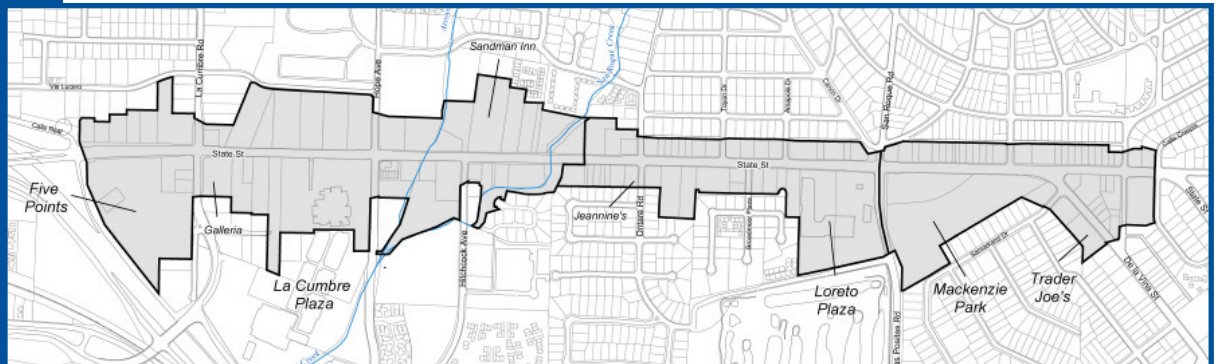


City of Santa Barbara

Upper State Street Study



Study Report



City of Santa Barbara

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Many thanks to the many individuals and community groups that took time to participate in the study through workshops, hearings, and providing comments and insight.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Upper State Street Study, please log on to the City web page at www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov, click on Major Planning Efforts, and select the Upper State Street Study.

This report is available on the City web page or a copy may be picked up at the City Planning Division office located at 630 Garden Street.



Highway 101 and State Street Intersection

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- D. Transportation Improvement Concept Designs and Descriptions
(from Meyer, Mohaddes Associates, Upper State Street Traffic, Circulation and Parking Study, February 2006 Report)

Other separately-bound study documents are available from the City Planning Division or City web page:

Upper State Street Study Information Booklet (City Planning Division, September 2006)

Upper State Street Traffic, Circulation, and Parking Study (Meyer, Mohaddes Associates, February, 2007)



La Cumbre Road/ State Street Intersection

I. BACKGROUND AND STUDY PROCESS

Introduction

In April 2006, recognition of community concerns about development proposals in the Upper State Street area, the Santa Barbara City Council directed staff of the Planning and Transportation Divisions to undertake a study of the Upper State Street commercial corridor between Highway 101 and Calle Laureles, working with the public, City commissions, and consultant teams.

The purpose of the Study is to identify changes that could improve traffic circulation and urban design in the study area. Issues addressed in this Study include area character and openness, landscaping and “streetscape” design, scenic views, open space and creeks, building heights and setback distances from the street, vehicle traffic, circulation and parking, and pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity in the area.

City Council specified that this effort be focused on roadway improvements and amendments to development and design standards that could occur within the existing City policy framework. Larger citywide policy issues such as land use changes, housing density and affordability, commercial growth, regional traffic, and environmental sustainability are therefore not addressed in this study. They will be studied as part of the upcoming City General Plan update process.

Applicants for individual development proposals could choose to continue to process their applications during the period of the Study. It is expected that the Study recommendations will inform the review of development proposals, and that development proposals will need to respond to the Study findings and direction from City Council.

This *Upper State Street Study Report* prepared by the City Planning Division with the City Transportation Division sets out recommendations for amendments to development standards and design guidelines, physical improvements, and City programs to benefit transportation and urban design in the Upper State Street corridor.

Upper State Street Study Area

Upper State Street is one of the City of Santa Barbara’s main transportation and commercial corridors. It provides a transportation link to downtown Santa Barbara and to the Goleta Valley. It connects to Highway 101 at Calle Real at the State Street on-ramp, and via cross streets at La Cumbre Road, Hope Avenue, Hitchcock Way, and Las Positas Road. State Street is lined with office buildings, banks, motels, retail and service shops, restaurants, and shopping centers. Mackenzie Park and the Army Reserve site provide substantial open space in the area. Arroyo Burro and San Roque Creeks cross underneath State Street. Expansive mountain views to the north are visible when traveling eastward. In addition to being accessible and convenient by car and transit, the corridor is also an integral part of the adjacent neighborhoods in a city that values a strong sense of place and community.

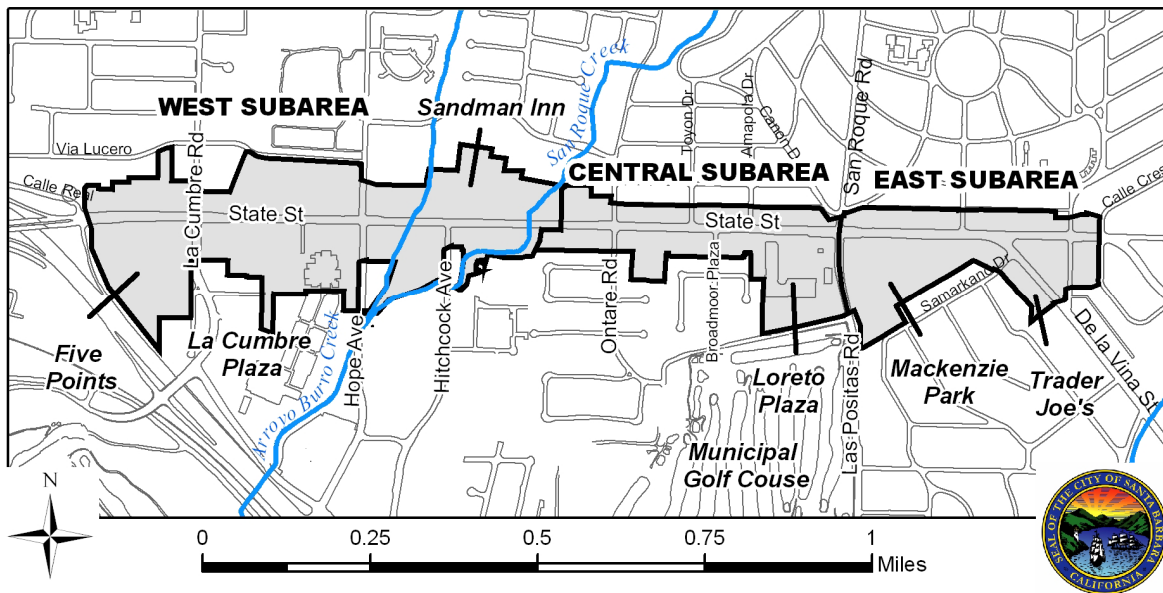


Figure 1 – Upper State Street Study Area

Study Area Boundaries

The 1 ½-mile study area encompasses commercially zoned parcels along Upper State Street from the Highway 101 northbound on-ramp at Calle Real on the west to Calle Laureles and De la Vina Street on the east. (See Figure 1)

Subareas

Three subareas were identified for the Upper State Street Study to assist in describing information about the corridor (See Figure 1):

West Subarea [Highway 101 to San Roque Creek just east of Hitchcock Way].

Two regional shopping centers (Five Points Center and La Cumbre Plaza) and generally larger parcels and developments.

Central Subarea [San Roque Creek to Las Positas Road].

Largely strip commercial development on both sides, and the Loreto Plaza shopping center.

East Subarea [Las Positas Road to Calle Laureles]

Mackenzie Park on the south and smaller historic storefronts on the north.

Surrounding Neighborhoods

The General Plan and other planning studies have identified neighborhoods adjacent to the State Street commercial corridor as follows (See Figure 2). The area north of State Street includes the Hope, San Roque, and East San Roque neighborhoods. South of State Street are the North State, Hitchcock, and Samarkand neighborhoods.

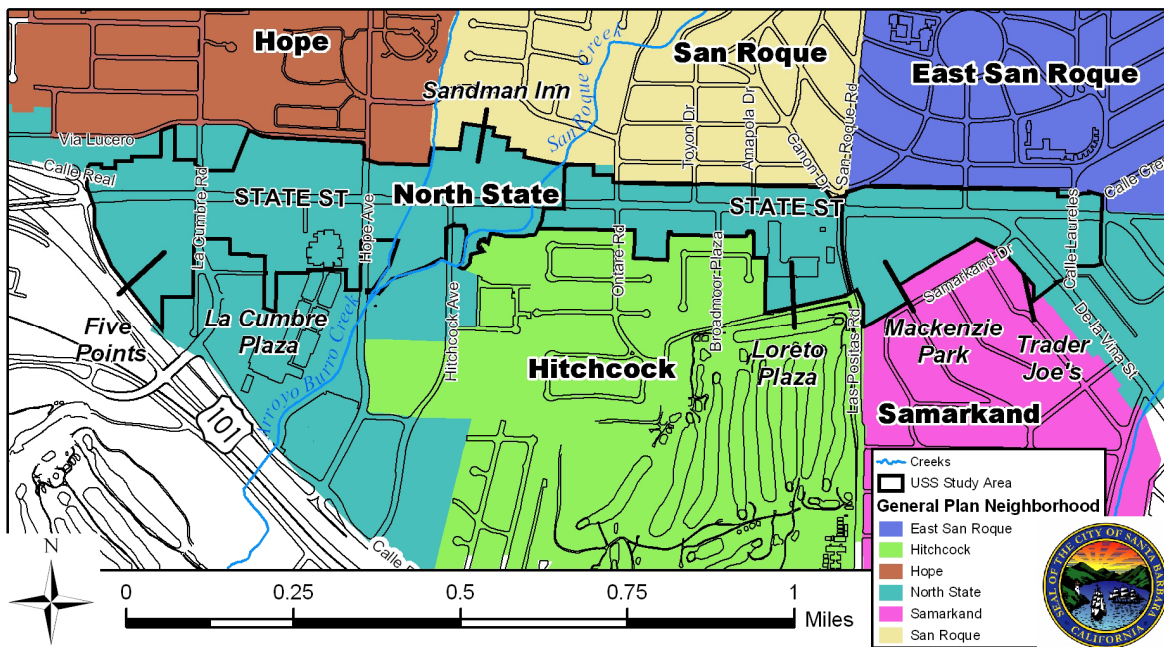


Figure 2 – Neighborhoods

Background

Historical Development Patterns

Upper State Street area parcels were gradually annexed from the County to the City over the last 40 years, and development standards have also evolved in a gradual fashion. Consequently, there is no one consistent development pattern along the corridor. Various land use groupings exist, such as regional shopping centers, large free-standing “campus-like” office buildings, 1960s strip commercial developments, and small, attached 1920s storefronts.

City Development Policies

Today, City General Plan policies for land use, housing, and circulation guide development within the City. These policies limit commercial development and encourage residential, as well as mixed residential/commercial uses, bus transit, bicycle use, and a “pedestrian friendly” environment. The 1989 citizen-approved Measure E controls the amount of non-residential growth. The *City Zoning Ordinance* and *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* serve as the primary tools to implement the *General Plan* policies in this area through development review.

Zoning Development Standards

The *S-D-2 Special District Zone* was adopted for Upper State Street in 1979 to address deteriorating traffic conditions and the rapid rate of development occurring within the corridor. Since that time, most of the identified traffic improvements have been constructed, the associated traffic mitigation fees repealed, and Measure E adopted to regulate commercial growth.

The S-D-2 development standards, such as requirements for the amount of parking, building height limitations, and building setback distances from the street, remain in effect today (See *Table 1* and *Appendix B*). In applying these provisions to individual development projects over the last 25 years, modifications to the setback and parking standards have been granted in some instances.

Summary of zoning requirements. Exceptions do apply, please refer to Appendix 5 for more information.				
Zone	Building Height	Front Yard Setbacks	Interior Yard Setbacks	Parking
SD-2	3 stories, 45 feet	10 feet for one story buildings 15 feet or lower; 20 feet for two and three-story buildings or buildings 15 feet or taller	None	1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area. If underlying zone requires more parking, the greater requirement applies
C-P	3 stories, 45 feet	10 feet	None	1 space per 200 square feet gross floor area
C-2	4 stories, 60 feet	None	None	1 space per 250 square feet gross floor area
R-O	3 stories, 45 feet	10 feet for one and two-story buildings; 15 feet for three-story buildings	6 feet for one and two-story buildings; 10 feet for three-story buildings	1 space per 250 square feet gross floor area

Table 1 - Summary of S-D-2 Zoning Requirements

Design Guidelines

The Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines were adopted in 1992 to work with the existing SD-2 development standards. These guidelines provide general direction for development design of architectural style and elements, color, exterior finishes, roofs, site planning, building heights, lighting, landscaping, and neighborhood compatibility. (See *Appendix 3*)

Traffic Conditions

Traffic and circulation patterns are also largely a product of historical development. The street network never evolved as the type of "grid" pattern that naturally lends itself to many walking destinations and alternative routes for the automobile. Historically, State Street was primarily a means to get out "Goleta way". Since the 1920s, the traffic levels have ebbed and flowed as a result of increased commercial activity, more cars per household, and the widening of Highway 101 and associated interchange improvements.

Today, traffic conditions in the study area are for the most part better than the City standard for congestion levels during peak travel times, with the exception of two intersections: Las Positas Road at State Street; and Las Positas Road at Calle Real. Other intersections approaching the City congestion level standard are the State Street intersections with La Cumbre Road, Hope Avenue, and Hitchcock Way. Much of the community's perception of congested traffic along this corridor relates to mid-block stopping, starting, and slowing, attributable to operational "friction" from multiple driveways, bus stops, and frequent spacing of intersections and traffic signals.

Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Facilities

Alternatives to vehicle transportation are available in the Upper State Street area. Bus transit service is in the process of being upgraded to run every 7.5 minutes. Both sides of State Street have striped on-street bike lanes. Sidewalks exist in most areas of the corridor, however walking along Upper State Street is generally not "pedestrian-friendly". Increasingly, the "streetscape" (including the street, medians, sidewalks, and building setback area from the street) is recognized as a key to successful urban design as well as promoting walking.

Pedestrian Master Plan

The City *Pedestrian Master Plan* (2006) sets out policies and programs to improve the pedestrian system citywide, and includes design guidance for sidewalk corridors, street corners, crosswalks, transit stops, paseos, and urban trails.

Study Process

2006 Process Steps:

Initial Consultation with City Boards and Commissions

In May and June 2006, staff received initial input about Upper State Street issues at public meetings of the City Architectural Board of Review, Transportation and Circulation Committee, Park and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and Metropolitan Transit District Board.

Traffic, Circulation, and Parking Study

The City contracted with transportation consultants Meyer, Mohaddes and Associates to prepare a technical study of traffic, circulation, and parking conditions, and to identify recommended improvement options for the area. A September 2006 report released for public review provided analysis of existing circulation and parking conditions for vehicles, bus transit, pedestrians and bicycles, forecasted future traffic volumes, and an initial list of improvement options.

Information Booklet, Web Site, and Public Noticing

Staff prepared an *Upper State Street Study Information Booklet* that provides background information and identifies issues for public discussion:

- Key urban design and transportation issues in the Upper State Street area.
- Historic patterns of development and traffic.
- Existing City plans and ordinance provisions that apply to development in the area.
- Existing urban design and traffic conditions, including building setbacks from the street, building heights and sizes, scenic views, traffic volumes, road network, parking, and pedestrian, bicycle, and bus facilities.
- The transportation consultant's initial list of options for traffic, circulation, and parking improvements for public consideration.

Copies of the *Information Booklet* were made available to the public in hard copy and via the City website (www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov) in September 2006. Public noticing of the Study process, *Information Booklet* availability, and dates of public workshops was provided via mail to community interest groups and properties in the area, as well as by newspaper notices and the web site.

Public Walking Tour

A public walking tour of Upper State Street was conducted by City staff on Saturday morning October 7, 2006 and was attended by 77 participants.

Public Workshops

Public workshops were conducted by planning consultants from Moore, Iacofano, Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) on Saturday, October 14th and Thursday evening October 19th, and were each attended by about 60 participants. In addition to input received during the workshops, comment cards and letters were received. A summary of community workshop input received is provided in *Appendix A* and on the City website.



Traffic and Circulation Work Session

A joint public meeting of the City Planning Commission and Transportation & Circulation Committee was held on November 15, 2006 for a focused discussion on the traffic, circulation, and parking analysis and initial transportation improvement options identified in the September 2006 Meyer, Mohaddes Associates report.

2007 Process Steps

Traffic, Circulation and Parking Report

Following the public workshops, the traffic consultant Meyer, Mohaddes Associates prepared a second phase *Upper State Street Traffic, Circulation, and Parking Study* (February 2007 report) that further analyzes options for traffic, circulation, and parking improvements.

Upper State Street Study Report

City Planning Division staff together with Transportation Division staff prepared this *Upper State Street Study Report* (February 2007), outlining both transportation and urban design recommendations.

Public Review; Boards and Commissions

This *Upper State Street Study Report* was issued for public review in March 2007. Public notification of report availability and meeting dates of City boards and commissions was provided by City website, and mailed notice to community interest groups, properties in the area, and individuals requesting notice.

Consideration of the Study Report will be scheduled on the noticed public meeting agendas of the City Creeks Advisory Committee, Transportation and Circulation Committee, Park and Recreation Commission, Architectural Board of Review, Metropolitan Transit District Board, and Planning Commission in March and April 2007.

City Council Action

Following public review and consideration by City boards and commissions, the Santa Barbara City Council will consider the Upper State Street Study Report and take action on its recommendations. This is expected to be scheduled on a City Council agenda in May 2007.

Implementation

Following City Council action, there will be further implementation activities, which could include amendments to the Special District (S-D-2) Zone and the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*, circulation capital improvements program, and larger citywide policy issues to be addressed through the City General Plan update process. Design recommendations would also be implemented through the review and permitting processes for individual development proposals.



State Street and Hope Avenue Intersection

II. OVERALL STUDY APPROACH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Study Approach

From the outset, the scope of the Upper State Street study has focused on urban design, traffic and circulation issues, all within the context of the existing General Plan policy framework. The general approach of this study has been to primarily identify short-term, incremental improvements, both physical and procedural, that can help to address development proposals, while not pre-empting longer-term opportunities. In addition, during this process some longer-term improvements have also been identified, together with encouragement to plan in a more comprehensive manner whenever possible.

Pending Projects

Design Review and Planning Commission findings for sound community planning are critical elements of the development review process. The recommendations presented in this report will begin to immediately guide applicants and decision-makers on key issues such as the public streetscape, the size and treatment of building setbacks from the street, roadway improvements, scenic views, and other factors that contribute to the improvement of Upper State Street. Simply identifying and emphasizing the importance of key community values can itself begin to empower the decision-makers to make the most of current opportunities.

This process has provided a much broader analysis of traffic and circulation issues than is typically done during any individual project review. The study area includes all the key intersections, which is standard practice, but the information on traffic volumes, mid-block conditions, pedestrian activity, medians, bus stops, etc. is much more comprehensive and detailed. Also, the potential capital improvements are broader than typically analyzed for project specific impacts, which reveals opportunities for both near-term and longer-term improvements.

Community Input

An important component of the Upper State Street study was to gather public input on what the community likes or doesn't like about the area, what works and doesn't work, and specific changes that can be made to improve the urban design, traffic, and circulation of the area. This level of public input is far broader and more detailed than

what would typically be gained through a project-by-project review of the pending proposals.

While the public participation process resulted in a variety of opinions, there was a substantial amount of agreement on a number of topics including the character of the corridor, the public streetscape, the importance of views, open space, creeks, and circulation. There was the greatest division of opinion on issues related to building setbacks, building size, mass, height and scale, and parking. (*Appendix A, Consolidated Summary of Workshop Comments*).

Urban Design

Public input was a key element in how the Urban Design recommendations were developed within the context of existing physical conditions, policy framework and development review process. In those areas of relatively strong agreement, the recommendations are straightforward measures for recommended amendments to clarify and strengthen the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*. Taken together, these recommendations create a good picture of what is expected in terms of community benefit from any project of significance.

Thus, as new projects come before the City, the Architectural Board of Review will have better guidance as to what is necessary for conformance with the Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines. Similarly, for those projects that request any modifications to the S-D-2 development standards, a comprehensive set of community benefit findings will need to be met as part of the approval process.

Much of Upper State Street is already developed (in most cases since long before the City established the S-D-2 Zone in 1979), resulting in many non-conforming properties. More recently, the Pedestrian Master Plan was adopted, which establishes standards for streetscape and pedestrian improvements. Changes to the corridor will largely occur incrementally over time as opportunities and funding arise through private development. Changes within the public road right-of-way could happen through a coordinated program, depending on available funding.

Traffic & Circulation

Public input on these topics was most helpful in supplementing and guiding the traffic, circulation and parking study prepared by Meyer Mohaddes & Associates, such as on the issue of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity (trails, sidewalk improvements, paseos, etc.), and a number of technical and methodology details. The traffic and circulation recommendations are presented essentially as freestanding Capital Improvement Projects, given the nature of the projects. Each project can then be implemented individually on a project-by-project basis or clustered in groups, depending on the respective development proposal or outside funding opportunity.

General Recommendations

The two primary objectives of this study are to provide better guidance for the development review of private projects, and more specific direction as to the type of physical improvements the community desires along the Upper State Street corridor. Following a series of well-attended public events designed to solicit specific input on these objectives, the following general recommendations emerged:

- 1. Maintain and enhance the unique character of Upper State Street including the public streetscape, open space, creeks, views, site design and building aesthetics.**
- 2. Improve traffic, circulation, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, and parking.**
- 3. Preserve longer-range future improvement opportunities.**

Implementation Actions

The General Recommendations outlined above are discussed further in the Urban Design, Transportation, and Long Term Improvements sections of this report. Each section provides a brief summary of existing conditions, public input, issues discussion, topical or project-specific recommendations, and implementation. Most recommendations are graphically represented on a series of three diagrams: *Figure 7-Summary of Urban Design Recommendations*; *Figure 9, Summary of Transportation Recommendations*; and *Figure 10-Summary of Long-Term Improvements*.

In summary, implementation of the identified Upper State Street Study recommendations would fall into the following four broad categories: Development Standards; Design Guidelines; Capital Projects and Programs, and Council-adopted Resolution.

S-D-2 Zone Standards

Existing development standards and procedures are recommended to be reaffirmed and/or amended to further specify community objectives along the Upper State Street corridor, particularly in the areas of public streetscape, open space, creeks, views, site design and building aesthetics.

Design Guidelines

The existing *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* are recommended to be amended and expanded consistent with the direction of the three general recommendations noted above.

Capital Projects and Programs

Specific capital improvement projects and programs identified in this Study can be implemented through private development exactions, public programs or public/private partnerships.

Council Resolution Adopting the Study

At the end of the planning process, it is recommended that a Resolution approving the Upper State Street Study be adopted by Council. The resolution would include all the final recommendations of the study for use during review of current and forthcoming development project applications.



State Street and Hitchcock Way Intersection

III. URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Urban design - how buildings and public spaces are arranged, designed and accessed - affects the entire built environment of an area. Among the key elements that make up the urban design character of Upper State Street are: the public streetscape; open space; creeks; scenic views; size and treatment of building setbacks from the street; and building sizes - both height and massing. The following summarizes existing conditions, community input, and a discussion of issues, and provides improvement recommendations and implementation for each of these key elements associated with urban design. *Figure 7* at the end of the section is a summary diagram depicting the urban design recommendations.

Corridor Identity and Character

Existing Conditions

Upper State Street is a four-lane commercial thoroughfare, well served by transit, with banks, offices, stores, a regional shopping center to the west, smaller shops to the east, and residential neighborhoods to the north and south. The corridor also has magnificent views of the Santa Ynez Mountains to the north, a City park, and convenient access by car that serves a local South Coast clientele. The auto-oriented convenience affects the pedestrian character, and tends to create a disincentive to walk, stroll or participate in other outdoor sidewalk activity.

The three subareas within the Upper State Street corridor (see *Figure 1*) also have distinct characteristics that spill over into the adjacent neighborhoods. Local shops often help to define the adjacent neighborhoods.

The west subarea (Highway 101 to San Roque Creek just east of Hitchcock Way) is developed with larger two- and three-story buildings, many of which meet the S-D-2 ten- to twenty-foot front yard building setback requirements (*Appendix B, S-D-2 Zone Ordinance*). The central subarea (San Roque Creek to Las Positas Road) has two distinct development and setback patterns on either side of the street. The north side is developed with buildings right up to the sidewalk and parking typically behind or along the side of buildings. The south side is a series of linear "strip"-style shopping plazas with two rows of off-street parking between the sidewalk and the buildings. The east subarea (Las Positas Road to Calle Laureles) is for the most part developed along the north side with small individual storefronts oriented directly to the street and built to the sidewalk.

There is variation in the existing development pattern throughout the corridor and in each subarea, including widths of sidewalks, size of building setbacks, etc. Examples of existing street sections within each of the subareas are provided in *Figure 3-West Subarea*, *Figure 4-Central Subarea*, and *Figure 5- East Subarea*.

Example of Section of West Subarea Intersection (Looking East)

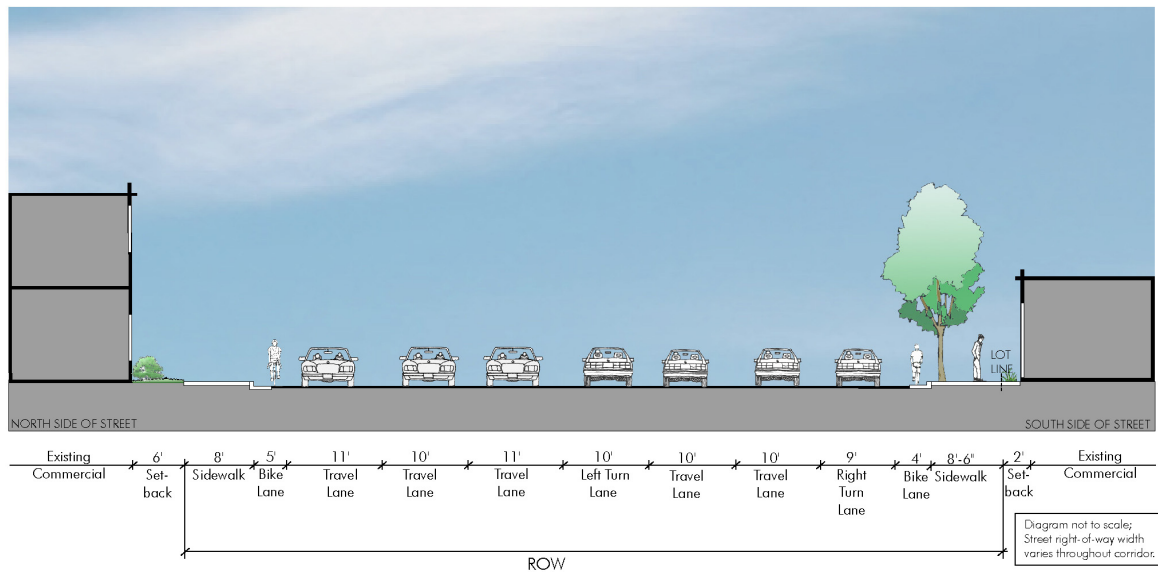


Figure 3 – West Subarea

Example of Central Subarea (Looking East)

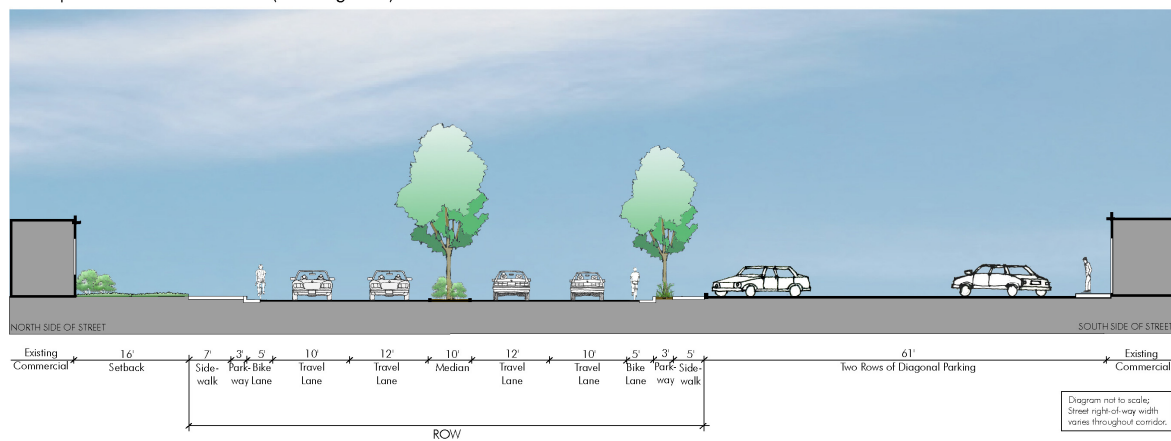


Figure 4 – Central Subarea

Example of East Subarea (Looking East)

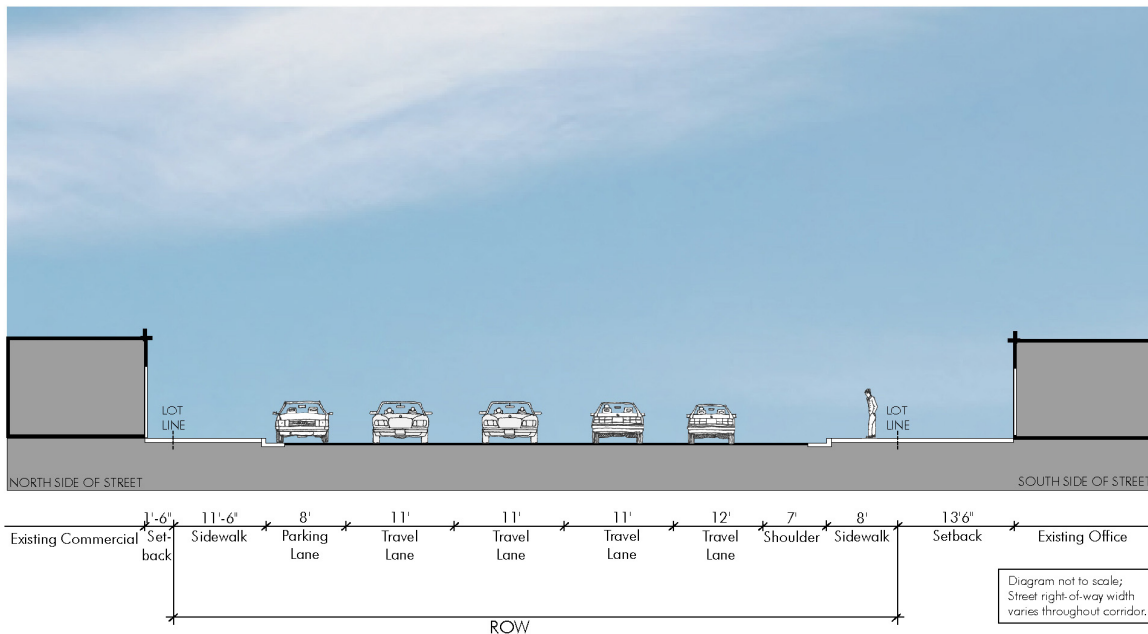


Figure 5 – East Subarea

Public Input

Many in the community made a clear distinction between the character of Upper State Street and the downtown, specifically, the downtown's more urban appearance, consistent Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, generous sidewalks and landscaping, and the proliferation of up-scale chain stores and tourists. There appears to be little interest in replicating the character of downtown, with the exception perhaps of streetscape improvements.

Many in the community prefer the "local" character of Upper State Street, including the unique neighborhoods, the auto convenience, the mountain views, and the more eclectic mix of architecture, urban form and businesses. There was strong support for strengthening this existing character, creating more sense of place and orientation along the corridor, and providing better connections to the neighborhoods.

Discussion

There is clear community recognition that this reach of State Street has its own sense of identity and that new development should respect the context in which it is proposed to locate. This recognition needs to be incorporated into the legislative intent of the S-D-2 zone standards and more clearly defined in the existing *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* (See *Appendix C*). To give the *Design Guidelines* more weight, appropriate findings for new development in the Upper State Street area should be made by decision-makers (the Architectural Board of Review) to ensure compliance.

Summary Direction: Preserve and enhance the unique character of Upper State Street and its subareas and neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRIDOR IDENTITY AND CHARACTER

1. **Key Characteristics.** Further identify key characteristics in the Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines that define Upper State Street and its subareas and adjacent neighborhoods.
2. **Activity Nodes.** Encourage the development of activity nodes to serve as public gathering spaces that incorporate public (and private) amenities such as plaza elements, fountains, seating areas, passive open spaces or pocket parks, view corridors, and other elements that create an animated pedestrian experience. Activity nodes should be visually distinctive locations and include features that provide street presence, a sense of place, and orientation within the long corridor. Activity nodes could be developed at:
 - La Cumbre and State Street
 - Las Positas/San Roque Roads and State Street
3. **Paseos.** Encourage pedestrian scale paseos in new development to facilitate interaction and connection between the commercial and retail activities along the corridor and the residential areas to the north and south.
4. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** Provide direction to the Architectural Board of Review to carefully consider neighborhood compatibility of new development within the context of the subarea in which it is located.
5. **Zoning Standard Variations.** Allow variation from zoning standards only for important trade-offs such as preservation or creation of mountain views, creek buffers, pedestrian streetscape amenities or to maximize the rear of the site for alley access and/or parking.

Implementation

1. Amend the S-D-2 Zone to:
 - Update the legislative intent of the S-D-2 district to incorporate specific reference to the importance of the Upper State Street character and sense of place;
 - Incorporate a finding that modifications to development standards, such as for building setbacks, can only be supported for important trade-offs or community benefits, such as preservation or creation of mountain view corridors, provision of creek buffers, enhanced pedestrian streetscape amenities, connectivity between State Street and the surrounding neighborhoods; provision of open space, or maximizing the rear of the site for alley access and/or parking.
2. Amend the *Architectural Board of Review Ordinance* to include a required finding of compliance with the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*, as amended.

3. Amend the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* to:

- Further identify key characteristics that define Upper State Street and its respective subareas and adjacent neighborhoods;
- Incorporate recommendations for activity nodes, plazas and paseo elements in all development proposals throughout the corridor;
- Underscore the need to review projects within the context of the block and subarea in which they are located.
- Strengthen compatibility standards to identify desired design criteria for residential uses proposed in the Upper State Street area. Criteria should include how residential uses are buffered from incompatible commercial development, such as additional landscaping, increased setbacks and/or building orientation to provide adequate separation between land uses.

Public Streetscape

Existing Conditions

The public streetscape is the open physical area of roadways and building setbacks from the street, which extends from one building front face across the street to the other building front face. It includes both public and private land to which the public generally has access. The character of the public streetscape defines whether an area is pedestrian-friendly and greatly affects the general look, feel, and character of a street.

The streetscape area provides for vehicle and pedestrian travel, open space, landscaping and aesthetics, and in some cases, parking. Included in the public streetscape are the public street right-of-way area containing roadway medians, street travel lanes, bike lanes and bus “pull-out” areas, curb and gutter, parkway landscaping and trees between the road and sidewalk, and sidewalks. Also included within the streetscape area are building setback areas from the street on private property that may contain landscaping, walkways, plazas, open space, parking, signs, utilities, and street furniture.

There is tremendous variation in the public streetscape along Upper State Street, ranging from areas with lush landscaping, well-maintained sidewalk, and medians with large shade trees, to areas with little landscaping, narrow and obstructed sidewalks, many driveways, and no shade trees.

Public Input

There was widespread community support for improving the pedestrian streetscape of Upper State Street. Most of the public agreed that this area is not currently a good place to walk. The public expressed support for improving those areas between the street and the buildings with landscaping, natural open spaces and wider, less obstructed sidewalks. There was also a desire to incorporate plazas and paseo connections between properties, to create a more inviting environment for pedestrians, and to create better connections with the adjacent neighborhoods. There was a general feeling that people would walk more if the pedestrian environment were cleaned-up and improved so that the pedestrians were buffered from traffic and parking areas.

Discussion

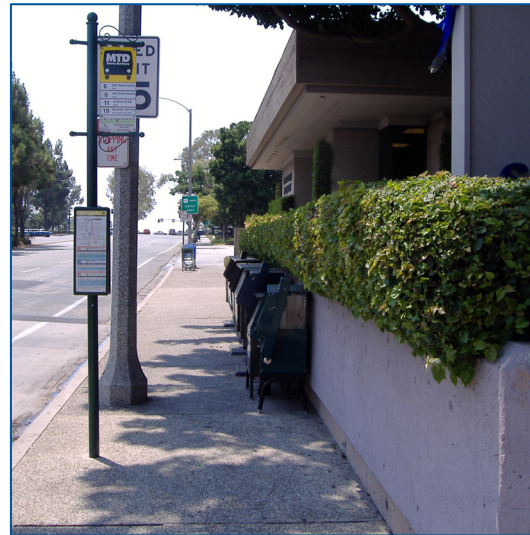
Creating a public streetscape that is comfortable for walking, strolling, bicycling, waiting for the bus, or sitting and relaxing with a cup of coffee increases the livability of an area. The *City Pedestrian Master Plan* clearly articulates many good reasons for improving the streetscape. For years, the benefits of a pedestrian-friendly public streetscape have been heralded, not only for the comfort and convenience of the individual pedestrian, but also in terms of community benefits to commercial economics, alternative transportation, energy savings and carbon reduction, and visual aesthetics. Recently, a correlation has also been strengthened by the public health community that links disease prevention with the level of simple physical activity associated with walking.

The *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* need to better reflect the importance of improving the public streetscape, consistent with the community's input, growing public health awareness, and the City's recently-adopted *Pedestrian Master Plan*. All future site development should be designed within the context of adjacent buildings, open space, creeks, and adjoining neighborhoods to encourage safe, comfortable and inviting pedestrian places and connections. As sites redevelop or additions are made to existing development, site plans should be reviewed by staff and decision-makers for conformance with existing landscape requirements, Pedestrian Master Plan provisions, and the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*, as amended.

**Summary Direction:
Improve the public streetscape and
adjacent pedestrian connections.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC STREETScape

1. **Development Design.** Encourage pedestrian activity with site layout and building design. Consider building entrances and outdoor activity spaces that can create a lively, pedestrian-friendly environment along the street. When sites are redeveloped, the site plan should incorporate pedestrian amenities such as landscaping, plazas, paseos, fountains, furniture, lighting, trash receptacles, etc.
2. **Parking Placement.** Encourage parking lots behind or next to buildings and provide building entrances that are inviting from the street. Parking may be considered for placement in the front of buildings if necessary to provide for protection of mountain views or public viewing locations. These trade-offs need to be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis when reviewing site plans.
3. **Landscaping.** Incorporate landscaping at building frontages to improve the pedestrian environment aesthetically and in parking lots to help screen automobiles and provide shade.
4. **Pedestrian Buffers.** Buffer pedestrian facilities from automobiles, particularly where cars line commercial development and overhang the sidewalk.
5. **Paseo Connections.** Look for opportunities to make paseo connections between retail centers and neighborhoods while considering public safety and maintenance issues.
6. **Street Trees.** Update the existing City Street Tree Master Plan along the corridor to identify appropriate street tree species to minimize impacts on pedestrians with respect to pedestrian facilities, safety, maintenance, and aesthetics.



Sidewalk Standards. As projects redevelop, non-conforming sidewalks shall be replaced consistent with the Pedestrian Master Plan standards.

7. **Sidewalk In-Fill.** The City should consider all opportunities to fill in missing sidewalk gaps.

Implementation

1. Reaffirm and enforce the existing landscape requirements for planting along street frontages and interior and perimeter areas.
2. Amend the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* to incorporate items 1-6 above.
3. Consider whether to include sidewalk improvements in this area as a discrete capital improvement program. (See Section IV discussion of capital improvement program.)

Mountain Views

Existing Conditions

The Upper State Street area is distinguished by scenic views of the Santa Ynez mountain range to the north, an important community asset. Generally, the views of the mountains are seen while traveling eastbound on State Street, with the most expansive views occurring at street intersections. Building setbacks, parking lots and creeks also provide opportunities for views. On the north side of the street, parking lots, and driveways located in the front and along the sides of buildings provide mountain view corridors. On the south side of the street, surface parking lots at the major shopping centers offer unobstructed mountain views as you enter and exit buildings or parked cars. MacKenzie Park also provides an opportunity for unobstructed views as one looks up Calle Palo Colorado.

There are many older one-story buildings, particularly in the central and eastern subarea, that could be redeveloped as two- or three-story buildings over time. The height limits allowed in the S-D-2 zone are three stories not exceeding 45 feet, and not exceeding the total floor area of a two-story building (30 feet) that could be constructed on the lot in compliance with all applicable regulations. The existing S-D-2 building height limits are the most stringent of any of the commercial zones of the city.

Public Input

There was widespread agreement that this area is characterized with beautiful views of the mountains that should be protected. Some of the community suggested protecting the views with lower or stepped-back buildings along the north side of the corridor. There is recognition that views are predominant at the street intersections, but that creating view corridors throughout the study area should also be pursued. The public supported that project proponents and decision-makers carefully consider opportunities for view corridors and viewing areas when siting new development.

Discussion

Currently, the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* do not speak directly to the importance of maintaining or finding opportunities for view corridors when redevelopment occurs in this area. Limiting the height of buildings on the north side of the street to two stories is not being recommended, as this would in effect down-zone those parcels and result in a substantial loss of property value. Given the variation in parcel sizes and depths in the area, a more flexible design approach is recommended, working within existing height limit standards to allow for the creation of view corridors on a case-by-case basis. Buildings can be appropriately sited and designed to explicitly frame existing views of the mountains or create new views corridors.

One recommendation is to amend the S-D-2 Ordinance so that the first story of a building requires a 10-foot building setback while any second and third stories would require a 20-foot building setback. This change could help to provide mountain views on some sights. For more discussion on this change please refer to the setback discussion below.

Currently in the S-D-2 zone, allowing a third story is related to the size of a two-story building, as described above. When this standard was written, it did not account for projects with underground parking, and assumed that the size of development would be more limited because of site area taken up by parking and setbacks. As such, on sites where underground parking may now be proposed, a three-story building could in fact be more feasible, not less feasible. Because there is a high probability that we will see three-story building proposals, additional scrutiny is needed for those buildings on the north side due to the potential for loss of mountain views, as well as neighborhood compatibility concerns. Therefore, another recommendation is that special findings be specified in both the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* and the S-D-2 Zone when approving a three-story building. (See also Building Size recommendations).

Summary Direction:
Maintain or establish mountain view corridors and viewing locations wherever feasible.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOUNTAIN VIEWS

1. **Building Height Limits.** Retain and enforce current height limits for buildings in the S-D-2 zone with special findings for three-story buildings. The findings would provide that a three-story building can only be supported in the event that a development proposal has important trade-offs or provides important community benefits such as preservation or creation mountain views, provision of creek buffers, enhanced pedestrian streetscape amenities, placement of parking underground in combination with substantial open space, or other improved design features identified in the amended *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*.
2. **View Corridors.** Existing view corridors should be protected or new view corridors created when siting new buildings, parking and streetscapes.
3. **Step Buildings.** Encourage developments to step second and third floor stories back to allow views to the north.
4. **Intersection Views.** Consider the preservation of views at corners that intersect with State Street. Corner buildings at intersections can be designed to preserve or minimize the change in the existing views.
5. **Parking Placement.** Parking in front of buildings along the north or south side of State Street could be supported if the design allows for preserving view corridors on the north or viewing locations on the south, and is designed to provide visual screening with landscaping or other features.



6. **Viewing Locations.** Redevelopment of parking lots on the south side of State Street must consider lost opportunities for views to the north.
7. **Landscaping and Trees.** Consideration shall be given to landscaping plans so that views are framed but not substantially blocked by vegetation.

Implementation

1. Incorporate view preservation recommendations 1-7 above into the existing *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*.
2. Amend the S-D-2 Zone to incorporate special findings for three-story buildings.

Open Space

Existing Conditions

The amount of open space varies along the corridor. Large intersections with expansive views of the mountains give an overall sense of openness. Some of the larger buildings along the western subarea limit this feeling of openness. Landscaping and green spaces vary within the built environment. Some sites have landscaping between the sidewalk and the structure, and others do not. Generally, as one travels the western end of the corridor, the large amount of street paving, the expansive front parking and landscaped areas, and deep building setbacks, give the area a "campus" office park feel. In the east subarea, McKenzie Park is a significant open space.

Public Input

The public expressed a desire for more open space throughout the corridor. They generally supported pocket parks, open areas within development proposals, active edges with pedestrian access, landscaped buffers between cars on the street, and between parking areas and pedestrians, and more landscaped medians to separate rows of traffic.

Discussion

Open green spaces help promote physical activity, improve water and air quality, maintain view corridors, provide relaxation, and enhance overall vitality and visual aesthetics. This is an area where private development can incrementally create more open space as sites redevelop. There may also be opportunities over time for the City, either alone or in partnership, to improve or augment existing open green spaces and perhaps to pursue acquiring the Army Reserve site for additional public open space.

Summary Direction: Maintain, enhance and create open space wherever feasible.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPEN SPACE

1. **Open Spaces.** Create opportunities for private and public open spaces, including pocket parks and open spaces within redeveloped sites wherever feasible, and consider opportunities to establish the Army Reserve site for public open space.
2. **Plaza Elements.** Encourage plaza elements to establish street presence and a sense of open space. Emphasize inclusion of plazas, paseos, pedestrian resting areas, bulb-outs for bus waiting areas, etc. in development projects.

Implementation

1. Amend the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* to emphasize the importance of open space when siting new development.
2. As part of the larger General Plan Update process, consider inclusion of public parks along Upper State Street, particularly at La Cumbre and the Army Reserve site. Should redevelopment of either site be proposed in the interim, consider dedication of public park areas within the project.

Creeks

Existing Conditions

Both Arroyo Burro and San Roque Creeks cross underneath State Street between Hope Avenue and Ontare Road. A public trail is located adjacent to San Roque Creek and stretches from State Street (just west of the Hacienda Motel) to Hitchcock Way (just north of the medical clinic across from the YMCA parking lot). The trail area is generally clean and well maintained due to private efforts by neighbors, however it lacks signage, and thus public awareness, and is used by transients.

Generally, the creeks do not have a strong street presence as buildings have historically been developed adjacent and in front of the creeks such that the creeks are out of sight at the back of development or they have been separated from public access by parking lots. The creeks generally have deeply incised channels in this area due to urban encroachment over the years. Because the creeks lack area to move around, they tend to downcut in order to deal with large flows.

Public Input

The community considers creeks to be an important asset in this area and generally supports creating more public awareness of the creeks, including better street presence along State Street ("street presence" refers to measures that identify creek locations, not to "daylighting" of creeks to the surface). Public comments received generally support establishing creek buffers to serve as visual enhancements to the area and improve air and water quality and habitat, and they support considering creeks when orienting the site lay-outs of new development. They also support pedestrian connections along and to the creeks from State Street.

Discussion

Creating more creek identity, and siting developments to take advantage of the creek environment would benefit Upper State Street. Improving the creek environment also goes hand-in-hand with the community value of open and green spaces. Measures to provide for watershed planning, creek restoration, reduction in impervious surfaces, creek setbacks, etc. to improve the health, water quality, and habitat of creeks are citywide issues addressed through City programs such as Creeks Division programs and the *City Storm Water Management Plan*, and will be further considered through the General Plan Update. In the near-term, adding language to the existing *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* would provide guidance for the review of individual projects near creek areas.

**Summary Direction:
Protect and enhance San Roque and
Arroyo Burro Creeks.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CREEKS

1. **Creek Protection.** When reviewing individual site plans, look for every opportunity to restore creek areas, reduce impervious surfaces, and increase creek buffers and buildings setbacks from creeks.
2. **Development Orientation.** Orient redevelopment towards the creeks as well as toward State Street within the commercial/mixed use corridor (such as with outdoor dining areas, residential open spaces or balconies facing creeks, trail connections, and landscaped creek buffers) to better incorporate creeks as part of the landscape and public open space.
3. **Creekside Paths.** Encourage creek-side pedestrian paths within the commercial corridor where appropriate to improve circulation and increase connectivity to the commercial corridor.
4. **Street Presence.** Establish better street presence of creek locations on State Street as feasible, with measures such as pocket parks and signage to delineate creek location and public awareness of creeks, and to provide points of orientation along State Street.



Implementation

1. Incorporate recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*.
2. Add street signage to identify locations of the creeks to a capital improvement plan for this area.

Building Setbacks

Existing Conditions

The S-D-2 overlay zone requires that any proposed new buildings have a 10-foot or 20-foot front yard setback, depending on the height of the building. Currently, there is a large variation in setbacks from State Street by subarea, dependant in large part on the sizes and widths of individual parcels.

Public Input

Community opinion was split on whether setbacks should be increased, reduced, or kept to current standards. Some of the community expressed a preference for conformance with the current S-D-2 front yard setbacks (as shown in *Figure 6*) to allow for landscaping and pedestrian amenities between the buildings and the sidewalk. Some thought that setbacks should vary according to each subarea or unique site conditions. Others liked very large setbacks with the exception of the eastern sub-area, where reduced setbacks could be acceptable, as long as the buildings remained at one story in height.

Another group of the public prefers a more urban pattern with buildings at the edge of the sidewalk in order to provide a more inviting pedestrian experience and sense of safety. Others were concerned that the lack of adequate building setbacks would provide a "canyonization" effect along the corridor. One suggested option is to "step-back" any second or third stories of a building, which would require an amendment to the S-D-2 zone.

Upper State Street with Application of Existing and Recommended Development Standards

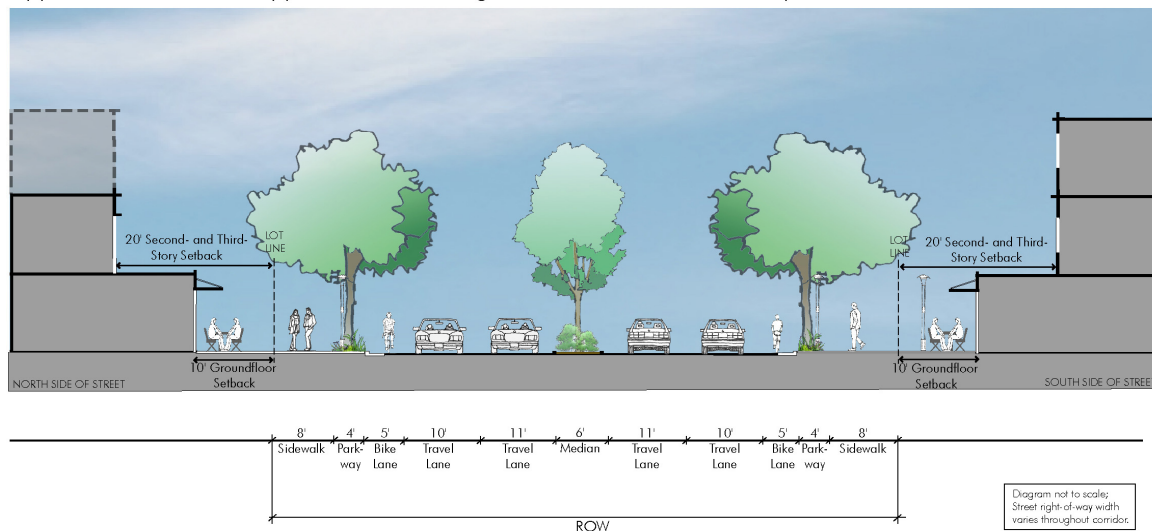


Figure 6 – Application of Existing and Recommended Development Standards

Discussion

The size and treatment of building setbacks can go a long way in meeting the goals of improving the Upper State Street design character and public streetscape and maintaining scenic views. Building setback areas from the street can provide character-defining and active space, view corridors, landscaping, and street furniture to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetics of the built environment.

Currently, if a building is proposed as two or three-stories, the entire building is required to be set back the entire 20 feet. The option of allowing the first story to have a 10-foot setback (consistent with the City one-story building standard) and then “stepping back” the second and third stories to the required 20-foot setback standard, addresses in part those who would like to strictly maintain existing standards and those who favor lesser setbacks.

Another consideration is that new dedications of between five and seven feet of property adjacent to the public right-of-way are necessary to meet current sidewalk/parkway standards as defined in the *Pedestrian Master Plan*. Thus, a ten foot setback for the first story portion could be found sufficient, given that the typical new sidewalk would be considerably greater (eight feet of pavement and a four-foot wide planter).

Some areas of the central and eastern subareas do have buildings at the edge of the sidewalk, which could be appropriate in the context of their location. However, there may be cases where small lots could merge and redevelop with larger buildings that would not be appropriate built right up to the sidewalk. Rather than creating individual zoning standards for each of the subareas, the current modification process can to be used for those small constrained sites when demonstrated that the proposed project is compatible within the context of the area and a community benefit is provided.

Any setback modification should be considered on a case-by-case basis per S-D-2 standards, and with consideration of subarea and block context, particular site circumstances (including lot size and depth, site lay-out and location of parking) and the provision of community benefits, including elements such as corridor character, view protection, and pedestrian amenities and connections.

Summary Direction:
Require any building setback variation to meet the S-D-2 findings, as amended.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING SETBACKS

1. **Building Setback Reductions.** To provide consistency of new development and blocks with the desired character of Upper State Street and its respective subareas, require a majority of the following elements as applicable for any proposed project with reduced setbacks in the S-D-2 zone:
 - Sidewalk improvements that meet Pedestrian Mater Plan standards;
 - Public/private green open space or courtyard;
 - Pedestrian and/or bicycle connections through the parcel;
 - A creek buffer and/or project orientation towards the creek;
 - One or more view corridors;
 - Parking at the side or back of the parcel;
 - An alley at the rear of the parcel.
2. **Stepped Back Building Design.** Amend the S-D-2 zone to allow the first story portion of a building that is 15 feet or less in height to be set back 10 feet while any second and third story portion is set back 20 feet.
3. **Eastern Subarea Setbacks.** Allow reduced setbacks of less than 10 feet for the first story portion of buildings 15 feet or less in height along the eastern subarea given the small lot sizes (assuming lots are not merged), historical development of the area, and ample sidewalks. Minimal setbacks could be allowed along the eastern subarea for one-story buildings as long as there is sufficient room for landscaping improvements along the front of the building.
4. **Setback Measurement.** Clarify that building setback standards are measured from the back of dedications for sidewalks or other public rights-of-way.
5. **Site Plan Variations.** Identify typical types of site plan lay-outs that are encouraged and discouraged.
6. **Building Dimensions and Spacing Requirements:** Identify maximum building depths and minimum space requirements between adjacent two- and three-story buildings.



Implementation

1. Incorporate setback recommendations 1-6 above into the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*.
2. Amend the S-D-2 Zone to incorporate a finding that modifications to development standards can only be supported in conjunction with substantial community benefits, e.g., preservation or creation of mountain views, creek buffers, enhanced pedestrian streetscape amenities, open space or to maximize the rear of the site for alley access and/or parking.
3. Amend the S-D-2 zone to allow the first story portion of a building that is 15 feet or less in height to be set back 10 feet while the second and third story portions are set back 20 feet.

Building Size

Existing Conditions

Upper State Street has a mix of one- to three-story buildings with a wide variation in size, mass, bulk, and scale. This variation affects how each building appears from passing cars as well as by pedestrians, and can affect views of the mountains, depending on where a structure is located or how much of the site is built out or up. The size and massing of buildings generally relate to the size of their respective parcels. The west subarea has some of the larger buildings while the eastern area has smaller one-story buildings, particularly along the northside where parcels are very small.

Public Input

There were differing opinions about whether this area of State Street should retain a lower-density “suburban” character or whether buildings should more urban, similar to buildings found in downtown State Street. Some concerns were expressed about potential “canyonization” by tall buildings and shadowing of adjacent residential neighborhoods. A number of commenters expressed a preference for a variety of building sizes, particularly by subarea. Others believe that there is room for two- and three-story buildings, particularly on the south, if pedestrian amenities are provided. There were also differing views on whether the older 1950s and 1960s buildings should be demolished, as some consider these to be outdated and underused.

Discussion

The existing design guidelines for the area currently speak to compatibility of architectural style with the surrounding neighborhood, and siting buildings so that their height, mass, and setback are in scale with adjacent buildings. As projects redevelop over time in this area, building mass and scale needs to be carefully considered relative to the overall character of Upper State Street as well as how the buildings fit into the context of the immediate block, subarea and surrounding neighborhood. Some of the recommendations for open space, landscaping and streetscape improvements will help soften the massing of buildings, however, the *Design Guidelines* could be strengthened to better convey these design directions. As recommended above, a finding of consistency with the guidelines by decision-makers should be required when they approve new development. Similar special findings should be made for those buildings on the north side of the corridor

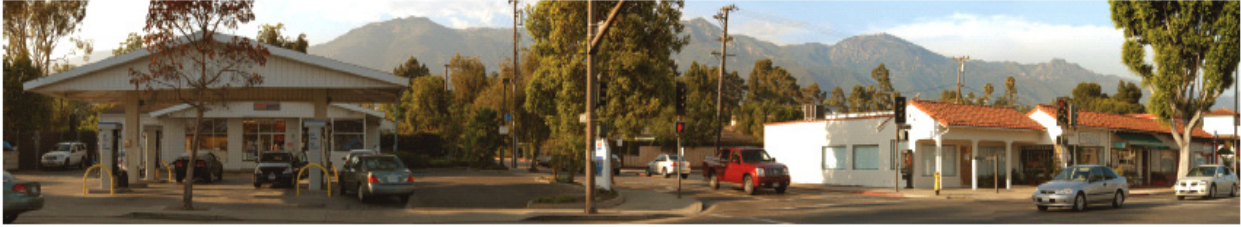
Summary Direction: **Encourage variation of building sizes and require the height, bulk, mass and scale of buildings to be compatible within the context of respective blocks and subareas, proportional to parcel size, and consistent with the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines*, as amended.**

Recommendations for Building Size

1. **Compatibility Findings.** Strengthen and enforce specific provisions within the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* that development be carefully considered and found compatible in the context of the blocks, subareas and adjacent neighborhoods.
2. **Form-Based Guidelines.** Form-based guidelines provide direction for the form and scale of development by addressing the relationship between building facades and public spaces, and the form and mass of buildings in relationship to one another. Consider the use of form-based guidelines to clarify specific maximum street wall heights and building setbacks for specific subareas, including examples of mixed use or commercial designs where courtyards are proposed and parking is located underground.
3. **Taller Buildings.** Identify characteristics where taller buildings can be appropriate for a site and specific criteria for their evaluation. Criteria should include the scale, proportion and character of existing development within the surrounding subarea.

Implementation

Amend the Neighborhood Compatibility section of the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* to incorporate specific consideration of the context of the surrounding blocks and subarea.



Ontare Road and State Street Intersection

IV. TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Vehicle traffic, circulation and safety, including transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation and connectivity, and vehicle parking are all inter-related elements of the Upper State Street transportation system. Following is summary information about existing conditions, public comment, discussion of issues, and improvement recommendations.

The recommended improvements summarized in this section were identified by Meyer, Mohaddes Associates (MMA) and the community, and are characterized as near-term improvements that would address traffic, circulation, safety, connectivity, and parking issues within the Upper State Street corridor character, through redevelopment opportunities, City and MTD transportation programs, and public/private partnerships. These near-term transportation improvements are depicted on *Figure 4*, the summary diagram for Transportation Improvements. Further descriptions and concept design figures by MMA for individual improvements are included in *Appendix D*.

Just as the major intersections of the corridor are reaching or at the City's threshold for congestion levels of service during peak travel periods, citizens also are feeling that the congestion levels of Upper State Street are impacting the quality of life in Santa Barbara. Improved future access and circulation on Upper State Street will require near- and long-term facility improvements for all modes of travel. The recommendations presented below can work in conjunction with other elements of planning for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the use, travel, and experience in this public space.

Traffic Signal/ Intersection Level of Service Improvements

Existing Conditions

Upper State Street is the main east-west surface street corridor in the northwest section of the City, and a transportation link between downtown Santa Barbara and the Goleta Valley. Because the road network never developed with a "grid" pattern, there are few alternative routes, and the corridor therefore has substantially lower capacity for carrying vehicle trips (between 14,000 – 32,000 average daily trips [ADT] capacity in various stretches of Upper State Street), compared to a similar distance within a grid pattern of multiple streets that might typically carry 140,000 ADT.

In the 1970s and 80s, traffic congestion levels at peak travel times were worse than current levels. Following the City's establishment of the S-D-2 zone standards and traffic impact fees in 1979, numerous roadway improvements were completed in the area that benefited circulation and automobile traffic. The Highway 101 widening in 1989 also diverted substantial traffic from Upper State Street. These highway and local roadway improvements, as well as SD-2 zoning standards and Measure E limitations on commercial development, resulted in substantial improvements to traffic levels on Upper State Street, and the traffic impact fee was discontinued in 1994 when most of the work was completed.

Since that time, traffic levels along Upper State Street have gradually increased due to incremental growth within the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods, and in the South Coast region as a whole, and with increasing numbers of vehicles per household. The MMA traffic analysis (February 2007) shows that most intersections within the corridor presently remain better than the City's adopted Level of Service C policy standard for maximum acceptable traffic congestion levels during peak travel times (.77 volume/ capacity), with the exception of two intersections: Las Positas Road at State Street; and Las Positas Road at Calle Real. Other intersections approaching the City's congestion level standard are the State Street intersections with La Cumbre Road, Hope Avenue, and Hitchcock Way.

Public Input

Public opinions differ about the extent of present traffic congestion problems on Upper State Street. Concerns have been expressed about the potential for future traffic increases associated with new development. Many recognized the continuing dominant role for vehicle traffic in the corridor in its role as a connecting link to the freeways, an alternate east-west route connecting downtown Santa Barbara and the Goleta Valley, and a primary commercial destination. Most comments supported roadway network improvements that would facilitate vehicle traffic flow and improve safety.

Discussion

Potential future traffic levels for the corridor were also analyzed as part of the MMA study. Additional incremental traffic increases over time were assumed, which could result from increased intensity of use within existing commercial buildings, and from pending and approved residential and commercial development projects. The future cumulative traffic forecast showed the potential for peak-hour traffic levels to exceed the City congestion standard at the State Street intersections with Hitchcock Way and Las Positas/San Roque Roads, and the Calle Real/ Las Positas intersection. Intersections identified as potentially nearing the City standard with future cumulative traffic include State/Hope, and Calle Real/ Highway 101 Northbound On-Ramp.

The analysis also showed that with implementation of near-term improvements identified in the following recommendations, future cumulative traffic levels at these intersections would be better than the City congestion standard (See MMA February 2007 Report for further discussion).

In addition, Upper State Street congestion levels are intrinsically related to the congestion levels on the paralleling Highway 101. When freeway congestion levels drop to stop-and-go conditions, traffic diverts to Upper State Street. This condition heavily burdens the street with very poor to failing levels of service that are worse than the typical conditions analyzed in this report. Although currently infrequent, this condition will occur more often over time if freeway congestion generally worsens. The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments is currently estimating continuous failing conditions for Highway 101 in 2030 if no improvements are constructed, such as additional lanes.

Summary Direction: Maintain or improve vehicle traffic flow and intersection service levels along Upper State Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAFFIC SIGNAL/ INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The following physical improvements and operational management measures were identified by traffic consultants Meyer, Mohaddes Associates (MMA) and the City Transportation Division to facilitate vehicle traffic flow within the corridor. These near-term improvements can improve the intersection service levels in the Upper State Street corridor.

1. Signal Phasing Modifications

The addition of right-turn arrow overlap phasing during left-turning phases is recommended at several intersections in the study area. For locations with existing and projected future high volumes of right turns, right turn arrows for some approaches could reduce the intersection volume-to-capacity ratio and improve congestion. The right-turn overlap provides an illuminated right-turn arrow during signal phases when the right-turning vehicle would have a protected period to turn. An example is currently at the State Street/ U.S. 101 off-ramp/Calle Real intersection, traveling westbound. The MMA cumulative traffic analysis indicates substantial service level improvement would result at intersection locations where this signal change is recommended.

Right-turn phasing modifications are recommended at the following intersections: (See *Figure 4* and *Appendix D - MMA Concept Design Figure and Description*)

- Highway 154/ Calle Real (Include LOS change for each)
- Highway 101 Northbound Off-Ramp/ State Street
- La Cumbre Road/ State Street
- Las Positas Road-San Roque Road/ State Street
- La Cumbre Road/ Calle Real
- Las Positas Road/ Calle Real

Right-turn signal phasing at these six locations can be implemented at relatively low cost with minimal construction.

2. **Traffic Signal at McCaw/ Las Positas**

Residents in adjacent neighborhoods reported that they experience a substantial amount of delay attempting to turn to and from McCaw Avenue at Las Positas Road during peak travel times, and that to avoid this delay, they use alternative routes via State Street to access local streets in the area. These added trips to State Street would largely be moved back to this nearby intersection with the installation of a traffic signal. In addition, a signal at this intersection would provide a controlled access point for MacKenzie Park, and, if a future pedestrian bicycle route were developed along McCaw Avenue, a traffic signal would provide a controlled crossing point for non-motorized traffic across Las Positas Road. (See Appendix D, MMA Concept Design Figure and Description)

3. **Traffic Volume Monitoring**

The City Transportation Division is proceeding with a program of regular, periodic traffic volume counts on roadways throughout the City, including the Upper State Street corridor. This will assist in coordinating traffic management with adjacent jurisdictions, identifying problem areas, reviewing development applications for traffic effects, and assessing the effectiveness of physical improvements and operational changes to the road network. The Transportation Division is scheduling yearly counts of the Upper State Street corridor. These counts will be included in a count data base in the form of a count booklet. Count trends will be monitored in coordination with other relevant data (i.e., freeway congestion, and the economy).

3. **Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)**

The use of ITS traffic control measures, such as electronic message signs, connection to the Caltrans regional monitoring system, and signal timing that adapts to traffic levels, assists in managing traffic flow and system efficiency. Upper State Street has ten City-controlled traffic signals that use an ITS system (called QuickNet) for adjustable signal timing. These signals are interconnected and controlled from a traffic control center and computer located at 630 Garden Street. The signals also have video detection at each intersection. The City Transportation Division has a continuing program to refine equipment and operational parameters to improve system performance remotely in real time as the demands of the corridor evolve.

Implementation

1. **Private development projects funding**

The traffic signal improvement projects could be implemented by individual developments as mitigation for project-specific or cumulative traffic impacts. Traffic fees could also be identified as a potential funding source.

2. **City capital improvements program**

The traffic signal improvements could be included and funded under the City Capital Improvement Program. Projects could be funded by a variety of funding sources.

3. ***City programs and operations***

Traffic monitoring and ITS programs are part of the ongoing City Transportation Operations programs. Expansions to the programs could require identification of additional funding and/or consultant services.

See also the Funding Sources discussion following the next set of identified improvements, and the discussion of development fees in Section V.

Mid-Block Congestion and Safety Improvements

Existing Conditions

The existing development pattern and circulation network in the Upper State Street corridor has multiple driveways, bus stops, and frequent spacing of intersections, traffic signals, and cross walks, which causes mid-block operational “friction” that contributes to both traffic congestion and traffic safety issues.

Public Input

Most public comments supported reducing mid-block friction by combining driveways to have fewer access points, providing more vehicle connections between adjacent properties within the commercial corridor; and identifying any alternative east-west vehicle routes, such as back alleys.

Discussion

In addition to intersection congestion, traffic congestion in the Upper State Street area is also attributable to mid-block stopping, starting, and slowing. This is a big component of the public perception of traffic congestion in the area.

Besides delaying vehicle progression, roadway friction associated with numerous driveways and frequent intersections also contributes to the potential for conflicts between vehicles, and between vehicles and buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians at driveways, crosswalks, and intersections, and during vehicle left turns.

East-west vehicle connections are discussed in Section V-Longer-Range Improvements.

Summary Direction:

Reduce access points to Upper State Street that conflict with through travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MID-BLOCK FRICTION AND CONGESTION IMPROVEMENTS

The following strategies have been shown to reduce mid-block friction and improve the traffic flow between signals. The primary goal is to minimize access points to the road that conflict with through travel.



1. ***Shared Driveway Access and Parking at Existing Development***

Shared access and parking can reduce the number of driveways to Upper State Street and pool parking supplies for more efficient use of space and parking capacities. A program could be developed for the City to promote shared access and parking facilities and arrangements by property owners and businesses within existing development. The City would assist in identifying locations conducive to retrofitting access and parking areas, provide informational materials, and work with interested property owners and businesses along

Upper State Street. The program might need to include financial incentives to motivate businesses to change current conditions.

2. **Access Management Guidelines**

Access management pertains to on-site circulation design of new developments that will maximize Upper State Street's ability to move people. General guidelines for promoting effective access management for new development along Upper State Street are recommended (see *Table 2*). Although most of the guidelines are near-term in relation to current and future developments, some guidelines, such as shared property access, may require longer-term efforts to encourage multiple property owners to cooperate together for their mutual benefit. The access management strategies could be incorporated into the Public Works standards and *Parking Design Guidelines*.

Table 2 - Recommended General Guidelines for Vehicle Access Management For the Upper State Street Corridor

(Meyer, Mohaddes Associates)

The following are general measures to promote effective access management. Given the historic and existing development pattern in Upper State Street, particular measures will not be feasible in various locations.

1. Require larger minimum lot frontages.
2. Adopt minimum driveway spacing distance standards.
3. Encourage joint and cross access, and consolidate access whenever separate parcels are assembled under one purpose, plan, entity or use, to increase average spacing between adjacent driveways.
4. Combine access to existing developments when adjacent owners can be persuaded to share joint-use driveways in lieu of separate driveways, to be located on the centerline between adjacent properties if feasible.
5. Attempt to achieve uniform spacing of driveways along the street as much as possible.
6. Require complete on-site circulation.
7. Promote activity centers rather than strip development.
8. Ensure design of adequate driveway throat length to avoid a conflict with the flow of off-site traffic, and provide adequate corner clearance.
9. Orient lots, buildings, and access points to local streets when feasible.

3. **Driveway Spacing Guidelines**

Reducing the number and frequency of driveways along State Street would reduce the "friction" of starting, stopping, and slowing by vehicles and thereby reduce potential conflicts and improve mid-block through traffic flow. General guidelines for driveway spacing distances for new development along Upper State Street are recommended (see *Table 3*). There are many variables involved in determining driveway spacing distances for new redevelopment, including the unique characteristics of each block along Upper State Street, the type and size

of future developments, proximity to signalized or stop-controlled intersections, presence or absence of parking, presence or absence of a median or not, proximity to other driveways, collision history on the block, type of driveway design, land uses to be served, and projected traffic volume of the driveway, etc.

New guidelines will need to be flexible given the existing land use and development patterns, lot frontage sizes, and other characteristics of the study area. Over time, incremental changes to reduce the number of driveways, create more uniform spacing, minimize conflicts points with through traffic, move driveways away from intersections, and consolidate parcels will benefit traffic flow, reduce delay, and improve safety.

The Circulation Element of the General Plan currently states that driveways should be minimized in width and number. Staff has directed applicants of new developments on this and other City streets to minimize and consolidate driveway access to reduce pedestrian conflicts and to benefit traffic flow on adjacent streets. This effort and practice will continue under current policy and can also be incorporated into the Public Works standards and *Parking Design Guidelines*.

**Table 3 - Recommended General Driveway Spacing Guidelines
for the Upper State Street Corridor**
(Meyer, Mohaddes Associates)

The process of determining appropriate driveway spacing involves case-by-case review and coordination with City Transportation Division staff. Following are general guidelines:

1. Minimum driveway spacing of 440 feet apart for new redevelopment is desired if feasible given existing development patterns. Where necessary based on special land use patterns and access requirements that cannot otherwise be met, a minimum driveway spacing distance of 220 feet may be considered.
2. Locate driveways at median openings or offset from median openings by at least 150 feet.
3. The centerline of a single driveway shared by two adjacent properties should be located on the joint property line.
4. Corner clearance near intersections will vary depending on specific characteristics, but allow a minimum of 220 feet for driveways on the far side of the intersection (intersection departure area), but attempt to locate the driveway beyond the endpoint of the intersection turning lanes. In such cases, the corner clearance will likely be at least 200 to 300 feet or more if the turn lanes are longer.
5. Where there is a raised median, locate the near side (approach side) driveway no less than 110 feet from the intersection.
6. Where there is not a raised median, locate the near side driveway at least 220 feet from the intersection.
7. Limit all new access to one driveway per property, except where properties exceed 300 feet in frontage, in which case allow two driveways as needed based on site design.
8. Recognize that access for parcels that cannot conform to the spacing criteria may be necessary when no alternative reasonable access is available. The basis for exceptions or variances should be identified in the guidelines.

4. ***Additional Raised Medians***

This improvement would add sections of raised median along State Street to reduce the number of mid-block conflict points between through- and turning-traffic on State Street, and thereby assist in improving through-traffic flow. Medians limit access to driveways and therefore reduce mid-block conflicts of through and turning vehicles. The locations where medians are proposed for consideration include sections of State Street with higher numbers of accidents in recent years, and/or where the close spacing and location of driveways contributes to vehicle slowing along State Street.



Adding the raised medians would smooth mid-block traffic flow and reduce vehicle collisions caused by mid-block left turns, however the change would also affect access and emergency response. Eliminating the possibility of mid-block turns may concern local business and frustrate motorists who wish to access these businesses. Alternative access with the medians in place would require U-turns at additional intersections or trip planning that changes travel patterns. This change would slightly lower the level of service at signalized intersections, and may be incompatible with right-turn overlap phasing.

Additionally, creating more raised medians would affect emergency responders' ease of access to specific locations, also requiring U-turns or variations of approaching sites. Emergency responders will not be able to immediately avoid and pass congestion as commonly occurs with the use of both sides of a street (driving on the other side of the street). Raised medians may also limit the use of the street for detours around episodic emergencies or temporary construction conditions that require use of the street to work or respond to an emergency.

Despite these negative aspects, MMA recommends adding the medians in certain locations while retaining access in the middle of the blocks. While some business may oppose the medians at first, experience in other communities show that the added landscape, improved aesthetics, and the improved overall traffic flow tend to win out over initial concerns. One proposed median location in the 3900 block of State Street should be done to address a mid-block safety concern and collision history. The installation of medians will improve the overall vehicle safety of the street by reducing turning conflicts.

The following blocks were identified as locations where additional raised medians would be beneficial to improving the flow of through traffic, and are presented for consideration (*See Appendix D, MMA Concept Design Figures and Descriptions*):

- Between Highway 101 Northbound Off-Ramp and La Cumbre Road
- Between Hitchcock Way and Ontare Road
- Between Ontare Road and Toyon Drive.

If proposed, implementation and construction of the medians could be included in a future capital improvement project or as a part of a business improvement district.

Implementation

1. ***Private development projects funding***

Any of the individual capital improvement projects noted above could be implemented by individual developments as mitigation for project-specific or cumulative traffic impacts. Private developments could also participate voluntarily to construct specific capital improvements that in the developer's view would benefit the project site. Traffic fees could also be identified as a potential funding source.

2. ***Development standards***

Guidelines for site access, circulation, and driveway spacing could be folded into the Public Works Standards, and the Parking Design Guidelines. This effort would require consultant services or a budgeted in-house work effort.

3. ***City capital improvements program***

All of the identified capital improvements could be included and funded under the City Capital Improvement Program. Intersection and median improvements can be phased as single capital improvement projects or constructed for the entire district as a part of a larger improvement effort. Projects could be funded by a variety of funding sources (see below).

4. ***City programs and operations***

The effort to assist with shared access and parking is programmatic and would require funding for consultant services and incentives to motivate business owners to participate in prospective agreements. Funding for such an effort is likely limited to the most flexible of monies, such as Measure D or General Fund. If a Business Improvement District (BID) is formed for the area, this effort could be a self-funded improvement.

5. ***Public/private partnerships***

Public/private partnerships could be developed if embraced by a majority of the business and land owners within the district. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be established to create a funding mechanism for a predetermined expenditure plan of projects. This would be similar to the parking assessment district currently in place Downtown. BIDs can also provide seed money for government funding sources that can supplement assessed funds. A BID has the potential of funding all or a majority of the improvements recommended in this report.

Funding Sources

1. **Local sources**

Development Fees. Development mitigation fees, or traffic impact fees are common in other areas that have steady flow of commercial growth. Traffic impact fees are determined by dividing the total cost of the improvements in a district by the anticipated increase in traffic trips (usually based on the PM peak-hour levels of traffic). As development is proposed within the district, the developer pays the per trip fee. The fees are then used to fund improvements or pay back the debt service on the improvements that are under construction or have been constructed.

This approach would not work in Santa Barbara and the Upper State Street area because the goal is to reduce traffic trips, not increase them. Most land developments are replacing existing buildings and are not resulting in substantial increases to the number of traffic trips generated from the site, if any. Additionally, Santa Barbara's commercial growth is limited by Measure E and is too small to amass the required funds soon enough. The City would need to fund the projects upfront and use traffic fees as a means of mitigation without expectation of recovering the full cost of the improvements.

Project-specific mitigation. Any of the individual capital improvement projects noted above could be implemented by individual developments as mitigation for project-specific or cumulative traffic impacts. The list of improvements and related benefits can be used as a menu for development proposals to offset any impact caused by generating additional trips, however few.

Business Improvement District. Public/private partnerships could be developed if embraced by a majority of the business and land owners within the district. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be established to create a funding mechanism for a predetermined expenditure plan of projects. This would be similar to the parking assessment district currently in place Downtown. BIDs can also be seed money for government funding sources that can supplement assessed funds. A BID has the potential to fund all or a majority of the improvements recommended in this report.

2. **Other Funding Sources**

Other funding sources available to the city include the following:

- Measure D
- Traffic Congestion Relief Programs
- Surface Transportation Program
- State Gas Tax and Motor Vehicle Subventions
- Transportation Enhancement Activities
- Safe Routes to School

Pedestrian/Bicycle Facility Improvements

Existing Conditions

Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are present in the Upper State Street corridor, including sidewalks in most areas, and striped on-road bike lanes along both sides of State Street. There is also an off-street public trail adjacent San Roque Creek from State Street west of Ontare Road to Hitchcock Way south of State Street. Because of the commercial nature of the street and the heavy transit use, sidewalks are well-used. The Upper State Street corridor serves as a major bicycle corridor and route to and from Downtown and the adjacent residential communities.

Public Input

Public comments generally supported standardizing and improving the quality of sidewalks, bus stops, and bicycle facilities, which would also lessen potential conflicts with vehicles and thereby improve safety.

There was tremendous community support expressed for improving pedestrian links within the commercial corridor, and between the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods, including routes across commercial properties. A parallel path to State Street was envisioned along the southerly edge of the corridor.

Discussion

Some existing pedestrian facilities are not “pedestrian friendly”, including sidewalks with inconsistent or inadequate widths, materials, or maintenance conditions; lack of a pedestrian buffer from the busy street; and sidewalk obstructions such as poles, signs, and utility boxes. The Pedestrian Master Plan identifies standards for Upper State Street including a standard furnishing zone (parkway), through way (sidewalk widths), and frontage zone (space between sidewalk and buildings).

Pedestrian routes across commercial sites from parking areas to buildings are not separated from auto traffic in many areas. Intersection crossings for pedestrians could also use enhancing to make the experience feel more inviting and safe. Some bus stop facilities with bus pockets out of the traffic lanes intrude into the sidewalk space. The quality of private bicycle parking is low throughout the corridor.

The existing circulation network could be improved to provide better connections for both pedestrians and vehicles between adjacent commercial properties within the corridor, and between the commercial corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

Summary Direction:

Improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the corridor, and increase connectivity between parcels and between the commercial corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS1. ***Pedestrian/Bike Route***

The route would provide an alternative to State Street for pedestrians and cyclists wanting to travel between the Five Points and MacKenzie Park areas south of State Street. The route would also provide non-motorized access between several neighborhoods primarily connected via vehicles. (See *Figure 9*, Summary Diagram of Transportation Recommendations)

The route would use largely existing roadways and sidewalks, connecting a few gaps. Route improvements would include new sidewalks, creekside trail improvements, street crossings, signage, and a stoplight at McCaw Avenue and Las Positas Road (see item 5).

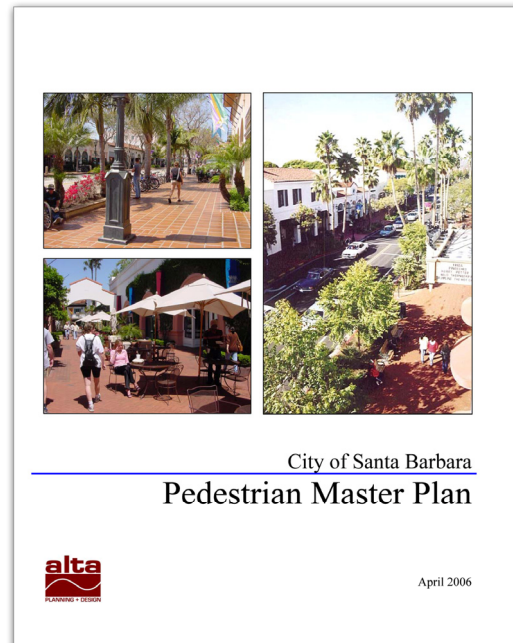
2. ***Pedestrian Connections***

It is recommended that development guidelines for the Upper State Street area promote the improvement of sidewalk connections along cross streets and the establishment of more paseos connections through parcels, to increase pedestrian connectivity throughout the corridor as parcels are redeveloped. Long-term operation and maintenance agreements should be established with the development of paseos to ensure that paseos are available to the public on a long-term basis.

Figure 2 identifies recommended locations for sidewalk improvements, and blocks where new mid-block pedestrian paseos would improve connectivity.

3. ***Relocate State Street/ Calle Palo Colorado Crosswalk***

Relocating the existing north-south crosswalk across State near the intersection with Calle Palo Colorado from the west side of the intersection to the east side addresses traffic and pedestrian safety and would benefit the flow of traffic. The relocated crosswalk would take advantage of the existing median area to create a pedestrian refuge area, and the access ramps to the crosswalk would be relocated and modified to provide access compliant with current American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Visibility for pedestrians would be increased through upgraded lighting, and pedestrian signage. (See *Appendix D, MMA Concept Design Figure and Description*)



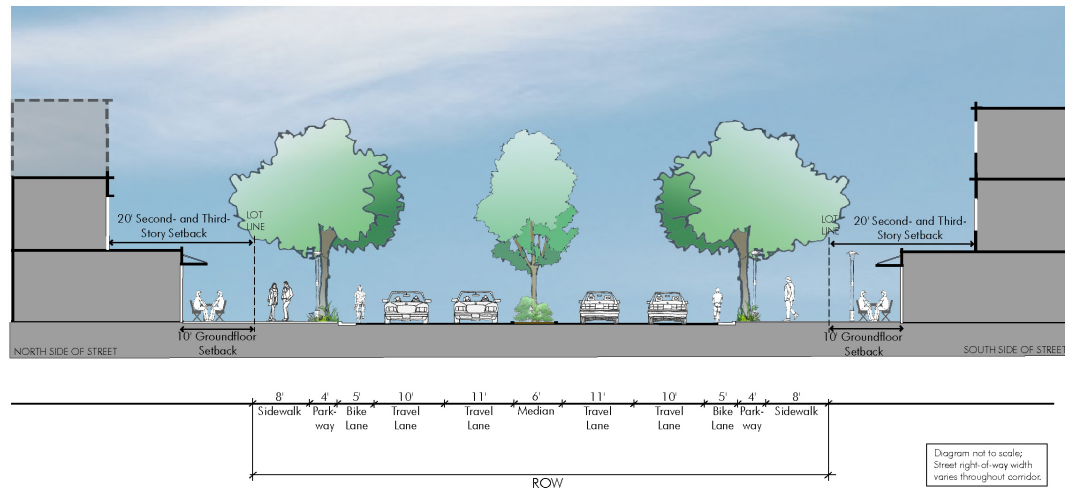
4. **Reconfigure State Street/ De la Vina Street Intersection**

De la Vina Street provides a main route to and from the downtown area. The current intersection configuration with its eastbound free-right turn for vehicles has the potential for conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists traveling eastbound on State Street. This improvement would modify the intersection to remove the vehicle eastbound free-right turn, and provide signal control for all crosswalks at the intersection, to address traffic and pedestrian/ bicyclist safety. The proposed change would allow the intersection to more closely resemble a "standard" intersection and operate in a more coordinated manner as part of the Upper State Street corridor. The Meyer, Mohaddes Associates analysis shows that the improvement would have only an incremental effect (about 5%) on evening peak-hour traffic level of service, which would remain at Level of Service B. The City Transportation Division is proceeding with this improvement.

5. **Traffic Signal at McCaw/ Las Positas**

A signal at this intersection would provide a controlled access point for MacKenzie Park, and, if a future pedestrian bicycle route were developed along McCaw Avenue, a traffic signal would provide a controlled crossing point for non-motorized traffic across Las Positas Road. (See Appendix D, MMA Concept Design Figure and Description)

Upper State Street with Application of Existing and Recommended Development Standards



6. **Streetscape Improvements**

As identified in the adopted Pedestrian Master Plan, and also discussed in Section III, Urban Design Recommendations, the following streetscape improvements are recommended, which would benefit pedestrian circulation and traffic safety.

a. *Sidewalk Expansion Program*

As described in the Pedestrian Master Plan, the new standard of pedestrian space within the Upper State Street right of way is 12 feet from curb face to the property line. This space will provide 4 feet of parkway or buffer from vehicles. This area is called the *Furnishings Zone* and provides space for plantings, light poles, news racks, and benches. The *Through Way*, which is the sidewalk area that remains free of obstruction, is to be 8 feet. And finally, the *Frontage Zone* is a buffer space between buildings and the sidewalk edge, which can include commercial signs, merchandise display, seating, landscape and Placitas. The width of this space will vary depending on the type of land use, function, and size of the building.

Many parcels on the street do not have appropriate amount of space to accommodate these new standards. The City has and will continue to ask for these standards as feasible within the Land Development Process. A more proactive process for earlier implementation of consistent widths throughout the corridor would require financing and cooperation from property and business owners.

b. *Sidewalk Obstructions Relocation Program*

For locations with obstructions within sidewalks, a program is recommended to investigate opportunities with adjacent property owners to relocate benches and other obstructions off the sidewalks. As a part of the establishment of updated streetscape standards per the Pedestrian Master Plan (Pedestrian Design Guide standards) as part of the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* (see above and Section III), include design standards to keep obstructions within the furnishings Zone (such as utility poles and equipment boxes, newspaper racks, street signs, street trees, furniture, landscape walls, and landscaping).

c. *Bicycle Hitching Post Program*

Bicycle Hitching Posts are installed within the public right-of-way yearly by staff as a part of an on-going program to achieve the destination goals of the Bicycle Master Plan. Currently staff has focused efforts within the Downtown, but will eventually reach Upper State Street. Bicycle parking should be located adjacent to the commercial building entrances. The Upper State Street corridor has a number of locations where bicycle hitching posts in the right-of-way will be directly in front of commercial businesses. Hitching posts will not be located within the right-of-way in other locations where the front entrance is set back far away from the street. Private bicycle parking is more appropriate/convenient in these locations.

d. *Pedestrian-Attractive Intersections/Crosswalks Program*

A capital improvement program is recommended to reconstruct intersections and pedestrian crossing with materials to make the

intersection more attractive, as has been done for the Downtown State Street area. This program would also upgrade the intersections to meet the new accessibility standards. Reference should also be included in the updated streetscape standards per the Pedestrian Master Plan as part of the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* (see Section III).

e. *Street Tree Enhancements Program*

As part of updating streetscape standards per the Pedestrian Master Plan as part of the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* (see Section III), it is recommended to include standards for provision of more street trees and/or other landscaping within a parkway between the street and sidewalk to provide a buffer for pedestrians.

A program to remove and replace overgrown trees is also recommended. The trees would be replaced with trees of a size and function more appropriate to the corridor setting, with slender trunks, reasonable shade canopies, and root systems that will limit the amount of sidewalk damage to occur as the tree matures. Trees should be placed in tree grates to allow for future growth without significant damage to the pavement. Include in updated streetscape standards as part of the *Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines* (see Section III).

4. *Crossing Timers Program*

A program to install pedestrian countdown timers at Upper State Street intersections is recommended to provide additional information to pedestrians about remaining time to cross. Signal timing is set per common traffic engineering standards (MUTCD). Consideration could be given to increasing pedestrian crossing time, however, this would add to vehicle delays.

Implementation

1. *Streetscape Improvements*

The public streetscape improvements identified above can be implemented in three ways: project-by-project, as a comprehensive program, or a combination of the two. While the project-by-project approach is perhaps most practical in the short-term, a longer view has a number of benefits. Certainly, a comprehensive program would require more resources up-front to design, and could be costly in-terms of any associated land acquisition. The first phase of work would be a Public Works Department study of right-of-way locations and dedications.

However, once a design is complete, such an approach could potentially attract outside funding from a variety of sources, including individual projects. Other advantages include the analysis of short-term opportunities and phasing to take advantage of existing conditions. An example is on the north side of the east subarea, where the sidewalks are very wide and could easily accommodate a lush planter strip without any dedication of land. Street frontages along McKenzie Park, the Army reserve site, Loreto Plaza and La Cumbre are other examples.

2. Private development projects funding

Some capital improvement projects, frontage improvements, and on-site improvements can be implemented by individual developments. Private developments could also participate voluntarily to construct specific capital improvements that in the developer's view would benefit the project site.

3. Development standards

Guidelines for pedestrian and bicycle site access and circulation could be incorporated into the Access and Parking Design Guidelines. This effort would require consultant services or a budgeted in-house work effort.

4. City capital improvements program

All of the capital above identified capital improvements could be included and funded under the City's Capital Improvement Program. Intersection improvements can be phased as single capital improvement projects or constructed for the entire district as a part of a larger improvement effort.

5. City operations

The City currently actively funds a Bicycle Hitching Post Program. City staff also performs sidewalk maintenance. Some efforts to remove obstructions from the sidewalks could also be added to existing City programs with additional resources. Funding for such an effort is likely limited to the most flexible of monies, such as Measure D or General Fund. If a business improvement assessment district is formed for the district, this effort could be a self-funded improvement.

6. Public/private partnerships

Public/private partnerships could be developed if embraced by a majority of the business and land owners within the district. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be established to establish a funding mechanism for a predetermined expenditure plan of projects. This would be similar to the Parking Business Assessment District currently in place Downtown. BIDs can also be seed money for government funding sources that can supplement assessed funds. A BID has the potential of funding all or a majority of the improvements recommended in this report. Projects that improve the look, feel, and function of the street would be appropriate for BID funds.

Transit Facility Improvements

Existing Conditions

Upper State Street serves an important role as a major transit corridor, connecting Goleta and Santa Barbara with multiple transit lines (See *Figure 8* below). Lines 6 and 11 using Upper State Street are the second most travelled Metropolitan Transit District bus routes. MTD is currently improving frequency of service on lines serving the corridor, with existing peak-hour service having buses traveling every 10 minutes.

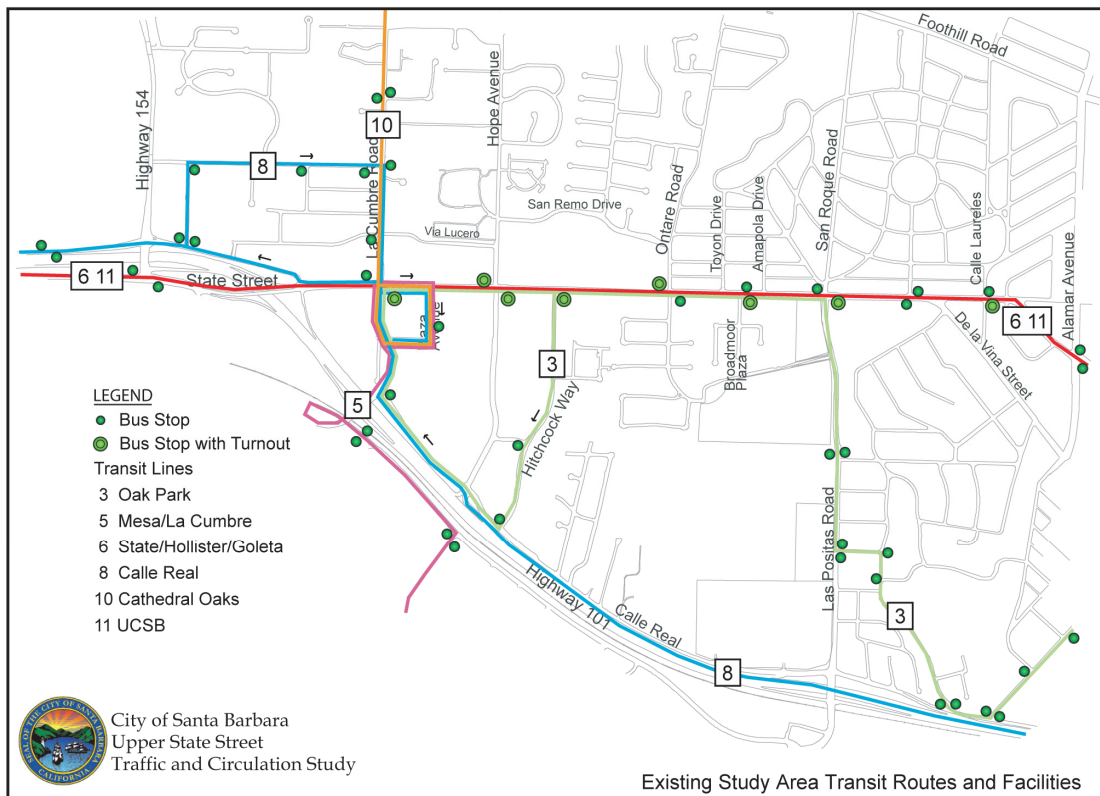


Figure 8 - Transit Lines

Public Input

Comments were received supporting improvements to bus service, and the establishment of a shuttle system. (Shuttle system discussed in Section V).

Discussion

MTD ridership through the Upper State Street corridor has important implications for traffic congestion. Lines 6 and 11 are the backbone routes connecting the commercial districts of the South Coast between Santa Barbara and Goleta. MTD carries 5,000 riders on an average weekday and nearly 1.3 million passengers annually on these lines. MTD bus service plays a significant role in preserving the vehicle capacity of the street by reducing the number of vehicle trips on the street.

Improvements to bus stops, bus turn-outs, and rider information can help reduce through-traffic friction and provide incentives to increase bus ridership.

**Summary Direction:
Improve transit facilities and service, and encourage increased ridership.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSIT FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

1. ***Increase Bus Service***

The most effective way to improve transit service and increase ridership is to provide more frequent bus service. The City is currently participating in a Transit Enhancement Program with the City of Goleta and Santa Barbara County to increase the frequency of Lines 6 and 11 to every 10 minutes during the peak travel periods. This ongoing increase in bus service will reduce crowded bus conditions and will attract riders that need more frequent bus service in order to make the bus an attractive option.



While providing free bus passes seems like it too would increase ridership, this is not always the case. Additionally, because the farebox recovery is only 40% on average, a free bus pass only pays for 40% of the ride and does not address crowding and more frequent service needs. Therefore, if land development projects are required to participate in funding transit, it is recommended that the added resource be invested in increased transit service rather than free bus passes.

2. ***Rider Information***

Waiting for the bus gets easier when you know exactly when the next bus will arrive. With the advent of global positioning satellites, *Next Bus* technology is available. "Real-time" rider information can be provided at bus kiosks within the corridor and online so that residents of the street can schedule departures around the individual bus schedules. This improvement to transit service will encourage more people to use transit and thereby assist in reducing vehicle usage and associated traffic congestion. MTD is the appropriate organization to provide this upgraded rider information.

3. ***Extend Signal Time for Buses***

To address traffic delays associated with buses, it is recommended that existing City traffic signals be modified, in coordination with MTD, to recognize an approaching bus and extend the duration of a green signal to allow the bus

through. This is different than giving priority for bus service in the corridor where traffic signals turn green as a bus approaches. Giving MTD buses priority signal adjustments would severely impact vehicle congestion levels by disrupting vehicle progression between traffic signal. While extending a green phase will not impact vehicle progression on State Street, it will reduce side street access for the individual traffic signal phased triggered by the bus approaching bus.

4. ***Relocate Bus Stops***

Relocating bus stops situated on the near side of traffic signals to the far side of traffic signals benefits the flow of vehicle through traffic. A program to work with MTD and property owners is recommended to relocate the bus stop westbound at the Century 21 building.

Also, as part of the land development projects and as MTD funding permits, bus stops can be moved off of sidewalks to improve pedestrian circulation. (see also streetscape improvements for removing sidewalk obstructions.)

5. ***Additional Bus Turnout Pockets***

Bus turnout pockets are currently located along a number of blocks of State Street in both the eastward and westward directions. Bus pockets reduce the amount of lane changing by vehicles attempting to pass stopped buses, and thereby improve through traffic flow and safety. A program to work with MTD and property owners to develop additional bus turnout pockets is recommended for the following locations:

State Street/ Ontare Road. The eastbound bus stop on the south side of State Street at Ontare Road has limited right-of-way to develop a bus turnout pocket and would need an additional 12 feet of right-of-way across the frontage of the car wash, and existing access drives for the car wash and hotel would need to be modified.

State Street/ Toyon Drive. A stand-alone westbound bus turnout pocket could be developed on the north side of State Street, or it could be extended to serve as a right-turn lane for westbound State Street traffic turning right at Toyon Drive. Additional right-of way

6. ***Bus Pull Out Right-of-Way***

One drawback to providing bus pockets for buses occurs as bus drivers attempt to merge back into traffic. A bus can be significantly delayed by long passing vehicle platoons that do not permit the bus to merge. A solution to this issue would require motorists to yield to a merging bus. This measure would require some changes to State traffic regulations, as this provision would not currently be permitted under the current California Vehicle Code. This approach is to give buses the right of way to pull out into traffic, in order to improve traffic flow and bus service on-time reliability.

Implementation

1. ***Bus Service***

Increasing bus service requires on-going funding. The newly implemented Transit Enhancements to increase peak hour bus frequencies is a good example of how this can be accomplished. Future increases will likely take a similar course of action.

2. ***Extending Signal Phasing***

Extended green time for buses approaching an intersection can be installed in cooperation with MTD. Each signal and bus will need added communication technology in combination with additional software and programming back at the traffic center at 630 Garden Street. Funding for this project can come from a high number of sources in the areas of congestion relief, transit improvement, and environmental sustainability. The City can include this project in as an individual capital improvement or as a parking of a package of projects jointly funded district wide.

3. ***Bus Turnouts***

Installing additional bus pockets will require right-of-way acquisition. In some cases, an existing building may also need to be moved. Some right-of-way can be obtained through the Land Development Process over time. Construction of the bus pockets can be funded privately, publicly or, as a partnership. Additionally, each bus pocket could be an individual capital improvement project or one element of a capital improvement program for the street or district. There is a wide variety of funding options for bus pockets.

4. ***Bus Pull-Out Right-Of-Way***

Adopting a new law to give MTD buses the right-of-way when pulling out of bus stops would require some changes to State traffic regulations, as this law would not currently be permitted under the current California Vehicle Code. Staff would likely need to pursue this option as a region to be effective. Any new law would apply to all bus stops in the City and not exclusively to Upper State Street.

Parking Improvements

Existing Conditions

Parking in the Upper State Street corridor is provided primarily as surface parking lots in conjunction with privately-owned commercial developments and shopping centers. Some on-street parking is provided in the eastern portion of the corridor, and along some cross streets. The Meyer, Mohaddes Associates analysis of existing parking conditions characterized the amount of parking to be generally adequate for the corridor overall, with a few locations experiencing constrained parking during peak periods. Parking-constrained locations in the corridor were found to be related mainly to parking operations, especially at mixed-use commercial sites with busy restaurants. Some smaller commercial sites on the eastern end of the corridor were also found to be constrained.

Public Input

Opinions differ about whether adequate parking currently exists, but there is substantial support for increasing shared parking and providing additional parking in more popular or congested areas and for new developments. Many comments expressed sensitivity to integrating parking into the overall design and functionality of the corridor. A number of commenters favored development of centralized parking structures in conjunction with a shuttle system to promote non-auto travel within the corridor. Some commenters supported underground parking reduce paved surface area and free up space for more landscaped open areas. Others questioned the feasibility and convenience of underground parking, centralized garages, and shuttles. The types, locations, and adequate quantity of parking facilities in the longer-term future are also issues of public concern.

Discussion

Every vehicle trip requires parking at its destination, so parking facilities are an integral component of the roadway system. Parking is one of the first experiences that people have when traveling to a destination. Convenient and affordable parking are considered a sign of welcome. Parking that is difficult to find, inadequate, inconvenient or expensive will commonly frustrate users and can contribute to spillover parking problems in other areas. As a result, inadequate parking supply can create problems to both users and nonusers.

Parking is also intrinsically related to transportation and other non-transportation issues. Parking facilities are expensive to construct, imposing financial costs on developers which are passed on to customers. Increasing parking facilities impose environmental costs associated with paved areas, and can contradict community development objectives for more livable and walkable communities. Abundant, unpriced parking tends to increase driving and discourage use of alternative modes.

The availability of parking has a direct influence on trip-making decisions. If parking is constrained at peak times, people may alter the time they make a trip, or avoid a vehicle trip altogether. Decisions to alter or eliminate vehicle trips will improve

congestion on Upper State Street, which is a primary goal of this effort, consistent with General Plan Circulation Element policies.

Summary Direction:

Develop parking policies and management strategies that help reduce Upper State Street congestion.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

1. *Public/ Private Parking Efficiency Management Program*

Field observations and parking occupancy surveys conducted as part of the Meyer, Mohaddes Associates Study indicate that parking is generally adequate overall across the Upper State corridor. However the most desirable and convenient parking locations of some lots reach near-full occupancy at peak periods, and are perceived by some users as deficient, especially at mixed commercial sites with busy restaurants, and smaller sites with constrained parking on the eastern end of the corridor. Generally, it appears that it is not an issue of parking demand exceeding supply, but that the access, circulation, and signage of parking lots are not adequately designed to accommodate the demand.

As part of the Shared Access and Parking Program discussed above, it is recommended to include work with employers and commercial businesses to improve efficiency of parking management by measures such as the following:

Shared Parking: This means that parking spaces are shared by more than one user, which allows parking facilities to be used more efficiently. Shared parking takes advantage of the fact that most parking spaces are only used part time by a particular motorist or group, and many parking facilities have a significant portion of unused spaces, with utilization patterns that follow predictable daily, weekly and annual cycles. Parking in the corridor should be shared to the greatest extent possible to maximize its use. Assigned parking spaces for commercial centers should be prohibited.

Employee Parking: Provide for employees to use remote parking and reduce the need for employee parking through the provision of Transportation Demand Management incentives that support carpooling and the use of alternative transportation.

Parking Pricing: This means that motorists pay directly for using parking facilities. Parking pricing will improve parking supply and reduced congestion on Upper State Street. Charging customers for parking can also be use to recover parking facility costs, to generate revenue for other purposes (such as a local transportation program or an Upper State Street business improvement district), or for a combination of these objectives. Free periods, similar to those offered Downtown, could be used in conjunction with parking pricing. Parking pricing strategies would require the cooperation and organization of the commercial business owners of the street.

Signs and Circulation: Make signage, access, and circulation as appropriate as possible to show users where all parking is located, especially lesser-used parking to the side and rear.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS): At larger centers, provide ITS measures, such as real-time indicators showing available spaces in other parts of the lot.

2. Site Lay-Out for Parking

Determining appropriate parking lay-out design for redevelopment within the Upper State Street corridor needs to consider specific circumstances of the site and surrounding area, such as size and depth of lot, scenic view considerations on north or south side of street, and proximity to connecting side streets and alleys. As a part of refinements to development standards and guidelines, it is recommended that information about how parking lay-out relates to access, circulation, and traffic be included for consideration. In general, parking in the rear of buildings can be more easily accessed from alleys and driveways on side streets, and could also potentially reduce the number of driveways along State Street. Underground parking should be maximized to the benefit of creating attractive, high quality space.

3. Parking Requirements

Future developments that provide able free parking will likely increase congestion on Upper State Street. Many of the existing commercial centers do not currently provide the amount of parking required by ordinance. The parking ordinance should be reviewed and changed to provide reasonable amounts of parking without burdening the transportation corridor.

Parking Maximums: Some communities limit the amount of parking capacity allowed at particular sites or within a particular area to control a development's congestion impact on the adjacent streets. It is recommended that parking maximums be considered to limit the amount of excessive parking or implement parking pricing as a means of regulating congestion at peak travel times.

Parking Pricing (described above): Parking pricing can be used as an alternative to or in conjunction with parking maximums to reduce congestion on Upper State Street.

Restaurant Parking: Consider conditioning certain retail centers to limit or restrict restaurants in smaller commercial developments.

4. Mixed Use Development Policies

Current City General Plan land use and zoning policies allow for mixed commercial and residential development on Upper State Street. As with Downtown, adding residential to Upper State Street would increase the "people activity" of the street and provide more opportunities to travel without a car. The number one response when asked what could be done to get people to use transit is: "Make the bus come to my front door." Because housing on Upper State Street would mean that transit is at the front door, the attractiveness of the existing frequent transit would equate to a greater share of transit trips. Parking strategies for residential use here should consider this.

Parking Requirements for Residential: The City may want to restrict parking to one space per unit or require that the price of parking supply be independent of the residential unit. This would address multiple goals. First, requiring less parking would improve the affordability of the housing unit. Second, this strategy reinforces people's choice of a lifestyle that does not include a second car, or any car at all. An additional benefit would be that the vehicle intensity of a project would be kept in check so as to improve the use of alternative modes of travel and protect the quality of vehicle travel on Upper State Street.

Car share: Car sharing refers to automobile rental services intended to substitute for private vehicle ownership. It makes occasional use of a vehicle affordable, even for low-income households, while providing an incentive to minimize driving and rely on alternative travel options as much as possible. It requires these features:

- Accessible (i.e., located in or near residential neighborhoods).
- Affordable (reasonable rates, suitable for short trips).
- Convenient (vehicles are easy to check in and out at any time).
- Reliable (vehicles are usually available and have minimal mechanical failures).

Car sharing should be considered for large residential developments in conjunction with parking limits or strategically implemented for Upper State Street district wide.

5. *Parking Demand Reduction Programs*

It is recommended to continue City and MTD policies and programs to increase use of alternative modes to vehicle travel, including walking, biking, and transit, by developing improvements and designing development oriented to alternative modes, which would reduce vehicle parking demand. As stated by policy 7.4 of the Circulation Element of the General Plan, "the City shall update Parking Requirements and Design Standards to optimize its parking resources and to encourage increased use of alternative transportation." (See also Policy 13.2.2.)

6. *Retain On-Street Parking*

On-street parking is not abundant in the Upper State Street corridor, but where it exists, it is heavily used and provides a needed parking supply, and helps to buffer pedestrians from vehicle through traffic. It is recommended to retain current on-street parking.

Implementation

New parking requirements and policies could be included in a revision to the S-D-2 Zone. The goal of parking policy adjustments would be to protect and enhance the Upper State Street corridor's limited vehicle capacity and to prevent future congestion increases. This effort could be conducted with the help of consultant services or budgeted as an in-house staff effort.



State Street at Las Positas.

V. LONGER-TERM FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

During the course of the Upper State Street public outreach process a number of policy issues were raised that extend beyond the scope of this study. Similarly, a number of traffic and circulation improvements identified as part of the Meyer, Mohaddes traffic, circulation and parking study either require substantial funding or altered land use/transportation patterns and thus do not appear viable in the short-term. The following descriptions summarize those policy issues most appropriately addressed through the General Plan update process or on-going City programs, as well as identified longer-term traffic and circulation improvements. *Figure 10* depicts the longer-range physical improvements.

General Plan Update and Citywide Programs

1. **La Cumbre Plaza Specific Plan**

Consider preparation of a Specific Plan for the eventual redevelopment of this site, including a mixed use (commercial and residential) village approach and possible public improvements such as a transit center, open space/public park, pedestrian connections, east/west vehicle circulation connections, and parking structure.

2. **Land Uses and Density Standards**

Reconsideration of land uses and residential density standards, including variable density and unit size, are community issues that will be examined within a citywide context as part of the General Plan update process.

3. **Environmental Sustainability**

Sustainable approaches to new development, including green buildings, transit-oriented development, air and water quality, natural resource protection, etc., are on-going, evolving citywide issues that are currently addressed as part of the development review process and City programs. Many of the near-term recommendations in Sections III and IV will result in more environmental sustainability, including improvements to transit, additional pedestrian facilities, and increased landscaping. Environmental sustainability will also be further examined as part of the General Plan update process.

4. Affordable and Workforce Housing

Existing affordable and workforce housing requirements, i.e. the Inclusionary Housing and Condominium Conversion ordinances, are currently addressed by City Housing Element policies and implementing ordinances and procedures, and are currently being re-assessed by the Housing Policy Steering Committee. Housing affordability will also be examined as part of the General Plan update process.

5. Creek Improvement Programs

Continue to implement goals and priorities for watershed management aimed at improving the health and water quality of the creeks as part of the ongoing City *Watershed Action Plan* process underway, and creek improvement measures are also incorporated as part of new development review. New and updated creek policies may also be examined as part of the General Plan update process.

6. Development Impact Fee

Staff is now undertaking a study to examine possible city-wide fees and other municipal funding options to mitigate the impact of new development on transportation, affordable housing, and open space. This study will include:

- A review of similarly sized California cities that charge development impact fees and a summary of their experiences.
- An analysis of alternative fees structures for the City of Santa Barbara.
- Alternatives for short- and long-term recommendations regarding development impact fees.

Traffic and Circulation Longer-Term Improvements

1. **Hope/State Intersection Eastbound Right-Turn Lane and Sidewalk**

As traffic volumes increase in the corridor over time, the volume of right-turning traffic from eastbound State Street to southbound Hope Avenue at this intersection is also expected to increase. Current traffic data indicates that the eastbound to southbound right turns are not presently a “critical movement” at the intersection (*i.e.*, one of the movement phases that are combined to identify the intersection level of service volume-to-capacity ratio), but in the future, this right-turn movement could be more important. In addition, the sidewalk and bike lane should be widened in this area.

Adding a right-turn lane on eastbound State Street would reduce the potential for rear-end accidents by eastbound traffic, and would improve visibility at the intersection to the west for northbound traffic. The wider sidewalk and planting area between the sidewalk and travel lanes would provide for safer pedestrian conditions and a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles. The turn-lane addition would improve future intersection operations. (See *Figure 10* and *Appendix D-MMA* concept design and description)

This improvement would require additional right-of-way from the La Cumbre Plaza property. Because a portion of the added right-of way would extend over the lower level parking area, this improvement is considered a longer-term project that would be done in conjunction with a future redevelopment plan for the La Cumbre Plaza site, so that vehicle and pedestrian improvements tie in with any other revisions to on-site lay-out and circulation design.

2. **Two-Way Calle Real/ Junipero Bridge**

To reduce reliance on State Street as a parallel corridor to Highway 101, an option under consideration is to convert the one-way section of Calle Real between Las Positas Road and Treasure Drive back to two-way operations. The City is proceeding with the Project Study Report (PSR) to further study this option. The Meyer, Mohaddes Upper State Street Report provides a concept design for a two-way Calle Real, with a ramp modification and a bridge/ramp structure at Junipero Street. The qualitative traffic effects analysis indicates that the improvement would provide more access options for local traffic, and that the attraction of additional trips would improve conditions at other area intersections and neighborhood streets, while increasing the Calle Real/Las Positas intersection service level by only a few percentage points. (See *Figure 10* and *Appendix D-MMA* concept design and description)

3. **Alternative East-West Routes**

Providing multiple connections for vehicles to a development site can be a substantial benefit to both an individual site and surrounding streets. Locations potentially suitable for east-west (and north-south) alternatives are identified as a longer-term strategy to consider as opportunities arise in conjunction with redevelopment proposals. (See *Figure 10* and *Appendix D-MMA* concept figure and description)

La Cumbre Road to Hope Avenue Route: Providing a future east-west route alternative south of State Street between La Cumbre Road and Hope Avenue would add circulation options and would draw some traffic away from State Street and its intersections with La Cumbre Road and Hope Avenue. This road improvement could only occur in conjunction with some redevelopment of the La Cumbre Plaza site and adjacent properties, and should include a dedication of right-of-way. A new road or grid of roads could be extended through the site in various configurations east-west and north-south. A primary or secondary access further to the south near La Rada or opposite Calle Esperanza could also provide access to Calle Real and the Highway 101 northbound ramps.

Alley Connection Between Toyon Drive and Amapola Drive: Back alley access can improve access to businesses fronting State Street, while limiting direct access driveways from State Street in order to help maintain good through traffic flow on State Street. As opportunities arise as part of any future proposals for redevelopment of adjacent properties, site design can be reviewed to determine the feasibility of extending the stretches of existing alleys to the north of State Street and connecting them between Toyon and Amapola Drives, thereby establishing a continuous alley between Ontare Road and Canon Drive.

Other Alley Development: Other locations where potential alley development or parallel street enhancement may be suitable are Via Lucero and San Remo Drives to the north of State Street, and the properties fronting on the south side of State Street between Hitchcock Way and Ontare Road. Additionally, the private easement connection from Hope Avenue, north of the Bank of America east past Arroyo Burro Creek could also be extended to San Roque Creek to improve access and minimize State Street driveways. Development of alleys along the south side of State Street will be more difficult and would be considered as a longer-term strategy.

4. ***New Off-Street Pedestrian/Bike Trail***

This improvement would be the development of a new pedestrian path/ bicycle trail extending between Hope Avenue and Las Positas Road south of State Street, to provide non-motorized access between La Cumbre Plaza and MacKenzie Park. The trail would be paved and provided with security lighting, would traverse both flat and sloped terrain, would include both on- and off-street sections, and would include both private properties and City-owned properties.

The trail would begin on the west at the La Rada Way and Hope Avenue intersection and would proceed along La Rada to Hitchcock Way, where the trail would access a new right-of-way along the north and eastside of the Ford Auto Dealership property, then connect to Ardilla Drive and Peach Grove Lane, then access the existing drainage easement between residences, then up the slope toward the golf course (requiring additional easement), and using the existing service drive and parking lot to McCaw Avenue and via on-street bike lanes and sidewalks to Las Positas Road (See *Figure 10* and *Appendix D*, MMA Concept Design Figure and Description).

As with many of the identified improvements, because the area is already developed, it would not be easy to add in a public trail, and a number of constraints and concerns would have to be overcome. In the identified location, part of the trail would run adjacent to the back property lines of residences, which has raised concerns about safety, security, liability, trash, noise, and night lighting. A portion of the route is proposed to use the golf course service road, and the City Parks and Recreation Department has raised similar concerns. Presently during off hours, the golf course service road is gated and locked against public access. Opening the road to public access would open the golf course and its facilities and equipment to the public, which could create problems with respect to transient use, facility and equipment security, public safety and liability.

If the trail could be feasibly designed and operated to address these issues, it would provide an alternative to State Street for pedestrians and cyclists wanting to travel between the La Cumbre Plaza and MacKenzie Park areas. The trail would also provide non-motorized access between several neighborhoods and areas that today are only connected via vehicles.

5. ***Parking Structures***

For the long-term, consider construction of shared parking structures as a way to assure adequate off-street parking for area employees and to promote more usable open space.

6. ***Shuttles***

Over time, it is recommended that the City work with the Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) to investigate the feasibility of a local shuttle-type service to encourage non-auto trips within the Upper State Street commercial corridor and provide residents, shoppers, and employees the ability to get around the corridor efficiently at a low cost.

7. ***Transit Center***

It is recommended that the City work with the Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) to review ridership patterns in the Upper State Street corridor to determine over time whether a more formal transit center should be developed. Such a center could be part of site redevelopment, with buses traveling off State Street, or could be in an existing ground-level space adjacent to an existing bus stop.

8. ***Transit Lane*** (For bus or light rail, bicycles, emergency vehicles)

To address potential longer-range regional growth and Highway 101 traffic congestion, it is recommended to further study the feasibility of augmenting and/or altering the right-of-way and streetscape on State Street to establish a dedicated transit lane (one-side or both sides of State Street). By retaining substantial setbacks as part of current streetscape standards, such a potential future change, if needed, would not be precluded. Removal of existing vehicle travel lanes to create a dedicated transit lane is not recommended.