El Cajon Boulevard Complete Boulevard Planning Study

Evaluation Summary (updated October 4, 2016)

The El Cajon Boulevard Complete Boulevard Planning Study has examined how to best accommodate multimodal mobility (auto, bike, pedestrian and transit) on the El Cajon Boulevard corridor between Highland Avenue and 50th Street as well as urban design concepts that would highlight the Little Saigon cultural district between Highland and Euclid Avenues and the historic Boulevard outside of the district. The study examined and documented existing conditions and evaluated possible configurations of El Cajon Boulevard with consideration of the following topic areas:

- Number of travel lanes;
- Safety enhancements;
- School traffic and safety
- Pedestrian accessibility and enhancement;
- Bicycle accommodations;
- Transit accessibility;
- Parking accommodation/expansion;
- Loading and unloading for businesses;
- Neighborhood circulation;
- Deterring criminal activity; and
- Urban design enhancements and corridor branding.

Alternatives Explored (see evaluation summary brochure for additional details):

- Alternative 1 (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, includes urban design/pedestrian emphasis with landscaped median and bulb-out treatments, safety enhancements, improves crosswalks with shorter crossing distances and pedestrian refuge islands and includes shared bike facilities with sharrow pavement markings).

- Alternative 2 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION)– Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, converts remaining parking to angled back-in parking, improves crosswalks, includes a concrete raised median and a shared bike facility.
    - Not supported by MTS due to Rapid service performance.
    - Does not enhance median aesthetics.
    - Impacts angled parking areas in vicinity of signalized intersection to widen for left-turn lane.

- Alternative 3 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, provides 4-foot painted median area, improved crosswalks, and includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles.
    - Not supported due to median area safety concerns.
    - Not supported due to inside lane compliance – no barrier median to channel left-turns only at intersections.
    - Intersection areas impacted due to required widening for left-turn lane accommodation.

- Alternative 4 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, no median area (only double yellow striping), improves crosswalks, and includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles.
    - Not supported due to median area safety concerns.
    - Not supported due to inside lane compliance – no barrier median to channel left-turns only at intersections.
    - Intersection areas impacted due to required widening for left-turn lane accommodation.

- Alternative 5 (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks, and includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles and reduces the pedestrian space on one side of the street.
    - Improves corridor safety and multimodal accommodation.
    - Not fully supported by stakeholders due to impact to pedestrian area/environment.

- Alternative 5A (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, 4-foot raised concrete median area, improves crosswalks, and includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles and preserves the pedestrian space.
    - Improves corridor safety and multimodal accommodation.
    - Additional parking loss at Intersection areas due to required median widening for left-turn lane and pedestrian refuge accommodation.
    - Does not enhance median aesthetics.

- Alternative 6 (VIABLE LONG-TERM SOLUTION) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, preserves parking on both sides of the street, raised and planted median area, includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles, includes parklets on both sides of the street, improves crosswalks, and requires redevelopment in areas with insufficient space to accommodate the improvements.
    - Accommodates all desired multimodal and aesthetic improvements.
    - Requires market-based phased implementation due to redevelopment.
    - Not a short-term solution.

- Alternative 7 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on both sides of the street, raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks and includes a cycle track on both sides of the road to accommodate bicycles.
    - Not supported due to removal of all on-street parking.

- Alternative 8 (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks and includes a bike lane on one side of the street and a shared bicycle facility with sharrow pavement markings on the other side of the street.
    - Eastbound direction would be better served with bicycle lane due to uphill climb.

- Alternative 8A (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, narrower raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks and includes bike lanes on both sides of the street.
    - Narrowed travel lanes (11-feet).
    - Additional parking loss at intersection areas due to required median widening for left-turn lane and pedestrian refuge accommodation.

- Alternative 8B (VIABLE) – Maintains 4 travel lanes, removes parking on one side of the street, raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks and includes a bike lanes on both sides of the street.
    - Narrowed travel lanes (10-feet).
    - Requires different curb/gutter system than what is in place today.

- Alternative 9 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 4 travel lanes during peak travel periods only, non-peak time period parking allowed, raised and planted median area, improves crosswalks and includes a cycle tracks on both sides of the street.
    - Parking needed most during peak travel periods.
    - Requires strong monitoring and expedient tow service.
    - High potential to impact Rapid service.
    - No bulb-out potential.
    - No parklet/planter extensions.

- Alternative 10 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 2 travel lanes and 2 shared bus/bike only travel lanes, parking is preserved on both sides of the street, improves crosswalks, and includes a raised and planted median area.
    - High potential to impact Rapid service – not supported by MTS.
    - Other metropolitan areas with shared bus/bike lanes have identified significant safety and operational issues when on-street parking exists adjacent to shared bus/bike lane.
    - High potential to redirect traffic into the adjacent neighborhoods.

- Alternative 11 (REMOVED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION) – Maintains 2 travel lanes, parking is preserved on both sides of the street, includes bike lanes, improves crosswalks, and includes a raised and planted median area.
    - High potential to impact Rapid service – not supported by MTS.
    - High potential to redirect traffic into the adjacent neighborhoods.

Detailed evaluations are included in the evaluation summary brochure.

Key results of the study team's technical evaluations are summarized below:

- Travel Lane Configurations
    - Alternatives with one lane in each direction
        - Not enough capacity for existing or future travel demand.
        - Approximately 10,000 vehicles per day would need to be redirected and use a different route, including adjacent neighborhood streets.
        - Limited alternative east/west route options in the area between I-8 and SR-94.
        - Does not support existing rapid transit implementation on El Cajon Boulevard.
    - Alternatives with two lanes in each direction
        - Can accommodate existing and future travel demand.
        - Will support existing/future rapid transit on El Cajon Boulevard.

- Safety Enhancements
    - Recommend installing bulb-outs to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians.
    - Recommend installing high-visibility continental crosswalk markings (where warranted).
    - Recommend installing raised median on El Cajon Boulevard to reduce conflicting turning movements, reduce pedestrian crossing distance, and to enhance motorist, bicyclist and pedestrian safety.
    - Examine potential for additional controlled or enhanced pedestrian crossing(s) on El Cajon Boulevard between Euclid and 50th.
    - New concept for market parking lot circulation developed at El Cajon Boulevard and Menlo to improve intersection and pedestrian safety.

- Parking Accommodation / Expansion
    - Angled parking on El Cajon Boulevard not supported due to right-of-way constraints (see Travel Lane Configurations evaluation).
    - Parking demand is highest at non-metered locations including private off-street parking lots, especially in close proximity the intersection at Menlo Avenue and the Winona Avenue rapid bus station.
    - Utilized parking could be consolidated to one side of the street.
    - Highest parking use is south side of ECB between Highland and Menlo, and on the north side of the street between Menlo and 50th.

- Pedestrian Accessibility and Enhancement
    - Marked crosswalk evaluations support east/west marked crosswalk installations at 48th Street, Estrella Avenue, 49th Street, and 50th Street.
    - Marked crosswalk striping evaluation supports additional enhanced pedestrian crossing of El Cajon Boulevard at 45th Street.
    - New pedestrian crossing planned at Altadena based on a separate study.
    - Recommend installing bulb-outs to shorten street crossing distances at all intersections. The recommended alternative would determine bulb-out geometry (side street only or full intersection).
    - Recommend installing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant ramps at all deficient locations.

    - Recommend installing ADA compliant traffic signals at all deficient locations.
    - Identify locations where benches, trash receptacles and lighting should be installed.

- Bicycle Accommodation
    - In order to install dedicated / striped bicycle lanes and preserve 4 travel lanes, parking would need to be removed on one side of the street.
    - Recommend using surrounding street network for bicycle travel. Exact configurations, applications and routes are under development by SANDAG under separate regional bicycle project processes.
    - Existing "sharrow" routes are most comfortable for the very experienced/confident riders.
    - Limited available right-of-way does not support widening the curb-to-curb width to install bicycle lanes.
    - El Cajon Boulevard corridor east of Euclid Avenue requires eastbound cyclists to climb a hill, therefore reducing their speeds.
    - Identify locations where bicycle parking stalls should be installed.

- Transit Integration
    - Enhance pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to the transit stops and comfort at the transit stops.
    - Support rapid transit lane implementation.
    - Continue to support highest performing ridership route in the region.

- Neighborhood Circulation and Parking
    - Converting side streets to one-way was considered but rejected because it would encourage additional traffic to use Orange/Meade/Monroe.
    - Median placement across side-street access was sensitive to locations with larger commercial parking lots to minimize commercial traffic in the adjacent neighborhoods.
    - Angled parking on the neighborhood side streets is not feasible due to curb-to-curb distance limitations. Highland Avenue north of El Cajon Boulevard was the only corridor with the space available to allow angled parking on one side of the street.

- Urban Design Enhancements and Branding Opportunities
    - Identified opportunities for trees, plantings, benches, trash receptacles, lighting and cultural enhancements.
    - Identified branding opportunities.
    - Identified monument opportunities and concepts.

For additional information on the Complete Boulevard Planning Study, visit our website, or contact Lara Gates at 619-236-6006 or lgates@sandiego.gov.