



City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 12, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Planning Commission Present:

Chair Stella Larson

Vice-Chair Addison S. Thompson

Commissioners Bruce Bartlett, Charmaine Jacobs, John Jostes, and Sheila Lodge, and

Transportation and Circulation Committee Present:

Chair David Prichett

Vice-Chair Mark Bradley

Committee Members Keith Coffman-Grey, Steven E. Maas, and David Tabor

Edward France arrived at 6:05 P.M.

Absent:

Harwood A. White, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Bettie Weiss, City Planner

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner

Steve Foley, Supervising Transportation Planner

Jessica Grant, Associate Planner

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

Absent:

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

A. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 6:03 P.M. and, with no one wishing to speak, closed the hearing.

II. PRESENTATION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 6:04 P.M.

PLAN SANTA BARBARA TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL

The *Plan Santa Barbara* process is underway to update City General Plan and growth management policies to govern land use over the next two decades.

The City's transportation consultant Fehr & Peers will provide a presentation describing development of the citywide Travel Demand Model to be used in evaluating future land use policies and transportation impacts for *Plan Santa Barbara*.

This is a presentation item only. No action will be taken by the Commission or Committee.

Planners: Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner; Barbara Shelton, Project Planner
Email: RDayton@SantaBarbaraCA.gov; BShelton@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner, provided opening comments and introduced Brian Welch, Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants, who gave the consultant presentation covering City Travel Demand Model development; the initial "No Project" model run of year 2030 traffic; and next steps for use of the model in evaluating *Plan Santa Barbara* policies and alternatives. Key points emphasized:

- The model uses a range of trip generation rates customized to Santa Barbara based on different areas of the City; different car ownership profiles; and calibration to traffic counts in the field.
- Analysis of policy alternatives will adjust trip-making characteristics only with a basis in empirical evidence from 20 years of research on how the built environment affects travel behavior.
- The initial 2030 traffic run is a conservative, worst case analysis because it cannot reflect City policy to reject applications that would add traffic to impacted intersections.
- The "No Project" traffic run for 2030 (assuming continuation of existing City policies and extrapolation of historic development trends) shows a substantial increase in traffic, so a key challenge of *Plan Santa Barbara* will be to identify ways to avoid or reduce these impacts.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 6:37 P.M.

The following people provided public comment:

1. Peter Hunt shared concern about local traffic and *PlanSB* over regional traffic. Problem areas are where the grid system meets the arterial system and lack of connectivity causes choke points; the grid should be expanded. When looking at sustainability for Santa Barbara, we should use examples of small-scale towns, not just cities.
2. Steve Yates, American Planning Association, appreciated the progress on model development and the empirical data. The 2030 run with 2800 residential units shows a 7% increase in housing stock that would contribute 24% increase in traffic on surface streets (a three times increase). Would like to see alternative policies analyzed in CEQA review.
3. Cathie McCammon was concerned that *PlanSB* is only looking at alternative transportation on fixed routes, need to identify ways to get to destinations not on fixed routes. Recommended that the Transportation Model be tailored to local considerations.
4. Fred Sweeney, representing the Upper Eastside community, gave perspective on 'no-growth' and suggested defining for the public the terminology behind the no growth scenario.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 6:47 P.M. Chair Larson noted that a public comment letter was received from Paula Westbury, Santa Barbara.

Mr. Dayton and Mr. Welch responded to Commission and Committee questions as follows:

1. Evidence supports that downtown trip-making allows more trip-chaining due to long, narrow geography of the grid.
2. A fifth trip type for golf was handled separately in the model calibration process due to different characteristics (unique peaking, large land area), however golf trips account for a negligible percent of total Santa Barbara trips and do not affect the modeling outcome.
3. Lower trip rate for hotel use is due to location relative to streets and travel patterns.
4. Area 1 has lower Home-Based Trips due to demographics.
5. The 4D adjustment process will consider characteristics for different unit types (e.g., parking for condos) and car ownership rates.
6. Future changes to transit service will be considered with the 4D factors and in translating policy changes to trip-making adjustments where evidence supports changes for Santa Barbara.
7. Elasticity adjustments will be identified in consultation with staff and SBCAG using empirical evidence that supports changes in trip generation due to policy changes, such as changes in density. The model looks at GIS parcel data in the grid, 4D factors, and scenario characteristics.

8. The model area did not need to be increased based on jobs/housing imbalance because with the seven external gateways included, the model balanced.
9. Re: analysis of transit with the reduced Mobility Oriented Development Area (MODA): For the "No Project model run, current transit lines and service levels were assumed to continue. For the *PlanSB* and alternative model runs, different policies for the MODA will be considered for transit service, transportation improvements, and housing potential.
10. The UCSB Long-Range Development Plan is factored in as part of the External Stations.
11. Cumulative vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will be a model output.
12. In addition to 2000 census data, more recent information such as the 2007 commuter survey is used.
13. The model will test parking policy options as a key factor.
14. Re: whether the Table 5 trip generation figures seem high for single-family residential use: The team will look further at that issue and may adjust the model calibration.
15. Residences without cars still generate some service trips, such as delivery trips.
16. Socioeconomic variables are addressed through an array of different trip generation rates associated with development types, auto ownership profiles, and area differences to test alternative policies.
17. The trip rate for Hospital use was not appreciably different from the Institutional rate, so a finer separation was not needed.
18. The model could be useful for data tracking for the adaptive management program.
19. Area 1-4 criteria would be used to determine which trip generation rate to use when a range is provided (e.g., single-family 8-12).
20. It is likely that Santa Barbara Home-Based work trips are lower than the California average (Table 4) due to demographic factors such as percentage of 16-65 aged population in the work force.
21. Based on Santa Barbara's city size and location within the region, the identified percentages of population working inside or outside the City are expected.
22. Beyond the *Plan Santa Barbara* analysis, future model use for development review, adaptive management, and network changes could be considered for funding by Council. Model use for development review could possibly result in applicant savings compared to the cost of individual traffic studies.
23. "No Project" analysis: The "no project" analysis does not mean a "no growth" scenario. The *Plan Santa Barbara* policies are the "project". The "no project" considers what would occur if the *PlanSB* policies were not adopted and it evaluates increases in both residential and non-residential development assuming continuation of current policies and historical growth trends.

24. Re: Steve Yates comments about percentage increases in traffic: The initial 2030 traffic run reflects traffic generated by non-residential as well as housing development.

The Commissioners and Committee Members made the following comments:

1. Table 2 should be revised to reflect Santa Barbara's unique 45° street grid and customary referencing protocol for East/West and North/South references.
2. The MODA appears smaller than was previously presented.
3. Good progress has been made and the Staff and consultant work is appreciated. Members are eager to see the additional traffic runs.
4. Staff is requested to document how assumptions are made for translating policies to trip generation rates.
5. It is suggested that more sensitivity testing be done to identify which land uses and input factors to the model are driving the growth in traffic in the 2030 model run.
6. Future impacts on the 23 key intersections are due in part to the ease of use of Highway 101 for local trips of less than one mile.
7. Analysis of alternatives needs to identify ways to avoid impacts, such as Transportation Demand Management measures.
8. Santa Barbara is experiencing no-growth planning and a declining population, so traffic impacts are due to the jobs/housing imbalance and the commuters who serve our area.
9. The model will be a useful tool for looking at multi-modal transportation improvements.
10. It is suggested that the model separate out home-to-school trips since they occur at different times of day and can cause traffic congestion around schools.
11. For future policies, it is suggested that the model needs to look at why car ownership changes (e.g., 1-car households with 1 person vs. 2 persons may use the car differently).
12. Analyzing future changes in the jobs/housing balance will identify different numbers of commuters.
13. It is difficult to measure how the built environment affects traffic, so it is best to base factors on many studies.
14. Neighborhoods and households change gradually, which cannot always be reflected by a future year projection.
15. It is suggested that future staff presentations mention the qualitative benefits not captured by the model, such as bicycle, walking, skateboarding, etc., and the savings to project applicants from use of the model.

16. It is hoped that the City will have the resources to maintain and use the model in the future.
17. Housing affordability is a key factor; many homes today have more than one family and increase trip-generation.
18. The model is a tool to support decision-making, and will help in developing the City/County climate action strategy and the Adaptive Management Program.
19. The 4D elasticity approach is good, and the model is sensitive to the Santa Barbara context, which will build public confidence in its output.
20. Focus points for the *PlanSB* EIR are to fine-tune an environmentally preferable alternative, and to look at traffic implications of the jobs/housing balance to improve policies.
21. The model will help to see the effects of policies toward better decisions, and to understand the relationship of growth, jobs/housing balance, and multiple modes on traffic.
22. Many of the traffic factors that impact the key gateways of the City are beyond the geographic scope of this model; should try to connect the analysis with housing development in Ventura.
23. It will be important to use the model for analysis of larger projects.
24. There is interest in seeing how the model deals with the effects of transit, bicycles, and pedestrians on traffic.

Chair Larson acknowledged appreciation for Committee Member Mark Bradley's contributions since he is nationally recognized for his expertise on the subject of transportation modeling.

Chair Larson called a recess at 7:52 P.M. and resumed the meeting at 8:02 P.M.

III. DISCUSSION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 8:02 P.M.

Commissioner Jostes did not return to the dais.

LAS POSITAS/MISSION CIRCULATION OPTIONS REPORT

Transportation Division Staff will hold a joint work session to discuss the development of the Las Positas/Mission Circulation Options Report. The work session will cover the background of the Las Positas/Mission Circulation Options Report; public workshop and stakeholder involvement on identifying transportation needs and ways to improve access to and from Cottage Hospital and adjacent neighborhoods; and the preliminary traffic model results of the potential improvements that were selected for further analysis based on feedback from the traffic consultant, IBI Group, Cottage Hospital and/or Caltrans. Committee and Commission feedback on the transportation improvement options is

requested to ensure that the City is considering the best options to improve access to and from Cottage Hospital and adjacent neighborhoods. Public comment will be held as well.

Case Planner: Jessica Grant, Project Planner

Email: JGrant@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Rob Dayton provided a brief background and introduced Jessica Grant, Project Planner, and Bill Delo, IBI Group, who gave the presentation.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 8:38 P.M.

The following people provided public comment:

1. John Jeffries, Administrator of Pilgrim Terrace Homes, Certified HUD Management Agent, was concerned that Pilgrim Terrace Drive was not labeled on the alternative diagrams. Concerned about the Pueblo Overpass Alternative and its potential impacts to residents of his neighborhood. Suggested utilization of Vista Madera.
2. Beth Bailey was concerned with the 500 block of Junipero Street; suggested that block of Junipero Street be rezoned to be consistent with the area. Concerned with the increase of traffic flow from the options presented to the residential street. Would like to see zoning available for a restaurant on Junipero Street by the park.
3. Robert Houk, Samarkand resident, appreciated the public workshop that was held in February. He supported alternative 2B; which was the alternative supported by all three of the break out groups that met at the public workshop. Appreciated the reduction in traffic on Tallant Road that Alternative 2B would provide.
4. John Devore, President of the Samarkand Neighborhood Associated, supported option 2B. Also, suggested a grade separation to put a bridge to carry Las Positas traffic over Modoc to decrease congestion. Thanked Transportation Division Staff for the workshops.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 8:49 P.M. Public comment letters were received from Ralph Fertig, Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition and Paula Westbury, Santa Barbara.

In response to questions from the Commissioners and Committee Members, Mr. Delo clarified the options presented and their differences. Browning Allen, Transportation Manager, added that the options are based on initial analysis with the economic study to come later.

Mr. Dayton stated that while level of service is not shown in this model, it will be shown in next presentation.

The Commissioners and Committee Members made the following comments:

1. Transportation Chair Pritchett acknowledged that it would be a few years before the State has funding for any of the options and in the interim would like to see small decentralized transportation improvements, such as pedestrian pathways; improved

bus service; and a potential park and ride facility at the Earl Warren Showgrounds that could be used by Cottage Hospital employees. The Transportation and Circulation Committee could review these suggestions and should be used a resource. Committee Member France concurred.

2. Flyover options (Alternative 2A and AC) may work for larger cities, but are not appropriate for Santa Barbara.
3. Committee Members Prichett and Bradley agreed that the hook exit plan has no room to move. The plan is contingent on the cooperation of Earl Warren Showgrounds. It was suggested that if the hook ramp does not work at the Showgrounds, perhaps it could be put on the other side of Las Positas, near existing exit.
4. Committee Member Bradley liked the extension of bike lanes in Alternative 2B.
5. Committee Member Keith Coffman-Gray suggested that the pedestrian overpass by the Junior High School be changed to a pedestrian and bike riding overpass to accommodate bicyclists, without having to go under the Mission Street freeway off-ramp. Suggested extending the one-way streets both ways on Bath and Castillo Streets, but acknowledged it would require a left hand green-arrow turn onto Bath Street from Mission Street. While De la Vina Street changed to a two-way street sounded well, it could cause more problems with parking and traffic than the benefit provided.

The Planning Commission and Transportation and Circulation Committee were appreciative of Staff and the consultant's presentation and the instant gratification in seeing the model used. The consensus of the Commissioners and Committee Members were supportive of Alternative 2B as being the most cost effective and having the most public support. Still, it was discussed that the involvement of Caltrans, Earl Warren Showgrounds, and Cottage Hospital would be necessary and should be sought early. Commissioner Bartlett acknowledged that this option would certainly have impact on Earl Warren Showground's transformers.

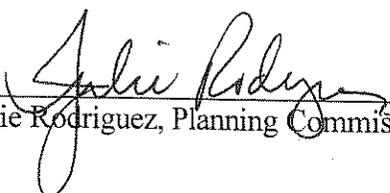
Staff will complete a draft of the Las Positas/Mission Circulation Options Report and the Transportation Division will bring the report to a joint meeting of both bodies to review.

Chair Larson and Staff thanked the public for their participation at the hearing.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 9:33 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary