Active Transportation Plan

December 2, 2019, 4:03 PM

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Summary Of Registered Statements

As of December 2, 2019, 4:03 PM, this forum had: Topic Start

Attendees: 207  August 1, 2019, 2:56 PM
Registered Statements: 26
Hours of Public Comment: 1.6
I have ridden my bike in cities and rural areas for decades. To encourage cycling as a viable transportation method, people have to feel safe on the streets. In Munich and Copenhagen, they established bicycle lanes on sidewalks, alongside pedestrian lanes. Each are clearly marked, and the users are trained to use their own lanes. Bicyclist’s are required to stop at lights, stop signs, and to signal when changing direction or stopping. This behavior is enforced by the cycling community and culture. Intersections have bicycle specific signals in addition to car specific signals. Bicycle parking is on the street, in lieu of a automobile parking spot: you can fit 10 bikes in the space of one car space.

In San Francisco, the city is working hard to make bike lanes separated from the car lanes, either by green paint on the road, or by moving the parking area into the street area, then turning the curbside area into a bike lane. This separates cyclists from moving cars very effectively. There is no question that riding a bike is often faster to ride a bike, so there is a good incentive to do so. Outside of the city center, bike lanes should be prioritized so that people who want to ride to work or shop have safe lanes to travel.

Above all, the education of motorists AND cyclists on proper road behavior is critical. When each party knows what to expect and can predict the behavior of the other party, they will act responsibly and safely. This has to be backed up by law enforcement and cultural expectations. In Copenhagen, if an automobile driver strikes a cyclist, and it is the drivers fault;  they go to prison! Talk about a great incentive to look twice for cyclists before turning in front of them...

There is dire need for stoplights at two locations, in my opinion. First, on Broad Street, between Fire House and Orcutt. Where it should be located is open to debate although I would opt for Stoneridge (for a host of reasons). Second, on South Street. That’s another long stretch of street without light to allow for safe crossing.

There are many streets close to downtown that are poorly lit (or without lighting) and erratic sidewalk quality - Morro Street for instance heading toward Islay.

A very important task, and assigned & obtained funding, is to get the RR Safety Trail & Bob Jones City to Sea Trail constantly underway to benefit residents & visitors. These trails will connect cyclists & pedestrians to important places throughout the city, and are way past due.

There are many issues to work on. First finish the RR Bike Path to Tank Farm Road. I know this in progress but it would really help getting people downtown. I agree with other commenters to improve access to Stoneridge and a way to cross broad somewhere near there without adding additional stop lights. a raised pedestrian safety area might help. South Street has a similar issue but is not as bad. All the bikeways should connect to something and not just dead end. The changes for Broad Street have already been approved. But my thought would be to make Broad...
Street One-Way from Lincoln Street to Center or Murray Street. This way the parking would not be removed. This would drive more traffic on to Chorro though heading north. The RR Bike path should have a paved path to Sinsheimer Park. More than the dirt one that exists now. It would be better if it came up between the two baseball fields for convenience. Maybe an ocean side RR Bike path from Orcutt Road to the parking lot at the train station. This would serve all the new homes along the railroad tracks.

Name not available
inside Neighborhood 7
October 10, 2019, 8:22 PM

1) Broad bw South/Orcutt feels unsafe for cars merging onto it at any stop sign, bikes traveling it, or pedestrians attempting to cross it
2) Join bike path bw Sacramento to train tracks over Orcutt so bikes don’t have to go up or u-turn when headed toward downtown.
3) Incentivize families with one car by allowing for senior rate monthly bus pass to take a car off the road.
4) Tank Farm east of Broad is too steep for elders and kids on bikes using the bike lane to feel safe with the speedy cars and roundabout: stripe the sidewalk to allow for bikes and pedestrians to co-exist.
5) Bus stop at TankFarm / Brookpine needs a crosswalk and ideally a flashing light to alert cars.

John Thomas
inside Neighborhood 10
October 11, 2019, 8:43 AM

Thank you for allowing comments. We need at least a crosswalk on Broad Street between South and Orcutt, there is no safe place to cross. A light on Broad between those two streets would be even better. With the additional housing off Broad along the train tracks and the existing neighborhoods on the other side of Broad, the street is becoming increasingly dangerous for pedestrians, bike riding and cars. Another good spot for a crosswalk would be at the Palm Street parking garage and the new pedestrian pathway between the Hotel SLO and the Palm theater.

James Lopes
inside Neighborhood 11
October 11, 2019, 3:42 PM

Traffic speeds can be reduced and managed to allow greater pedestrian and bike travel. I presented the attached "Neighborhood Center Arterial" concept to the City in the LUCE update, and it was ignored. However, this template is workable and productive where it is used. The attachment lists specific major intersections where this street type would be designated. The street type would enable the City to obtain developer participation and transportation funds to plan and construct these exciting improvements. Note the source of the proposal is http://www.walklive.org/resources/ . . .

James Lopes
jameslopes@charter.net

Supporting Media (140 KB PDF):

Bob Tedone
inside Neighborhood 4
October 12, 2019, 10:20 AM

As someone who walks downtown frequently I’d like to see either the mid-block crosswalks either eliminated or regulated with a stoplight timed to the intersection lights, especially the Marsh Street one. I’ve seen this done on State Street in Santa Barbara. Pedestrians would be a lot safer and drivers would be able to get to their destinations without emitting as many greenhouse gasses. The intersections on either side of the mid-block crosswalks are a very short distance away and most people who cross mid-block have either come from an intersection or are going to one. It’s a miracle that no one has been killed in those walkways.

Marta Peluso
inside Neighborhood 10
October 12, 2019, 1:40 PM

I live in the Stoneridge neighborhood off Broad Street and often walk downtown from my home. The sidewalks are small and uneven, forcing two people to walk single file for
much of the way, discouraging comfortable and companionable walking in this area. Also, crossing Broad Street between Orcutt and the intersection of Santa Barbara/South streets is near to impossible as there are no crosswalks between those two points across Broad Street. Nevertheless, I often see people dangerously crossing that busy street. There needs to be a safe crosswalk, perhaps at a streetlight, in that stretch of roadway from Orcutt to the Santa Barbara/South intersection. Also, the only way to drive out of the Stoneridge neighborhood towards the direction of downtown SLO is to pull into the middle lane of fast moving traffic on Broad Street. This is dangerous and also needs to be addressed. Thank you.

Name not shown
inside Neighborhood 5
October 13, 2019, 6:59 AM

There is a desperate need for ped bridge at Santa Rosa and Boysen. Poly students cross there constantly which makes sense but it is so unsafe and with poor lighting at night, it's a death waiting to happen. Maybe a shared cost with Poly?

Robbi Rizzo
inside Neighborhood 6
October 14, 2019, 10:12 AM

I walk to work generally five days per week and we walk to downtown for recreation once every week or two. The primary issue is safety and it relates to drivers. Sometimes drivers are distracted, but more often they are impatient. I have a close call with an automobile about once per week and I am often not even taking my right of way to avoid getting hit. The key issue, from my perspective, is enforcement of laws for drivers to yield to pedestrians. I do also see pedestrians cross on red or in the middle of the street and so enforcement needs to happen both ways. Same for bikes. There has to be education (I honestly don't know that drivers even realize they are supposed to wait for a pedestrian to get all the way across and I would be happy just getting out of the lane they are going into) and then there has to be enforcement with consequences. Walking with the frequency I do can be stressful. I still believe the benefit (exercise, decompress, save gas) outweighs the negative, but I feel like it is only a matter of time before my attentiveness cannot save me from getting hit. People are in a hurry and distracted, and they have simply lost perspective as to what kind of damage they will do if they hit a pedestrian. One woman who nearly hit me and my boyfriend actually got out to make sure her car was okay! We were in the crosswalk, crossing on a green, and she was in a hurry to turn and skimmed right behind us before we could step onto the curb. This is routine in SLO. The recent addition of a delay between the pedestrian walk sign coming on and the light turning green is very misunderstood. I often see pedestrians waiting for the light to turn green, not realizing they have a walk sign, and I also see pedestrians continuing to cross when the pedestrian signal is red. I don't know if having something specific for pedestrians/bikes all ways would work, but I have seen it work well elsewhere. I also agree with the comment about seeing things that worked very well in Europe, but I think that requires people to follow the rules.

The other issue I encounter regularly is not being able to cross South Street safely to get from my neighborhood near Hawthorne Elementary School to South Hills to hike. It is great to have this hiking area so close, but I have started driving now, as I do not feel safe crossing South Street and it would add a significant distance to go up to Broad to cross. I hike at least two days per week.

Thank you for gathering feedback and I hope something meaningful will be done with it.

Name not available
outside Neighborhoods
October 18, 2019, 10:03 AM

Creating a safer way to connect from the downtown RR trail to Cal Poly would be really helpful. We also really need a way to slow down traffic on Broad Street and create another crossing between Orcutt and South street. I love to bike with my kids around town, but on some of the busier roads, the bike lanes don’t feel safe enough. Cars drive too fast and drift into the bike lanes, or honk at cyclists for minding their business. More protected bikeways would definitely get me out of my car more and on my bike.
The pedestrian crossing of S. Higuera at Prado on the southern crosswalk is SUPER dangerous. I walk there for my daily walk and have almost been hit by people turning left to go southbound on S. Higuera. They are so focused on their oncoming Prado traffic they fail to see people in the crosswalk. This is a safety issue.

Karen Aydelott  
inside Neighborhood 10  
October 18, 2019, 3:22 PM

This letter is to add my voice to the many citizens of San Luis Obispo who support urgently needed protected bike lanes. If you are even an occasional cyclist, a commuter, someone who rides how for exercise or pleasure or an avid cyclist, you know full well how dangerous riding on a bike can be in our city. This fact was certainly reinforced by placement of temporary barriers in three locations in our city – where I often ride – late one night. In spite of being wrapped in reflective tape many of these barriers were destroyed which certainly gives us pause to think long and hard about this vital need.

The three feet distance required by law that a car must provide a cyclist when passing has proven to be meaningless for most motorists. And anyone who has stood 3 feet away from a truck or a car driving 60 miles a hour knows how scary that feels. Although a county road, ride your bike on Orcutt when the gravel trucks are speeding by. Even simple protected bike lanes throughout the city would provide a much greater sense of safety – important to encourage additional ridership – as well as a documented drop in accidents.

The city has adopted two relevant and excellent goals. One is a 20% mode share for bicycles, pedestrians and public transportation. The second is Vision Zero that sets an ambitious goal of no traffic related accidents. I believe that these goals will be very difficult, if not impossible, to reach without protected bike lanes and connected bikeways. The cost of protected bike lanes can be simple and affordable and the cost of not doing so could potentially be very expensive.

I admit that I come at this issue with an informed perspective as a 3-term member of the San Luis County Bike Coalition Board and as an individual with direct experience. I was riding my bike in Pasadena to a training ride when a distracted motorist drove directly into the rear of my bike. Consequently, I lost my right leg below the knee. Although I consider myself fortunate, clearly the protection of a protected bike lane would have made all the difference. My dear friend, Bridget Dawson, was killed when a distracted driver drove of the road on 227 and hit her. The responding officer stated that a rumble strip would have saved Bridget’s life. That haunts me.

Please address this critical need for protected bike lanes both for the safety of our City’s many cyclists and so that we will as a community meet our 20% mode share goal and Vision Zero. Both address very important community needs. Thank you very much for your serious consideration to provide protected bike lanes as quickly as possible.

Chuck Waldrop  
inside Neighborhood 11  
October 19, 2019, 4:16 AM

As the traffic has become noticeably heaver in San Luis over the past two years, one of my concerns has become much more obvious, that is the dangerous biking route along Tank Farm between Broad and Higueri especially dangerous since the heavy truck traffic has increased with the Rock Haulers bringing their loads through the city from the quarry out on Orchid Road to get to the 101.

Tom Murphy  
outside Neighborhoods  
October 22, 2019, 6:59 AM

There’ve been significant improvements over the decades, e.g. widening LOVR, widening Foothill (between city limit and LOVR), widening O’Connor Rd, and many bike lanes in town.

On the other hand:
Most recent repave (gravel and oil) of Santa Rosa is a travesty - rough, dirty, nasty - bike lanes significantly narrowed in key places - bad. 
Bike lane narrowed at Foothill ->LOVR right turn toward Los Osos - bad. 
City projects routinely block bike lanes; at least place your signs (blocking bike lanes) where they can be clearly seen WELL IN ADVANCE!
City Police on bikes, please consider setting a positive example: you’re wearing all dark clothing, no lights - bad. Some of you ride poorly as well.
Active Transportation Plan
Share your ideas on how to improve bicycling and walking in the city!

Ongoing maintenance: please clean up all the way to the curb - debris, dirt, sand, gravel, and particularly, accident debris - before leaving the scene (now, not later).

Forward!
Thank you!

Sincerely,
The Hulk

kenneth price
outside Neighborhoods
October 24, 2019, 8:52 PM

As the safety director for the San Luis Obispo bike club, I can speak to the ongoing issues of biking safely on our roads. As long as we continue to have at best class two bike lanes we will be second class citizens. The injury and death toll by people using their mobile devices is climbing and as long as enforcement is as lax as it is that will continue. I realize that money is scarce, but the only way to make biking and walking safer is to spend a lot of money to have safer infrastructure. I have lived in the area for 14 years and on the whole, there has been very little improvement to the infrastructure. Think of the investment as a way to save lives and encourage people to get out of their cars Ken Price slobc safety director 805-489-9779

Name not available
inside Neighborhood 1
October 25, 2019, 5:16 PM

Add sidewalk on east side of Chorro between Murray and Meinecke.

Odile Ayral
inside Neighborhood 1
October 28, 2019, 9:16 AM

The city needs to make sure that all routes where a steady number of pedestrians regularly mix with a steady number of cars have sidewalks and that these sidewalks are wide enough and in good shape. It took me more than thirty years to get the city to finally agree to finish a sidewalk on North Chorro by the new city sign, and the city agreed only because the county forced them to do it. This should never be the case. Safety ought to be the first priority for anything.

People rightly speak about the need to protect cyclists from cars, but we also must consider the need to protect pedestrians from cyclists. I still see cyclists riding on sidewalks, and sometimes for no obvious reason. Cyclists and pedestrians should never share the same lanes (ironically, this also goes for our open space areas, where bikes regularly scare the hell out of walkers.)

Finally, separated bike lanes ought to be set in all arterials (such as Foothill, Santa Rosa, California, etc.), where they are most needed, not in narrow neighborhood streets. Regular bike lanes should be placed in neighborhoods where biking is visible. In my opinion, bike counting is a good idea that the city seems to be avoiding, and this has led to the building of bike boulevards that are only lightly used, such as Morro Street (according to the people living there). Let us spend the money where it can do the most for everyone's safety.

Jesse Englert
inside Neighborhood 1
October 31, 2019, 2:50 PM

I would like to see the guiding principle of the ATP be to prioritize people over cars when redesigning our streets. Protected bike lanes & protected intersections are the best tools we currently have to create a major mode shift. Adopt a “Quick Build” policy to get safe infrastructure built faster and cheaper. Quick build projects activate and excite citizens who want change, instead of only those who fear it.

Chris McBride
inside Neighborhood 7
October 31, 2019, 10:42 PM

As others have said, prioritize people over cars. Drivers are distracted, aggressive and regularly speed through streets -- these are behaviors that don’t seem to change so develop bike paths, protected lanes, safe intersections and safe walking spaces that do not rely on driver behavior changing. Make it easier and safer to ride or walk and people will try it! Adopt a quick build policy to be able to quickly address issues and create change.
If you want people to bike more, the police have to use a little better discretion. I was recently ticketed for riding the wrong way on S. Higuera. I’ve yet to find out how much this is going to cost me, but if it’s equated with driving into oncoming traffic, then it will probably be serious. I was initially riding with traffic on S. Higuera but needed to access a facility on the other side. I was still about 200 feet from the driveway when the whole road opened up. All four lanes were completely clear with no traffic approaching and few nearby driveways. I took advantage of the opportunity to cross safely. But I then proceeded to ride down the WIDE shoulder (more than 17 feet wide) the rest of the way. A motorcycle officer stopped me right at the driveway of my destination and gave me a ticket. His suggestions were to: 1) move into the left lane and signal my indication to turn, just like a vehicle; 2) ride down to the light at Madonna Rd and turn with the light; 3) walk my bike the rest of the way once I’d crossed. These are all impractical and in two of the cases not even safe. I would never intentionally ride in the left lane of S. Higuera and come to a full stop so I could “legally” make a left turn. (After receiving the ticket, I ended up in that very scenario and it was terrifying.) The first rule of anything being legal is that is has to be SAFE. That movement is NOT safe! In the same way that driving the posted speed limit might be deemed unsafe and thus illegal if the road is icy, maneuvering like a 2000-pound motorized vehicle surrounded by a steel safety cage when actually it’s just you and a few scraps of aluminum is unsafe even if it’s described in the vehicle code. Likewise, turning left out of the shopping center at Madonna Road is almost just as bad. Although cyclists have the advantage of a green light, drivers coming off Madonna at that free right generally don’t stop even on a red, and certainly aren’t looking for cyclists. And I’d have to cross right in front of them. That’s precisely how I got hit in 2000 on South Street. The last option, walking my bike, is certainly safe and legal, but it sort of defeats the purpose of riding, don’t you think? Had I darted across the street in front of traffic and then rode down a narrow strip against oncoming traffic, I would think the cop justified in giving me a ticket. But my actions were the safest and most practical solution to a major problem: getting across S. Higuera! People are constantly crossing the road at this location. Furthermore, the closer you get to Madonna, the worse it gets because of all the businesses and driveways. To cycle “legally” during my normal work day, I would have to cross it at least 4 times a day, but more likely 6-8 times. What do you think my odds of doing it safely are if I did it “legally” each time? It’s frightening enough as is, but now I have to worry about being ticketed! My health and well-being are worth more to me than whatever this ticket will cost, but this isn’t a choice I should have to make. And if a motorcycle cop needs to make his ticket quota, he can go sit out on Santa Rosa near Palm, where the posted speed is 25 mph, and ticket speeders all day long.

Please improve the crosswalk at Johnson & Sydney. I use this crosswalk frequently and it’s very dangerous; very few drivers actually stop. I was in the middle of the crosswalk the other day and someone just whizzed by me. I have had other close calls as well. As a driver, I know how hard it is to see people in this spot. It’s a very dark intersection at night and you really can’t see the crosswalk; I always make a point of slowing down and scanning the area for pedestrians. The flashing lights help a little bit but not much. Even when the crossing guard is there sometimes in the morning, drivers still don’t pay attention.

I find the bike boulevard concept very biker friendly. It would be nice if they could go from the east to west side of town rather than just stopping downtown. Some of us are trying to get across town not just to downtown. Protected bike lanes also help encourage riding by allowing riders not to have to worry about cars at all.

I’d love to see more sidewalks and bike lanes on South Higuera going south to the Octagon barn and to Johnson Ranch area. Also, better bike lanes on LOVR and South Higuera would be great. Using the South Higuera bike path
feels too sketchy to take alone although I wish it were more family friendly because I'd love to take my kids down there.