



WalkSanDiego
740 13th Street, Suite 502
San Diego, CA 92101
Tel: 619-544-WALK
Fax: 619-531-WALK
www.walksandiego.org

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Chairwoman Lori Zapf
Land Use and Housing Committee
City of San Diego
202 C St. MS 10A
San Diego, CA 92101

Honorable Chair Zapf and Committee Members,

WalkSanDiego is pleased to submit this letter of support for efforts by the City's Transportation Engineering Operations Division (TEO) to enhance bicycling and walking safety in San Diego. TEO's establishment of its new Multi-Modal Division has been extremely effective in advancing the design and creation of bicycle facilities throughout the City. We especially want to commend their efforts to improve or create new bike lanes in tandem with road repaving. The **lane diets** referenced in their report have been proven in case studies around the U.S to be one of the most effective techniques to slow traffic speeds and make streets safer for people bicycling or walking.

As an organization dedicated to walkability, we also want to strongly support the City's planned use of **pedestrian HAWK signals**. Like lane diets, HAWK signals are highly effective to improve safety and reduce pedestrian collisions by up to 70%.

In light of these advancements and the City's commitment to continue this work, we want to outline existing auto-centric policies we believe will limit the robust implementation of bicycling facilities. Specifically, we ask the Land Use and Housing Committee to request a presentation from staff on the policies listed below, their relationship to further implementation of bicycle facilities, and a host of citywide policies that support walkable, bikeable streets and communities.

1. CEQA Significance Determination Thresholds (2011, Development Services Department)

These thresholds were developed to assist staff and the public to determine whether a proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. Thresholds for 19 Environmental Issues are detailed including issues such as Biological Resources, Noise, Historical Resources, and Transportation. The document emphasizes, *"They are not intended to be stand-alone policies and are to be used in conjunction with commonly accepted professional standards, judgments, and practices. These guidelines should be updated when necessary in response to changes in CEQA, case law, and refinement of recognized scientific analysis of impact thresholds... They also recognize that the level of impacts depend upon a multitude of factors such as project setting, design, construction, etc."*

Thresholds outlined for Transportation/ Circulation emphasize vehicle circulation and establish a Level of Service threshold of E or F (on a scale of A-F where A is the highest measurement and equates free flow of traffic). Level of Service is a measurement of vehicle delay at intersections. This policy conflicts with goals outlined in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and prioritizes traffic flow over bicycle and pedestrian safety.

NOTE: Statewide legislation in 2010 related to Complete Streets deleted traffic Level of Service impacts as mandatory mitigable measures under CEQA and incorporated additional components for walking and biking into the CEQA Project Checklist. Cities across California have successfully integrated new bike/ped metrics as a result of this change.

2. Traffic Impact Study Manual (1998, Development Services Department)

Directly related to the Significance Thresholds document are policies outlined in the City's Traffic Impact Study Manual. When traffic impacts associated with new development projects are determined to cause traffic delays and Levels of Service at E or F, mitigation measures are required. The City does not have a similar metric to measure successful implementation of bicycling and walking safety. As a result, mitigation measures often unfairly benefit the automobile and preempt design for bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Cities across California have recently revisited policies such as the ones outlined above under the banner of Complete Streets to ensure that roads are designed for a variety of people using multiple transportation modes.

We ask the Land Use and Housing Committee to request a presentation from staff on the policies listed above, their relationship to further implementation of bicycle facilities, and a host of citywide policies that support walkable, bikeable streets and communities.

Thank you,



Kathleen Ferrier, AICP
Policy Development Manager

Cc: Linda Marabian, Deputy Director, TEO Division
Brian Genovese, Senior Traffic Engineer, Multi-Modal Section, TEO Division