free right turn lane and maintaining an island would also achieve their goals.

Courtney Dietz, Project Director of Santa Barbara Walks, a project of COAST, supports the removal of the free right turn and not maintaining an island because it will be a protected intersection. The removal of the free right turn will also benefit drivers by slowing down traffic and increasing site distance.

Chris **Orr**, an employee in the area of the State and De la Vina intersection, supports the reconfiguration of the configuration and favors the removal of the free right turn.

Frank **Hotchkiss** spoke on behalf of Michael Self and Santa Barbara Safe Streets and requested the Committee deny the original plan for the reconfiguration of the intersection due to lack of accidents and the increase of "cycle-weaving" with vehicles down State Street. In the alternative, they support alternative #3+. Santa Barbara Safe Streets hired a professional transportation firm to analyze this intersection. They suggested improvements like signal heads for pedestrians. They also commented that this project would increase congestion contrary for what the Caltrans funds are to be used. He also provided the Committee with 14 letters in opposition to the project. Mr. Pritchett asked for a copy of the report from the hired transportation firm. Mr. **Hotchkiss** replied that **Roger Manasse** would speak to the report.

Ralph Fertig, President, Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, recommended that the free right turn be removed due to safety concerns for bicyclists and for pedestrians. A pedestrian island also increases safety for pedestrians. Removing the free right turn is in accordance with the Circulation Element to level the playing field for vehicles and bicycles.

Shirley **Wood Force** spoke to the functionality of the intersection. She does not support changing it for fiscal reasons and because there is lack of pedestrians who use the intersection.

Edward **France**, Director of Programming, BC Centro, a part of Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, supports replacing the free right turn with the original plan presented by Staff.

Kent Epperson strongly recommends the Staff's recommendation of eliminating the free right turn.

Eva Inbar, President, Coalition for Sustainable Transportation, urged the Committee to reaffirm their November 2007 decision to eliminate the free right turn.

Susan Shields commented that cost should not be the main consideration when dealing with safety especially when it comes to families and children who are trying to get to and from Mackenzie Park. Alternative #4 does not take pedestrians into considerations at all except for the pedestrian refuge at Samarkand. Removing the free right turn is the safest option for pedestrians.

Susan **Horne** agrees strongly with the previous recommendation of the Staff and hopes it is adopted for reasons of safety and cost to prevent accidents.

Roger **Manasse**, resident of San Roque, requested the Committee deny reaffirmation of the project. He believes the project wasn't properly vetted by the Committee at the November 2007 meeting. Other suggestions were made by residents, such as improving signage to improve safety, which were not included in the recommendation. The reconfiguration will reduce parking, increase pollution, and increase congestion contrary to the purposes of the grant money. Mr. Pritchett commented that the public's written comments were read and considered during the November 2007 meeting although it was unknown if that occurred prior to the vote. Mr. Pritchett also inquired into the data collected by the private transportation firm. Mr. Manasse replied that due to his not being on the board of Santa Barbara Safe Streets he could not speak for them as to the release of their report. The results of the City of Santa Barbara study from October 2007 were used in his handouts.

Lee Moldaver, San Roque resident, worked on Circulation Element, served on National Safety Council, asked the Committee to reinforce their recommendation from last year because it is the safest design. In terms of cost effectiveness, when looking at capital Public Works projects that include modal conflicts and public safety, public safety prevails only after a fatality occurs.

Alex Pujo, resident upper Chapala Street, commented that the Committee should think of the pedestrians and bicyclists who have died in the city. He also thanked Staff for the Boysel Path. It will save lives and may provide refuge for the Boyseles that their son's death was not senseless.

Diane Khron, resident Oak Park neighborhood, member of the core group of the Oak Park NTMP, stated that the removal of the free right turn had unanimous support amongst the core group members. She supports the removal of the free right turn.

June Pujo, member of the core group of the Oak Park Mobility Plan, worked on the Circulation Element, agreed that the elimination of the free right run was unanimously supported by the core group. She also commented that Staff's recommendations would further the plan of the Circulation Element and supports the Committee's consideration of Staff's recommendations. She would like the Committee to go with the plan of the shortest distance for the pedestrian crossing.

Debbie **Castanha**, via Chair Tabor, applauded Staff's efforts to improve the safety for users of the intersection. Taking the status quo option is a disservice to the community.

Bonnie Donovan commented that slowing down traffic is contrary to relieving congestion as per the grant. She suggested putting up flashing crosswalk signals to increase safety for pedestrians.

#### Committee Member Comments

Mr. Coffman-Grey thanked the speakers for their comments. He commented that it was the residents in the area who were the ones to start the project in 2003. The project was made separate from others in the NTMP due to funding restrictions. In 2007, the Upper State Street study also showed concerns for this area. The businesses have become more community-serving making it more compelling to walk, but due to safety concerns, that remains difficult. He feels the right turn lane creates speeding and that getting rid of the free right turn will allow cars to slow down making it easier for cars to turn left from Samarkand while also increasing safety for pedestrians. He feels that it is unnecessary to keep the island for aesthetic purposes because it does not help the pedestrian and there is another alternative that creates more landscaping to Mackenzie Park while shortening the walking distance from one side of State Street to the other. The goal of the TCC is to reinforce the Circulation Element. Policy 2.1,"to work to achieve equality

of convenience and choice among all modes of transportation” is violated by this intersection which favors cars over pedestrians and bicycles. He reaffirms the original vote of the plan approved in November 2007 because it supports Policy 2.1.

Mr. Boyd supported all of Mr. Coffman-Grey's comments. He also stated that this area has major accident potential. If proposed today, an intersection like the one at issue would not be approved by any City division. He supports the reaffirmation of the decision from last year as the appropriate solution to the problem.

Mr. Pritchett thanked the public for coming. He stated that ABR's message was to look at other configurations of the intersection which Staff has now presented. He is concerned that the letters addressed to the ABR were not forwarded to the Committee with their mailing. He would like to receive the Santa Barbara Safe Streets' report from Staff because that is also a public comment.

In the presentation to Council, Staff should reiterate the option to put in hardware for a turning signal from State Street turning south onto De la Vina. Even though this option for a turning signal was thought to not be a good idea it might improve the predicted level of service at C. He would also like the abbreviations in the metrics to be written out. He would like a more “liberal arts” approach in describing the numbers in the metrics. He would also like the bicycle and pedestrian variables clustered together and for Staff to put in another alternative called “the current condition” in order to give Council a baseline number. Council is looking for a way to tease apart the options to analyze so they may make a decision. Staff should also address the question of if the historic design of the sweeping right turn has merit in modern city planning. He would like an expert opinion about the policy merits of this question for Council.

He commented that the analysis has weighting factors amongst eight to nine variables looking at four design alternatives. At first glance, removing of the free right turn and narrowing the free right turn plus amenities seem to have almost equal scores, but when looking at the variables, things such as bicycle safety and bicycle riding experience along State Street are notably different for the narrow free right turn versus the no free right turn alternative. The Committee's job is to evaluate a project and how it is consistent with the Circulation Element. The initial proposal to remove the free right turn and to shorten the distance for pedestrians is still the option that complies with the Circulation Element.

He asked if the funding was targeted for several projects or just this one. Mr. Allen commented that the funding is for the State and De la Vina reconfiguration and then with left over monies, two other projects will be done. The grant was for just over \$1,000,000 and about 5-10% of the project would come from City funds for the traffic signals. Mr. Pritchett commented that the representatives of Santa Barbara Safe Streets were referring to the functionality of the intersection if you are in a car. If you are not in a car, the intersection doesn't work great and the policy of the City is to make all modes a viable option.

Mr. Tabor stated that we needed to make adjustments to accommodate all modes of transportation. As other modes are accommodated, the amount of cars on the road could decrease. He favors the original scenario.

Mr. Boyd requested that Staff take a look at the inclusion of a pedestrian island at Samarkand as was included in the narrow turn plus option. Mr. Allen responded that Staff would work with the engineering staff to see if that would add a benefit to that project. Mr. Boyd also asked if the plan had to go back to the ABR or go to the Planning Commission before it goes to Council. Mr. Allen

replied that it does not have to go to the Planning Commission. It will go back to the ABR at some point, but probably after it goes to Council. Mr. Boyd requested that when it returns to ABR that the ABR refrain from addressing transportation issues.

**Motion 2:** That the Committee reaffirm the original option of November 8, 2007:  
Removing the free right turn.

Ayes: 4      Noes: 0      Abstain: 0      Absent: 2

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

**5. Selection of TCC Chair and Vice Chair.**

It has been the procedure of the Committee to appoint the Vice Chair to Chair and vote in a new Vice Chair. Mr. Maas feels that due to his employment, it is not appropriate to be considered for the role of Vice Chair. Mr. Bradley communicated to Chair Tabor that he is willing to serve as Vice Chair.

Mr. Pritchett called for a reconfirmation of tonight's vote at the next meeting for Chair and Vice Chair due to the number of absent members. Mr. Allen reminded the Committee that this selection procedure is consistent with the Committee and one of which the absent members are aware.

**Motion 3:** To promote Mr. David Pritchett from Vice Chair to Chair and to appoint Mr. Mark Bradley as Vice Chair to the Transportation & Circulation Committee.

Ayes: 4      Noes: 0      Abstain: 0      Absent: 2

Motion made by Chair Tabor and was seconded by Mr. Coffman-Grey.

The Transportation Circulation Committee has elected Mr. David Pritchett as Chair of the TCC for 2009 and Mr. Mark Bradley as Vice Chair of the TCC for 2009.

**6. Review of TCC Calendar for 2009**

Mr. Allen commented that due to the new appointment and the reappointments of current Committee members, this item could be discussed further at the January 22, 2009 meeting. It was then discussed that Mr. Bradley's Vice Chair appointment may have to be reconfirmed at the January 22, 2009 meeting due to his reappointment to the Committee.

**ADJOURNMENT: 8:36 PM**

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

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

**Please Note: These Minutes were revised on Friday, January 23, 2009. Items in bold and italics have been added to the Minutes, while items with a strikethrough have been deleted.**