

# **Transportation Commission Special Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday November 18, 2015**

*Commissioner Michele Bellows* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

## **1. Roll Call**

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

### Members Present:

Michele Bellows (Chair)  
Eric Schatmeier (Vice Chair)  
Jesus Vargas  
Christopher Miley  
Michael Hans  
Gregory Morgado

### Members Absent:

Thomas G. Bertken

### Staff Present:

Staff Patel, Transportation Engineer  
Staff Payne, Transportation Coordinator

## **2. Agenda Changes**

*None.*

## **3. Announcements / Public Comments**

### ***3.A. Transportation Commission Meeting: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 7 pm***

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that AC Transit has been actively compiling a service enhancement plan that impacts the City. *Commissioner Schatmeier* provided a memo summarizing the items that were discussed. He explained three priorities came about from the discussion: 1. funding should stay local; 2. maintain existing AC Transit Line O on Santa Clara Avenue and if they shorten the route as originally proposed by AC Transit then savings should stay local; and 3. in the absence of transfers, AC Transit should maintain direct service to Fruitvale BART Station on the current lines despite the additional cost of doing so. He recommended that the topic be agendized for the January 2016 meeting so the Commission can discuss the priorities.

*Staff Payne* stated that the City has been working with AC Transit and the City supports their expansion plan. She further explained that the biggest priority is the restoration of the Line 19,

which is in the northern waterfront area and a new development will be built in the area. She said last week she went to an AC Transit hearing and summarized the need for restoration of the Line 19.

## **4. Consent Calendar**

### ***4.A. Transportation Commission Minutes – Approve Meeting Minutes – May 27, 2015***

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated he had a change to Item 5b discussion of the Central Avenue Complete Streets proposal. He said that the minutes state Webster Street and Central Avenue eastbound traffic on Central Avenue has a large amount of vehicles turning right onto Webster Street. He explained that he meant to say was westbound traffic on Central Avenue has a large number of vehicles turning right onto Webster Street and he was concerned about how that would be treated.

### ***4.B. Transportation Commission Minutes – Approve Meeting Minutes – July 22, 2015***

<p><i>Commissioner Miley</i> moved to approve the minutes of May 27, 2015 with the corrections provided by <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> and approve the minutes of July 22, 2015. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.</p>
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## **5. New Business**

### ***5.A. Review Quarterly Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans***

*Staff Patel* presented the quarterly report and introduced *Rochelle Wheeler*, Alameda Public Works, to present an update on the Cross Alameda Trail.

### ***5.B. Recommend City Council Approval of the Central Avenue Concept Including Safety and Other Street Improvements***

*Jennifer Ott*, Chief Operating Officer for Alameda Point, presented the report and introduced *Staff Payne* to discuss the public outreach, staff recommendations and next steps. *Jennifer Ott* also presented *Jean Finney*, Deputy District Director of Caltrans District 4, who spoke at the end of the presentation.

*Commissioner Vargas* said having worked with Caltrans there are design manuals and guidelines and there are design exceptions for similar facilities that Caltrans has granted with lane widths of 10.5 feet.

*Jean Finney* replied yes and the standard width for this type of roadway is 11 feet, so there will be a design exception for the 10.5 feet lane widths. She also reiterated the fact that traffic engineers looked at the conceptual plans and gave conceptual approval for the 10.5 feet width.

*Sean McPhetridge*, Superintendent of Alameda Unified School District (AUSD), stated that he was glad that the City and staff worked with the District. He explained that school leaders

support a walk and roll event every year to show and emphasize the need to be healthy and safe. He also said the City of Alameda has worked hard to partner with them on numerous fronts and he along with his colleagues support the plan.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that he thought staff did a good job on outreach and the presentation was conducted well. He said *Jennifer Ott* talked about safety improvements and the disproportionate number of collisions the corridor is responsible for and he felt that was an interesting case. He wanted to know if there will be a report on the before and after statistics as a result of the project.

*Staff Payne* replied she would like to report back about the impacts after construction.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that the presentation commented on the delays in traffic in the year 2035 and he wondered how much of the delays and growth attribute to traffic growth that would take place if the City did nothing. He wondered if that would be a similar level of delay and growth. He also wanted to know if staff attributes the delay growth to the project or the fact that the City will get bigger and there will be more traffic in the year 2035.

*Staff Payne* replied the numbers for the year 2035 do assume that all the planned development is within the estimate including no mode shift and the project is built.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* replied the data reflects the assumption that the project is built, but does the data also assume growth delays in the corridor if the project was not built so there would be no net impact on delays.

*Laurence Lewis*, Associate Planner Kittelson and Associates, said the comparison that *Staff Payne* mentioned was in addition to the growth that would happen from upcoming development. He explained there was a comparison with the same level of traffic in the year 2035 meaning existing conditions and with what was proposed without mode shifts.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* said the benefits listed included the improvements to bus access and he wanted more detail regarding this.

*Staff Payne* replied the west end of the island where there is the two-way bikeway on the west side of the street would have bus islands on the west end of the street to accommodate the existing bus stop and staff would move the island a little bit north to the far side of that intersection. She also mentioned that on 8th Street there would be a bus bulb-out for the westbound bus stop with benches and shelters and that type of improvement along the corridor.

*Commissioner Miley* stated that looking at the Encinal High School side, he was happy to see staff partnering with the school. He confirmed with staff that the reconfiguration of the school's parking lot, which is the staff parking lot, will have no loss to parking spaces.

*Staff Payne* replied there is no parking loss.

*Commissioner Miley* replied since the parking lot is the staff's parking lot, where would the rest of the encroachment of the existing school's facilities take place.

*Staff Payne* replied that would be the lawn space and they would be moving to the two kiosks further south out of the path of the bikeway.

*Commissioner Miley* asked about the Webster and 8th Street intersection. He explained the intersection is where the highest pedestrian incidents were observed. He wondered if there were any treatments or improvements made within the 10 years.

*Staff Payne* replied there were four pedestrian injuries at Webster Street and Central Avenue over the past 10 years and since that time staff has improved that intersection. She said staff created a new marked crosswalk on the east side and they felt that would improve the intersection moving forward. She went on to say that half of the injuries occurred before the intersection improvement and half occurred afterwards, but she felt that did not occur on the eastern side.

*Commissioner Miley* inquired about Washington Park from Page Street to 8th Street, where the bike lane would discontinue. He wondered if staff looked at going into the park to accommodate a lane there.

*Staff Payne* replied staff reviewed the option and decided not to pursue that because park space is very limited and they weighed that as a higher concern.

*Commissioner Bellows* opened the floor to public comments.

*Kyle Long*, Alameda west end student and east end resident, said he took a bicycle safety class and obeys all traffic laws. He said he feels unsafe when bicycling and feels safer when there is a dedicated bike lane.

*Jay Katter*, Alameda Community Learning Center (ACLC) student, said his friend who also bicycles was hit by a car when riding to school. He felt having bike lanes on Encinal Avenue would be very nice.

*Jay Lucy* stated that he does not support the project. He felt the elimination of the parking spots and road access at the intersection of Central Avenue and Webster Street will be a business negative and poor use of City funds. He asked for a loading and unloading study to be conducted and he said West Alameda Business Association (WABA) does not support this project. He pointed out that at the public meeting when the new cross walks were installed at the intersection of Central Avenue and Webster Street staff stated that over 20,000 vehicles were crossing daily and now the numbers have mysteriously dropped due to a different agenda even with the growth pattern being 2.9 percent from 2009. He said with population density growing, limiting a major arterial makes no sense when a back path exists on Santa Clara Avenue. He requested that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be considered on such a significant proposal. He also requested that a Shore Line Drive usage survey be considered to see how the people living along Shore Line Drive feel about the change. Having been to every meeting on this topic, he felt disappointed by the changes that were made since the last meeting. He heard that the schools are drawing from outside the area like the city of Oakland. He asked that the bulb-outs not be used because they are a hazard and are not maintained.

*Kathy Neilson*, Central Avenue resident and parent to an Encinal High School student, said she was surprised by the low collision incidents reported at the corner of Encinal Avenue and St. Charles Street because she felt there are more collisions that took place than was actually reported. She was happy to hear about the inclusion of curb extensions and crosswalks because they will be effective. She felt that the loss of one parking spot in front of her home makes up for increasing community safety. She was also happy to see the Sycamore trees would stay and beautify the street. She wondered if the plan includes redirecting activity to go from Santa Clara to Central Avenue. She also wondered if the school district considered changing the school hours. She thought potentially staggering school start hours would reduce the traffic.

*Colin Wainmain*, Academy of Alameda student, said he rides his bike to school 3.5 miles each way. He said he likes to ride in the bike lanes because they do not honk at him and the bike lanes allow him to focus on riding safely and follow the laws. He explained that after school, he often rides down to Webster Street to get a snack and then rides over to soccer practice at Alameda Point. He said he would ride along Shore Line Drive after soccer practice, but his coach would not let him ride in the dark because it is too dangerous.

*Jim Strehlow*, Alameda resident, stated that plans have changed from initial presentation from workshop to workshop to tonight. He said what was shown tonight was new material not previously shown to the public so #1, 2, 3 and 4 became 1, 2a, 2b and 3 from sections A-K. He felt there should be more meetings on the project now that there are new revisions and the community should review and have the opportunity to present questions and receive answers. He asked staff how many citizens along sections A-F have stated that they want a cycle track in front of their house or business, especially since it will be more difficult for them to enter and exit their home or business. He also said, the parking widths on sections F, G, H, I, and K are 7 feet wide, not 8 feet wide and he wondered if staff would move the disabled off the street. He noted that Section J, slide 48 on the presentation packet is something the community has not seen before and public input was not received. He believed that was a bait and switch. He asked the Commission about *Commissioner Schatmeier's* ideas and why they were not included in the plan other than 8th Street. He said he bikes along 19th Avenue near Stern Grove in San Francisco and San Francisco would never suggest taking away one traffic lane because that would make it difficult for vehicles and emergency access vehicles to maneuver. Overall, he said some portions of the plan he agreed with, but he did not approve this vastly changed project.

Todd Wainmain, Central Avenue resident on the east end, said he and his children bicycle to the west side of the island. He felt the City needs to have a safe way to get across the island and his children have told him about unsafe drivers and how they are following the rules of the road. He went on to say that he lives on a portion of Central Avenue that contains sharrows and the drivers do not understand exactly what they are. He asked that staff construct dedicated bike lanes because most drivers understand what that is and it is safer for cyclists. He explained that he would cycle more frequently to the west end to Alameda Point for soccer games and Spirits Alley if there were safer options to do so. He noted that when coming out of Crab Cove cyclists are spit out on a sidewalk and there is signage saying "Do not bike on the sidewalk." He also pointed out that the plan has no loss of parking, so he does not understand why this plan cannot be approved as it stands because the presentation was quite thorough.

*Susan Sperry*, Alameda resident, asked the Commission to reconsider the plan and carefully look at the issues of the street. She came before the Commission because she was devastated to see what happened to Shore Line Drive. She carefully gathered newspaper editorials about Shore Line Drive and she is a property owner on Shore Line Drive as well. She said in the past she was able to see the ocean from her window and now there is parking lot.

*Bruce Kibbe*, Santa Clara Avenue resident, felt the plan is excellent and to go ahead with it because this plan is looking towards the future. He said every bicycle equals one less car and one less parking space that needs to be provided by merchants.

*Commissioner Miley* said it was great to see so many young kids out tonight to speak and attend the meeting and he said they were brave to bike to school.

*Commissioner Bellows* replied it was great to see the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) produce such articulate children.

*Matt Winn*, Central Avenue resident, said one of his kids attends Franklin Elementary School and he does not see the school on the study. He went on to say that there is a whole subset of parents who live on the north side and have kids who attend Franklin Elementary School. He stated that there are four traffic lanes and when crossing the intersection you have to wait 30 seconds or so until one of the lanes notice and stop. However, by that time motorists start getting impatient because there are three other lanes that need to stop and you must wait for all four lanes to stop in order to go. He explained that he uses Central Avenue to get across the City as a motorist and he would gladly give up a lane to see this plan go through, so he recommended the plan.

*Scott Mace*, Central Avenue resident between Webster Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, said he bicycles a lot throughout the island. He felt bikes belong on the street because they are traffic too and motorists need to respect that and most motorists do. He explained that some of the proposed bike lanes are too narrow on Santa Clara Avenue because there is a 7 foot parking lane and a 6 foot bike lane and this gives cyclists a foot or more to avoid the door zone. He pointed out that on Central Avenue staff proposed a 7 foot parking lane and a 5 foot bike lane and that is a legal engineering minimum. However, the bike lane is a door zone bike lane. He requested that staff either widen the bike lane or revert to sharrows. He noted that some statistics are lacking in this presentation such as staff say conflicts occur at intersections, but separated facilities do not make it safer. He stated that they do not know what the cyclists were doing when they were injured. He felt road diets are good for pedestrians, but signage must state that cyclists are not mandatory, and then perhaps sharrows could be painted next to the separated bike lanes. He wanted to see new resources devoted to pedestrian, cyclist and driver education. Ultimately, he was not in favor of the plan as currently proposed because of door zone issue.

*Gerald Bryan*, Alameda resident, stated that the concerns are at the intersection of 6th Street and Central Avenue because it is a choke point across the entire island. He said if you have an accident at the intersection, you will stop traffic going in each direction and that was proven last week at the busiest time of the day. He felt if you cut off that line 6<sup>th</sup> Street does not go around the corner except for Palace Court and that does not go anywhere. He said realistically staff should look at the area a little differently such as reviewing the crosswalks on the corner and the lack of proper driving and poor riding on the part of cyclists. He recommended erecting

stoplights especially by the school to regulate traffic. He said currently, there are two poles with bright orange flags and that is the only way to get across the street safely. He exclaimed that safety is the most important thing.

*Commissioner Bellows* asked that the speakers with children line up so she can pull their speaker slips in light of the current time.

*Cosma Hatragi*, Maya Lin School student, said he bikes to school every day. He said he sometimes ride his bike after school to Franklin Park Pool to his sister's swim lessons. He explained during his ride there are many fast moving cars and he rides on the sidewalk, which is not safe for pedestrians. He thinks there should be bike lanes on Central Avenue.

*Deena Hatragin*, mother, cyclist and Alameda resident, said she moved to Alameda because it is a bike able town and she uses her bicycle for everyday transportation. She felt very strongly to have her children ride bicycles as well and she hopes that more people will get out of their cars and onto bicycles. She heard over and over again that the City needs to make the island safe enough for everyone to ride, so she approved the plan.

*Marissa Wood*, Alameda Community Learning Center student, said she regularly shops at the farmer's market and Webster Street businesses. She explained when coming from the west end and approaching onto Webster Street she attempts to bike onto Santa Clara Avenue, but the part of Santa Clara Avenue west of Webster Street has many stop signs and the road is hard to share with cars. So, she stated that when she does not bike down Santa Clara Avenue, she will bike down Central Avenue which is very dangerous. She felt the project would help all members of the community because there will be parking spaces for motorists and the plan will reduce speed limits benefitting pedestrians.

*Jerry Cevente*, 5th Street resident, thanked the Commission and staff for embarking on the study. He said he and his wife have been to all of the public workshops and he has lived on 5<sup>th</sup> Street for 25 years. He went on to say that he drives, walks, and bicycles on Central Avenue and it is harder to walk across and along Central Avenue. He said he likes seeing the amount of cyclists increasing, but on Central Avenue the cyclists end up on the sidewalk. He noticed the vehicle speeds along Central Avenue are a lot faster than the speed limit sign. He believed the bulb-outs and the flashing beacons at the crosswalks will create an advantage for pedestrians and make traffic flow better. He noted that the traffic signal installed at 3rd street is good, but that will bend the end of Taylor Avenue and eliminate the right turn lane with the ability to turn right onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. He explained that the report stated that a traffic signal on 5th Street may be erected and he felt it would be advantageous to have the signal sooner than later and possibly not run it as a true traffic signal all day, but during peak hours and then have it as a flashing red the rest of the day. He brought up the fact that Webster Street and the way that you see the traffic signals work on Central Avenue one light is available and then there is a turn coming up Webster Street going south has its own signal and coming up Webster north it has its own signal. Thus, each direction should have its own signal. He requested that the City work with the merchants on the northwest corner of Webster Street and Central Avenue about the impact to deliveries in the morning. Overall, he felt the plan is a real benefit because of the bicycle lane and narrow streets to have complete streets.

*Ron Berrant*, Alameda resident, appreciated staff and the Commission's hard work. He said he was concerned about the details for the plan to be effective and the correctness of assumptions about vehicular traffic. He explained that the experts stated that there would not be major impacts on traffic going into the tube even with the development of the adjacent housing project. He wondered how the planners figured there would not be a problem going into the tube. He recommended that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be conducted in order to look at the number of items that have not been pushed here. He also said that a study of the changes to Shore Line Drive has not been published.

*Jerry Harrison*, Alameda resident, stated that he supports the proposal. He also explained that he has cycled from coast to coast and the one place that makes him uncomfortable is riding on Central Avenue between Sherman and Webster Streets.

*Diane Brock*, west end resident, said she is concerned about recommending the plan without the research data. She explained that staff at the last public workshop said the Planning Department would conduct a traffic study on what is happening at Southshore. She asked that the study be done before moving forward with this plan because the public does not need vague statistics. She also felt a project of this size should have an EIS and she needed data before any recommendation should be considered.

*Dave Maxi*, Bay Street resident, said he is not against cyclists, but he is wary of the narrow traffic lanes and the behavior of cyclists. He went on to say that cyclists would arrive at the Chestnut Street and Central Avenue stop sign and not stop. The cyclists would then go off to the sidewalk or crosswalk and then back onto the bicycle lane. He questioned whether the narrow lanes would create congestion for truck, delivery and vehicular traffic because many delivery trucks double park. He also stated that it is illegal to enter the center lane to pass cars and the extra street trees will take up the car space and create more maintenance issues.

*Dan Wood*, Alameda resident, said he is in favor of the project and he heard a lot of people who are in support of the project. He also heard the community speak about issues which are relevant as well. However, he felt that the City should start with what they have proposed and they can tweak it to make it even better.

*Griff Neal*, Alameda resident, stated that 450 homeowners who live on the south side of Central Avenue between Burbank and Sherman Streets are fiercely opposed to the plan. He said he does not drive much, but he has to leave the island for work and family obligations. He went on to say that during rush hour it will be difficult to get onto Central Avenue and the plan does not consider the south side residents. He brought up the fact that there is little support from people attending Franklin Elementary and Saint Joseph Elementary Schools; many of whom ride their bicycles on San Antonio Avenue and go over to Grand Street.

*Klose Slidernagers*, Shore Line Drive resident, stated that tonight's meeting addressed similar issues made during the Shore Line Drive proposal. He stated that the Shore Line Drive project was a godsend for people bicycling or walking to the beach. He explained that before the project was implemented pedestrians had to cross four traffic lanes and now speeds are much lower and cars are not overtaking an already stopped car. He said the outcome of the project created a huge impact on bicycle and pedestrian safety. However, he was surprised by the number of cyclists



riding on Fernside Boulevard after including the cycle track there and he felt Central Avenue will have the same outcome.

*Bernie Matthews*, west end resident, gave a shout out to *Jennifer Ott* because she's a true professional. However, he felt there are many similar issues to Shore Line Drive where parts of the community, especially renters, feel the plan is ugly and inefficient. He felt Appazatto Way is a freight train coming down the track and the project is like my way or the highway. He said he has been a resident of the west end for 18 years and cycles often. He encouraged the Commission and staff to take a look at the traffic on Central Avenue because he does not trust the data. He also pointed out that the bike group must have partnered with this project, which felt like a conflict of interest.

*Kelly Jackson*, Central Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street resident, stated that she generally supports the project, but she has a problem with the plan along the Central Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street segment. Last year, she wrote the City about the intersection and she was surprised with the relatively low number of reported accidents. She felt it was a step backward for this intersection and people will speed to jockey past each other to get ahead because there is a quick merge ahead of the intersection. She also felt this is an effort to compromise, but this is putting everyone at risk including residents and visitors.

*Julie Connor*, Bay Street resident, said she understood the variety of interests and circumstances that come into play. Were it not for the road diet proposed at 4th and Sherman Streets, she would be in support and she felt the Commission should have more information about this intersection. She referred to slide 7 of the presentation and noted there were three injuries on Sherman Street within a 10 year span and one accident within the 10 year span. She said only Lincoln and Central are thoroughfares and to cross Central Avenue is already difficult. She brought up the survey data and noted that 25 percent of 4th and Sherman residents were not in favor. Also, she stated that the streets along San Antonio Avenue and Sherman Street will have unintended consequences of extra traffic.

*Bonnie Waimain*, bike safety instructor, thanked staff for their work and explained that the benefits of bike riding connects to better health and reduces the need for parking spaces. She explained that more people would bike if they felt safe. She said the separated bike lane creates visibility and predictability for cyclists and motorists. Overall, she supported the plan.

*Scott Milston*, Bay and San Antonio resident, said he is pro bike, pedestrian and kids on bikes, but he opposed the plan because he needs good data. When he read the literature he was disheartened by what he saw was one minute increases to traffic time and that memo did not support the statistic at all. He also explained that the memo readily admitted that no study was done on the spillover affects to the side streets. He pointed out that the majority of tonight's meeting was very pro and at the November meeting there were plenty of dissenters in the crowd. He felt it was the responsibility of the Commission and staff to think of the macro effects of the pro-growth initiative occurring within the island. Yet, the City is restricting one of the main arteries on the island.

*Rein Clostenter*, Bay Street and Central resident, said he rides his bicycle to work daily to go to work and supports the road diet. He explained that his mother-in-law lives on Shore Line Drive

and he can now ride his bicycle with his family. He stated that his children will start Franklin Elementary and crossing Central Avenue is a barrier to get to the school. He also explained that he would patronize the businesses on Webster Street more, but he does not want to take the car. Overall, he supported the plan.

*Karen Ratto*, Caroline Street near Central Avenue resident, said she rides her bike around and felt the grant money could cover the EIS. She also feared that San Antonio Avenue will take on more traffic and she didn't hear much about the viability of using Santa Clara Avenue as a bicycle route.

*Dave Kimball*, Advocacy Director for Bike East Bay, said safety is a huge reason to support this project and the community receives a net gain of parking which is a first. He explained if the City received an endorsement from Caltrans then that says something, so they need more partnerships like that including working with the schools. He said his organization conducted shopper intercept surveys to see how modes of travel relate to consumer spending when consumers walk, bike or take public transit. There were two studies conducted locally in downtown Berkeley and Oakland's Temescal neighborhood in order to have local shopper data which support projects like this.

*Jeffrey Bernerford* stated that two lanes in both directions offer a lot of flexibility for garbage and delivery trucks to move around vehicles. He felt once the project is in place, a 1.6 minute delay will produce a domino effect because there are three 20-second traffic signal cycles. He suspected that the plan will be very unusable and he did not support the plan.

*Benty Peterson*, Burbank Street resident, said she has two children and she enjoys living in Alameda because they can bicycle. Therefore, she supported the plan, but she had concerns with the gap.

*Carol Gottstein*, disabled Alameda resident, said she was struck by staff's lack of outreach towards the disabled community. She explained that the disabled rely heavily on vehicles and she had concerns about the 7 foot wide parking strips. She wondered what the City would do if a disabled resident requests a blue curb in front of their residence. She explained the City would have to construct a bulb-out of their parking space into the bicycle lane because that is what the resident is legally entitled to have. She also agreed with the other speakers who said the data and reference to the data were vague.

*Michele Elson*, Bike Walk Alameda Board Member and south side of Central Avenue resident, said she is the parent of Franklin Elementary and Academy of Alameda students. She said she supports the plan and felt staff did the work to show the plan is needed. She felt the plan should be focused on safety because where Central Avenue comes into Sherman Street she observed motorists flying through the traffic signal as soon as the light turns green. She stated if motorists could slow down and drive the speed limit that may be easier to get off Bay Street or St. Charles and get on to Central Avenue or Sherman Street. Also, the plan will help young and older pedestrians cross the street easier. Additionally, she said having dedicated bike lanes will provide a continuous route on an arterial that is best equipped to handle it. Overall, she supported the plan.

*Lisa Foster* stated that she does not live far from tonight's meeting location and she bikes with her 1 and 5 year olds frequently. She said she regularly goes west towards Washington Park, the library and other establishments. However, when she hits Sherman Street they have to go over to Santa Clara Avenue, a busy street with buses, so she would love to stay on Central Avenue. She also said when going past Webster Street and staying on Central Avenue she is okay with that, but the cars that are stuck behind her are probably not okay because they have to negotiate around her. Overall, she felt the proposal is a step in the right direction.

*John Spangler*, Alameda resident and a League of American Cycling Instructor, stated that he rides his bicycle, drives, walks and takes public transit. He explained that he lived on San Antonio and Encinal Avenues so he understood the different perspectives. He said Monday through Friday from 6-7 am and 6:53 pm he has been stuck in the tube going to the Capital Corridor Station in Oakland. He said the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue is the chokepoint, but if they can save 16 people from being killed or injured over the next few years, then 96 seconds is not a big price to pay. He was disheartened to hear former chief of police Bernie Matthews say that traffic was more important to him because he was sure his heart bled every time someone was in a collision or victim of a crime. He felt there are too many preventable collisions and injuries and he supported the project. Yet, if the plan had to be revised and there are no bikes lanes created the safest thing is to take the curb side lane, which is the same thing as having a bike lane.

*Lucy Gigli*, Director of Advocacy for Bike Walk Alameda, stated that Central Avenue is not Alameda's main highway it is a neighborhood because the corridor contains housing, schools, parks and businesses. She said currently it is a four lane roadway with an average of seven collisions per year. Staff has done an incredible job composing a detailed packet addressing the diverse community and their needs. She felt it was an iterative process with many people involved. She pointed out that the result and package seen before the Commission does not match Shore Line Drive, but instead matches Atlantic Avenue, Broadway and Fernside Boulevard. As the report showed, the middle turn lane will make it easier for people to turn onto Central Avenue from San Antonio Avenue and Bay Street. She explained that the Commission received over 200 letters and postcards of support and 72 people came that night from Franklin Elementary and other schools, so let's support this project.

*John Knox White* stated that a previous resident spoke about how the flags were put up on the corner of Central Avenue and if that intersection is broken and not working than there it is. He exclaimed the question that should be asked is how many people are acceptable to hit on this street because if the answer is greater than 0 feel free to shoot it down. He said the City must create a safe environment and this is a best compromise plan. He went on to say that the City has a 20-year experiment happening, which is Broadway. The corridor carries more vehicular traffic and has neighborhood streets that cross into it including driveways that enter on to the street. He said they don't have to wait for Shore Line Drive to be evaluated when they know there have not been major accidents or backups. He brought up the fact that this will be the first bike lanes west of Webster Street and if that is not a call for equity on the west end then that is it. He asked the Commission to please move forward with the project.

*Brian McGuire* stated that there was a well-publicized article within the last couple of weeks about two kids walking in the San Francisco Marina District with an almost identical road setup

(four lanes of traffic and uncontrolled crosswalks) as the area around Maya Lin School. He said kids think it is safe to go and someone driving 35 mph can take them out. He felt two lanes with a center turn lane is a big difference than a two lane road. He explained that he use to live south of Central Avenue and motorists only have to go across one lane to get into the center lane and merge. He went on to say if Caltrans approved a project it is not a takeover of the bicycle groups. Ultimately, he supported the project.

*Karen Bay*, 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Taylor Avenue resident, said she is a 15-year ferry rider. She explained that she attended a transportation meeting on November 16 and was told that the ferry experienced a 30 percent increase in the last two years and she has seen it. She has also seen a lot of people riding their bikes to the ferry and a lot of children riding their bikes to school. She said the problem with Santa Clara Avenue is that it is not safe infrastructure for cyclists. So, she approved the project because it is important for students and commuters going to the ferry and for Alameda Point as whole.

*Peter Baron* stated that he organized the first bicycle symposium in Cambridge Massachusetts in the 1970s and he spent his career doing waterfront redevelopment and restoration. He said he has never seen a town with more bikeway and pedestrian potential unrealized than Alameda. He felt the potential for the Alameda Point circumference trail is extraordinary and people will be coming across the island and around the state to go there.

*Lee Huo*, Bay Trail Project Planner, said he supports completing the trail along Central Avenue. He explained that the idea of the trail is to get along the shoreline on a Class I separated trail as often as possible. He pointed out that you do see alignments such as Central Avenue where the project essentially completes the trail between Pacific Avenue and Crown Drive. He thanked City staff and the consultants who worked diligently with the concept. Furthermore, he said the trail is a regional recreation trail and significant commute alignment adopted in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) regional bicycle plan and Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) bicycle and pedestrian plan.

*John McKeenan* stated that the Commission studiously paid attention to all the speakers and he does not see that often. He said Indianapolis, Indiana known for motor cars and racing has put together a tremendous complete street program in the last five years and has gone from completely no infrastructure to trend setting infrastructure. He cited cities such as Copenhagen in Denmark having 55 percent of its commuters bicycling and the rest commuting by public transit or private vehicles. He felt bicycling and public transit is the way the community can survive on this planet. He ultimately supported the project.

*Commissioner Miley* stated that he would like staff to respond to a few statements made by the speakers. He explained that the last speaker hit the nail on the head about the fact that multimodal communities are the future. He said he heard the concerns about loading zones within the business district and the loss of travel lanes on Central Avenue. He understood that people may double park on Webster Street more often when loading, so he asked staff to address and explain the plan moving forward.

*Staff Payne* replied the area of concern is along Webster and Page Streets and the northwest corner, which was mentioned. She referred to page 4, cross-section I, which is right next to the

establishment that needs the loading zone or has a lot of loading. She explained that the merchant is not interested in having a loading zone because that would restrict parking. So, she said double parking occurs and that can still happen with this cross-section. She went on to say that loading/unloading would occur in the bike lane in the painted buffer and motorists could go around. She understood that this configuration is not ideal, but it happens all the time and staff felt having the bike lane blocked every now and then to load and unload was the tradeoff for having a bike lane. She also mentioned that this is a corner establishment so they could still have loading and unloading occur southbound on Webster Street.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff if the bulb-outs at the corner of Webster Street and Central Avenue will impact delivery vehicles from being able to turn whether they are going north or south on Central Avenue from Webster Street.

*Staff Payne* replied staff does not believe so and the plan was designed to accommodate trucks.

*Commissioner Miley* recommended that staff work with the business district in order for the streetscape to be designed appropriately for that intersection.

*Staff Payne* replied staff can do that, but they are not at that level of design. Additionally, from what she has heard the area was designed a little tight so it is hard to get in and out when trying to park on Webster Street.

*Commissioner Miley* said people shop online a lot and as a result FedEx and UPS double park and take the travel lane. He asked Alameda Police Department if a car double parked in the travel lane is it against the law to go around using the center lane.

*Commissioner Bellows* repeated the police officer's answer and said a vehicle cannot drive into the center lane just to pass a double parked vehicle, the vehicle must wait.

*Commissioner Miley* asked *Staff Payne* what is the cost of conducting an EIR for the project. He also explained that this plan is talking about paint and curb extensions. So, he wondered if an EIR was required and has an EIR been done for other projects similar to this plan.

*Farima Brown*, Alameda Attorney's office, stated that there will not be an EIR for this project because after a lot of due diligence by staff including City Planner Andrew Thomas and herself the plan is the poster child for a CEQA exempt bicycle project. She explained there are several grounds for its exemption outlined in the staff report, but the strongest one is public resources code 21080.20.5, which was specifically designed for this type of project in urbanized areas. She went on to say the plan is statutorily exempt, which is a contrast to projects that are categorically exempt. Furthermore, the project is also exempt from a variety of categorical exemptions, which are outlined in page 15 of the staff report under Environmental Review, 15301C and section 15304H.

*Commissioner Miley* stated that other speakers compared Central Avenue to other roads such as Shore Line Drive and Broadway. However, he felt this project is similar to Fernside Boulevard and Broadway, which he drives on every day. He asked staff to talk about the door zone within the bicycle lanes and how they reviewed that and came up with the width.

*Staff Payne* replied they are under constrained situations and curb to curb it is 56 feet in width for most of the corridor. She explained that was the best they could do and this is not a best practice bike way due to the door zone. Therefore, staff will have to implement public education around this issue. Additionally, she felt having a separate bike space is much better than what is available today.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff about the 7 foot parking spaces and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) concern raised by *Carol Gottstein*. He said when he viewed the map he saw some blocks with 7 foot and 8 foot spaces and he understood that some portions along Central Avenue are constrained. He wondered if there will be ADA parking spaces added to the plan.

*Staff Payne* replied there would be six ADA parking spaces added and staff has looked at the corridor and they believe six would be most appropriate. The parking spaces would be located west to east in front of Encinal High School, Patton Elementary, two parking spaces near the Webster Business District, one parking space by Washington Park and one by the Weber Commercial District.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff how many ADA parking spaces are currently present within the corridor.

*Staff Payne* replied none.

*Commissioner Miley* replied so this is an addition and they would be 8 feet.

*Staff Payne* replied when the area is 7 feet they would encroach into the landscape strip.

*Commissioner Miley* replied so staff would not encroach into the bike lane or into traffic it would be into the landscaping.

*Staff Payne* said she met with WABA and they liked the two ADA parking spaces at the foot of Webster Street on the east and west sides. She explained that would be accommodated without any change and staff has not produced an exact placement, but that is the direction and their highest priority is to place the spaces at the foot of Webster Street.

<p><i>Commissioner Bellows</i> made a motion to continue the meeting since the time was now 10 pm. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.</p>
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*Commissioner Schatmeier* asked staff if the disabled parking space issue was done in consultation with disabled advocacy groups.

*Staff Payne* replied no.

*Commissioner Vargas* stated that the comments raised by *Jean Finney* (Deputy District Director of Caltrans District 4) as part of her comments explained the need for additional traffic analysis that was also brought up by a few community members. He asked staff if it is possible to find out

what studies are needed and he wanted to hear from *Staff Patel* about his perspective on some of the technical issues that are involved.

*Jennifer Ott* replied that they hired Kittelson and Associates who performed the traffic analysis. So, *Staff Patel* could talk about what Caltrans might inquire about, but she would like Kittelson and Associates to talk about what analysis was performed.

*Commissioner Vargas* stated that Caltrans was looking for additional traffic studies in order to grant the City design exceptions. He explained they only cover the part between Webster and Sherman Streets, which is a state route, and the rest does not need approval but falls on the City. However, for continuity sake he asked staff to talk about the studies Caltrans is inquiring about and the studies that have been done so far, including what are the challenges this project has from an engineer's perspective.

*Staff Patel* replied since this project is only a study they have not done detailed traffic operation analysis. However, from Caltrans' or the City's standpoint staff is conducting analysis on each and every traffic signal along the route and the proposed signals along the route. Yet, that level of detail Kittelson and Associates may have done as an overview. He explained that design exceptions usually go to the headquarters, which is why staff ended up having this route under the City because they were asking for a standard shoulder width and the City did not have the standard width.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff if the traffic and operational analysis include a review of shifts in vehicle traffic or only show the Central Avenue traffic or also movements to other streets.

*Staff Patel* replied that staff would look into the shifts in vehicle traffic.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff when the plan would go over to engineering for detail design.

*Staff Patel* replied staff reviewed the conceptual plan and made comments, but the plan is turned over to engineering for detail design when the final plan is approved by the Transportation Commission and City Council.

*Commissioner Bellows* said what was happening tonight was reviewing and making a motion for the conceptual plan and that was all that was funded. She said until additional funding is identified they are not going forward with the design.

*Jennifer Ott* stated that staff has reviewed the conceptual plan with City and Coastal engineers, Stantec Engineering, *Staff Patel*, Kittelson and Associates and Caltrans engineers. She also said there will be additional analysis and engineering when they get into the design phase.

*Laurence Lewis*, Kittelson and Associates, stated that an overview of the analysis looked at seven key intersections on Central Avenue and one limitation that would be addressed is looking at the minor intersections as well. He said they looked at locations that have traffic signals with the highest traffic volumes going west to east and during the design phase all the side streets would be analyzed. Additionally, they looked at AM and PM peak hours to understand the existing traffic volumes level of service and existing conditions to understand the impact. Overall, they

discovered there was a 1.2 minute increase in travel time going 25 mph from one end of the corridor to the other stopping at all the traffic signals and experiencing delays there. He pointed out that the limitations did not account for people shifting to cycling or walking or account for people diverting to other routes. He heard several comments about the 8<sup>th</sup> and Webster Street intersection and some of the compromises made for the bike lanes were for vehicular operations and level of service. When he met with the Commission earlier in the year there was a level of service identified at the location. He said they reviewed the intersection in consultation with the community and the City and revised the concept so the intersection could operate at the level of service.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that several intersections were called out as needing attention. He wondered how staff analyzed those intersections, specifically whether traffic signals or new treatments were necessary. He said one speaker stated there should be a light at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue another speaker stated a traffic signal is needed at 5<sup>th</sup> Street and yet another speaker stated they were unhappy about the way 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue was modified. He wanted to know staff's process for making the decisions, excluding the public process but the engineering decisions.

*Laurence Lewis* replied the process included collision and traffic data and as *Staff Payne* showed earlier there were certain intersections that showed collisions by cyclists or pedestrians. Also, he explained on the east end there was a note that there was a gap in crossings because there is a signal at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Encinal Avenue, but not one between.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* replied one of the compelling comments about 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue was the widening out to four lanes, the crossing of the intersection, the narrowing back to two lanes and how drivers may be predicted to race around cars that were going too slow. He wondered if that was taken under consideration because it seems to be a creditable comment that could be a cause of concern.

*Laurence Lewis* replied the 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue intersection was a concern that came about because of the vehicular operations. The consideration in terms of length was for motorists to use both lanes and as far as the possibility of drivers speeding to go around was not specifically something they considered. Yet, he did not know if that consideration alone would modify the recommendation.

*Commissioner Hans* asked *Staff Payne* if she talked to the nine schools to see what the current bicycle numbers are now and what the schools predict the numbers will be if the project was completed. He also wondered if the schools have a goal number they are shooting for in terms of mode shift.

*Staff Payne* replied they have not asked the schools, but out of the nine schools the majority has a citywide catchment area and bicycling is a great shift from driving.

*Commissioner Hans* asked staff if she heard of schools discouraging cycling because they perceived it to be unsafe.

*Staff Payne* replied she had not.



*Commissioner Miley* said to follow up on *Commissioner Schatmeier's* comments about 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue the intersection is tricky and he lived on 8<sup>th</sup> Street growing up. Overall, he felt the project improves safety throughout the corridor, but staff could look to do more. He wondered if staff could look at having the bike lane encroach into the park because it is concerning what driver behavior would be like at the intersection, especially making that right or left turn onto 8<sup>th</sup> Street going northwest.

*Staff Payne* replied staff looked at this option. She said the advantage is a more protected space, but the disadvantages are conflicts with bicyclists getting into the park because there is a park facility with a preschool and after care with a lot of parking activity at that intersection.

*Commissioner Bellows* replied staff could move the right turn lane over further and keep the orientation the way it is and that could provide more room for the westbound traffic to not merge.

*Staff Payne* replied there is also a concern when you get to the 8<sup>th</sup> Street intersection as a cyclist how would you get across since you would not be orientated to go eastbound again.

*Commissioner Miley* said the lineup would not be ideal.

*Commissioner Miley* made a motion to accept staff recommendations with additional requests and move the plan to City Council for review. He requested that staff conduct additional analysis at the 8<sup>th</sup> Street intersection and to further review the short merge or if there is any way to extend that. He also requested that staff provide the City Council with some analysis that shows what encroaching into the park would look like, so they have some options in front of them. Additionally, he asked that when the project is eventually implemented staff would present an annual review to the Commission. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. *Commissioner Vargas* made an amendment to the motion that included having the engineering department review the concept as it evolves, so they are officially in the loop. The motion was approved 6-0.

## **6. Staff Communications**

### **6.A. Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items**

- Cross Alameda Trail – Atlantic Segment
- Main Street Ferry Terminal Improvements

## **7. Announcements/Public Comments**

*None.*

## **8. Adjournment**

10:21 pm