

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**December 10, 2008**

*Acting Chair Krueger* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

Michael Krueger  
Robert McFarland  
Eric Schatmeier  
Kathy Moehring (arrived after Item 4)  
Jane Lee

Members Absent:

John Knox White  
Srikant Subramaniam

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator  
Eric Fonstein, Development Services Department

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. October 22, 2008

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that with respect to page 7 (Future Agenda Items), he did not recall raising the issue of High Street and I-880, and believed that another Commissioner made those comments. *Staff Khan* believed the comments were made by *Commissioner McFarland*.

*Commissioner Lee* noted that with respect to school budgeting on page 5, the language should be changed to: "...school budgeting, which *can* cause ..."

*Commissioner Schatmeier* moved to approve the minutes of October 22, 2008, as amended. *Commissioner Krueger* seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

- b. November 12, 2008

There was not a quorum to consider these minutes, which will be considered during the January 28, 2009, meeting.

**3. AGENDA CHANGES**

There were none.

**4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

No task forces met since the last meeting.

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

There were none.

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

**6A. Parking Management Strategy for the Park Street and West Alameda Business Districts.**

*Eric Fonstein, Development Services Department*, summarized the staff report and detailed the background and scope of this item. He noted that West Alameda Business Association and the Park Street Business Association expressed concerns that the Alameda Municipal Code did not reasonably take into consideration the type or size of the business, or its location, when applying the minimum parking requirements. The members also believed that the City's in lieu fees were burdensome and expensive, especially for small businesses. The third concern was raised by residents in the neighborhoods regarding lack of adequate on-street parking. He noted that in response to those concerns, the City hired Wilbur Smith & Associates to conduct a parking study, which measured occupancy, turnover and duration of both on- and off-street parking in the two districts. He noted that the study was completed before the completion of the new Civic Center parking structure and Movie Theater, although those facilities were included in the future parking demand calculations.

*Mr. Fonstein* advised that the study found high on-street occupancy levels several times during the day; City-owned parking lots A and C were also highly used, and that many of the private lots were highly underused; and there were high occupancies in the residential areas near the downtown area. Similar findings were found in the West Alameda district. He noted that the goals of the parking strategy were:

1. Management of the existing supply should be enhanced, and that the bargain hunters and employees should be moved from the on-street parking spaces and into the private and public lots through pricing mechanisms, and to open up the on-street parking for the shoppers, which benefit the district; and
2. Lower the barriers to private investment and business expansion in the districts.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that the infrastructure and supply were in place, but that the resource management tools must be sharpened. He noted that on-street parking was an underpriced, finite resource, which was capable of being exploited or sold out. He noted that an appropriate price point for on-street parking should be found, so that merchants and employees did not monopolize the on-street parking; parking structures and off-street lots would be preferable. He noted that by appropriately pricing the on-street parking, the turnover rate would be optimized. He noted that

short-term parkers were less sensitive to the price, and preferred the convenience. He noted that Professor Donald Shoup of UCLA discovered that appropriately priced parking actually reduced traffic congestion by up to 30%, which was the percentage of drivers cruising around the block looking for a parking space. He noted that the goal was to have 15% vacancy of meter space available at any one time, or approximately one empty space per block. He noted that in the Park Street district, the on-street meter rates were increased from 50 cents to \$1 per hour. The off-street public lots were kept at 50 cents. Staff recommended monitoring the parking conditions on Park Street.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that on certain areas of Webster Street at certain times, there was high occupancy, but that there was not enough to consider raising the on-street meter rates. Both districts would continue to be monitored. He noted that an ordinance may be considered to establish a target occupancy rate of 85%, and create a threshold of meter rates which could be adjusted up or down at 25% intervals. He noted that this plan needed neighborhood support, active enforcement and should be self-funded to avoid impacting the City's General Fund.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that staff's recommendations were to establish a cost-neutral program, which would be borne by the permit holders, estimated at approximately \$75 annually. It would also establish two-hour parking for non-residents in a permitted area; active enforcement would be very important, and that violators would receive a ticket. The program should be located within three blocks of the commercial area; 75% of the on-street occupancy in any given two-hour area should demonstrate an impact on those streets; and one-third of the neighborhood should sign a petition to bring it forward to the City. After a study, the City should present the measure to the residents for a vote, with a majority approval by the property owners.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that the third management strategy was to use employee parking permits, allowing employees to park in off-street lots and parking structures, freeing the on-street parking for customers. He described the prices of the various parking permits. Staff recommended that an RFP be prepared and issued for a trial project for both districts, as funding becomes available.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that the second goal was to encourage private investment, infill development and business expansion in the business districts. He noted that there were some concerns by members of the business associations about the parking requirements. He noted that the goal was to find the right size of parking requirements for uses. He noted that there were comments that the requirements did not take the realities of on-street business locations into account, and that motorists may park once for many destinations. He noted that another concern was that restrictive requirements would increase the cost for infill development. He noted that staff would like the flexibility to go below the stipulated requirements, using either a demand waiver, a historic waiver, or a shared parking waiver. Staff would like to look at shared parking, and that a City employee parking lot at Lincoln and Walnut may be opened to the public on weekends, and for special events. They would also like to create a shared parking database for people to use. Staff would like to re-examine the shared parking code, to ensure that it would be easy to enter into the agreement.

*Staff Fonstein* noted that the third goal was program management, with periodic monitoring, depending on the availability of funding. He noted that issues such as satellite parking programs, park & ride, casual carpool, loading zones, the possibility of extending enforcement to Saturdays or evenings, valet parking, the needs of disabled patrons, and to develop a long-range financing plan for future parking in both districts. He noted that WABA endorsed this plan the previous week, and it was presented to PSBA for consideration in January. He noted that the EDC did not have a quorum on November 20, 2008, and that it would be re-presented on January 15, 2009. This plan would be brought before the Planning Board at their January 12, 2009, meeting. They hoped to bring it to the City Council in February 2009.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* inquired about the impact of casual car pooling on surrounding neighborhoods. *Staff Khan* noted that it was not defined fully at this time, but that there would be some impact. He noted that Encinal/Park and Santa Clara/Webster are currently being used informally for this purpose.

*Commissioner Moehring* inquired about the payment machines, and would like to confirm that they would accept cash in addition to credit cards. *Staff Fonstein* confirmed that they would accept cash. *Commissioner Mehoring* ask when funding for these machines would become available, *Staff Fonstein* for the initial pilot project, and that the cost was \$48,000 for two machines. There would be one machine per block. *Commissioner Moring* noted that it would be nice to try a machine, and inquired whether they could be solar-powered.

*Staff Khan* noted that some machines can be loaded via cell phone.

### **Open public hearing.**

There were no speakers.

*Acting Chair Krueger* suggested this might be a good time to read *Chair Knox White's* written comments into the record.

*Staff Bergman* noted that *Chair Knox White* stated that "in-lieu fees should be used for accommodation of transportation, but an emphasis on transportation options that reduce the need to build more parking. Bus shelters, benches, bike racks, etc., not just parking for bikes or for cars." After receiving the comment, staff examined the Municipal Code, and it appeared to allow considerable flexibility, and should accommodate *Chair Knox White's* concerns, although it was not explicit. The Code stated that "fees should be allowed where the City can identify appropriate uses for funds reasonably related to the project. Appropriate uses shall include, but not be limited to, acquisition ..."

### **Close public comment.**

*Commissioner Schatmeier* agreed with *Chair Knox White's* comments, and was concerned about the portion of the study that recommended lowering the cost of commuter parking in off-street parking to address the balance between on-street and off-street parking. He believed the lower parking cost would serve as a deterrent to using transit in areas where transit service was dense.

*Acting Commissioner Krueger* requested that the possibility of the TransLink card be investigated, because the program was moving very slowly. He agreed with *Chair Knox White's* suggestion about broadening the usage of the in lieu fees for transportation improvements, with an emphasis on parking demand reduction. He believed that the minimum and maximum long-term fee adjustments should include adjustments for inflation. He noted that the criterion for the 15-minute transit service was good except the requirement that it also be 15 minutes on weekends during peak business hours, which he believed was met only by the 51. He believed that was too strict.

*Staff Khan* agreed and stated that it should be changed to weekdays only for the criterion.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* suggested using 15 minutes during the week, and 30 minutes during the weekend, which would apply to both the minimum and maximum. He suggested lowering the price of garage parking would encourage people to park there, or to increase the cost of street and residential parking.

*Staff Khan* wished to confirm that *Commissioner Schatmeier* suggested that before changing on-street pricing, that the impacts should be evaluated, and if the residential permit parking could address the on-street parking issues. *Commissioner Schatmeier* confirmed that was correct.

*Staff Khan* noted that he understood the other comment to examine casual carpool analysis more comprehensively, consider TransLink card use for payment of parking meters; broaden the use of in lieu fees that could be used not just for bicycle or parking supply facilities, but also for transit, transit shelter and parking demand management strategies. He understood that inflation be included for maximum parking meter charges, as well as examining making a change to a waiver that changes weekday 15-minute and weekend 15-minute headway to weekday 15-minute and weekend service being available.

*Staff Khan* summarized the Commission's desire that shared parking would be available for all parking and would apply to all waivers if a facility acquired a new waiver. He added that for the maximum waiver, shared parking could also satisfy as part of the waiver.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that was not his comment, and that having looked for shared parking should be part of the conditions in order to obtain the waiver. He noted that in order to get the waiver, you must show that you cannot satisfy it through shared parking.

<p><i>Commissioner Moehring</i> moved to recommend approval of the plan with Commissioner comments forwarded to the City Council. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.</p>
--

#### **6B. Proposed Method for Identifying Preferred Transportation Modes on Street Segments Where Multiple Priorities Have Been Identified.**

*Staff Bergman* summarized the staff report, and provided the background on this item. He displayed a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate the staff report.

*Commissioner Moehring* noted that segment 68 (Central to Atlantic) gave preference to autos and pedestrians, but that it was also a major transit route, which should be addressed as well. *Staff Khan* agreed.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that the segment 15 listed transit and bicycles on Challenger at Marina Village Parkway, which was not a primary transit or an exclusive right of way transit, yet transit was listed as the preferred mode. He inquired whether that was correct. *Staff Khan* noted that staff would re-examine that item.

#### **Open public hearing.**

There were no speakers.

*Staff Bergman* noted that *Chair Knox-White* submitted comments in writing, which he distributed and read into the record:

The current report/proposal does not address the goals that the TC and the TMP set out, which is to stop the incremental degradation in the walk/bike environment and maintain the quality of life on all streets.

Past TC and staff discussion has focused specifically on allowing higher congestion in Commercial areas in favor of pedestrian improvements, however the current staff proposal does the opposite, specifically saying that for *Commercial Main* and *School and Recreational Zones* not on Regional Arterials, preference is given to Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and/or Transit.

This means that automobiles are given preference in both Commercial Main Streets and School and Recreation zones, the exact opposite of the purpose of these classifications. In fact, the proposal essentially makes the Commercial Main Street classification moot.

The TC's past consensus goal identified the use of the "Modal Priority" maps in the TMP for Multimodal LOS purposes. The staff proposal does not follow this methodology and the TC should be aware of this during the discussion.

At the TMP EIR hearing, we heard from 3 different people about the trouble pedestrians have crossing Broadway near San Jose. Broadway is a Regional Arterial. In moving forward with staff's proposal, auto mobility will be prioritized over pedestrian; the ability of the city to respond to these issues will be reduced.

Alameda's regional arterials are not Gilroy-like walled off roadways that can be treated in isolation of other modes; they run through our business districts, past parks and schools.

Many of the core Primary Transit Streets are also along the Regional Arterials, in prioritizing autos over transit, the staff proposal reduces the TC and city council's goal of moving people instead of cars, especially as it affects the Park Street Bridge and more importantly the tubes.

Before the discussion on the "grid" begins, I'd respectfully ask that the TC discuss the goals of the TMP and the desire to create multimodal LOS thresholds. Only through an understanding of what we are trying to achieve, can the right result be crafted.

Rather than starting with the grid, which is difficult to conceptualize, I would like to encourage people to talk about policies and trade-offs using the grid to identify examples of where certain situations might occur and how the TC would like to recommend they be handled.

Regional arterials streets: Park St., Webster St., Constitution Way, Encinal/Central, ½ of Broadway, Clement Ave., Atlantic Ave., Ralph Appezato Memorial Parkway, ½ of Main Street, Otis Drive (from Towne Centre to the bridge).

### **Close public hearing.**

*Commissioner Moehring* noted that the regional arterials should all have transit as one of the preferred modes.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* concurred with *Commissioner Moehring's* comments, and counted many streets designated as primary transit streets where transit was not mentioned in the priority column.

*Commissioner Moehring* left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that the auto was the default modal priority, which he believed was the reason there was no auto overlay. He noted that the modal overlays answered that priority. He believed this grid brought the street classification in as a means prioritization, particularly bringing in the regional arterial as a way of saying automobiles should trump the other modes, despite the modal overlays. He was concerned that was not how the street classification was intended to be used.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* would like the streets to be prioritized on a case by case basis.

*Commissioner McFarland* agreed with *Commissioner Schatmeier's* assessment.

*Staff Bergman* noted that for the multi-modal priority layers, they were examined in isolation.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* suggested that the clarifications, as detailed in the November 12, 2008, minutes (page 5) be reviewed for the benefit of the Commissioners who were not in attendance at that meeting.

A discussion of the modal overlays ensued.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* suggested that Park Street be designated as a primary transit street, because the level of service and ridership was already high; they could be higher by assigning this priority, and giving preferential treatment to transit.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that the classifications were based on a series of rules, particularly a rule that if a street was designated as a major arterial, that automobiles would automatically take precedence, which was not the same as saying it was a case-by-case basis. He believed that staff was trying to craft a set of rules that could be applied to determine the outcome. He believed that was fair, because it would be practically difficult to handle everything on a case by case basis; in that event, there would be no need for overriding rules and classifications.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* objected to the rule stating that regional arterials would always get auto-priority treatment, and noted that Park Street was different than Otis.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that regional arterials were a major issue in that they were also commercial streets.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that Webster and Park were major transit corridors, but that there was no "T" listed in the table.

*Staff Bergman* noted that if the Commission would like to modify the guidelines, that would be useful feedback for staff.

*Staff Khan* noted that the City would hire Dowling Associates to work on this specific aspect of threshold significance. He noted that if this could not be resolved at this time, there would be other opportunities; this may be a good starting point to get feedback for the next meeting.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* believed the discussion should be continued with all of the Commissioners present, and that the resolution of the conflicts should be identified.



*Staff Khan* noted that the stated goals of the Transportation Element would be a good place to start; the following goals were identified:

1. Circulation
2. Livability
3. Transportation choice
4. Implementation in a cost-effective way.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that he had considered the following goals: protecting livability; maintaining current bicycle, pedestrian and transit levels of service/access; and creating equity for the modes.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that the statement about regional arterials was tricky because they ran through all of the business districts. He believed that when the automotive mode priority in regional arterials, that ran counter to the idea of preserving the walkable business districts.

*Staff Khan* reflected the comment to mean that the regional arterials would be examined in terms of looking at giving priority to high-occupancy vehicles.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that would be a good start, and would like to explore the issue of prioritization. He would like to have more information to provide guidance, and if the modal overlay did not determine the priority, he would like something better than just an *ad hoc* statement, and that maybe too many streets were called out.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* suggested that the goals be used as a guide in setting the priority.

*Staff Khan* noted that some changes could be made based upon the Commissioners' comments, and that the revised goals could be brought back at a later meeting.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* complimented staff on the presentation and believed this was a very good format.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* inquired whether the chart included every classified street. *Staff Khan* noted that staff only looked at the streets in the transportation model with a LOS of C or more.

*Staff Bergman* noted that this was done conservatively, and if the analysis were limited to streets projected to go to LOS D or lower in 2030, it would be reduced to 50 segments. He noted that this constituted only a small percentage of the City's street network.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* noted that good ideas were brought forward.

*Staff Khan* summarized the direction, and noted that staff would examine the Transportation Element goals, and incorporate them into the preferences for different modes. He invited further Commissioner comments, and would report back in January 2009.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Appointment of a Long-Range Transit Plan Update Subcommittee**

*Staff Bergman* noted that this item was suggested by *Chair Knox-White*, since the City was not successful in acquiring a grant to complete the Long Range Transit Plan update. *Chair Knox-White* requested that a scope of work be identified for the time when funding was available. He noted that the general scope of work was identified in the grant application, and could be fleshed out. The Subcommittee would be composed of three members, which was not a quorum; the discussion would be brought back to the full Commission.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* invited volunteers to serve on the Subcommittee. *Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that he would be willing to serve, as would *Acting Chairperson Krueger*. *Commissioner McFarland* noted that he would be willing to serve, but wanted the new members to have the opportunity to serve. He suggested that two members be named, with the third to be named later.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* appointed *Commissioner Schatmeier* and himself as volunteers for the subcommittee, and deferred naming the third member until the next meeting.

#### **Open public comment.**

There was none.

#### **Close public comment.**

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

## **8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

*Staff Khan* noted that staff was asked to consider identifying every agenda item as an action item. After a discussion with the City Attorney's office, it was felt to be problematic.

*Acting Chairperson Krueger* asked for standard guidelines so that there was consistency between all the boards and commissions.

*Staff Khan* noted that the Planning Board did not take action on every item, and that they included discussion items on the agenda.

### **a. Estuary Crossing Feasibility Study**

*Staff Khan* noted that a public meeting was held in October 2008, as well as a policy advisory committee meeting with members of other agencies. A meeting with the TAT was held on this issue, and that the report would be brought to the Commissioner.

b. **Broadway/Jackson Update**

*Staff Khan* noted that there was nothing new to report since the last meeting. A transportation study would be submitted to City Council on December 17 or 18, 2008, and would be available to the public.

c. **Monitoring of Oak Street/Central Avenue intersection**

*Staff Khan* noted that there was no report.

d. **Upcoming development-related traffic studies and plans**

*Staff Khan* noted that there was no report.

e. **Future meeting agenda items**

*Staff Khan* noted that staff would examine ordinances related to parking, because residential permit parking required an ordinance change, and that the issue would be brought forth in January or February 2009.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the Interagency Liaison Committee with AC Transit was tentatively scheduled to meet on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and was rescheduled for January 2009.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 10:05 p.m.