

COMPLETE STREETS SAN DIEGO



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American Planning Association
California Chapter
San Diego

Making Great Communities Happen



Question 1:

- California state law on Complete Streets requires cities to integrate Complete Street policies in the update of their general plan.
- Please explain your perspective on how cities can implement effective policies and introduce immediate and long term change to encourage the implementation of Complete Streets?

Anything is POSSIBLE!



January 2012

Strategic Plan



We Keep Carlsbad Moving...

By providing a transportation system valued by all who live, work and play in Carlsbad.



Five Major Goals

- Multi-modal transportation initiatives keep Carlsbad moving and contribute positively to the quality of life in Carlsbad
- A productive, skilled, empowered, and engaged workforce
- Effective performance measurement/feedback
- Effective work order system
- Current “Best Practices” business processes

Operating Values

- Leadership
- Innovation
- Accountability
- Effectiveness

DAD

Design Advertise Defend

POP

Publicly Owned Projects

The Changes

- Traffic Signal Upgrade Program
- Envision Carlsbad Process
- Carlsbad Residential Traffic Management Program
- Redefining our Users
- Complete or Livable Streets Initiative

Envision Carlsbad
Existing Conditions and Issues Exploration



Working Paper

5

**Walking, Biking,
Public Transportation
and Connectivity**

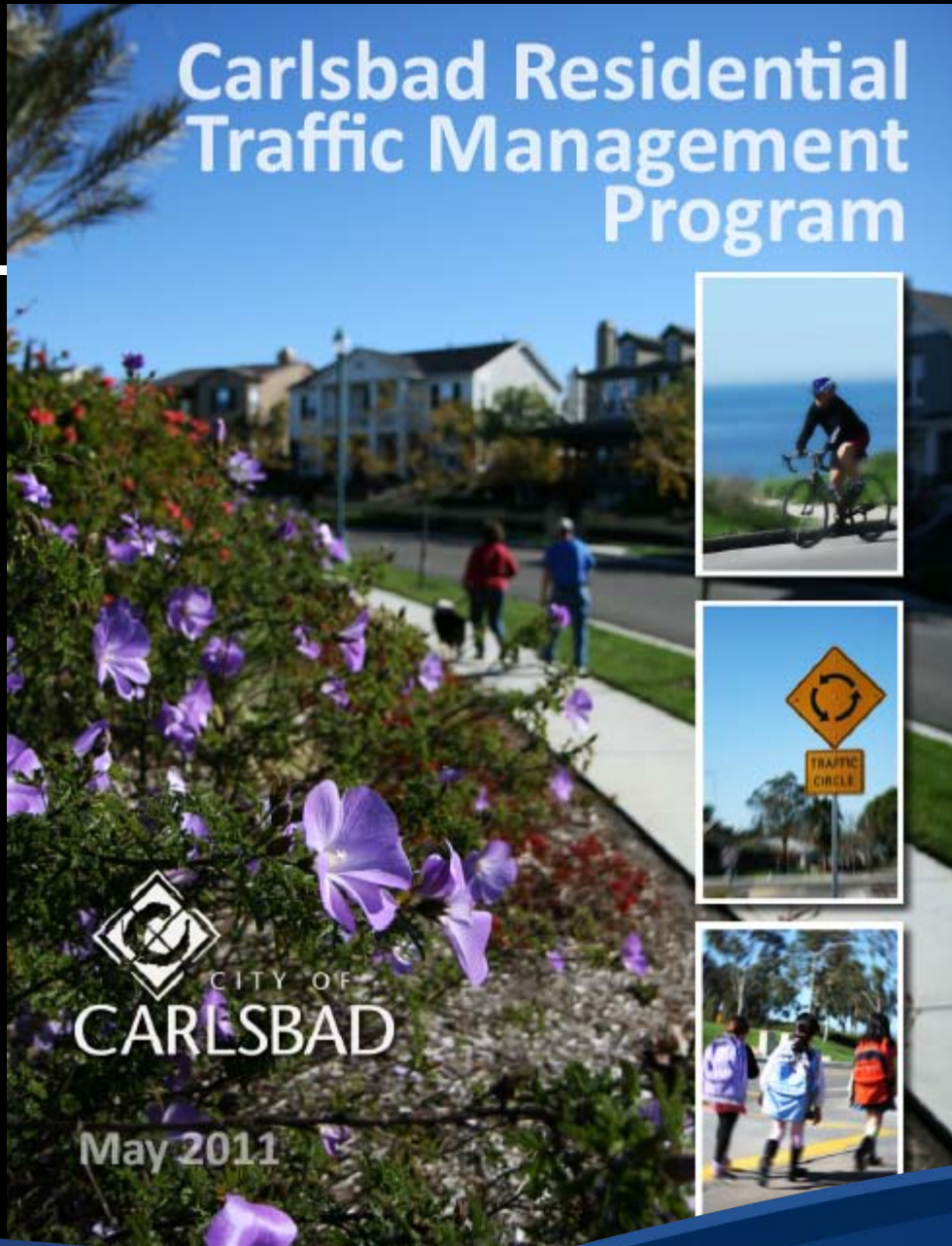


www.carlsbadca.gov/envision

Community Vision and Values

- Walking, biking, public transportation and connectivity
- Sustainability
- Neighborhood revitalization, community design and livability
- Small town feel, beach community character and connectedness

Carlsbad Residential Traffic Management Program



May 2011



Carlsbad Residential Traffic Management Program

- Designed to solicit and encourage active neighborhood participation
- Education, Engineering, Enforcement, Enhancement
- Improve quality of life
- Create safer streets

Carlsbad Residential Traffic Management Program

- Phase I: Enforcement and Education
- Phase II: Traffic Management ← NEW
- Phase III: Traffic Calming





Planning for Complete Streets

- Strong General Plan & Community policies giving high priority to:
 - Bicycles
 - Pedestrians
 - Transit
- Plan updates identifying smaller areas/corridors where vehicle LOS is offset by improvements to other modes



Table 3-2
Complete Street Guide, Mode Preferences

Sample Street	Prioritized Modes	Non-Prioritized Modes	Prohibited Modes	Sample Street Typology
Category 1				
San Marcos Boulevard, Discovery to Grand				Multi-Way Boulevard
Rancho Santa Fe Road, Twin Oaks Valley Road				Arterial with Class II or Class III bike facility and sidewalks
Mission Road, Rural Parts of Twin Oaks Valley Road				Arterial with Enhanced Bike/Ped Facilities
Freeway State Route 78 (SR-78)				Highway
Collectors				Collector
Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails				Class I Bike/Ped Path
Neighborhood Streets				Neighborhood Streets
Industrial Streets				Industrial Streets
Main Street (University District)				Main Street Concept
Priorities: Pedestrian Bicycle/Non-motorized Vehicles Transit/Bus service				

Table 3-4 – LOS Parameters

Street	Mode Preference				Sample Street Typology
	Transit	Bicycle	Pedestrian	Vehicular	
San Marcos Boulevard, Discovery to Grand	 LOS D	 LOS D	 LOS C	 LOS E	Multi-Way Boulevard
Rancho Santa Fe Road, Twin Oaks Valley Road	 LOS E	 LOS E	 LOS E	 LOS D	Arterial with Class II or Class III bike facility and sidewalks
Mission Road	 LOS D	 LOS D	 LOS C	 LOS D	Arterial with Enhanced Bike/ Pedestrian Facilities
SR-78	 LOS E	 	 	 LOS D	Freeway
Collectors	 LOS E	 LOS D	 LOS C	 LOS E	Collectors
Bike/Pedestrian Trails	 	 LOS D	 LOS C	 	Class I Bike/Ped Paths
Neighborhood Streets	 LOS E	 LOS D	 LOS C	 LOS E	Neighborhood Streets
Industrial Streets	 LOS E	 LOS E	 LOS E	 LOS D	Industrial Streets
Main Street (University District)	 LOS D	 LOS D	 LOS C	 LOS E	Main Street Concept

Notes: = Mode Prioritized = Mode not Prioritized = Mode Prohibited

Short-Term Solutions

- Specific Plans focused on:
 - Corridors
 - Transit oriented development areas
- Focused General Plan, Community Plan, and Specific Plan amendments



Question 2:

- Senate Bill 97 passed in 2010 introduced amendments to CEQA that provide flexibility in transportation analysis.
- Please share your perspective on how these amendments have effectively changed the method and findings of transportation analysis in regards to Complete Streets?

How have amendments changed transportation analysis in regards to complete streets?

- CEQA Guidelines re: Transportation/Traffic amended in 2010 due to SB 97
- Four changes to checklist questions:
 - Question (a) changed focus from increase in traffic at a given location to effect of project on overall circulation system in project area
 - Question (b) clarified role of a congestion management program in CEQA analysis
 - Question (f) re: parking was deleted
 - Prior question (g), now question (f), changed to focus on performance and safety of alternative modes

Continued

How substantial are the changes?

- Land Use guidelines already required consistency analysis with land use plans, many of which have Complete Streets policies
- Reinforces that increased traffic at a given location doesn't necessarily trigger potentially significant impact
- Moves away from LOS and focuses on effect of projects on pedestrians, bicycles, and transit
- Deletion of parking question is major change, but indirect impact analysis still required

Questions 3 and 4:

- How can CEQA significance thresholds and analysis help cities and counties overcome their current dilemma associated with implementing Complete Streets when traffic impacts are always significant requiring mitigation?
- How much flexibility does an agency have in choosing a threshold?

How do amendments change mitigation requirements?

Mitigation Issues

- CEQA requires adoption of all feasible mitigation measures for significant impacts
- No change unless “Complete Streets-friendly” thresholds are applied or adopted

Question 3 - Continued

- If no significant impact on circulation system as a whole, despite increased traffic at a given location, no mitigation required
- Substantial evidence must support no impact finding
- Funding would then need to come from non-CEQA mechanisms such as TIF, other exactions
- Requirement to fund improvements must have nexus and rough proportionality to project

Question 3 - Continued

- If significant impact on circulation system as a whole, mitigation required
- If no adopted plan is in place for improvements, it is not feasible to mitigate
- Agencies could develop programs to fund pedestrian and bike improvements that developers can then contribute a fair share towards

CEQA Significance Thresholds

- Best basis for updating thresholds is General Plan, Community Plan and Specific Plan policy
- Combine policy plan update with significance thresholds update using a single CEQA document



Transportation Food Chain



Why we Build Roads Bigger and Wider...



*Designed for the largest users
in the food chain*

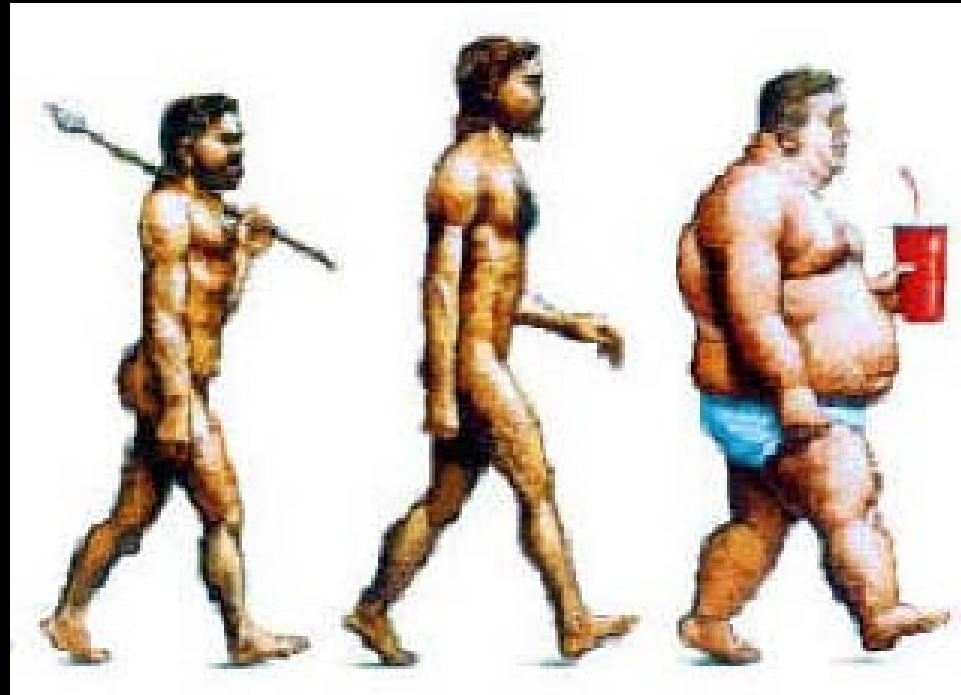
Pedestrians are the Indicator Species...

“Perhaps walking is best imagined as an 'indicator species,' to use an ecologist's term. An indicator species signifies the health of an ecosystem, and its endangerment or diminishment can be an early warning sign of systemic trouble.

Rebecca Solnit, author of *Wonderlust: A History of Walking*

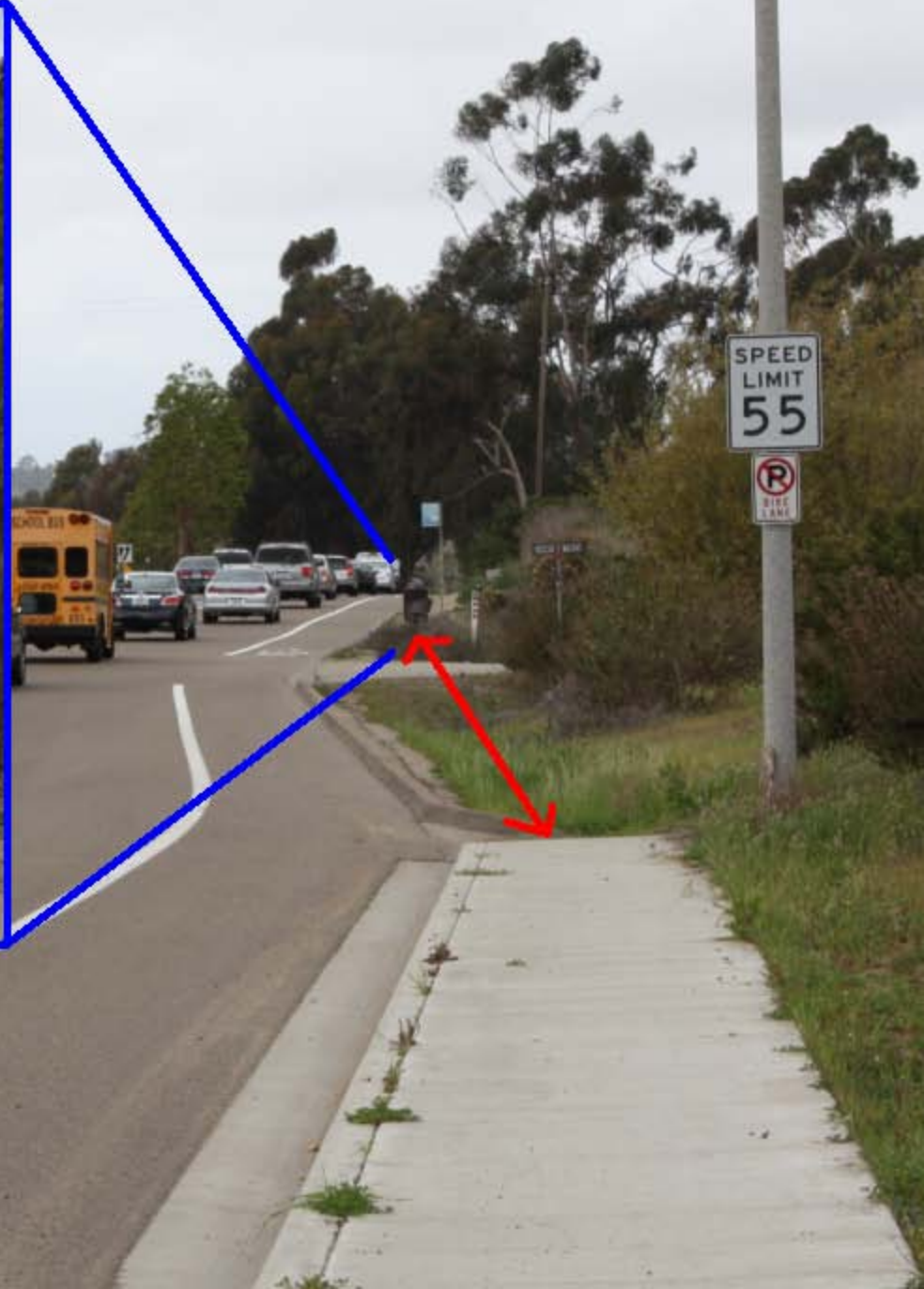
Thresholds for Pedestrians

Public Health



Pedestrian Endangered Species Act

- **Identify** Situations and what you do and don't like
- **Ask** "Why"
- **Review** Policies, Goals, and Objectives
- **Change** Policies, Goals, and Objectives
- **Put** thresholds in place to protect pedestrians









Definition of Complete or “Livable Streets”

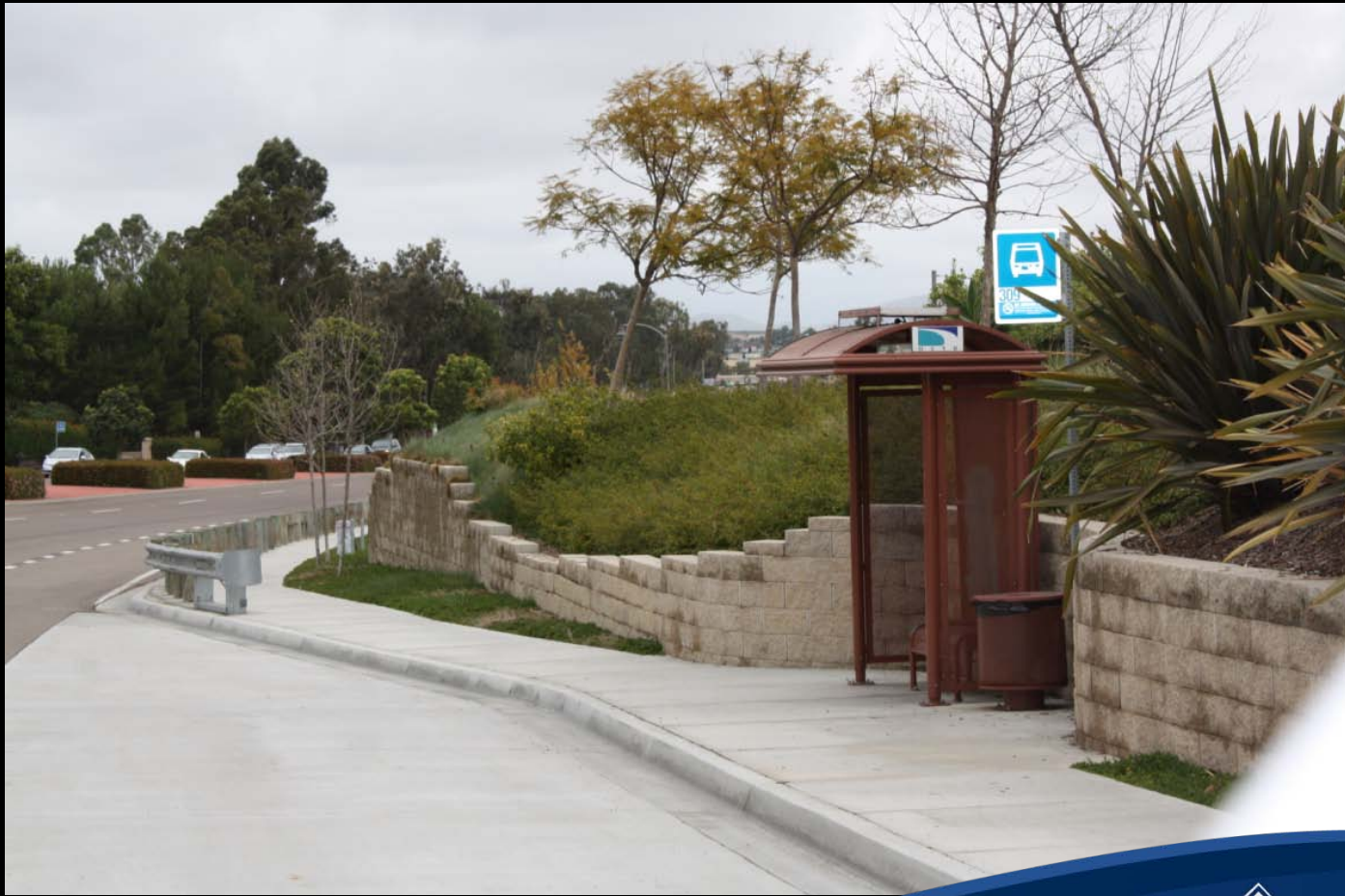
- Creates welcoming and inviting streets
- Improves Quality of Life
- Balances moving people, not just cars
- Walking, biking and public transportation
- Enhances safety
- Enhances economic vitality

Livable Streets Exist in Carlsbad

Connections to Transit



Connections to Transit



Traffic Circles in Residential Areas



Traffic Circles in Residential Areas



How much flexibility does an agency have in adopting significance thresholds?

- Agencies can choose methodology for CEQA analysis
 - No iron-clad definition of significance
 - Wide variety of models which may be appropriate
- Agencies can apply thresholds of other agencies
 - Could be interim solution for agencies without “Complete Streets-friendly” thresholds
 - Agencies should do thorough job explaining why another threshold is appropriate and properly applied
- Agencies have much flexibility in determining if a project overall “complies” with a plan

Narrower Streets and Bulbouts



Narrower Streets and Bulbouts



Median Entry Features



Median Midblock & Tree Well Features



Question 5:

- Many would say that change is hard within local government because of risk and precedence.

How do you suggest we overcome these obstacles that restrict change?

Carlsbad Blvd over Buena Vista Lagoon Before



Carlsbad Blvd over Buena Vista Lagoon After



Carlsbad Boulevard/State Street



Welcome to Carlsbad

Carlsbad Boulevard/State Street Before



Welcome to Carlsbad

Carlsbad Boulevard/State Street After



Welcome to Carlsbad

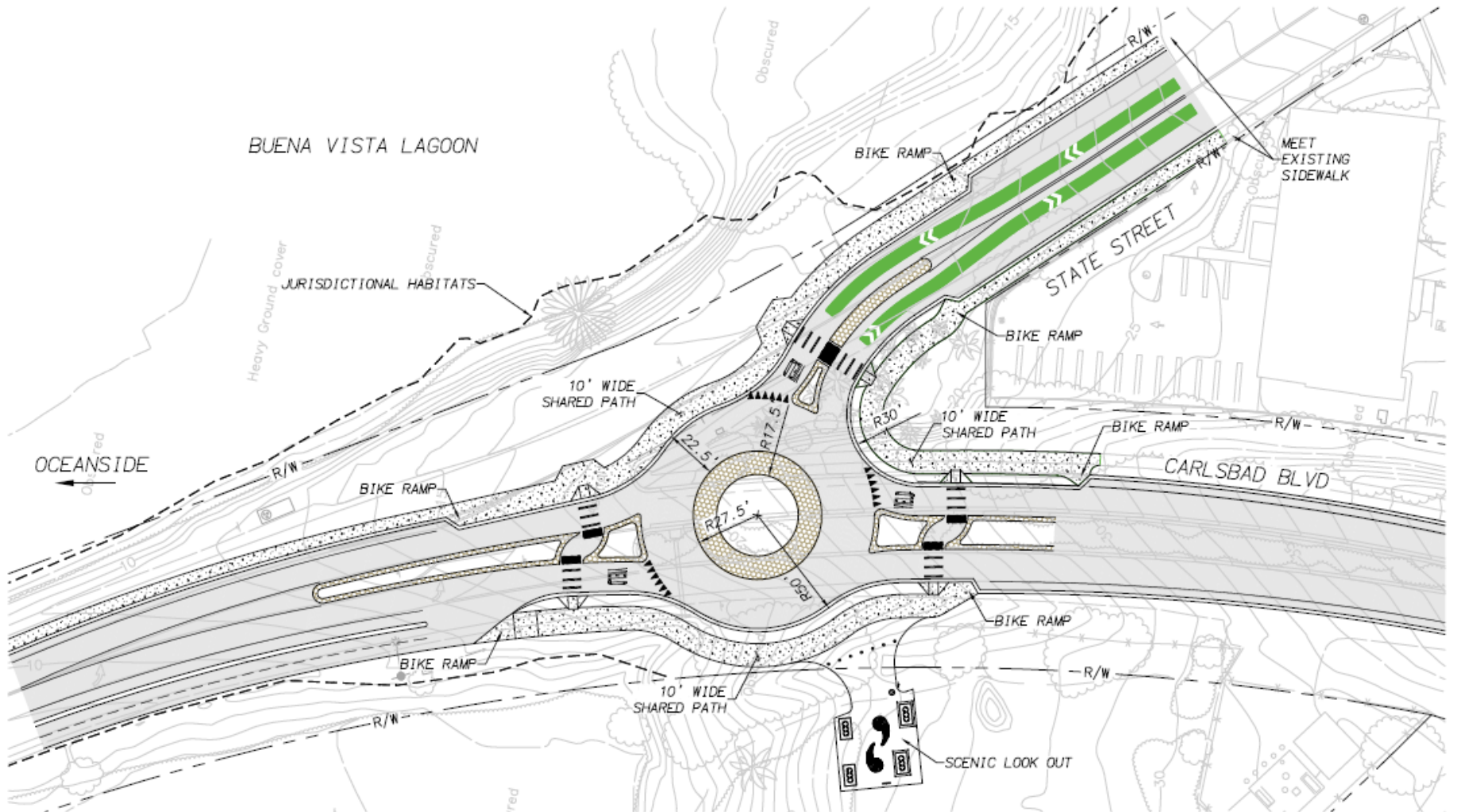
Carlsbad Boulevard/State Street Before



Welcome to Carlsbad

Carlsbad Boulevard/State Street After





STATE STREET AT
CARLSBAD BOULEVARD ROUNDABOUT
SCALE: 1"=40'
DECEMBER 6, 2011

RBF
CONSULTING

PLANNING ■ DESIGN ■ CONSTRUCTION

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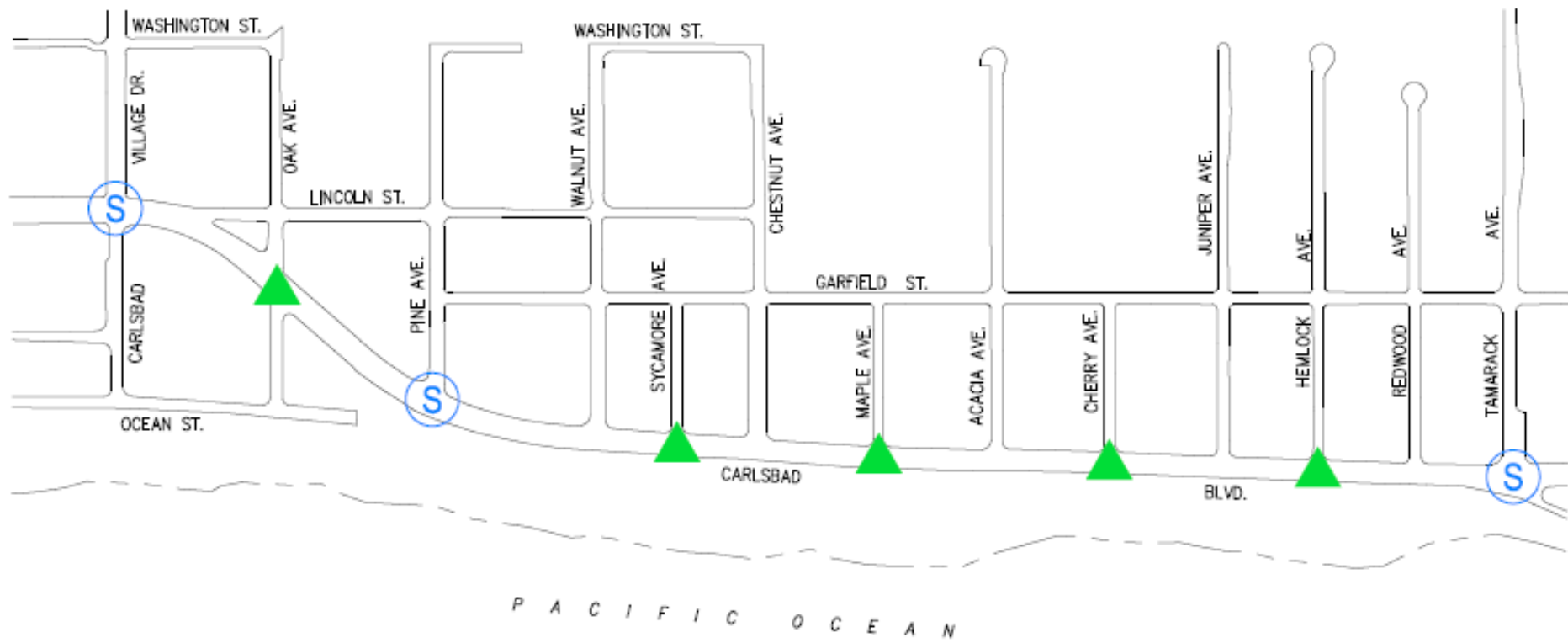


SPEED
LIMIT
30



↑
LANE
BIKE

30

30



LEGEND:

-  PROPOSED MEDIAN/RRFB LOCATION
-  EXISTING TRAFFIC SIGNAL

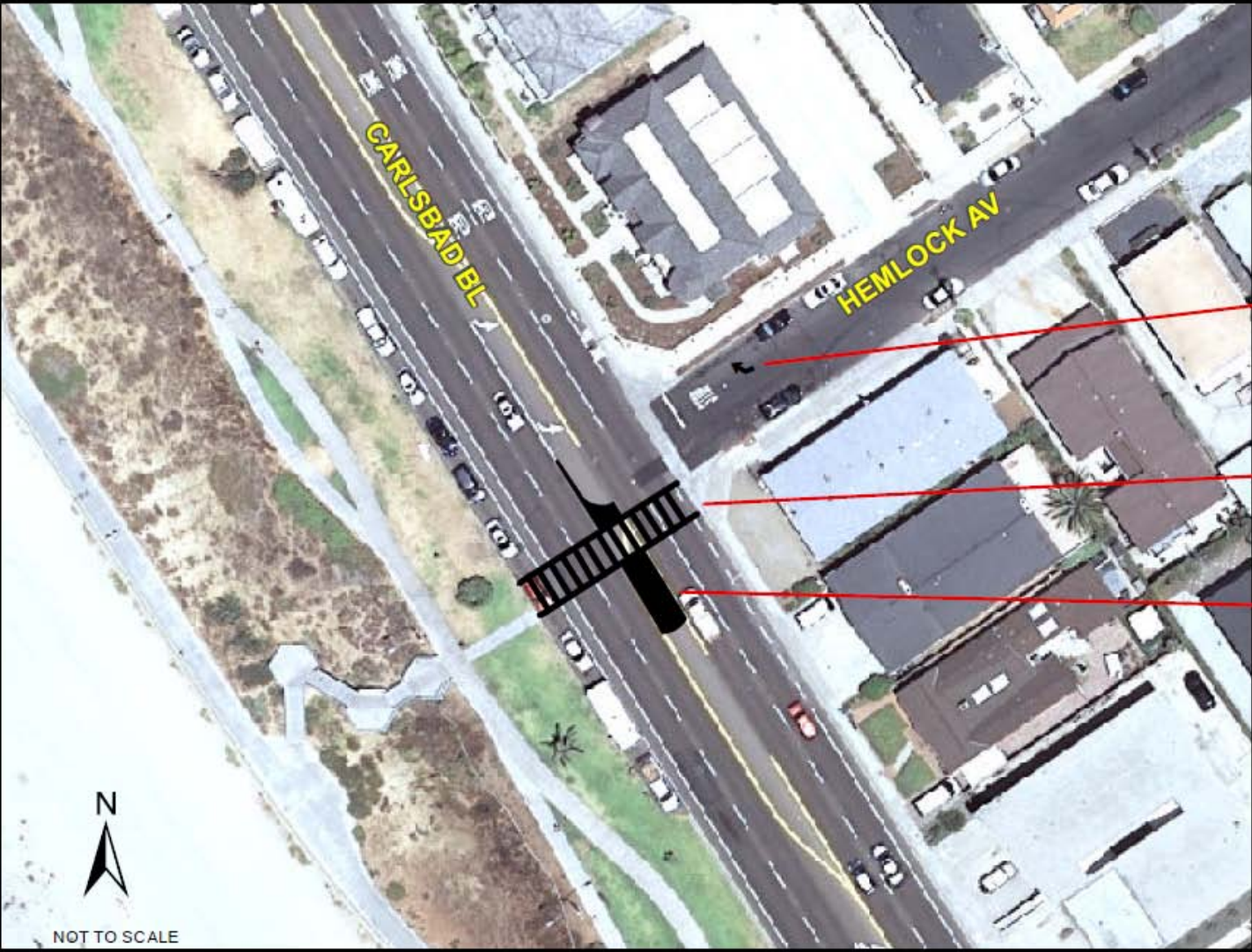
LOCATION MAP











- Proposed Right Turn Only
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Proposed Raised Median

Carlsbad Boulevard at Hemlock Avenue (Proposed Improvements)

The Tradeoffs

- Costs
- Safety
- Speed
- Convenience
- Volume
- Infill Development
- Sustainable Transportation Modes
- Physical Space
- Air Quality, Greenhouse Gasses, Public Health

- END

CEQA Conundrum

- Traffic Control Changes are Generally Categorically Exempt
 - Traffic Signals, Signs, Markings
- Changes in travel lanes can result in impacts to vehicles
 - Road Diets
- Categorical Exemptions not intended to conceal impacts
- Conservative Approach: Conduct CEQA more than minimum CEQA analysis



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San Francisco Bikeway Program

- Long Mileage of Facilities requiring Lane Reductions
- Probably not too Many Impact
- No Environmental Analysis (Categoric Exemption)
- Stopped by Legal Challenge for Three Years
 - While EIR was prepared that showed minimal impacts



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Long Beach Bikeway Program

- Concern over Downtown Cycle Tracks
 - Loss of Travel Lane
 - Loss of Some Parking
 - General Plan
- Traffic Study and Negative Declaration Prepared
 - Turned Away Idle Threats
- No Delays to Project
 - Concurrent with Design Preparation



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Los Angeles Bikeway Program

- Proposed Bike Lanes on Many Miles of Important Roadways by eliminating travel lanes or parking
- Traffic Impacts vary from minimal to severe
- EIR document in progress
- Has potentially delayed low impact improvements



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Remedies

- Modify Agency Guidelines and Significance Criteria
- Assess Multi-Modal Level of Service
- Clarify or Change CEQA Procedures via Legislation



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Modify Agency Guidelines

- Review General Plan Goals and Objectives
 - Traffic Level of Service
- Establish Policies for All Modes
- Redefine Significant Impacts
- Establish Simple Criteria for Modest Improvements
 - Road Diets up to 15,000 daily vehicles



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Multi-Modal Level of Service

- A through F letter grade Scale
- Autos
- Pedestrians
- Bicycles
- Transit
 - Latest (2010) reference *Highway Capacity Manual*
- Impact of Automobile traffic mitigations on other modes
 - Not routinely done at this time



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Change CEQA Procedures

- Potential Legislation Areas:
 - Clarify Categorical Exemption for Active Transportation Infrastructure
 - Clarify Definition of Unavoidable Adverse Impacts for Active Transportation Infrastructure
- CEQA should spell out any Approved Alternative Process



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Other Sources of Reluctance

- Financial and Staffing Resources
 - Ped/bike Coordinator position
- Liability
- Greater Leadership Needed from the top



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Liability

- Innovative Treatments are Years ahead of Standards and Guidelines
- Crashes involving pedestrians and bicycles are frequently litigated, due to extent of injuries
- Adherence to Standards is Classic Defense
 - Often, but not Always Successful
- Some Immunity Available for Demonstration Projects
 - Untested Theory
 - May not work for 2nd or 3rd Incident



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Liability Remedies

- Great Concern over California's Deep Pocket laws
- Some activities with Inherent but tolerable risk have special liability rules
 - Skiing, Mountain Biking, Skate Board Parks, Trail Hiking, Some Bike Trails
 - Special Legislation Required
- May Impair Ability of Injured parties to Receive Compensation
 - Pedestrians and Bicyclists!



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Liability Remedies

- Programmatic Safety Benefits
 - Portland, University Cities, Safety in Numbers
 - Effectiveness of Defenses Unknown
- Health Benefit Arguments
 - Strong, but not well known to transportation agencies
 - Health savings do not accrue to local governments
- Is now the time to seek liability protections?



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