



City of Santa Barbara

Community Development Department

Memorandum

DATE: October 18, 2023

TO: State Street Advisory Committee (SSAC)

FROM: Tess Harris, State Street Master Planner
Timmy Bolton, Project Planner

SUBJECT: October 23, 2023, State Street Advisory Committee Meeting

State Street Advisory Committee Members,

This memo provides a preview of the October 23rd meeting and highlights the guidance that we are seeking from the Committee.

Background and Meeting Purpose

The State Street Master Plan (Create State) is tasked with rethinking how the public right-of-way can be transformed through placemaking into vibrant community spaces that support economic and social vitality, while balancing adopted City policy, the overall Create State and district vision statements, community feedback and State Street Advisory Committee input, best practices and industry standards, economic and logistical feasibility, impacts to the rest of the transportation network, and an evolving Downtown that will feature more residential development.

On October 23, 2023, the State Street Advisory Committee will discuss the transportation network and how mobility designs along State Street support the visions and concepts for the districts along State Street, while recognizing that the right-of-way is finite (80 feet) and tradeoffs must be made. Following the presentation from MIG and City staff, SSAC members will have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions and provide comments on the proposed transportation elements.

Key Themes and Guiding Principles

The following key themes and guiding principles were used to inform the recommended transportation design and management.

Safety is Paramount

Safety is often improved by reducing travel speeds, traffic volumes, and conflict between different transportation types. Providing adequate access and space for public safety personnel is also critical. The City's Vision Zero strategy, which aims to eliminate

all traffic fatalities and severe injuries in Santa Barbara by 2030, emphasizes the City's desire for safety in design.

Maximize Flexibility and Adaptability

Adaptable designs allow for a broader range of uses and functions that could vary during the time of day or year, during a special event or based on market shifts and economic trends. A design with flexibility is likely to be successful over a longer period.

Ensure Equity and Accessibility

Universal Design improves upon the minimum standards imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to maximize the number of people that can use an environment by removing barriers and increasing accessibility for all. In the context of the transportation network, this also includes providing equitable access to a variety of transportation options and ensuring that mobility decisions do not exclude certain groups of people from being able to reasonably access community spaces.

Support Economic Vitality

Downtown revitalization is a key purpose of Create State and the transportation network must be designed to support existing and future businesses by providing for deliveries, service needs, employee access, and customer visibility. The design must also be right-sized for Santa Barbara and consider that the most successful Promenades in the US are typically shorter in length than the current State Street Promenade.

Emphasize Connections and Maintain a Strong Network

Transportation networks are most effective when designed to safely serve all modes by providing strong multi-modal connections between people, places, goods, and services. Key connections include State Street to the waterfront, Funk Zone, Amtrak Station, Transit Center, neighborhoods, and other key destinations.

Design for Now and the Future

The transportation network must be designed to support current needs, while planning for a future urban neighborhood that prioritizes safe and sustainable transportation for the additional hundreds to thousands of people who will be living Downtown over the next 20-30 years. The in-progress negotiations to redevelop Paseo Nuevo as mixed use with ~500 new housing units and significantly less commercial space provides unique transportation needs and an opportunity to revitalize the central portion of Create State.

Integrate with Existing and New Paseos

Paseos provide important pedestrian circulation in the El Pueblo Viejo Historic District by creating human-scale access and connectivity to cafes, restaurants, shops, parks, plazas, courtyards, theatres, cultural facilities, and parking lots. Throughout the community engagement process, many highlighted the need for Create State to celebrate, highlight, and enhance the paseo network.

Right-Size for Santa Barbara

The Create State design must be right-sized for the unique conditions found in Santa Barbara, reflect good governance practices that make efficient use of public funds, and not require an additional level of management that cannot realistically be scaled to.

Designing the Transportation Network

The needs and function of the transportation network Downtown vary by district and by the types of placemaking, activation, and programming that might occur. Multiple design approaches could be viable for Create State.

Physical Design and Street Typologies

Physical design options vary depending on whether a space is defined and separated or shared; and strengths, weaknesses, and tradeoffs exist for both options.

Designs with separated and protected spaces for each transportation mode increase safety by clarifying where each user is supposed to travel and reducing conflicts between other modes. This approach is commonly applied to corridors that have higher traffic speeds and volumes. A disadvantage of this approach is that demarcated spaces, curbs, and physical barriers require defined crossing points and limit the flexibility of using the space for other things, like programming and special events. Separated spaces also typically require more space for each transportation mode, which results in less pedestrian amenities and/or activation area.

Slow, shared designs that allow for multiple transportation modes in the same area can also increase safety, while maintaining high levels of flexibility for other uses like open space and special events. A disadvantage of this approach is that it requires traffic calming techniques to ensure low vehicular volumes and slow speeds, which are not feasible in all portions of the network. While it provides for greater social interaction and community space, it relies on human behavior to share space safely and respectfully.

Fixed Pedestrian Promenade

A fixed pedestrian promenade is a space that only allows pedestrians. This typology uses similar pavement across the entire corridor and provides a high level of flexibility for gathering, performances, special events, art installations, and similar uses. However, this option limits access for other modes, which may exclude users with less mobility and require infrastructure upgrades to the surrounding network to divert bike, transit, and vehicular traffic. A 20ft clear area for emergency access is required, and deliveries would still need to be able to access the space during morning hours. This approach requires significant programming and management to maintain high activity levels throughout the entire space, and there is limited ability to convert a fixed pedestrian promenade to another typology if proven unsuccessful long-term. A fixed pedestrian promenade is typically designed in a curbless configuration, which can require extensive stormwater management infrastructure. Examples of a fixed pedestrian

promenade include Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica, CA and Pearl Street Mall in Boulder, CO.

Multi-Purpose Promenade

A multi-purpose promenade, or “shared street,” features a shared corridor that can accommodate pedestrians, bikes, transit, and vehicles. Moveable planters, changes in paving, and other amenities are used to separate the mobility corridor that doubles as an emergency access lane from the sidewalks and pedestrian amenity areas. Non-driving modes are prioritized through traffic calming design, street furniture, bike infrastructure, and other pedestrian-oriented amenities that make the space feel more comfortable to a variety of users. This typology can accommodate any transportation mode, including business deliveries, and allows for flexible management that can easily change which modes are allowed in the space depending on the time of day or season. When designed in a curbless configuration, the lack of defined space also allows for a wide variety of uses and special events. As with the fixed pedestrian promenade, a curbless configuration can require extensive stormwater management infrastructure. A multi-purpose promenade may also require infrastructure improvements to adjacent streets to ensure low traffic volumes.

A recent example of a multi-purpose promenade is the nine-block (1 mile) redesign of Washington D.C.’s Wharf Street. This relatively high-end shopping and nightlife district is the largest shared space in the U.S. It features various pavement colors to define zones, adaptable human-scaled spaces in between each building, open space, water features, café spaces, play areas for children, and public seating.

Separated Bikes

The separated bikes typology accommodates pedestrians and bikes. It features dedicated pedestrian space and a separated two-way bike lane that could be demarcated within a portion of the 20ft emergency access lane with different pavement patterns, planters, or raised buffers. This design provides a safe experience for pedestrians and cyclists; however, it provides limited access for other modes, business deliveries, and those with limited mobility. While this design is less flexible because of the demarcated spaces, special events could still be accommodated. The portion of the UCSB bike network that travels through its campus is an example of the separated bikes typology.

Separated Bikes and One-Way Travel Lane

This design builds upon the separated bikes typology to include a dedicated vehicular travel lane adjacent to a buffered bike lane to accommodate pedestrians, bikes, transit, and vehicles. In this scenario, the Downtown traffic configuration would be reviewed to lower traffic volumes by limiting turning movements and slowing speeds. This design provides access for all modes, including business deliveries, while maintaining safety. If designed in a curbed configuration, it can be a lower-cost solution to provide additional pedestrian and activation space. As with the previous separated bikes typology, special

events may be accommodated, but it provides less programming flexibility than other options. An example of separated bikes and a one-way travel lane is Clinton Street, Manhattan in New York City.

Downtown Mobility User Types

The following Downtown mobility considerations were used to inform operations and management recommendations.

Pedestrians

In August 2022, over 8,000 pedestrians experienced the State Street Promenade in one day. The City's Pedestrian Master Plan anticipates that additional pedestrian facilities will be needed as more people live, work, and visit Downtown. A goal of Create State is to provide additional space for walking paths and other pedestrian amenities to address the anticipated increased demand for these facilities throughout the project lifetime.

Bikes

The City's Bicycle Master Plan designates State Street as the "spine" of the bicycle network and primary connection between Downtown and the Waterfront. Creating the State Street Promenade and limiting private vehicle usage significantly improved bicycle safety along this portion of State Street, which previously had a concentration of bike and vehicle collisions. In August 2022, over 2,000 cyclists experienced the State Street Promenade in one day. The Create State team anticipates a continued increased demand for biking as more people live, work, and visit Downtown.

The Create State team evaluated the feasibility of permanently re-routing bicycles off State Street and concluded that the driveway conflicts and traffic volumes associated with a bike lane on Chapala or Anacapa Streets create a more uncomfortable user experience, on-street parking and loading space would need to be removed, and costly infrastructure improvements to adjacent streets would result in a diversion of finances from State Street improvements. The Create State team believes that the 20-foot emergency access area on State Street can safely accommodate cyclists of all ages and abilities. However, the Create State team recommends requiring dismounting during special events on State Street. If special events become so frequent that State Street is unable to generally operate as a bicycle facility, then a re-route could be further studied during a later Create State phase.

Transit

MTD electric shuttles between the Downtown and Waterfront neighborhoods suspended service in 2020 and have not returned due to budget constraints. However, there is anticipated to be an increased demand for public transit Downtown, particularly as more residential development occurs. Connections to the Amtrak Station and Waterfront are also missing in the transit network because of the loss of the Downtown Shuttle. A circulator that primarily travels along Anacapa and Chapala Streets can move more

people efficiently than smaller shuttle systems. A pedicab or micro-transit shuttle could supplement a circulator system, and capacity and boarding zones along State Street would need to be further studied. Additional transit information is provided in the attached memo from MTD, submitted by SSAC member Hillary Blackerby.

Vehicles

Chapala and Anacapa Streets are designed as the primary north and south-bound vehicle corridors in the Create State project area and provide access to the City's public parking lots. The creation of the temporary State Street Promenade that currently limits vehicular traffic has generated minimal surrounding traffic impacts. Due to the lack of alleys and back of house access for many businesses, maintenance, service, deliveries, and construction access is needed in some compacity on State Street. Currently, this function is limited on State Street to the morning hours before 10 a.m. and provided on Chapala and Anacapa Streets, as well as the 0 blocks adjacent to State Street, at all hours. If private vehicles are reintroduced on the State Street Promenade, this utility and anticipated traffic demand could be accommodated in a single travel lane.

District Needs and Recommended Mobility

Each district has unique transportation needs based upon its identity, potential design and placemaking elements, and function in the greater transportation network. There are also common needs shared by all districts, such as business service and delivery, customer and visitor accessibility, safety, and the ability to host special events. Together, these districts and the recommended mobility described below build together to form a cohesive placemaking and transportation strategy that comprises the Grand Paseo.

Entertainment District (Highway 101 to Ortega Street)

The vision for this district is to be a vibrant area that features lively restaurants and bars that energize the area day and night, with street performers and games that provide additional life and activity. This district also provides a defined connection to the Funk Zone and Waterfront. Key district transportation needs include delivery and service access for food and experiential-based business, public safety access to and from the Waterfront, customer drop-off and access that may extend late into the evening and early morning, and mobility options that are compatible with outdoor dining.

As part of the Vision Zero State Street Undercrossing Project, the 300 block of State Street (Highway 101 to Gutierrez Street) will be reconstructed to nearly double the sidewalk width, expand and protect the bike lanes on either side of the street, reconfigure the vehicular lanes, provide space for art, and improve lighting. There are no recommended changes to this project, as it is in direct alignment with the Create State vision.

The 400 block of State Street (Gutierrez to Haley Street) provides a critical link for public safety access between the Waterfront and Downtown areas of the City, and

community feedback emphasized that this block should also be a primary entrance from the Waterfront. To maintain efficient public safety access to and from the Waterfront, two lanes of vehicular traffic must be provided at all times, and unless traffic volumes are lowered, a separated bicycle facility is required. The Create State team is continuing to study this block and the feasibility of expanding sidewalks and providing delivery and loading zones. The team has not yet identified the preferred design.

The 500 and 600 blocks of State Street (Haley to Ortega Street) are recommended to be a multi-purpose promenade, which consists of shared space within the 20ft emergency access lane between pedestrians, bicyclists, and pedicabs or micro-transit. Vehicles would not be permitted in this space outside of a defined service and delivery window. Full-size transit would operate on Chapala and Anacapa Streets. Limiting the mobility on State Street to low-intensity transportation modes enhances safety and compatibility with outdoor dining and other district uses. This design will allocate sixty of the eighty feet of corridor width for pedestrian facilities, outdoor dining, interactive games, and small-scale performances.

City Center (Ortega to Carrillo Street)

The vision for the City Center is that it showcases the best of Santa Barbara and creates a magnetic destination for locals and visitors. The district integrates the paseo network and key anchors, like City Hall, De la Guerra Plaza, Paseo Nuevo, El Paseo, and the Santa Barbara Historical Museum. It operates as the heart of community life in the City and invites all Santa Barbarans, with an emphasis on locals and families. Play is emphasized in this district, with small “moments of joy” and iconic features. Key district transportation needs include the ability to support large special events and temporarily limit certain areas to only pedestrian use, consideration of the redevelopment of Paseo Nuevo as mixed use, and mobility options that are compatible with De La Guerra Plaza, children’s play elements, and community gathering spaces.

As provided in community input and from prior SSAC direction, and due to the proximity to De La Guerra Plaza and Paseo Nuevo, the 700 to 900 blocks of State Street (Ortega to Carrillo Street) are envisioned to provide a venue-like setting and environment for ongoing community programming and regular special events, supplemented by park-like spaces for families and gathering. A multi-purpose promenade that allows low-intensity travel modes provides the required flexibility for events and is the most compatible with these uses. The Create State team recommends designing these blocks as a pedestrian-prioritized space that allows bicycles when large special events are not occurring. Vehicles would not be permitted in this space outside of a defined service and delivery window. Transit would operate on Chapala and Anacapa Streets and pedicabs could be considered on State Street when special events are not occurring. This design will allocate sixty of the eighty feet of corridor width for pedestrian

facilities, play elements, and gathering spaces. This allocation would grow to the full corridor width of eighty feet during special events.

Arts District (Carrillo to Sola Street)

The vision for the Arts District is that the district is animated by the concentration of vibrant cultural destinations, including the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Arlington and Granada Theaters, the Santa Barbara Public Library and Historic Courthouse. The streetscape is defined by its interactive art exhibits, sculptures, small performance spaces, and outdoor dining. Key district needs include patron drop-off for cultural institutions, enhanced pedestrian connections to the MTD Transit Center, and space for public art.

While the 1000 to 1300 blocks of State Street (Carrillo to Sola Street) could be designed as a multi-purpose promenade to provide the benefits highlighted in other districts, the Create State team recommends that the initial design be configured in a way that requires less active management, programming, and construction cost to improve project feasibility and right-size Create State for social and economic vitality in Santa Barbara. The recommended design includes expanding curbs to provide additional space for pedestrians, interactive art exhibits, outdoor dining, and other placemaking elements that implement the district vision; adding a separated bi-directional bicycle facility on the west side of the corridor that will connect to the Westside Community Paseos network at Sola Street; allowing transit of all types; and reintroducing private vehicles with a one-way northbound travel lane with drop-off areas at key destinations, like the Granada Theater. The Create State team recommends that the City monitor the success of the multi-purpose promenade in the other districts to determine whether this district should be designed in that typology in a future phase. While outside of the Create State project area, the project team also recommends extending the 1300 block design of State Street to the 1400 block ending at Micheltorena Street. This design will allocate roughly forty to fifty-five of the eighty feet of corridor width for pedestrian facilities, art installations, and other activation elements.

Concluding Summary

After considering the guiding principles and the unique transportation needs, vision, and future placemaking elements of each district, the Create State team recommends the following:

- Continue to develop a design on the 400 block that facilitates public safety access by allowing two-way vehicle traffic with bicycle facilities.
- Design a multi-purpose promenade on State Street that is right-sized for social and economic vitality in Santa Barbara. This multi-purpose promenade would extend from Haley to Carrillo Streets to allow pedestrians, bikes, the option for pedicabs or micro-transit, and limited business deliveries, in a shared space.
- Support the City Center District as the primary programming and events space and limit the mobility to pedestrian use during large special events.

- Design the Arts District to require less active management, programming, and construction cost by expanding curbs to provide additional pedestrian facilities and activation space, adding a separated two-way bicycle facility, and providing a one-way vehicle travel on State Street from Carrillo to Sola Streets.
- Design an accessible transit network that serves a range of functions with a full-size circulator shuttle that primarily travels on Anacapa and Chapala Streets and is supplemented by a pedicab program or micro-transit on State Street.
- Consider phasing, funding opportunities, and construction coordination with other Downtown development projects.

Requested State Street Advisory Committee Input

During the October 23, 2023 SSAC meeting, the Create State team will be seeking input from the Committee members on the following question:

In reviewing the Create State team's mobility plan and recommendations, what do you like? What would you recommend be altered and why?

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. MTD Memorandum – Transit Considerations for the State Street Master Plan and Downtown Santa Barbara



MEMORANDUM

To: State Street Advisory Committee
From: Jerry Estrada, General Manager, Santa Barbara MTD
Date: 10/18/2023
Re: Transit Considerations for the State Street Master Plan and Downtown Santa Barbara

Important Considerations for Transit Service

- **Market for service**—Who are you trying to serve? Where are they coming from? Where do they want and need to go? Are you just serving a linear corridor or are you connecting multiple gateways and points of interest?
- **Demand**—What kind of demand do you have? How many people are you trying to move? What does that mean for your fleet and driver workforce needs?
- **True accessibility**—Are you able to move people in a way that honors universal design? Can groups made up of people of varying abilities and needs travel together? Are you designing for people who use different mobility devices, strollers, children, visitors with luggage, or people with lots of shopping bags? Does whatever vehicle you use have ADA accessible, low-floor, kneeling capabilities and does it have a compliant boarding and alighting zone at each stop?
- **Safety**—Does your vehicle operate in an environment that is mixed with other travel modes (cars, bikes, pedestrians)? Do stopping, boarding, and alighting take place at designated stops or at any location along a route?
- **Comfort**—Does the service allow respite for rider comfort? Does it provide air conditioning in the summer, heat in the winter, and shelter from the rain?
- **Fixed route or on-demand**—Does the service run on a regular schedule of headways, or does it need to be requested by flagging it down or requesting a ride via app or phone call?

It has been clear both before the pandemic, during, and now that there is a market and demand for some type of dedicated transit service in Santa Barbara's Downtown core. For context, prior to the pandemic suspension of MTD's Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and dating back to the early 1990s, ridership ebbed and flowed based on the vibrancy of State Street over the years. For example, after Paseo Nuevo opened, the month of July 1992 alone saw 142,829 riders. Even at much lower ridership levels in 2019, the service still carried 33,999 people in the month of July.

Accessibility for all must be a main consideration for both the function and form of the service. The transit industry is well versed in how important it is to carry people no matter their ability, and to do so in a seamless manner, not one that requires a different special vehicle that separates a person from the rest of their party.