

DRAFT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019

Chair Miley convened the meeting at 7:00pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Miley, Commissioners Soules, Nachtigall, Johnson, Kohlstrand, Yuen.

Absent: Commissioner Hans.

2. AGENDA CHANGES

None

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Strehlow said he recently found a Bird electric scooter obstructing the pathway in the Posey Tube. He suggested a minimum speed limit in the tube as a potential solution to deal with problems like scooters being left or slow moving pedestrians pushing shopping carts.

3-A. Transportation Commissioner Appreciation of Service Resolution for Chair Christopher A. Miley

Gail Payne, Senior Transportation Coordinator, thanked Chair Miley for his service on the commission.

Commissioner Soules read the resolution and expressed her gratitude towards Chair Miley.

3-B. Climate Action and Resiliency Plan Public Comment – May 14-31. Link to the online platform: www.opentownhall.com/7405

3-C. Clement Ave. Safety Improvement Project Workshop – Mon., June 3 at 6:30 p.m. – City Council Chambers: www.alamedaca.gov/clement

3-D. Car Seat Inspections/Installations (free): Sat., June 15 in the City Hall Parking Lot from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

3-E. Clipper Card Registration at Mastick Senior Center – Tues, June 18 – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

3-F. Bicycle Safety Education Classes: Sat, June 22 and July 27 at 9 a.m. to 12 noon: <https://bikeeastbay.org/alamedabikeed>

3-G. Transportation Commission Meeting: Wed, July 24 at 7 p.m.

3-H. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) 2019 Trainings in September and October: register on Fire Department web page

Scott Wikstrom, City Engineer, provided an update regarding City Council requests for an updated policy for daylighting intersections. He said they would be bringing the item to the City Council on July 2nd.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4-A 2019-6924

Draft Meeting Minutes – March 27, 2019

Commissioner Kohlstrand moved approval of the item. Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection (6-0.)

5. NEW BUSINESS

5-A 2019-6925

Approve Otis Drive Traffic Calming and Safety Improvement Project
Design Concept Recommendations

Staff Member Payne announced that Commissioner Johnson would have to recuse himself from the item due to the proximity of his business to the project area.

Staff Member Wikstrom gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3948357&GUID=5FF05DC7-3762-4F80-AEF9-1B58E7661A5C&FullText=1>

David Parisi, project consultant, continued the presentation of the draft concept.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked for more information about the impact of a roundabout on pedestrians, noting that pedestrians would not have a protected cycle.

Mr. Parisi explained how the roundabout would work, noting the shorter crossing distances and slower vehicle speeds.

Commissioner Nachtigall also expressed concern about safety for pedestrians on the roundabout.

Chair Miley asked for clarification of what decisions staff was looking for tonight.

Staff Member Wikstrom said staff was looking for recommendations on the short term improvements and feedback on the alternatives for the Rittler Park section.

Chair Miley opened the public hearing.

Jim Strehlow recalled failing his first driving test due to speeding on Otis Drive. He expressed skepticism that a roundabout would function for double long parade floats. He asked about the ramps in the long term plans and how high they would be and whether they would impact vehicles passing through intersections.

Joe Keiser said that many Wood Middle School students wanted to provide input to the Transportation Commission, but that tonight was the Wood open house. He said two students put together a video to share with the commission. He said he is a resident of Otis Drive and strongly supports the project.

A video of Jacob and Kiley Wong, Will Middle School students, was played. They expressed concern about cars speeding and asked for safety improvements for pedestrians and bikers.

Denyse Trepanier, Bike Walk Alameda, said they support the project. She said they urge adoption of the parking protected bike lane near Rittler Park. She said cars doing drop off would force cyclists out into the street.

Jon Spangler said he likes the roundabout because it reduces vehicle speeds. He said he supports the project but disagrees with the Bike Walk Alameda suggestion of curbside bike lanes. He said children going to and from cars will cross the bike lane without looking.

Karen Boutilier said she supports the plan. She said she thinks all moving traffic should be in the middle of the street, not between parked cars and the sidewalk.

Chair Miley closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Nachtigall said the proposal meets the goals of the project. She noted that some of the proposed trees would not be a good fit for the area.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she supports dealing with speeding and improving bicycle and pedestrian safety, but noted that many people opposed the project. She asked staff if there were ways to achieve traffic calming without dramatically changing the configuration of the roadway.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that road diets have been demonstrated to reduce average speeds and have even greater impact reducing the extreme speeds. He said Otis has been identified as a priority street in the Bicycle Master Plan.

Commissioner Kohlstrand suggested that narrowing the existing lanes to ten feet would provide room for four foot bike lanes. She suggested that a center turn lane may not be

needed everywhere and that a landscaped median with occasional turn pockets would be preferable.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that a five foot bike lane is the minimum design standard. He said a four foot lane is not recommended and would put cyclists even closer to the door zone of parked cars. He said landscaped medians would be a large short term investment and long term maintenance cost. He said the project is fundamentally different from Shoreline Drive.

Chair Miley said he was sensitive to concerns about kids having conflicts in the protected bike lane. He asked if there were any treatments that could be used to mitigate that problem.

Staff Member Wikstrom said there is not a very good option for letting kids know that they are crossing a bike lane next to the curb. He said it is a relatively narrow space but any bicyclist travelling at speed could create an issue.

Chair Miley asked if homeowners were noticed about the change in bus stop positions, and asked if there were any responses.

Staff Member Payne said they did not receive any concerns from homeowners about the change in bus stop locations.

Chair Miley said he supports the project in order to calm traffic in the corridor. He said he prefers the buffered bike lane but could support the protected bike lanes in front of Rittler Park.

Commissioner Soules asked if AC Transit gave feedback on the moving of bus stops.

Staff Member Payne said they have worked closely with AC Transit. She said they are okay with the lane widths and with the bus stop location changes.

Commissioner Soules asked whether staff knew the difference in parking loss between the Class II and Class IV options near Rittler Park.

Mr. Parisi said installing red curb at all corners in the corridor would result in the loss of about 10-15% of the parking opportunities. He said the Class IV option would result in the loss of an additional two parking spaces near the park.

Commissioner Soules said she had similar concerns as Commissioner Kohlstrand about the number of people opposed to the project. She noted that auto drivers are not as well organized as bicyclists and pedestrians. She said this thoroughfare carries our crosstown traffic. She said the public is having a hard time understanding how bike lanes

solve the speeding problem. She asked for more information about enforcement efforts and why that is not a long term solution.

Sgt. Brian Foster, Alameda Police Department Traffic Supervisor, said he has three motor officers in addition to himself to deal with this problem. He said they spend more time on Otis Drive and see higher speeds here than anywhere else in the city.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked how the speeding on Fernside compares after the road diet.

Sgt. Foster said you can never solve all the speeding problems. He said speed is a problem on Fernside when there is little traffic, but he never sees speeds over 60 mph like on Otis.

Commissioner Yuen said she is supportive of all the proposed changes. She said we need to focus on design to address speed. She said we cannot rely on enforcement, which can create its own negative impacts. She added that focusing on multimodal solutions is the key and ties into our climate action goals.

Commissioner Nachtigall said she supports the changes, but worries about increased pedestrian bicycle conflicts.

Commissioner Soules asked if the Class IV option makes the lane widths tighter.

Staff Member Wikstrom said the Class IV option would feel tighter than the Class II option because of the position of the parked cars, but would have essentially the same lane widths. He said that could have the effect of further calming traffic.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she would support the Class II option with the parking at the curb. She said she could see the potential for conflicts with people exiting their cars into the Class IV bike lane and added that the Class IV option is not very elegant.

Chair Miley moved to accept the staff recommendation on the short term project with direction to support the Class II option at Rittler Park, not include the two tree types indicated by Commissioner Nachtigall, and that a status report be given 12-18 months after implementation. Commissioner Yuen seconded the motion.

Commissioner Yuen asked if staff knew how many reported injuries there have been on Shoreline due to pedestrian and bike conflicts.

Sgt. Foster said he does not have that data, but that most of those collisions would not get reported because they are not injury collisions.

Commissioner Yuen said she was trying to figure out what was the safest alternative between the Class II and Class IV options. She said she is uncertain, but would support a Class IV option given her understanding of best practices.

Chair Miley said he would normally support protected lanes where ever possible, but thinks that this location would not be right because of the presence of so many children.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said that she thinks the street can work as a two lane street with turning lanes, but that her earlier concerns were in the interest of respecting the will of the broader community beyond her personal views. She said that, given that most speakers tonight are in favor of the project, she will support it with some reservations.

Commissioner Soules said she is concerned about people who are not represented or cannot bike for different reasons. She said knowing that this project is just paint, she feels okay moving forward. She said that going forward, how workshops are attended and surveys constructed will be important. She said there is not a capacity issue on this portion of Otis. She said she would make a motion to support the staff recommendation and Class II bike lanes.

Chair Miley restated his motion.

The motion passed 4-1 (Yuen opposed.)

Commissioner Yuen said she opposed the motion because she preferred the Class IV option in front of Rittler Park.

5-B 2019-6926

Recommend Transportation Projects in Alameda's 2019-2021 Capital Budget to the City Council.

Staff Member Wikstrom gave a presentation. The staff report and attachment can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3948400&GUID=A88F2666-0FFD-40D2-BE8D-39A1651BD151&Options=&Search=&FullText=1>

Chair Miley asked if the root damaged pathways around Bay Farm Island would fit into this spending plan.

Staff Member Wikstrom said the paths would typically fit under the pavement management program because most of the pathways are asphalt.

Chair Miley suggested that there may be other less prominent intersections in the city where roundabouts could be employed to help acquaint residents with their use.

Commissioner Johnson said that Shafter Avenue approaching College in Oakland recently was treated with new roundabouts. He said they were minor streets and used to create a bicycle throughway and were really well done.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked to what degree our traffic signal system is integrated.

Staff Member Wikstrom said most of our signals operate independently. He said they are making efforts on Webster and Park to introduce corridor coordination.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said that efforts to time the signals on our major corridors would be a positive.

Commissioner Soules asked how projects within the traffic calming fund would be prioritized and coordinated.

Staff Member Wikstrom said the fund is set aside for smaller needs around the city as opposed to the larger, corridor length, and grant funded projects.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to accept the staff recommendation. Commissioner Yuen seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection (6-0.)

5-C 2019-6927

Provide Comment on the Draft Climate Action and Resiliency Plan
Erin Smith, Deputy Public Works Director, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3948401&GUID=9698D1CE-9A05-4E98-971B-BF4614B2826E&Options=&Search=&FullText=1>

Commissioner Yuen asked why the public comment period was only two weeks long.

Staff Member Smith said that it was a long process and in order to meet the adoption timeline that two weeks was the best they could do.

Chair Miley opened the public hearing.

Jim Strehlow said we need to be careful not to road diet too many streets. He supported efforts to time the traffic signals. He scoffed at the idea of taxing everyone to provide EZ Passes to all residents. He said congestion pricing would be a regressive tax and is a bad idea.

Christy Cannon emphasized the importance of acting to curb greenhouse gas emissions. She said transportation is where we need to solve the problem. She said we need to get people onto buses, which will require big efforts to prioritize their movement

and reliability. She supported many efforts to get people out of their cars. She said communication with the public will be critical for getting public support and success.

Chair Miley closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Soules said the plan has a good balance of aggressive near term goals within the long term vision.

Commissioner Kohlstrand expressed surprise that the plan did not make more of a connection between transportation and land use. She said we need to focus on density in order to support transit alternatives. She expressed a preference for improving Alameda's jobs to housing balance. She asked for more information about reducing use of natural gas appliances.

Staff Member Smith said that the fuel switching in the plan could involve swapping out heaters and appliances. She said they are looking to make progress increasing the mix of electric versus gas appliances throughout the city.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked if there is an expectation that the City would provide incentives to achieve the goal of fuel switching.

Staff Member Smith added that the plan calls for all new development to be all electric. She said she can envision the Public Utilities Board providing incentives in the form of rebates for customers to move away from their gas powered appliances.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said focusing on communities that are disproportionately impacted and attempting to get people to switch to transit may not work if the island's entire transportation network was not sufficiently protected. She asked for more information about the thinking behind how the plan approaches protecting transportation infrastructure.

Staff Member Smith said the network that best serves transit and transit dependent communities was prioritized. She said all the bridges are able to handle about 48 inches of sea level rise. She said they focused on redundancy in the network.

Chair Miley said funding the priorities in the CARP would be challenging and suggested setting aside funding for these long term projects.

Staff Member Smith agreed with Chair Miley's sentiment and explained how the Plan addresses funding issues.

Commissioner Nachtigall asked how the telecommuting item would be dealt with on a regional basis given the nature of employment.

Staff Member Smith said their goal would be to raise awareness generally in the business community about the benefits of telecommuting. She acknowledged the regional role necessary for successful implementation of that strategy.

Commissioner Nachtigall said she had a potential regional connection to suggest for staff to follow up with regarding telecommuting.

Commissioner Yuen asked how the CARP would interact with other decisions being made by the City. She asked how we would hold ourselves accountable.

Staff Member Smith said the concepts in the plan are pervasive in everything the City does. She said that they would leave it up to Council to determine how the CARP gets integrated into the workflow.

Liam Garland, Public Works Director, said annual reports would be a time for Council to make sure we are on track and hold ourselves accountable. He added that staff has been working closely with Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA) and expects them to help hold staff and Council to account.

Commissioner Yuen said she supports the coordinator position and advocates that they are represented on other planning processes in the city for coordination purposes.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked if the annual reports would come to the commissions as well as City Council.

Staff Member Garland said they could make the reports available to the Transportation Commission, given how significant a share of greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation.

There was no action taken.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

6-A 2019-6928

Quarterly Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans

The report can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3948433&GUID=B86FABE1-614B-44BB-B569-82ED268F2013>

6-B Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items

1. Resident Appeal of Walnut Street/San Antonio Avenue Daylighting
2. Transportation Management Association Annual Reports
3. Emergency Plan with Transportation Annex
4. Clement Avenue Safety Improvement Project

5. Central Avenue Safety Improvement Project

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Jon Spangler, Chair of the BART Board Bicycle Advisory Task Force, said BART will be making a decision between including only one, or keeping two multi-purpose/bicycle parking spaces per BART fleet of the future car.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Miley adjourned the meeting at 10:07 p.m.