Cesar Chavez Street
Community Design Workshop #1 – 5.28.08
Summary of Comments

EXERCISE 1. Tradeoffs

The first of two small group exercises was designed to explore the issue of tradeoffs and the space and use implications of one design choice over another.

The following introduction was provided at each of the tables:

“The goal of today’s first exercise is to begin to think about tradeoffs. More lanes of traffic, for example, may speed auto travel times, but translate into narrower sidewalks and longer crosswalks. Wider sidewalks and shorter crossings improve pedestrian conditions, but may slow down auto speed and reduce capacity. It is important to consider these tradeoffs and the implications to people, cyclists, cars, and landscaping of one design choice over the other, and we hope to begin thinking about tradeoffs in this exercise today. How we consider these tradeoffs tonight will help to identify priorities and will help guide Cesar Chavez’s future design.”

Four (4) graphical boards were placed on each table, and facilitators guided group discussions based on the speaking points included below. Participants were asked to place an X, or a dot, or other marking along the scale to indicate where each of their individual priorities fell along the spectrum. Markings from all the tables were then consolidated into one (1) set of boards.

Facilitator speaking points are provided below and compiled tradeoff ratings are included in RED type:

- BOARD 1. The first two tradeoffs explore the ease of use of Cesar Chavez Street as different users: as a pedestrian, as a cyclist, and as a driver.
  - Easier to Walk and Cross or Less Delay for Cars. By making Cesar Chavez more enjoyable for people, one could envision improvements that prioritize the needs of pedestrians over those of private automobiles. This could include improvements such as special crossings, wider sidewalks, a landscaping buffer, and longer crossing times. But these pedestrian oriented improvements could also slow down the speed of cars along the corridor.
  - Easier to Bike or Less Delay for Cars. Adding permanent bike lanes to Cesar Chavez would make the corridor a much safer and more enjoyable route for cyclists. It could also encourage people to bike rather than drive their car for shorter trips. But adding bike lanes could slow down the speed of vehicular traffic and reduce the capacity of the roadway, especially during peak commute times.
➢ Participants prioritized improvements to pedestrian conditions and bike facilities over those for private vehicles.

- BOARD 2. The second two tradeoffs explore in greater detail how Cesar Chavez Street could better consider the needs of all users, including people and transit riders.
  - Crossings that Favor People or Crossings that Favor Cars. By improving how the sidewalks and crosswalks are designed and marked, pedestrians would be made much more visible to drivers. These improvements would also be designed to shorten the distance a pedestrian must travel when crossing Cesar Chavez Street and would be aimed to minimize conflicts between cars and people. These improvements would also create a more favorable pedestrian environment. But these improvements aimed at favoring the needs of pedestrians could slow down cars, especially during commute times.

  - Less Delay for Transit or Faster Vehicle Speeds. Buses are often delayed when trying to re-enter a lane of traffic after picking people up at a bus stop. With extended bus bulbs, the sidewalk is extended so that a bus can stop in the lane of traffic. This allows the bus to immediately drive off as soon as all riders have boarded. But this improvement for buses can translate into delays for drivers who must wait behind a bus while people are boarding.

➢ Participants prioritized improvements to crossings and transit service over those for private vehicles.

- BOARD 3. The next tradeoffs explore sidewalks and medians.
  - Wider Sidewalks or Wider Median. Given the limited amount of space, widening both the sidewalks and the existing median is not likely feasible. With that said, there are benefits to both approaches. Wider sidewalks give pedestrians more space to walk and circulate, increase the buffer between fast moving cars and people, allow for more generous landscaping and tree planting, and shorten the distance a pedestrian must cross to get from one side of the street to another. Wider medians, on the other hand, can provide a refuge space in the middle of the block for pedestrians. Because they are not interrupted by driveways, more trees and landscaping can be planted.

  - More Space for People or More Space for Cars. By removing just a few parking spaces right at the corners, sidewalks can be widened significantly and areas to sit, sidewalk amenities, significant landscaping, and ecological stormwater improvements can be added. These sidewalk extensions at the corners also shorten crossing distances for pedestrians and make pedestrians more visible to oncoming traffic. But these improvements often necessitate the removal of a limited amount of parking.
Participants were neutral over whether wider sidewalks or wider medians was preferable. Participants favored increasing space for people, even if it necessitated the removal of limited parking.

- BOARD 4. The last board explores greening opportunities in detail.
  - More Space for Greening or More Parking. As in the previous tradeoff, significant greening opportunities can be secured in the parking lane by removing the first stall of parking right up against the corner. In addition to greening, pedestrians are made more visible as they are not hidden behind parked cars. The focus of this tradeoff is more greening versus more parking.
  - Narrower Driveway Ramps and More Trees or Wider Driveway Ramps and Fewer Trees. Many driveway ramps are much longer than they need to be to provide access to garages. These wider ramps limit the opportunities for planting trees and encourage parking on the sidewalk. By narrowing driveway ramps, more trees can be planted and opportunities for ecological stormwater improvements can be found. The amount of available street parking can also be increased. In some cases, where neighboring properties have garages side by side, two ramps could be combined into one.

- Participants favored increased greening opportunities in the parking lane as well as exploring opportunities to narrow unnecessarily wide curb cuts.
WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU?
“No one gets everything; everyone gets something.”

1. EASIER TO WALK and CROSS
2. LESS DELAY FOR CARS

3. EASIER TO BIKE
4. LESS DELAY FOR CARS

COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOP.
CESAR CHAVEZ STREET
MAY 2008
WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU?
“No one gets everything; everyone gets something.”

CROSSINGS THAT FAVOR PEOPLE

CROSSINGS THAT FAVOR CARS

LESS DELAY FOR TRANSIT

FASTER VEHICLE SPEEDS
WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU?
“No one gets everything; everyone gets something.”

3.

WIDER SIDEWALKS

NEUTRAL

Median

WIDER MEDIAN

MORE SPACE FOR PEOPLE

Median

NEUTRAL

MORE SPACE FOR CARS
WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

“No one gets everything; everyone gets something.”

*More Space for Greening*  
*More Parking*  
*Neutral*  
*Wider Driveway, Ramps and Fewer Trees*  
*Narrower Driveway, Ramps and More Trees*
EXERCISE 2. Mapping

The second small table exercise asked participants to draw from their own experiences walking, driving, or living on or around Cesar Chavez Street to help identify likes and dislikes along the corridor.

Participants were asked to consider everything that might come to mind, such as the number of cars, lanes of traffic, crossing conditions, greenery, lighting, and more.

Participants were asked to place RED dots on a large aerial map indicating locations needing improvements, and GREEN dots pointing out positive attributes or opportunity sites. Notes explaining the dots were written directly on the boards and on notepads.

The following MEMO lists the comments documented on the boards and on the notepads. Many of the comments came up repeatedly but are listed below only once out of a desire for brevity.

Comments are organized longitudinally from East to West, starting at Guerrero and ending at Potrero.

GUERRERO/CC
Red Dots: xx
Green Dots: xx
Comments:
- Greening of medians should be expanded.
- Traffic/pedestrian conditions are poor.
- Turning movements favor cars, risky to pedestrians.
- Cars race eastbound from Guerrero towards 101.
- Bulbouts needed.

CC BETWEEN GUERRERO AND VALENCIA
Red Dots: x
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
- Sidewalks are too narrow.

VALENcia/CC
Red Dots: xx
Green Dots: x
Comments:
- Right turns onto Valencia should be slowed.
- Consider bulb outs.
- Bad pedestrian conditions, good bike conditions.
- Sears parking lot is an ‘urban void’ / deserted and dangerous.

**CC BETWEEN VALENCIA AND MISSION**

Red Dots: none.
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
- Sears parking lot is an ‘urban void’.
- Narrow sidewalks.
- Bulbout needed at Bartlett.

**MISSION/CAPP/CC**

Red Dots: xxxxxxxxxx
Green Dots: x
Comments:
- Incredibly difficult intersection for pedestrians, complicated by entrance of Capp Street.
- 7 lanes of traffic are way too many — priority should be shifted back to pedestrians.
- Terrible pedestrian crossings.
- Blind intersections – streets should be aligned to intersect at 90-degrees.
- Great site for potential gateway treatments.
- Important pedestrian connections between Bernal, Mission Street commerce, and 24th Street commerce and transit.
- If medians remain, add thumbnails to protect pedestrians.
- Curb extensions at all corners are needed.
- Westbound left-turn onto Mission is good.
- Eastbound right turn from CC to Mission is dangerous as visibility is reduced.
- Capp at 26th needs a stop sign.
- Consider Capp as a bike route.
- Why are the sidewalks in front of the new building on the south-east corner of Mission and CC so narrow?

**CC BETWEEN MISSION/CAPP AND S. VAN NESS**

Red Dots: xx
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
- Eastbound CC between Mission and S. Van Ness is the best block for cycling because of an extra ‘half-width’ lane.
- A ‘traffic sewer’.
- Landscaping should be added to medians to discourage mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- Parking lot and billboard at the intersection of Capp and CC detract from the pedestrian realm. Could be a great site for a plaza.
- Too many curb cuts, especially for the gas station at SVN and CC.
- Sidewalks too narrow.

**S. VAN NESS/CC**

Red Dots: xxxxx  
Green Dots: none.  
Comments:
- Concern over traffic diversion onto S. Van Ness.
- S. Van Ness can handle more traffic from CC.
- Very difficult crossing for pedestrians and bikes.
- Bulbouts needed.
- Auto/industrial uses at northwest corner are bad for pedestrians and detract from the corridor's aesthetic value.
- Left turn from eastbound CC to S. Van Ness is good.
- Apparently trees were removed along S. Van Ness because of root problems? New trees are needed.

**CC BETWEEN S. VAN NESS AND SHOTWELL**

Red Dots: x  
Green Dots: none.  
Comments:
- Landscaping should be added to medians to discourage mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- Sidewalks are narrow and in bad condition.
- Bulbouts needed.

**SHOTWELL/CC**

Red Dots: none.  
Green Dots: x  
Comments:
- Traffic signal not needed.
- Bulbouts needed.

**CC BETWEEN SHOTWELL AND FOLSOM**

Red Dots: xxx  
Green Dots: x  
Comments:
- St. Anthony de Padua Church Plaza has potential to provide more publicly-accessible space.
- School parking lot unwelcoming, unsafe, unsightly- wire fencing.
- Wall along north side, between Shotwell and Folsom is unwelcoming.
- Difficult for bikes, even though listed as a bike route.
- Sidewalks are too narrow.

**FOLSOM/CC**
- Red Dots: xxxxxxx
- Green Dots: xx
- Comments:
  - Divides neighborhood.
  - Incredibly difficult pedestrian crossing.
  - Fast speeds and wide lanes.
  - Allowed crossing times for pedestrians/children going to school way too short. Incredibly dangerous.
  - Retime traffic signals to give longer crossing times to pedestrians.
  - A lot of existing pedestrian activity. Should be supported by design.
  - Enhanced pedestrian and greening treatments to connect Precita Park and Garfield Square.
  - Could be a gateway intersection.
  - Trees along Folsom are nice and consistent.
  - Canopy should be brought closer to intersection to provide a visual connection across CC.
  - Bulbouts on all four corners are necessary.
  - Flooding at SE corner.

**CC BETWEEN FOLSOM AND TREAT**
- Red Dots: x
- Green Dots: none.
- Comments:
  - Sidewalks are too narrow.

**TREAT/CC**
- Red Dots: x
- Green Dots: none.
- Comments:
  - Difficult to cross because there is no traffic signal.
  - Bulbouts needed.

**CC BETWEEN TREAT AND HARRISON**
- Red Dots: x
- Green Dots: xx
- Comments:
  - Beautiful mosaic at Leonard Flynn.
  - Sidewalks too narrow.
HARRISON/CC
Red Dots: xxxx
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
  • Allowed crossing times for pedestrians/children going to school way too short. Incredibly dangerous.
  • Enhanced pedestrian and greening treatments to connect Precita Park and Garfield Square.
  • Better pedestrian facilities needed.
  • All four corners need bulb outs.
  • Consider pedestrian island.
  • Harrison, between CC and Precita should be made a green street. Connections to CC should be highlighted.

CC BETWEEN HARRISON AND ALABAMA
Red Dots: x
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
  • Sidewalks too narrow

ALABAMA/CC
Red Dots: x
Green Dots: x
Comments:
  • Traffic signal definitely helps.

CC BETWEEN ALABAMA AND FLORIDA
Red Dots: x
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
  • Sidewalks too narrow.

FLORIDA/CC
Red Dots: xxx
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
  • Difficult to cross because there is no traffic signal.
  • Bulbouts needed.

CC BETWEEN FLORIDA AND BRYANT/PRECITA
Red Dots: x
Green Dots: none.
Comments:
- Sidewalks too narrow.

**BRYANT/PRECITA/CC**

Red Dots: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
Green Dots: xx  
Comments:
- Gateway treatment desperately needed.  
- Traffic bottleneck.  
- Gas station and surrounding streets are an amazing opportunity site for new open space.  
- Gas station should be removed.  
- Entrances/exits to gas station should be reduced, possibly taken off CC.  
- Speeding traffic.  
- CC curve blocks pedestrian visibility.  
- Very difficult to cross.  
- Double left turn lane on Bryant to CC east makes crossing exceedingly difficult for pedestrians.  
- Wide width of Bryant roadway encourages speed, wider turns, which are both dangerous to pedestrians.  
- Bus loading for 27 Bryant is incredibly awkward.  
- Tree/landscaping in median is nice.  
- Appreciates corner stores.  
- Precita should be closed off at Bryant and at CC.

**CC BETWEEN BRYANT/PRECITA AND YORK**

Red Dots: x  
Green Dots: none.  
Comments:
- Sidewalks too narrow.  
- Lots of sidewalk parking.

**YORK/CC**

Red Dots: xx  
Green Dots: none.  
Comments:
- Blind spot.  
- Bulbouts needed.

**CC BETWEEN YORK AND HAMPSHIRE**

Red Dots: x  
Green Dots: none.  
Comments:
- Sidewalks too narrow.
- Lots of sidewalk parking.

**Hampshire/CC**
- Red Dots: xxxx
- Green Dots: none.
- Comments:
  - Great place for a gateway treatment to announce to drivers that they are entering a residential community.
  - Illegal westbound right turns onto Hampshire.

**CC Between Hampshire and Potrero**
- Red Dots: xxxx
- Green Dots: none.
- Comments:
  - Sidewalk along park is way too narrow.
  - Connections to park are bad, emphasizing ‘dominance of cars’.
  - South side feels very unsafe for cyclists.
  - When coming from the Bayview into the Mission, it’s difficult to cross CC on a bike.

**Overall**
- Important to consider not only CC, but surrounding streets as well.
- Street looks bad in general.
- Bad connections between transit modes.
- Consider time restrictions for commercial traffic.
- Left turns should not be permitted at all.
- Left turns are incredibly difficult.
- Number of left turns should be reduced.
- Consider a serpentine treatment between Alabama and South Van Ness, with enhanced greening, less parking, etc, to reflect historic hydrologic conditions.
- Treatments to encourage pedestrian/transit travel along CC to BART node at 24th should be considered.
- Rolph Playground is greatly improved, and should be highlighted in design.
- Precita Park is an underutilized asset and should be highlighted through CC design.
- Bike route should travel down 26th, not CC.
- Sidewalks should be wider on north side of CC because of greater sunlight. Gathering spaces, art, and possible daylighting of Precita Creek should be considered.
- Bike lanes would be beneficial.
- Bike lanes should be grade-separated from roadway.
- If medians persist, trees should be added.
- Sidewalk parking is a problem.
- Cars parking along the street are constantly getting banged.
- Most of the day, the corridor is underutilized by cars.
- Increasing delays for cars is well worth the benefits to pedestrians and cyclists.
Cars need to be slowed, and discouraged from entering side streets.
CC is a primary east-west connector serving the entire city.
Left turn lanes work, but only if they are long enough to allow for cueing.
Not enough greenery.
Lighting should be updated and made more aesthetic... cobra heads are bad.
Traffic signals should be re-signalized to reduce speeding.
The Good:
  o Sheepskin City
  o Appliance Store
  o Mosaics at Flynn
  o Folsom Chinese Elms
  o New traffic signal at Alabama
  o Precita Park

OUTSIDE STUDY AREA
Pedestrian and bike overpass is way too low.
101-interchange is hard to traverse as a pedestrian or a cyclist; not safe. Bike bridge ends at a rail line and a narrow sidewalk.
Traffic lights should be added to off-ramps.
Homeless encampments under ramps should be addressed.
Underpass is a psychological divide.
Connection between parks across Potrero and along CC needs to be emphasized and made simpler for pedestrians.
Parcel on NW corner of Rolph Playground, at intersection with 26th, is a great opportunity site.
Bulb outs needed at Duncan/Guerrero.
Study area should be extended to Church Street.
Potrero is a terrible intersection – bad for people, cyclists, and cars.
Potrero Del Sol is underutilized.
Folsom and S. Van Ness should have a road diet like Valencia or wider bulbs/sidewalks like Harrison.