



## TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

City Hall - Council Chambers  
1000 San Pablo Avenue  
June 25th, 2015—7:00 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chair Chomsky.
2. **ROLL CALL. Members present:** Javandel, Del Rosario, Reeves, McCroskey and Chair Chomsky. Staff present: Lt. Geissberger, Bond, Chen, and Chavez.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES for May, 2015.** Minutes were approved without changes.  
*Motion JavandelMcCroskey:* Moved to approve the May minutes. Vote in favor: Javandel, Del Rosario, Chomsky, McCroskey. Opposed: None. Abstained: Reeves. Motion passed.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Hanes, resident of 807 Cerrito Street spoke about the traffic calming proposal for Washington Ave. He said it was not a good proposal or a good idea, and he was not sure what it would be accomplishing. He said that his house backs Washington and that the proposal to red curb Washington will remove a lot of parking. He wants to be involved in the future. Chavez said she would give him a background on the project.

Ellen Hershey called attention to the pick up/drop off issue in front of the Middle School. The 3-minute parking areas need to be corrected as school lets out at 3:05 pm. There is no provision for school drop off/pick up after school hour and the school has a lot of after school activities. The drop-off/pick-up time on the signs need to be extended around school.

#### 5 PRESENTATION

**5-A Police Report:** There were 10 collisions in March, 6 non-injury, 4 injury. One (1) was hit/run, 2 collisions occurred on Marin, 1 near school, 1 auto-bicycle collision. The APD issued 248 moving citations and conducted 11 DUI arrests.

McCroskey asked about the APD citing bicyclists who go through stop signs on the Ohlone Greenway. He understood APD officers drive their cars on the Greenway to cite cyclists and he said the practice was a bit intimidating. Lt. Geissberger said that this was done the first day, but he understood that subsequently, officers were using their bicycles.

Preston Jordan said that this presents an interesting contrast between not citing a motorist who broke a little girl's leg and citing cyclists who had not injured anyone. He said the issue of citing the driver was resolved before this Body.

#### 6. Discussion and Action Related to the Following Items

##### 6-A Pavement Rehabilitation Plans 35% PS&E

Bond introduced the subject and presented Wen Chen, Senior Engineer with the City. The Pavement Phase I is already designed and at this time, the City is starting the design of Phase II. Chen provided an overview of the curb ramp investigation.

#### The Commission had clarification questions:

- When you said 6 out of 17 curb ramps, were you referring to 17 that failed? Yes. We had more than 40 curb ramps within the project, but 17 have failed.
- Have the ADA requirements changed? Chavez said that some of the ADA standards have been updated.

- Some curb ramps are new and are scheduled to be replaced. Why is that? Some curb ramps have cracks and need to be upgraded.
- Are you going to put truncated dome on the curb ramps that are compliant but need the detectable warning material? Yes.
- How do you decide on which streets get to be repaved? The Metropolitan Transportation Commission provides technical assistance every year to jurisdictions with the update of their pavement program. The report ranks pavement condition based on the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). In Albany, the PCI has consistently decreased since 2009. Streets are selected based on this study, but we also listen to the community if they have suggestions for pavement repairs. Bond clarified that if a street needs sewer or storm drain work, the pavement is delayed until the underground work is done.
- How does the community reach you? Through mail, phone, or email.
- What about the sidewalks between the curb ramps? The City conducted a survey of sidewalks and came up with over 250 locations of damaged sidewalks.

**Public Comment: the following people spoke: Preston Jordan, Ben Hanes**

- All the maintenance projects should be publicly processed and should include complete streets components.
- The City has agreed to paint the ATP Striping and Signage and the first one was already installed on Washington Ave. It is exciting to see it on the ground! By all means, continue to paint all those routes.
- Include in the pavement project, the pavement within the crossings at Ohlone Greenway and Marin Ave. and Ohlone/Washington.
- In Phase I, the City had 18 curb ramps to upgrade, but Phase II plans show that 8 of them are no longer needed. Phase II shows 13 curb ramps that are not particularly a subset of the first set presented to Council in May. Had the City gotten a contractor in the summer, those curb ramps would have been installed, including 2 of the ramps at Marin/Stannage that would have been eliminated soon by the upcoming undergrounding project. This is a waste of tax payer dollars.
- What is the process for selecting the locations?
- AS&R wonders why the curb ramp at the corner of Solano and Evelyn has been eliminated. It needs retrofitting by adding truncated domes.
- AS&R suggests only five locations that may not need reconstruction. The curb ramps along Solano should not be reconstructed. The curb ramps on Solano must be done as part of one project.
- Southeast corner of Washington and Talbot has a very small differential between pavement and ramp. It only needs some grinding to make it ADA compliant.
- AS&R believes that a curb ramp at Marin and Ventura could be built as perpendicular ramp.
- Change the curb ramp at Garfield and Carmel to perpendicular ramp
- Another issue is back-curb behind the diagonal curb ramp. It is a straight angle curb that represents a tripping hazard. AS&R recommends rounding the back-curb.
- Some of the streets being proposed to be repaved are among the best in town. It is not clear how the decision was made to choose the streets.
- AS&R suggested eliminating the parking on the east side of Masonic to widen the Ohlone Greenway. If pavement rehabilitation is going to take place on that street, not paving the parking strip would save funds.
- When talking about measurements, are we measuring the correct grade? Is the slope relative to the street or to zero?
- Taking away parking on Masonic is not a good idea
- Santa Fe Avenue is not on the pavement rehabilitation list. This is a street with very bad pavement. When the City installed the two speed humps, the contractor damaged the pavement adjacent to them.

**The Commission had the following comments:**

- The grade is calculated in absolute terms.
- Solano Avenue is a widely used corridor and it may not be a place to cut corners.
- The grinding suggestion works in places where the height differential is not significant.
- Saving money by retrofitting a curb ramp is a good idea.
- The street selection is based on the PCI rankings and lab tests. Slurry seal cannot be use all the time.

- The street selection process should be one that is open and participatory and not based on private phone calls between staff and a resident. Chen clarified that it was not a private communication between staff and resident, but staff keeps on receiving several calls from residents through the City website. For instance, the City has received several calls from Adams Street residents in regards to the pavement on that street. The report recommends Adams to be repaved in two years, but the tests and the actual pavement conditions warrant a sooner approach. The report is just one of the points of reference to make decisions about which corridors would be repaved.
- Would the T&S Commission have the opportunity to review the list of the streets and curb ramp locations? Chavez said that in the past, the City had not publicly processed the pavement projects. However, now that we are incorporating the ATP projects with the pavement project and given that the City has a Complete Streets Policy, we have to start processing the pavement projects through the T&S Commission.
- Would Santa Fe be repaved soon and would the Ohlone Greenway crossings be included in the pavement program this year? There are other factors to take into consideration, such as the sewer and storm drain improvements projects. The Ohlone crossings can be done with the phase II pavement project.
- Could you explain the reason to exclude some curb ramps? It had to do with available funds and the realization that some curb ramps represent a huge liability to the City. The 8 curb ramps that were eliminated from the first phase could be delayed.
- Please follow the principle that if something can be delayed, do not include it in the design. Please present the design to the Commission.
- Is there any requirement to bring every curb ramp up to standard whenever a pavement rehabilitation project takes place? Whenever a project changes the structure of the pavement, the City is required to bring curb ramps to standard. If it is slurry seal, there is no requirement.
- Preston Jordan raised the need to follow the ATP to the extent possible. The ATP suggests a pedestrian network and this must be prioritized.

Staff thanked the Commission and audience for their feedback. Staff said the process had been valuable. Commission members said that they hoped the process would be streamlined in the future and not take too long.

#### **B. Brighton Avenue Green Street Project.**

Bond said that the Fire Department had substantial concerns about their ability to maneuver their fire engine through this intersection and changes were made to accommodate the Fire Department feedback. Chen provided an update on the project modifications. The Commission had the following questions/clarifications:

- What was the concern of the Fire department? The Fire Chief wants to have enough space to push traffic through the intersection in case of an emergency.

**Discussion was open to public comment.** The following people spoke: Val Williams, Charles Blanchard, Preston Jordan, Ellen Hershey, Comments were:

- If there are no bulb-outs, students would have longer distance to walk when going from class to class about 6-7 times each day.
- Include a raised crosswalk with high visibility striping.
- Student safety is paramount. Students are not trade-offs. Please remember this when making a decision.
- Give the School District more time to review the proposal.
- The new alternative puts the sidewalk next to the street, which is different from the original plan. The original plan had a bio-retention between the sidewalk and the street. In addition, the current proposal seems to narrow the sidewalk and force students to walk next to the street.
- AS&R opposes this particular design as it cuts the width of the sidewalk in half.
- Can this project be implemented somewhere else? It seems that we are trying to address school safety with this green street project when in fact, they are two different issues. Just a block away, the ATP recommends a crossing at Portland by the Ohlone Greenway. This location would be a great opportunity for the installation of rain gardens, or at the recommended bulb-outs at the intersecting streets with the Greenway. If the grant is not flexible, AS&R suggests returning the funds to the state. The group also wonders how this project got this far without any previous public process.

- How is this project going to affect the drop-off area?
- It seems this project is being put in piecemeal without a chance to think through it with the school staff. How do projects like these affect future school design?
- The project is also removing limited street parking space.

The Commission had the following comments:

- There is extensive foot traffic between the High School and the Middle School.
- Are the bio swale areas protected?
- Disappointed at the turn the project has taken. The Emergency services should have been consulted earlier.
- Loss of street trees and traffic calming components
- The project is not ready to be sent to the Council
- What is the funding source for this project? Chen said that it is a competitive process from Proposition 84 for Storm Water Management from the Department of Water Resources.
- Could an alternate location be selected under this grant? We have to ask permission from the granting agency to delay the process. We cannot change the location. How long would construction be? The project can be done in less than one month-3 weeks.
- How much money have you received and how much is the total grant? So far, we have spent about \$70,000 out of the \$300,000 grant funds. This includes \$30,000 match. The funds expire on November 2016.
- If we shut the project down, the City has to reimburse the funds that were already spent, \$70,000 plus the consultant expenses. Bond said that staff had taken a look at other locations, such as under the BART tracks, but the depth of the storm drain is not enough to make the structure work. He said there is another location at the Middle School that staff needed to explore. Superintendent Williams said she is excited about the potential educational opportunity.
- The Fire Department can identify standards for when and where they would allow bulb-outs. It should not be a case by case situation.
- Locating the bio swale behind the sidewalk on school property is advantageous for the school and students.

The Commission recommended continuing discussions of this project with the School District and the Middle School. Another recommendation was to develop a procedural protocol to follow so we do not have this situation in the future.

Item 6-D was moved up for discussion in consideration to the members of the public attending for this item.

**D. Santa Fe Traffic Calming Study Results**

Cosky recused from this discussion. Chavez provided background on the project and reported that speeds had been reduced from 33 mph to 29.3 mph with the installation of the chokers. Since 29.3mph is still considered high and because the hazard the chokers present for cyclists at these locations, staff recommended removing them. She said that speed humps would be more effective in reducing speeds.

The Commission had the following clarification questions:

- How much does it cost to remove the chokers? Between \$1,000 and \$3,000.
- Have you determined the location of the speed humps? Not yet, but a general location is between Pomona and Ramona and between Pomona and the Berkeley City limit.
- When you said you needed more time to evaluate the edge stripe, what does that mean? It would be good to evaluate it during the winter months when it gets dark earlier.

**Discussion was open to the public:** The following people spoke: Howard McNenny, Preston Jordan, and Dennis Meyers. Comments were:

- In favor of removal of the chokers
- Why not installing a raised crosswalk?
- This was the only location in town where a person has contacted AS&R about a built treatment being a hazard
- Speed humps are a reasonable alternative.

- A series of speed humps would help bring speeds down. The block would be noisier, but traffic is slower.

**The Commission comments were:**

- Leave the white line where it is
- Proceed with the speed hump process

Motion Reeves/Del Rosario: moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove the chicanes (chokers), keep the white line where it is and add speed humps. In favor: Javandel, Del Rosario, McCroskey, Reeves. Abstained: None. Opposed: None. Motion passed.

Chomsky returned to the meeting.

**C. Sonoma Speed Hump as a Component of the Marin Avenue Safe Routes to School.**

Chavez gave a report on the decision to include the speed hump on Sonoma Avenue as part of the SR2S project at Curtis/Marin/Sonoma. She explained the different alternatives studied and the design standards for the location of speed humps.

**The Commission had the following questions:**

- It seemed that the speed hump was proposed higher uphill. Chavez said that there were visibility issues with the original location.
- What is the distinction between speed humps and speed cushions? The Cushions are humps that have a gap in the middle to allow for fire trucks to drive through those gaps. However, skateboarders and bicyclists can go through them as well at high speeds.
- Do our Fire Department prefers them? Yes, they do.
- Which ones are better? Javandel said that Berkeley had experience with them. The Berkeley Fire Department said that they were a good concept but in practice, they have a lot of drawbacks because in addition to going over, motorists also move sideways and this is a concern for the disabled community.
- Would the design of the speed hump take into consideration the slope on Sonoma? Yes, the designer went to the site and took a look at the Santa Fe speed humps. Berkeley has a standard for speed humps on streets with a slope.

Public Comment: No Public Comment.

Motion Javandel/Reeves: Moved to support staff recommendation to include the speed hump with the SR2S project. In favor: Javandel, Del Rosario, McCroskey, Chomsky, Reeves. Abstained: None. Opposed: None. Motion passed.

**E. Status of the Buchanan Marin Bikeway Phase III and Peer Review Contract.**

Chavez reported that she would bring the plans in July. The plans were currently being reviewed by the undergrounding, PG&E and the other utility companies. We do not have a City counterpart to do so and we need engineering expertise, particularly for the undergrounding review. Staff would like to get a recommendation to issue a RFP for Peer Review.

Motion Javandel/McCroskey: Moved to authorize the City Manager to enter into a Peer Review Contract. In favor: Javandel, Del Rosario, McCoskey, Chomsky, Reeves. Abstained: None. Opposed: None. Motion passed.

Motion Javandel/McCroskey: Moved to extend the meeting another 15 minutes. In favor: Javandel, Del Rosario, McCoskey, Chomsky, Reeves. Abstained: None. Opposed: None. Motion passed.

**F. Draft Ordinance to Update Traffic and Safety Commission Composition and Review Procedures related to Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements.**

Bond made the presentation on the first Ordinance draft for Commission consideration. The draft ordinance was based on the Planning and Zoning Commission, which has a well established process in the Municipal Code. In

doing this, a key change in this draft ordinance was the inclusion of an appeal process. Again, this is based on the Planning and Zoning process. Per MTC requirement, we have to make sure that appointees demonstrate that they have experience with the different modes of transportation and reflect complete streets criteria. With respect to the duties, the language states that the T&S Commission advises Council on everything related to transportation and parking in the public right of way.

**The Commission asked for clarifications:**

- Why did you dropped the ex-officio members. The Fire Chief and Police Chief do not attend the meetings, nor does the City Engineer. Bond did not know of any commissions or committees that had an ex-officio member.

**Public Comment. Preston Jordan spoke.**

- The City Council referred to the name of the Commission as the Active Transportation Advisory Commission.
- Still, it is not clear how the eligibility to the Commission would be determined. How is Council going to ensure that their appointees meet MTC Resolution 4108 requirements? It would be good to include this in the Ordinance language.

**Commission had the following comments:**

- To what extend do these rules apply to the Commission as a whole or to each individual? Each of us has to be qualified as a user of all modes of transportation. We use all modes, but the MTC requirement does not specify how to determine if a member is a cyclist or a pedestrian.
- The Commission as a whole is the Active Transportation Advisory Commission; it would not be a subset of this Commission.
- Bond said that when a person applies to become a member of any commission or committee, staff does not discuss the applicants qualifications with Council.
- The guideline should be part of the application. Include checkboxes in two columns: Are you an active user? Do you consider yourself knowledgeable of this mode of transport?

Motion Javandel/McCroskey: Moved to extend the meeting another ten minutes. In favor: Javandel, Chomsky, McCroskey, Del Rosario. Opposed: None. Abstained: None. Motion passed.

Discussion on this item continued.

- Preston Jordan said that the requirement to be an active user should be included. Also, change the word “pedestrian” to “sidewalk user.”
- At least one active bicyclist and one active pedestrian should be required.

Bond said he had enough feedback to edit the draft ordinance.

**7 Announcements and Communications**

-Chavez said that she was applying to a Transportation Fund for Clean Air grant for the ATP projects

**8. Future agenda items**

-Middle School drop-off area. Signage and hours for drop off area.  
-Parking Study - September.

**9. Adjournment**—Meeting was adjourned at 10:27 pm. Next meeting: September 24, 2015 at 7:00 pm