



**DATE:** January 26, 2016

**TO:** Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

**FROM:** Jeremy Dennis, Advance Planning Manager

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**TITLE:** Review of the Transportation Element (Meeting One)

This staff report provides instructions to be used for the review of the draft Transportation Element.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE MEETING**

After roll call and oral communications, staff will provide a quick overview of the draft element. This overview will include recognized themes, major changes, Transportation Subcommittee findings, and requests from staff.

Following the overview, each member of the CAC will have 2 minutes to share their thoughts, focusing exclusively on those areas of controversy or new issues that he/she believes were not addressed by the Subcommittee.

Finally, the Co-Chairs will lead a process to vet any identified areas of controversy.

This direction will then be used to prepare for the next Transportation Subcommittee meeting and finalize the draft element.

### **Themes**

The Transportation Subcommittee and staff identified a number of themes that derived from the initial CAC brainstorm meeting last year:

1. Data – wherever applicable, CAC members indicated great interest in collecting more and better data and looking at the overall system to find effective solutions. Staff supports this concept and attempted to incorporate appropriate additions to programs reflecting data collection and utilization, but welcomes additional input and suggestions for further inclusion into the draft
2. Collaboration – CAC members recognized that the City and even its residents do not live in a vacuum, and that more intensive and broader collaboration with as many suitable bodies is preferred. This could include more expansive collaboration with existing partners such as PAUSD, Stanford University, or local businesses, or creating new relationships with neighboring cities or some of the city's larger employers within the larger region.

3. Automobiles – the existing Comprehensive Plan’s Transportation Element, generally speaking, makes clear the desire to reduce overall dependency on automobiles, and incorporates a number of programs to pursue this goal. The draft element takes a more inclusionary tone related to automobiles, reflecting newer thinking focused on eliminating as many single occupancy vehicle trips as possible with fitting alternatives, but recognizing that automobiles still have an important role in a modern transportation system. The narrative in particular reflects this change, and this was borne from staff’s interpretation of the comments made by CAC members. We would appreciate a “check” on the validity of this analysis.
4. Parking inconsistencies – Goal T-4 lays out a number of seemingly-conflicting or inconsistent policies and programs related to the City’s parking program. For example, Program T4.1.1 requires the provision for adequate parking for employees, but the very next program T4.1.2 requires the promotion of parking programs to encourage ride sharing. Another example of inconsistency with Program 4.1.1 is Program 4.2.1, which requires the study of reduced parking requirements for developments that are well-served by transit. Staff asks that the CAC delve deeper into the suite of policies and programs under “Motor Vehicle Parking” following Policy T-4.1 and provide staff with direction.

### Subcommittee Discussion

Prior to their first meeting on December 16, 2015, staff provided the Transportation Subcommittee with a list of issues identified as consensus items, and items that required further vetting and discussion. The subcommittee’s review determined the following:

- A. Four items were correctly identified as having CAC consensus with a few modifications<sup>1</sup>. The original staff-identified issues are italicized, and suggested language follows
  1. *Explore use of technology to solve problems.*  
Proactively collect data and use technology to solve problems. (Use more active language)
  2. *Better collaboration and/or partnerships with schools and companies.*  
Collaboration should include private schools. Insist of tighter collaboration and follow through of schools and private companies
  3. *Expand intra-city public transit, especially shuttle routes and schedules.*  
Should also include other providers of transit, such as Google-like buses.
  4. *Safe routes to work, shop, in addition to schools*  
Should also include libraries, community centers, retail centers, and early childhood centers.
- B. Four additional issue areas were modified to provide consensus. The original staff-identified issues are italicized, and suggested language follows.

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<sup>1</sup> Even though there was general consensus at the Transportation Subcommittee meeting on the level of consensus on these issues, individual members retain the right to vet their specific differences.

1. *Most CAC members seemed to support a regional approach to transportation planning, though there were a couple of members who thought a regional approach wasn't helpful since Palo Alto is a small city and has unique needs.*  
Proactively work with targeted partners in the region that directly impact the city and we have a greater ability to impact. For example, work with cities where commuters into Palo Alto live.
2. *Most CAC members would like to incentivize transit, walking, and biking over driving, although there was at least one CAC member who said that drivers should have options and not be made out to be villains.*  
Provide alternatives and options to make it more convenient not to drive.  
Optimize transit options. It is important to educate and incentivize options.
3. *One CAC member said that the Comp Plan should not align too closely with the Bike Master Plan since it is already three years old, while another said that implementation of the Bike Plan is very important.*  
Consensus was that it is not all about bikes. Bicyclists and pedestrians have different needs that need to be addressed.
4. *Most CAC members would like tighter parking regulations driving into the City, though there was at some who would want to make sure that parking regulation (i.e., fees) doesn't adversely affect Downtown retail or the less wealthy.*  
Options should be provided to address concerns. Start a pilot program and be accountable for issues that come up.

C. During their discussions, the Subcommittee found four new items that require CAC discussion:

1. Parking requirements/numbers should be aligned with sustainability goals.
2. The Subcommittee affirmed a desire to strengthen language in the Comprehensive Plan related to the regional importance of Palo Alto Airport, and suggested crafting policies and programs to improve safety and incorporate the use of new technologies.
3. Policy needs to be developed for the airport to address the growing usage and popularity of drones.
4. New: Metrics are important. But equally important is to measure overall systems travel and to optimize travel system as a whole. Need to look at the outcomes, not just the number.

### **Staff Requests**

1. We believe that the three programs under Policy T-1.26 could be combined into one program – we seek CAC advice and suggestions on this potential change.
2. Airports – Airport staff was consulted to obtain a better understanding of the complex relationship the airport has with the FAA. As they described to us, when airport owners or sponsors, planning agencies, or other organizations accept funds from FAA-administered airport financial assistance programs, they must agree to certain

obligations (or assurances). These obligations require the recipients to maintain and operate their facilities safely and efficiently and in accordance with specified conditions. The duration of these obligations depends on the type of recipient, the useful life of the facility being developed, and other conditions stipulated in the assurances.

Staff welcomes further input from the CAC on issues regarding the airport.

### **Vetting Draft Element Disagreements**

After the Subcommittee presentation, the Co-Chairs will take five minutes to synthesize any comments made into a set of potential policies or programs to be selected by the CAC. If there are conflicting concepts for potential policies and programs, each will be vetted by the CAC by giving any member 2 minutes to address why they believe a certain policy or program should be selected. Those who disagree or have a counterproposal will have 2 minutes to argue their position. If, after vetting there is no clear consensus, minority opinion will be captured for those positions with more than four CAC members in favor.

This process may not be finished in this meeting – an additional Transportation meeting is on the current schedule and is available to complete CAC work on this element. Should the body complete its work, the Transportation Subcommittee will be reconvened to prepare materials for Council.

### **Data**

CAC members have indicated their interest in receiving more data on a variety of topics. Staff is supportive of this request. The DEIR that will be released in early February will have vast amounts of actionable data that we believe will be very useful in ongoing conversations. If there are additional data requests, staff will make every attempt to locate or develop it.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Draft Transportation Element
- Attachment 2: Draft Action minutes, December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Attachment 3: Verbatim minute notes, Transportation Element discussion
- Attachment 4: Presentation by Jessica Sullivan, Transportation Division, to the Transportation Subcommittee
- Attachment 5: Relationship between the Comp Plan and the S/CAP
- Attachment 6: Description of the difference between LOS and VMT