



Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee

Matthew Taecker, Secretary, 2120 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704
Telephone: 510.981.7487 Email: mtaecker@ci.berkeley.ca.us Web: www.cityofberkeley.info/sosip

MINUTES

Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee – Meeting #6 Monday, July 12, 2010, from 7 to 10 pm

North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, California

Subcommittee Member Attendance. Seven (8) City members were present: Keith Alward, Patricia Dacey, Kate Harrison, Meghan Lang, Jim Novosel, Carole Schemmerling, Margo Schueler, and Ann Smulka. Teresa Clarke was absent (with Leave). UC members present: Emily Marthinsen.

Staff Attendance. Matt Taecker (Planning Department & Secretary to Subcommittee) and Kara Vuicich (Transportation Division).

Public Attendance. Approximately 10 members of the public attended some part of the meeting.

Order of the Agenda. No changes were made.

Public Comments. Six (6) members of the public commented.

Wendy Alfsen, Walk & Roll Berkeley, said that SOSIP proposals were not doing enough to accommodate walking, and that walking was part of everyone's trip to Downtown no matter how they arrived.

Jurgen Aust showed historic photos of: Shattuck Square as a rail and trolley hub, and pedestrian plazas that enhance surrounding retail and resulted from comprehensive planning.

David Campbell, East Bay Bicycle Coalition, appreciated proposal for bicycle lanes on Shattuck, and asked that bicycle lanes on Hearst be made a near-term priority – even if greenway landscaping was only between Walnut and Oxford. He also expressed excitement over the shared street concept, especially along Allston and Center Street.

Arianna Katovich, Earth Island Institute, wanted Subcommittee members to be aware of a program to apply art to 60 utility boxes in Downtown, that has support from merchants and the Civic Arts Commission, and has addressed Department of Public Works' concerns.

John Caner, Downtown Berkeley Association, supported more art in the Downtown, particularly art that invites children to play and meets functional needs. He also asked the Subcommittee to emphasize near-term investments along Shattuck, rather than investments on side streets like Center Street and Milvia.

Peter Sellar, former Civic Arts Commissioner, said that while temporary art was an interesting concept, emphasis should be given to permanent art by renowned artists.

47 **Adoption of Minutes.** The Subcommittee adopted minutes for June 14, 2010, with minor
48 revisions (5 ayes, 0 nays, 3 abstentions).

49
50 **Near-Term Priorities: Subarea Projects, Costs & Phasing.** Subcommittee members
51 considered criteria for near-term priorities, using draft criteria by staff and Novosel as a
52 starting point. Subcommittee members thought that the following factors should be
53 addressed.

- 54 • Create a major community space in the heart of the downtown along Center Street for
55 public gatherings, activities, commerce, and enjoyment.
- 56 • Improve the pedestrian walking environment of the downtown for residents and
57 visitors.
- 58 • Increase, enhance and make more safe paths of travel for pedestrians and for
59 bicyclists.
- 60 • Accommodate vehicles in the downtown but slow and calm it through the use of
61 pavers, etc.
- 62 • Improve transportation access into and through the downtown (for north/south traffic),
63 public transit, and biking.
- 64 • Recognize that parking is essential to downtown's success by maintaining the number
65 of parking spaces in the near-term and developing an effective parking &
66 transportation management strategy.
- 67 • Make improvements for all ages and abilities.
- 68 • Promote downtown as a memorable destination by making it more vibrant and more
69 beautiful through the use of art, trees, pavers, themes, etc.
- 70 • Improve the aesthetic connection between the Campus' green environment and the
71 downtown's cityscape as UC develops its properties west of Oxford Street.
- 72 • Encourage midblock connections.
- 73 • Reinforce the existing center of commercial activity by focusing on Shattuck near
74 BART, and possibly also University Avenue.
- 75 • Promote ecological features consistent with the Climate Action Plan etc.
- 76 • Place improvements near development projects that are likely to happen -- to help
77 fund abutting improvements and take advantage of synergies.
- 78 • Maximize benefits by funding multiple projects, and avoid using limited funds on a
79 single project.
- 80 • Consider what types of projects would be most competitive for grant and private
81 funding.

82
83 Matt Taecker, Principal Planner, then presented a concept for a near-term funding priorities
84 that reflected Subcommittee comments heard in June. The Subcommittee concurred with
85 recommendations for the following near-term priorities: redirect northbound traffic to make
86 Shattuck Square westside 2-way, increasing parking on the eastside of Shattuck Square,
87 establish a linear park on Shattuck between BART Plaza and cinema destinations, create a
88 Center Street Plaza gathering place near Oxford Street with a water feature to occur with
89 redevelopment of the Bank of America parcel, and install greenway improvements adjacent to
90 the Helios project on Hearst (with new bike lanes from Shattuck to Oxford). The
91 Subcommittee also supported bicycle lane improvements on Shattuck and Milvia but thought
92 that these deserved less emphasis.

93
94 **SOSIP Public Art Chapter.** The Subcommittee was in agreement with the draft chapter
95 provided by staff, but with the following revisions. Emphasize creation of a major and
96 permanent piece of art by a renowned artist. Encourage reference to Berkeley's notable
97 personalities. Emphasize play features and functional art, like benches. Staff noted that Civic
98 Arts Commission would also review the draft chapter in late July, and CAC comments would
99 also be incorporated.

100
101 **SOSIP Outline and Schedule.** Staff plans to address Subcommittee comments as chapters
102 are revised. All SOSIP chapters should be integrated into a comprehensive document for
103 Subcommittee review in September. New chapters will also be developed including an
104 executive summary and chapter on maintenance and operations. Staff offered to involve
105 Subcommittee members as new material is developed. Novosel and Dacey indicated interest
106 in helping with the executive summary. Scheuler indicated interest in the maintenance
107 chapter. Harrison indicated interest in developing language on implementation. Lang
108 indicated interested in finance recommendations.

109
110 The comprehensive draft would be reviewed at meeting scheduled for September 13 and 30,
111 with final recommendations made by the Subcommittee at its final meeting on September 30.

112
113 **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm.

114
115

116 THIS PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK.
117