



PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES

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Wednesday, May 14, 2003
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 PM
City Council Chambers
Civic Center, 1st Floor
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94301

ROLL CALL: 7:00 PM

Commissioners:

Annette Bialson, Chair
Michael Griffin, Vice-Chair
Karen Holman
Patrick Burt
Bonnie Packer
Phyllis Cassel
Joseph Bellomo

Staff:

Steve Emslie, Planning Director
Joseph Kott, Chief Transportation Official
Carl Stoffel, Transportation Engineer
Wynne Furth, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Olubayo Elimisha, Staff Secretary

AGENDIZED ITEMS:

- 1. Louis Road Traffic Calming Project Trial Approval**
- 2. Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program**
- 3. School Commute Corridors Network**

Chair Bialson: I would like to call this meeting to order. Would the Secretary please call roll.

Thank you. The first item on the agenda is Oral Communications.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS. Members of the public may speak to any item not on the agenda with a limitation of three (3) minutes per speaker. Those who desire to speak must complete a speaker request card available from the secretary of the Commission. The Planning and Transportation Commission reserves the right to limit the oral communications period to 15 minutes.

Chair Bialson: I have one card for Oral Communications from Sharon Erickson.

Ms. Sharon Erickson, City Auditor, City of Palo Alto: I am Sharon Erickson for those of you that I haven't met I am the City Auditor for the City of Palo Alto. I have been asked to begin a review of the Planning Process. Being as how you are the Planning and Transportation

1 Commission I figured it would be a good time to let you know what we are going to be up to and
2 give you my phone number in case you have any comments or suggestions.

3
4 Our objective of this review is going to be to evaluate the process from beginning to end from
5 the customer's viewpoint. So unlike some of the previous reviews that have been done we are
6 going to be trying to cut across division and department lines in looking at the process. We have
7 been asked by the City Council to look at and assess the timeliness and consistency of all the
8 various reviews. We will be addressing questions like what is the current cost of the planning
9 process to the customer, to the City, how long does it really take and where is the time spent, are
10 changes needed to improve management and coordination of the process, are changes needed to
11 expedite the process, are changes needed to improve customer perceptions of the process. We
12 will be reviewing internal policies and procedures working closely with Staff to determine
13 industry best practices and pulling a sample of case files for review. As part of our review we
14 will also be attending, and you may have seen my staff and I out in the audience, at least at a
15 selection of Commission meetings. I can't guarantee that we will have the stamina that you all
16 have. It is an important part of the process at least for some applicants.

17
18 I have assigned Edwin Young from my office who is a senior auditor with many years of
19 experience to work on this project. He wasn't able to be here tonight but he is going to be
20 working pretty much full time for the next several months on this. If you have any comments,
21 questions, suggestions please give me a call. I can be reached at 329-2629. I guess there is not
22 an opportunity here for questions but Steve and I will be working closely and if you want to
23 forward items either through him or through me that would be just great. Thank you very much.

24
25 Chair Bialson: Thank you. We have a question. Karen.

26
27 Commissioner Holman: If there are questions or comments that go to you, just procedurally and
28 for consistency sake, do you want the Director of Planning copied on everything or do you want
29 it to go to one or the other? Just for consistency sake and for full information for everybody.

30
31 Ms. Erickson: It is probably best for the items to come to me. I say that in case there are items
32 that people would prefer come straight to the auditor. We will be sharing all information fully
33 with Steve unless there are items people request confidentiality on.

34
35 Chair Bialson: Thank you. The next person to speak in Oral Communications is Lynn
36 Chiapella.

37
38 Ms. Lynne Chiapella, 631 Colorado Avenue, Palo Alto: I live in the Midtown area and we have
39 noticed a big increase in traffic particularly on neighborhood streets like Colorado and Cowper
40 and Waverley. I missed the meeting on April 9 on the Zoning Ordinance Update on parking. I
41 don't know if you have finished that or didn't finish that or what. I just have the copy of the
42 report and I am very concerned about the parking and the traffic situation in that area. So I
43 would like to be kept informed of Planning Commission meetings on particularly the CN zone,
44 which would affect my area dramatically, and if you do any more work on this parking update.

45
46 The last one I would be interested in is the maps. In the 1977 hearings the maps, which is part of
47 the Zoning Ordinance Update came before the Planning Commission. The Planning
48 Commission approved those maps. In the approval of those maps there was no notification of

1 changes of zoning of properties from one to a different type. That is to say there were whole
2 areas that got rezoned, none of the people in that zone were notified and only because it got to
3 the City Council a couple of people came down, I for one, and said my house has now been
4 zoned a CN instead of an R-1 and that was approved by the Planning Commission. So I am very
5 concerned that when you receive these stacks of maps that zoning changes whether it is RM-4 to
6 something else or R-1 to CN, whatever the zoning change is, is actually noted prior to the
7 meeting in some kind of a form rather than it is just on the back page. If you didn't go over with
8 a fine-tooth comb every single property you might miss something like that. So I would be
9 interested in knowing about those three areas particularly at the Planning Commission level
10 because that is where the initial discussion of those approvals happened and that was not picked
11 up. So you zoned approximately 20 to 30 properties as CN that were residential. Thank you.

12
13 Chair Bialson: Thank you. I have no other cards for Oral Communications so I will close that
14 agenda item.

15
16 We have no Consent Calendar.

17
18 **CONSENT CALENDAR.** Items will be voted on in one motion unless removed from the
19 calendar by a Commission Member.

20
21 Chair Bialson: We have no Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions or Unfinished Business.

22
23 **AGENDA CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.** The agenda may have additional
24 items added to it up until 72 hours prior to meeting time.

25
26 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

27 **Public Hearings:** None.

28
29 **Other Items:** None.

30
31 Chair Bialson: So the only items before you are under the New Business that we are going to
32 now deal with Item one, Louis Road Traffic Calming Project Trial Approval. Does Staff care to
33 comment?

34
35 **NEW BUSINESS.**

36 **Public Hearings:**

- 37
38 1. **Louis Road Traffic Calming Project Trial Approval:** - The Commission will discuss
39 and act on a Transportation Division recommendation to install two speed tables on Louis
40 Road between Adobe Creek and Charleston Road in order to reduce traffic speeds in that
41 area. This is a resident-initiated proposal conducted under the auspices of the Palo Alto
42 Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. **SR Weblink:**
43 <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cityagenda/publish/planning-transportation-meetings/1909.pdf>
44

45 Mr. Joseph Kott, Chief Transportation Official: Good evening Chair Bialson and members of
46 the Commission. We are returning to you this evening to offer a recommendation on a traffic-
47 calming project for Louis Road. This Commission at a prior meeting accepted our
48 recommendation to end an earlier trial of traffic calming on Louis Road and recommended that

1 we consult again with the residents of Louis Road and the surrounding neighborhood and devise
2 with them a new traffic-calming plan that was more suitable than the original traffic calming
3 plan.
4

5 We are coming to you under the rubric of the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program in Palo
6 Alto, which this Commission recommended to Council and Council adopted in April 2001. The
7 traffic-calming program was a policy mandate really of the Comprehensive Plan in Palo Alto.
8 The second agenda item this evening will in fact be a discussion of the Traffic Calming Program
9 overall and the guidelines that pertain to it.
10

11 A few general words about our Traffic Calming Program per the Council adopted guidelines. It
12 is really an initiative by resident program. Residents come to us with petitions for action under
13 our Traffic Calming Program. If the proposed projects qualify under our criteria we work with
14 residents to devise a suitable plan. That plan is presented to a neighborhood meeting, a meeting
15 of residents that is those beyond the Working Group. If the plan is suitable it proceeds to a
16 postcard ballot. Carl Stoffel, our Program Manager, for traffic calming will discuss the
17 particular balloting that took place on the Louis Road project which involved a wider area than
18 some of our local street projects do.
19

20 In Palo Alto we always do recommended trials before permanent placements. We are very, very
21 careful about our evaluations of trials both quantitatively and qualitatively. We would expect
22 that the same would hold in the use of speed tables. Carl will discuss speed tables. They are
23 deployed in Menlo Park right now on Laurel, on Alma and there is a third street that I can't recall
24 now. So we have some local nearby experience with speed tables but this will be our first
25 deployment in Palo Alto. So we are particularly interested in Commission discussion of the
26 likely affects of these speed tables. If there are no questions of me in my preface I would like to
27 ask Carl Stoffel to describe the Louis Road Traffic Calming Plan.
28

29 Mr. Carl Stoffel, Transportation Engineer: Madam Chair, members of the Commission, thank
30 you very much. Continuing on with what Joe said our procedure does call for going back to the
31 residents if a trial does not work out. So of course we recommended that to you, you approved
32 that and we went back to a group of the original residents. They were anxious to spend more
33 time, it takes a lot of time for these folks to work with us, they wanted to go ahead and try for
34 something else. So following your recommendation we formed a larger working group with
35 representatives from outside the area. That process is described in the Staff Report. So that
36 group of ten, I think one person actually didn't show up and then continued not to show up so I
37 think we really ended up with nine people meeting regularly four meetings. This group had
38 many active, animated discussions. We looked at a lot of different alternatives. We actually just
39 made a list of some of the things we considered at various levels, education and enforcement,
40 some people just wanted to forget the traffic calming and could we do something with only
41 education and enforcement. We looked at a traffic circle. We looked at a median slow point,
42 sort of a mid-block effort to do something that didn't involve humps. Then we looked a lot at
43 various combinations of speed tables, everything from one to two to three in different areas of
44 the original project area. Quite early on in the meetings we decided to cut the project area down
45 considerably because this was one of the problems with the prior project, just too many of things.
46 People were thinking, gee, problems aren't that great in some of these areas. So we limited our
47 area. We went back to the original request of the original residents from Charleston to Adobe
48 Creek. Then we looked at a lot of different options in that area and had a lot of animated

1 discussions as I said. I am quite confident that at the end of that process I was really happy that
2 people were very cooperative in our group. We came out with a strong recommendation for
3 what you have before you tonight, the two speed tables. This group was particularly sensitive to
4 the failures of the past one, the number of devices, the nearness of stop signs, the abruptness of
5 them, the extent that they covered. This group really wanted something to come out that would
6 address those issues or not have the same possible problems and something that could really go
7 forward and work. So that came out of the working group and that is what we sent out in a
8 neighborhood survey and a neighborhood meeting. Like the last survey which is a procedure we
9 developed with the prior collector street project on Churchill, we just surveyed a wide area in
10 addition to the project area but we tabulated the results separately because we believe and all
11 traffic calming programs that I know about base the primary recommendation and the primary
12 interest level on the people living on the street where these devices go because they are the ones
13 who made the initial request. Though many people made the request they are the ones who live
14 on the street and would have to put up with any devices that went on the street. Plus they have to
15 use the street for all of their trips whereas other people though there are a lot more of the people
16 who live in the wider area but of course they don't use the street all of the time and of course they
17 don't have these devices placed in front of their homes.

18
19 So for all of those reasons our recommendation is based on two things. One is the quality of
20 what comes out of the Working Group, which I mentioned earlier, and the other is the result of
21 the survey. As you can see we had a strong positive vote based on survey responses from the
22 project area, which is Louis and one of the cul-de-sacs, that was 87% in favor, again this is the
23 responses that came back, and obviously a lesser amount in favor, 40%, from the entire wide
24 area. For collector streets we go by project survey responses rather than the absolute number of
25 households. For instance the 87% is the number of people who responded positively divided by
26 the number of responses that came back not divided by how many households are in the area.
27 We do that for the collector street projects because they are subject to further hearing, which we
28 are having tonight. So there is another round of public discussion and possibility for people to
29 make their views known. We don't follow that procedure for the local street projects. So based
30 then on the results of the surveys and the product that we came out with from the Working Group
31 that is why we are recommending to you tonight to proceed with a trial of a speed table project.

32
33 Speed tables, we actually have two of them in Palo Alto. They are not very widely known. One
34 of them is on Terman Drive. It is actually in the form of a raised crosswalk. We also have one in
35 an alley in Downtown North. Really we don't have any on any of the major streets and Menlo
36 Park has at least a dozen of them, Stanford has a couple of them, there is one on Stanford Drive
37 in the County. These have worked quite well on the busier streets because people can really
38 drive over them at the speed limit and so the people that are needing to slow down are really the
39 more outlying speeds, above 30-35. So in a sense it is a new device for Palo Alto because we
40 have not used them on the major streets until now. Maybe this is reminiscent of our speed
41 cushion trial where that was also a new device but this one is quite well known by our
42 neighboring city, it is a much more standard traffic calming measure and it is definitely suitable
43 for the more major streets because it is a gentler device. So we are quite confident that this will
44 be a much better choice for Louis than the prior measure. Plus in this case we only have two of
45 them. We limited the area to specifically to where speeds have been measured before to be 35
46 miles per hour, which more than meets our criterion. That is another reason why we dropped the
47 other portion of the project area because the speeds actually were a little bit lower there.

48

1 It is a small area. This is a spot treatment traffic-calming program. This is obviously just a
2 couple of blocks that we are looking at so that's why we are not looking at all of Louis or even
3 looking at a larger piece of Louis is that we are just responding to this particular group of
4 residents which is where our program is set up. That is pretty much all I have for introduction. I
5 have a few things I can put up on the overhead if you are interested in seeing pictures of speed
6 tables or the surveys and so on. That is all I have to say and can answer any questions.

7
8 Chair Bialson: Do we have any questions from Commissioners? Okay, hold on just a second.
9 Joe.

10
11 Commissioner Bellomo: Carl, just a question on Guinda near Middlefield, I guess it is near
12 University speed bump. Is that a speed table or a speed bump there? I do travel it often.

13
14 Mr. Stoffel: On Guinda that is a standard speed hump.

15
16 Commissioner Bellomo: Speed hump.

17
18 Mr. Stoffel: Speed hump we call them. Actually since you mentioned that we do have a speed
19 table that will be installed. It has already been approved through a prior process going on
20 Channing right at the Lincoln intersection. That may even be installed this Friday. That will be
21 our first speed table in Palo Alto. So we will actually have a chance to see that quite soon.

22
23 Commissioner Bellomo: There are some being installed soon in the north neighborhood in Palo
24 Alto?

25
26 Mr. Stoffel: That is a totally different program. That is a street closure project. We don't have
27 any humps of any type in that.

28
29 Commissioner Bellomo: Okay.

30
31 Commissioner Packer: Carl, I have a question about the project area size and which households
32 were in it. Were they just households along Louis and along Bibbits? Louis between Gailen and
33 Charleston?

34
35 Mr. Stoffel: I am sorry I should have had an exhibit showing the area that was surveyed. This
36 area included all the properties that are touching with any frontage or side frontage on Louis all
37 the way from Charleston on up to Ross Road, which is just off the top of the map. Plus you can
38 see what I call the Bibbits cul-de-sac, which is down in the bottom left corner. We include that.
39 We include cul-de-sacs in the project area where the only way they can get out of their cul-de-
40 sac is to get onto Louis. So they were included in the voting even though those properties
41 physically were not on Louis. Those other streets, which actually go through, they were not
42 included.

43
44 Commissioner Packer: The earlier project area had about 67 households. It was about twice as
45 large. Did you do an attempt to tabulate the people who were excluded from the new project
46 area that I assume were included in the wide area?

47
48 Mr. Stoffel: They were not tabulated separately.

1
2 Commissioner Packer: Did you do an analysis of those people who had been in the project area
3 the first time around and then were in the wide area the second time around what the percent
4 was?

5
6 Mr. Stoffel: We didn't look at those responses separately. So those were totally aggregated into
7 the wide area response.

8
9 Commissioner Packer: Then I have one other question. As a traffic engineer, because this is a
10 very tiny spot treatment, it is just two traffic calming measures within one block really it doesn't
11 even cover an intersection, and this is a collector street with between 4,000 and 5,000 vehicle
12 trips per day do you really see this as having a real impact on any other parts of Louis or is it just
13 going to have an impact in that very small spot?

14
15 Mr. Stoffel: Well, I put this other graphic up here, which gives you a little bit of perspective of
16 the area. This includes a good chunk of the so-called wide area and shows a lot of the homes
17 there that Louis serves. You can see our project is down in that bottom right-hand corner. The
18 actual physical impact of slowing speeds really is going to be felt just within a couple hundred
19 feet of each side of the top-most and bottom-most speed table. So it is very limited in its speed
20 reduction area. And because there are only two measures and they are fairly gentle, sometimes if
21 you have enough of these things perhaps three in a row, especially speed humps, we usually see
22 about a ten to 15 percent diminishment in the traffic volume. Some people just don't want to go
23 over them so they go elsewhere. Here given the importance of Louis and that there is not a lot of
24 really adjacent or alternate parallel routes and the fact that there are only two of these and that
25 they are fairly gentle I don't see much impact in terms of changes in volume anywhere in the
26 area even right where the tables themselves are. So basically the answer is we see the impact as
27 limited pretty much to that area between the creek and Charleston.

28
29 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Karen.

30
31 Commissioner Holman: I am assuming that the reason for two rather than one is because two
32 has a more lasting effect in slowing traffic than would one?

33
34 Mr. Stoffel: Two covers a larger area. We looked at one and the folks in the working group felt
35 that you couldn't get enough coverage with one in terms of the extent to which it works. People
36 generally start to slow down for anything from stop signs to these kinds of things a couple
37 hundred feet in advance. So you don't cover a very big area just with one of these. So it is
38 basically trying to cover a little bit more of the area that people saw as where some of higher
39 speeds are. It is also the focused area where a lot of the original residents live that made the
40 initial request.

41
42 Commissioner Holman: Then if these are successful, which I hope they are, and you wanted to
43 expand the program to further down Louis would you anticipate a diversion of traffic if you had
44 a further installation of speed tables further down Louis?

45
46 Mr. Stoffel: Of course we would only do that if another group of residents in another few blocks
47 came in and we would still have to see if they even met the criteria to even do anything. If we
48 ended up with another project, let's say the next couple of blocks and we put in more, the more

1 of these there are little by little at some point you are going to be getting enough of them that it
2 does make a difference. I can't say right now how many that would be but if we have a series of
3 speed humps like on Ross Road up near Oregon they are quite concentrated there and that's
4 made, my understanding is, quite a big difference in volume. So those do have an impact. But
5 there we are talking about seven measures closely spaced that are much different kind of
6 measures than the speed tables. So somewhere in there, between two and more you begin to
7 have an impact that you need to be careful of in terms of diverting traffic.

8
9 Chair Bialson: Pat.

10
11 Commissioner Burt: Carl, in comparing a speed table to a speed hump or a speed bump what is
12 the comfortable driving speed that you would use to go over the speed bump say on Ross versus
13 the speed tables?
14

15 Mr. Stoffel: I put up there just a picture of a couple of speed tables in Menlo Park. Down at the
16 bottom there is a comparison of the profile to the speed cushion not to the speed hump because
17 this was a prior cushion project. The speed humps which are for instances in most of the other
18 places where we have speed humps like on Ross we post those for advisory speed of 15 miles per
19 hour and that is pretty much how we found people go over those. Even at that speed you
20 definitely know you are going over a speed hump. The tables, I have driven over quite a few of
21 those in Menlo Park at different times. We are going to be posting those for 20 miles per hour
22 though we figure people are mostly going to be going over those at about 25 maybe 24, which
23 essentially is the speed limit. So there is at least ten miles per hour difference maybe eight to ten
24 miles per hour difference in the speed that you go over the table. As a result speed tables are not
25 as effective at reducing speeds because people don't slow down as much and that is why you
26 don't want to put speed tables on a street where the speeds are only 30 to begin with such as on
27 some of our local streets. They are more useful on a street like some of our collector streets
28 where speeds are a little higher because only then is it going to make the differential.
29

30 Commissioner Burt: I take it that the objective is not to have people who would ordinarily go 25
31 miles an hour at the speed limit and slow them down to 15 but instead to take the egregious
32 speeders and cause them to slow down to the speed limit or thereabout.
33

34 Mr. Stoffel: That is a good goal for a collector street because it carries more traffic, people are
35 used to driving a little higher speeds. Ideally it would be nice to on any traffic-calming project
36 not to slow people down to below the speed limit but the thing is people speed up after those and
37 they begin to return to a higher speed above the speed limit. So most traffic calming devices at
38 least on local streets they slow people down to this more like the 15 range because the idea is to
39 get between a series of them an average speed of 25 miles per hour. So you put in these speed
40 humps that are 15 and by the time you get to the middle point before the next one people are
41 back up to about 25 and then they go down to 15 again. So the average speed between measures
42 along the street comes out about 25 but to get there you have to have these slower points. As a
43 result with speed tables we will get 25 at the table but between them the speeds go back up to 30
44 or 31 depending on the spacing.
45

46 Commissioner Burt: Did you have an opportunity to discuss with your counterparts in Menlo
47 Park the response that has occurred to speed tables? And connected with that, did they have a

1 community response before they were installed and do they have any difference in the response
2 now that people have utilized them?

3
4 Mr. Kott: Commissioner Burt, I am not certain about this but I have heard that Menlo Park is
5 quite an engaged and lively community. My counterpart in Menlo Park reports to me, and he is a
6 very reliable guy, that they have precisely one complaint about speed tables through all their
7 deployments of speed tables in Menlo Park. There was a fair amount of apprehension prior and
8 people were quite expressive of that apprehension.

9
10 Commissioner Burt: Finally, one of the ways in which speed tables are utilized on occasions
11 such as on Campus Drive on Stanford is to incorporate them with a crosswalk and providing
12 slowing right at the pedestrian safety standpoint. These didn't utilize that. Were there particular
13 reasons why the one at Gailen wasn't determined to be used as a combination speed table/raised
14 crosswalk?

15
16 Mr. Stoffel: There were no issues really expressed about pedestrians crossing the street there is
17 also no March crosswalk. It is kind of interesting that the top table there in Menlo Park [graphic]
18 is actually a raised crosswalk. For some strange reason, this is on Laurel pretty much in front of
19 City Hall, they chose not to mark them as crosswalks or to sign them as crosswalks but they have
20 ramps and they call it a crosswalk. We probably wouldn't do that. We didn't want to put them
21 at corners and prefer to put them mid-block. We would just as soon not have people slowing
22 down too much at corners in case people on the cross street think the car is going to stop and so
23 they will pull out, that kind of thing. But if it is a marked crosswalk and there is a pedestrian
24 issue they could definitely be used in that regard but we didn't have that here in this project.

25
26 Commissioner Griffin: Joe, your reliable source in Menlo Park does he say that they are
27 satisfied with the ethicality of these speed tables? Did they slow down the traffic like they
28 thought they would in front of Burgess Theater, etc.?

29
30 Mr. Kott: He has described himself and he is not an effusive guy as delighted.

31
32 Commissioner Griffin: Delighted, all right. Carl, one of the difficulties for me with the first trial
33 was the surprise that I had and I think many people had with the abruptness of the speed
34 cushions. There was not much cushion in those cushions. They were like an old fashioned speed
35 bump as far as I was concerned. Have we done anything with these speed tables to test them
36 more thoroughly and I am particularly thinking of the people that were on your advisory
37 committee, did you get them over here to Laurel Street and have them do some trial runs so that
38 they knew what they were letting themselves in for? Did City Staff do the same?

39
40 Mr. Stoffel: Well Joe and I and our City Traffic Engineer of course we drove over the speed
41 cushions also but we went and drove over all the speed tables. We had the Fire Department go
42 over and take their rigs over to Menlo Park because the Fire Department has to live with these
43 things on collector streets and they said those things are great. They would rather not have
44 anything but if traffic calming is going to go in they like those much better than normal speed
45 humps. We sent out this same exhibit to everybody, all these 1,200 or so people, in this wide
46 area and told them as you can see there exactly where they are located and encouraged people to
47 go drive over them. As far as I know all of our or most of our working group members went
48 over there and tried them out. So the answer to that would be yes.

1
2 Chair Bialson: Bonnie, one more question?
3

4 Commissioner Packer: Yes. I have a question about the way the average speeds were
5 determined initially. The reason I have my question is there is one speed given that was in the
6 earlier report, there were four different locations, it is on page seven of 13 of the report right
7 before this one. There was one speed and Louis Road is a funny kind of road. When you are
8 going towards Charleston and you are coming over the creek you are going downhill and you
9 tend to speed up and then you slow down as you approach the stop sign. When you are coming
10 off from Charleston turning either way, you have just made a turn and especially now with the
11 new arrangement of the curb you have to go very slow which is good, but you are going slow
12 and you are not going to get up to speed going north. So there is a different way you drive and I
13 can understand why there are different speeds at different blocks because of the creek and
14 whether you are coming from Charleston or going towards Charleston as opposed to people just
15 speeding. You modulate your speed because of the conditions of Louis Road. I just wondered if
16 that was taken into consideration when you determined that the area between Adobe Creek and
17 Charleston was more suitable for spot treatment as opposed to another area and whether you
18 analyzed it. Because the difference between speeds is small, it was 35 miles per hour right in
19 between and right in the middle was area three and the other places were like 32 miles per hour.
20 It was really a very small difference. It wasn't like it was an area where people were always
21 speeding. I suspect the higher number probably comes from the people going towards
22 Charleston coming from the creek and going downhill and not because they were egregious
23 speeders. So what consideration did the working group give to that aspect in choosing that spot?
24

25 Mr. Stoffel: The original request as I said came from the folks living between Charleston and the
26 creek which is kind of a hard to see blank area there just above Gailen as you approach the top of
27 the picture. Of course that is where the hill is. When we did our before measurements the ones
28 that we used to determine to see if this was a valid project to qualify to work on the speed was
29 measured about where 3915 is which is between the two speed tables. We took one
30 measurement there. That was the highest one at 35 miles per hour. It is well after the downhill
31 after the creek. That is an average of both directions. Then the other place we measured was
32 down near Charleston, which is about 3939, it is halfway between Charleston and Bibbits. That
33 speed was low, that was 23. We really only needed the one speed, the 35, because obviously
34 down near Charleston there was a reason for it to be lower in both directions. So the 35 miles
35 per hour was the qualifying speed and it happens to be right where the working group said that is
36 the problem area and that is why we want the speed tables there. People do go faster as they do
37 go down, as they are coming south and they pass over the hump of the creek but that hill is pretty
38 much done by Gailen. That is a problem for them and they would like to slow those people
39 down also. It is not just that people are letting the car go and it is not really speeding. It is
40 speeding it just happens to be caused by people going over the hill and going too fast. The group
41 wanted to focus on the area where the worst problem was which is the 35 mile per hour speed
42 which is the block where those two tables are. North of there up towards Ross and north of Ross
43 and the prior area we actually found the speeds not to be that high even before the speed
44 cushions went in or just before they went in. We measured and they were up around 31 or 32
45 and so that is one reason why we dropped that area. They really didn't meet the criteria for the
46 second round.
47

1 Chair Bialson: Thank you. I think we should hear from the public at this point. Each speaker
2 will have three minutes. If you can refer to someone else's presentation perhaps so you don't
3 have to repeat it that would be great. First we have Jean Wilcox to be followed by Peretz.
4 Thanks.
5

6 Ms. Jean Wilcox, 4005 Sutherland Drive, Palo Alto: Members of the Planning and
7 Transportation Commission tonight you will be considering the proposal to install two speed
8 tables on Louis between Adobe Creek and East Charleston. I would like to point out that this
9 section of Louis comes within the one-quarter mile parameter of East Charleston and is included
10 in the traffic study of the Charleston corridor and is therefore subject to a moratorium until
11 February 2004. As traffic proceeds south along Louis and reaches the two proposed speed tables
12 between Adobe Creek and East Charleston there may be a temptation on the part of the drivers to
13 avoid these speed tables by turning right on Gailen and left on Grove causing unintended cut-
14 through traffic into nearby neighborhoods. The Charleston corridor traffic study includes an area
15 of one-quarter mile on either side of Charleston so the Transportation Department can include an
16 analysis of whether possible changes to Charleston will cause cut-through traffic into nearby
17 neighborhoods. Since this section of Louis is under the moratorium I would like to request that
18 no decision be made tonight on placing these speed tables on Louis. The City Council has
19 already approved a comprehensive traffic study for the whole of Charleston to include side
20 streets up to one-quarter mile. Thank you.
21

22 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Mr. Peretz to be followed by Terry Martin.
23

24 Mr. Peretz, 3871 Corina Way, Palo Alto: I live on Corina Way, which is very close to the area.
25 I am a survivor of the first trial that was really bad. I have sent by email my input for the
26 program and I did it too late so I would like to read it to you.
27

28 I have lived in the area for the last 13 years and drive this section at least four times a day. I
29 never experienced irresponsible driving there. So 35 miles per hour I believe is reasonable. I
30 believe it is above the law but I can understand this happening there. I am saying that if you
31 approve speed tables over there basically we justify speed tables everywhere in Palo Alto. If it is
32 applicable here it is applicable everywhere in Palo Alto so think about the budget and the
33 inconvenience to people.
34

35 In general when looking at law enforcement it shouldn't be a punishment for people. There are
36 many other ways of doing it. Palo Alto just put in light signs for the 25 speed and the speed you
37 are driving. I would start with this to put some feedback to the driver. Put signs, put police
38 officers once every two weeks. It is a nice way to make money not spend money. So I am
39 strongly opposed to the speed tables. I think if you want to slow down don't invest money, don't
40 maintain the holes and if there are enough holes in the street that people will drive slow.
41

42 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Terry Martin to be followed by Marvin Weinstein.
43

44 Dr. Terry Martin, 3616 Evergreen Drive, Palo Alto: Hi I live in the area. I am very much
45 opposed to the speed tables or bumps. I want to make three quick points. One is to challenge the
46 logic of determining the project area. Two is engineering standards. Three is liability.
47

1 One on who drives this type of process. If it is an isolated neighborhood and someone wants to
2 do this fine. But if you look at the map and assume that most of us have some interest in going
3 south on 101 this is a critical logical road that we need to take in a whole lot larger area than just
4 that small section that you are considering. So I contend that for these collector streets you really
5 can't look at just a few residents sitting on a street. You have to look at the impact on everybody
6 that is traveling down the street. So I am very much opposed to this concept that a few people
7 should determine this project. I think you should look at a map, you should determine every
8 household that would be compromised to have to have to go a longer distance, spend more
9 money for fuel, more pollution to get to the same area. You can identify those households you
10 send them the postcards and let that group vote, if you want to do it that way fine.

11
12 Secondly, engineering standards. Whatever you do I think one, you can't put in bumps that are a
13 damage risk to an automobile traveling at the speed limit and two, you can't increase the risk of
14 public safety. The last speed cushions did a miserable job on both those counts. I became
15 involved in this process when I saw a near accident of a car trying to divert from the speed
16 cushion and almost hit a bicyclist. Now I have been living here for 26 years I have never seen a
17 problem on this section of street and I think you are about to create one. Also the last speed
18 cushions calculated and imposed a six-G shock, that is six times acceleration to gravity shock, to
19 the suspension of a car traveling at 25 miles per hour over that bump. My car was damaged. I
20 had to get a suspension fix for it but it is an older car. I know that newer cars respond differently
21 so if you are testing speed bumps and their effects older cars react different than newer cars and
22 you are likely to damage a lot of older cars with these things.

23
24 The final think is liability. You guys are here on this Commission to vote on this type of thing
25 and I don't know what process goes into that. As I said I started getting involved in this when I
26 saw someone almost get injured. Now it is my understanding that there is no accident history in
27 this section of street. The question is if you vote to improve this who on this Board is going to
28 standup and accept liability for that injury.

29
30 Chair Bialson: Could you wait just a second? Go ahead, Pat.

31
32 Commissioner Burt: Have you had an opportunity to visit the speed tables that Menlo Park has
33 installed on Willow or Alma or Laurel?

34
35 Dr. Martin: No, the only things I have seen are the ones on Stanford campus that are associated
36 with crosswalks and you have to stop anyway. I think that's fine. One of the points of the
37 engineering is I asked Carl with the speed cushions was there any consideration at all done
38 before installation of what damage it might do to a car. The answer is none. Even went back to
39 the company and no the company doesn't do any analysis. No one is doing and engineering
40 analysis of the effect on the car. Plus there is a psychological analysis to make everyone drive
41 around these things and increase the public safety hazard. Somebody has to think about stuff
42 before they do it.

43
44 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Marvin Weinstein to be followed by Jim Swan.

45
46 Mr. Marvin Weinstein, 3845 Nathan Way, Palo Alto: Hi I live a short distance past the area. I
47 would like to make basically three points and then ask a question.

48

1 The first point goes to what you are discussing which was I am a little bothered by the statements
2 of the group that reported. If you look at your first minutes, which you distributed out here,
3 when the first trial was suggested. The comment from the head of that group said I am very
4 excited about the possibility of demonstrating the ethicacy of a new technology speed cushion
5 and yet he also testified that he tried those speed cushions out. No person with same judgment
6 who tried those speed cushions out could have made the remarks he made. They were
7 impossible to live with.

8
9 Two, the way Mr. Stoffel reported were only the people on that section of street are seriously
10 impacted. I can't get to my house if I don't drive down that section of street. So even though I
11 am not defined to be in the effected area I am very much affected. There is no other way. It is
12 not a street you can easily avoid if you live in that area.

13
14 Three, I find it a little disingenuous to say that people could drive the speed limit very
15 comfortably when in the same report that was distributed and in Mr. Stoffel's report he said we
16 are posting these at 20 miles per hour. He is somewhat more forthcoming in the report where he
17 says they should be fine at 25 but we are posting them at 20 just to avoid possibility of damage to
18 cars and things like that.

19
20 Now he also said something that I am very much in favor of as strongly as I am opposed to the
21 speed bump or the speed hump or the speed table I have nothing against being forced to stop for
22 an extra stop sign placed on the corner of let's say Bibbits. That would be fine. It doesn't affect
23 older residents who have to jump over the bump. Mr. Stoffel said it causes exactly the same
24 amount of slowing down as these more intrusive measures which affect cars, which affect people
25 in SUVs, which I am not a fan of but there are a lot of SUVs in the neighborhood and cause
26 people to do very strange things when they approach these tables because of what happens when
27 they are hit. It is the top of the SUV as they go over one of these tables. So I don't understand
28 why the stop sign was not considered and it is not on any of the comments as to what people
29 were going to be looking at as a possible measure. It seems very effective.

30
31 The reason there is not a lot of speed at Ross Road, which is where I turn onto Nathan, is
32 precisely because there is a stop sign there. The Charleston turnoff onto Louis, the modification
33 there has been very effective at slowing people down. I have no problem with that either. If
34 there really is a speed problem on that street I am happy for you to calm it. I don't understand
35 why a stop sign isn't an effective method.

36
37 Chair Bialson: We have a question from the Commission for you.

38
39 Commissioner Griffin: Sir, I happen to share your opinion of speed cushions as I think you
40 heard me mention earlier. I am interested however in whether or not you had an opportunity to
41 try the Menlo Park speed table at all?

42
43 Mr. Weinstein: I have been across some of the speed tables. They tend to come singularly. This
44 plan has two speed tables within one block. So you get a bump and then another bump. That is
45 a very different shock pattern than the ones that they are talking about in the other areas. I
46 suspect that it will be more disturbing, I can't tell you it will be more disturbing, I can say the
47 judgment of the people who reported the speed cushion was a great idea and they were very
48 excited about trying it leaves me underwhelmed.

1
2 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Jim Swan to be followed by Rita Sodos.
3

4 Mr. Jim Swan, 3939 Louis Road, Palo Alto: Commission, gentlemen. I live at 3939 Louis,
5 which is the second house from Charleston, and I am here this evening in support of these which
6 you can probably tell from my address. I am no longer concerned about the volume of traffic on
7 Louis. I understand the type of street I live on. I am no longer concerned about traffic in the 25
8 mile per hour range or below. I am primarily concerned about traffic in excess of 35 miles an
9 hour. I also admit that the speed cushion was a dismal failure. It had gaps in it that allowed
10 people to allow one wheel in the curb and one wheel on the sidewalk. My understanding is these
11 will go curb to curb so there is no necessity for people to attempt to do that.
12

13 After the speed cushions were removed there was a noticeable speed reduction in traffic. I
14 thought this would be great if it lasted and it has not. Traffic now comes up San Antonio hits
15 Fabian and for some reason after they make that turn onto Louis they feel that they need to get
16 going again at some high rate of speed. Rather than take up a lot of your time obviously I am in
17 support of it and that is why I am here this evening. Thank you.
18

19 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Rita Sodos to be followed by Irene Sampson.
20

21 Ms. Rita Sodos, 3612 Arbutus Avenue, Palo Alto: I live just on the other side of East Meadow
22 Drive. I have lived there for 35 years and I walk, bike and drive that area just about every day of
23 my life. It is a very quiet place. You can count the number of people on one hand most of the
24 time going from Charleston down to East Meadow Drive. With all the stop signs that are already
25 there and the way the street curves and they have neglected to put the creek on here, it is almost
26 impossible unless you are crazy to be speeding because you not only have a stop sign on Gailen
27 and one on Bibbits as you come off of Charleston but then you are going uphill. You are coming
28 off a curve going uphill coming down and then at Ross Road you have a four-way stop at Ross
29 Road. I think that it was conducted not on a very impartial basis. It was decided I think by the
30 Traffic Department and some of the residents on Louis Road that this was necessary. After I
31 came to the last meeting that we had they were going to select another committee or maybe that
32 was the first meeting, not just the last one. They were going to select a ten-person committee
33 from the residents. Five were supposed to be from area right around Louis Road and the other
34 kind of from where I am right on the other side. I sent the email the very day after I asked if I
35 could be on this committee and I didn't hear anything for two weeks. Finally when I did it
36 turned out that they said that they hadn't selected a committee yet. I never heard from anybody.
37 When I did get to the meeting and I questioned it I was told that they had selected the ten people
38 and they were all selected from the cards that they sent in, the response cards, saying if they
39 wanted nothing, something different or the same. Only two people out of the ten were selected
40 that were against it. I happen to have been against it. It seemed like it was a stacked deck. It
41 wasn't very fair. The money that was spent, \$55,000, on a project that was used in Mobile,
42 Alabama and the parts were from England. Economically that didn't make very good sense to
43 me. Then they spent another \$5,000 to take it out. It was like \$60,000, let's try this and see if it
44 works and if not well there is always more money. So I just don't think that the thing was
45 conducted fairly and I don't think that it is necessary. I guess my time is up. I think there are
46 enough stop signs and everything.
47

48 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Irene Sampson to be followed by Chip Wytmar.

1
2 Ms. Irene Sampson, Bibbits Drive, Palo Alto: I am Irene Sampson and I live on Bibbits Drive on
3 the side that is one block long and ends on a cul-de-sac. I can't go anywhere without making
4 either a right or a left turn onto Louis Road so I have been very interested in the proposals to
5 slow down the traffic on Louis. I had no objection to the original cushions that we had. It was
6 the way people drove when they were on the street that I objected to. You never knew whether
7 they were going to turn this way or that way to try to avoid them. People that had come to
8 almost a complete stop before they would go over them. You just never knew what you were
9 going to encounter with the drivers as they met those.

10
11 I have used and driven on Willow Road in Menlo Park many times. The tables that are there I
12 think are just fine. One of the problems that nobody seems to have mentioned you go up over
13 the creek but there is also a curve in that road. When I am waiting at the corner of my street,
14 Bibbits, to make the turn onto Louis the visibility is not all that great. Those cars do go up over
15 the creek and they come down and they speed until they have to stop at the corner of Charleston
16 where there is a stop sign. So I am very much in favor of putting in these new speed tables.
17 Thank you.

18
19 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Chip Wytmar to be followed by Kerry Yarkin and that would be my
20 last speaker unless someone else wishes to put in a speaker request card.

21
22 Mr. Chip Wytmar, 749 Mayview Avenue, Palo Alto: Hi I live some distance from this area but
23 nevertheless still impacted. My main concern has to do with the fact that a certain amount of
24 traffic is going to be diverted by this project. In the previous trial there was approximately 40%
25 of the cars were diverted off based on the City's data, approximately 1,200 cars a day. Those
26 cars obviously went somewhere else and at the previous Town Meeting, or whatever it is called,
27 I raised this question and didn't really get any adequate response because no measurements were
28 done on where this traffic went. From personal experience I can say that it went down side
29 streets that are not collector streets and are considerably less appropriate for that level of traffic.
30 This will be a less severe example so there will be less diversion obviously but I believe there will
31 still be some and it will be significant. So that is my main concern with this. That it is pushing
32 traffic that is properly on a collector street off onto non-collector side streets. I think that is a
33 very negative impact of this project.

34
35 My second comment is that what we are doing here is we have 20 people who voted from the
36 neighborhood to put this in and they are dictating a change in behavior for 1,000 people in the
37 survey area. A clear majority of which voted against this by the way based on the City's data
38 again. So those two main ideas that are against this project, which quite frankly I think, overrule
39 in my mind the interest and the ideas of the 37 households along this stretch of road. Thank you
40 very much.

41
42 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Kerry Yarkin and that will be the last speaker.

43
44 Ms. Kerry Yarkin, 135 Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto: Good evening Commissioners. I didn't
45 hear the whole discussion. I am here to support the speed cushions, which are not even up there
46 tonight. The reason I am bringing forth this idea is because the Churchill Avenue Traffic
47 Committee last summer tested out the speed cushions which now people are saying are too
48 strong but actually most of the people from our committee that went out to Louis Road and road

1 over the speed cushions felt that it wasn't strong enough. We felt that you could still go 25 miles
2 an hour. Now I see that you are looking at lesser measures which are not the speed humps, we
3 wanted speed humps because we didn't think that cushions were actually strong enough, now
4 you are looking at speed tables which I actually don't think are strong enough. You have a
5 beautiful neighborhood. You have people living on Louis Road. The street is the same width as
6 all these other side streets. The volume of traffic should be on the arterials. Now if people
7 complain about going 25 miles an hour where there are schools, parks and homes they all have
8 front yards on Louis Road. Are those people just being forced out of the livability of their
9 neighborhood because other people will not go 25 miles an hour? I think you should start
10 looking back at the speed cushions because I think they were inexpensive. I think Carl did a
11 good job. I think that they should be reconsidered because I think you need to uphold the
12 livability of neighborhoods. I think the patterns that people will change as they drive should be
13 dealt with but I think you need to ensure the livability of the people that live on Louis Road and
14 have those thousands of cars every day overrunning their neighborhood, overrunning schools
15 where people are dropping children off, trying to walk across the street, own a dog, walk up and
16 down the street. Louis Road was never intended to carry the amount of traffic that it is now
17 being forced to carry because the arterials are not carrying their load. So I think you need to look
18 at it in a bigger picture and say yes there might have been some other issues about side streets
19 where the traffic shouldn't have been diverted but the traffic should not be at the volumes that
20 you have now accepted as acceptable levels. I think you really need to take another look at the
21 speed cushions.

22
23 Chair Bialson: Thank you. There are no other speakers. One more speaker and this will be the
24 last one, Roland Finston.

25
26 Mr. Roland Finston, 856 Thornwood, Palo Alto: Thank you Madam Chairman. Commissioner
27 Packer asked the question about the differential between the north and southbound traffic. One
28 of the data sets that came up at the reconvened meeting of the wider area and local residents was
29 in fact a breakdown between the north and southbound speeds in the affected area. It is
30 interesting that the 85th percentile speed going south was 35 miles per hour and the 35th
31 percentile going north was 34 miles per hour. So basically we had a significant problem and this
32 is in the curved section.

33
34 Chair Bialson: Can I just ask a question? Was that both the 85th percentile?

35
36 Mr. Finston: Yes, both the 85th percentile 34 miles per hour/35 miles per hour north to south.

37
38 Chair Bialson: Thank you.

39
40 Mr. Finston: So by that point it is about similarly problematic. I think Ms. Sampson's point is
41 very well taken. Because of the curve in the road it is quite hazardous I believe for people
42 coming out on Bibbits to face the possibility that one out of every seven cars could be
43 approaching 35 miles an hour and not be seen until very late as they came into view. For this
44 reason I believe the speed table is about the best compromise that we are going to get in this
45 situation and I urge you to support the trial. Thank you.

46
47 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Let's close the public portion and bring it back to the
48 Commissioners. Do I have any other questions of Staff at this point? Karen.

1
2 Commissioner Holman: Just one. Do the speed tables actually go from curb to curb?
3

4 Mr. Stoffel: No they don't. The gutter needs to remain open so somebody maybe one of the
5 public had said that, they go from gutter to gutter. They taper down in the last one-foot before
6 the gutter. So in that sense the speed cushions on one side actually went all the way to the gutter.
7 On the other side they stopped short of the gutter but they also had the gaps in between them. It
8 is always a potential problem especially on a rolled curb situation where the curb is gentler than a
9 driver who doesn't want to go over the bump might want to put a wheel in the gutter. That was a
10 big problem with the speed cushions as we found out. We didn't think it would happen but they
11 were so abrupt that people really wanted to find that gutter. We think these speed tables are not
12 going to be that way that people will find it more time consuming to go over to gutter than to just
13 go over them because they are so much more gentle. In this case, however, just to preclude or to
14 try to minimize a potential problem since we did have a problem like that with the cushions we
15 are going to put the signs and the poles, which were behind the sidewalk in the prior trial, they
16 are going to go in the sidewalk at roughly one foot in from where the gutter is. This we do on all
17 of our speed hump projects in rolled curb areas to keep the cars off the sidewalk and it also is a
18 bit of a deterrent. People don't want to get too close to these poles so they will tend to stay out of
19 the gutter area a little bit more. We think that is an extra safeguard and we are probably not
20 going to be doing it on our other speed table projects but here we want to make sure to try to
21 minimize repetition of people driving over on the sidewalk kind of thing. However, these are so
22 much gentler than the cushions we don't really think that is going to be a problem. So the gutters
23 are open, the three foot gutter.
24

25 Chair Bialson: Karen.
26

27 Commissioner Holman: That positioning of the signs, that is without detriment to bicyclists?
28 Just for clarification.
29

30 Mr. Stoffel: The position of signs in all of our projects, the speed hump projects where we have
31 rolled curbs, has always been controversial. Our standard calls for in a rolled curb area where
32 we have speed humps that the signpost goes one foot from the edge of the gutter which leaves
33 one foot of sidewalk on the street side and four feet, which is kind of the minimum certainly for
34 ADA purposes, on the other side but people don't like that understandably. But we feel that that
35 pole needs to be there in the rolled curb areas especially for speed humps as a way to keep
36 people from avoiding the hump and going up into an area where they shouldn't be. Basically it
37 is an unfortunate drawback that you get with traffic calming, as are your signs and poles and in
38 that particular location. So they are in the sidewalk and there is legal space there but there is not
39 as much space. There is one foot less.
40

41 Chair Bialson: Joe.
42

43 Commissioner Bellomo: Steve, could you speak to the Charleston corridor moratorium that was
44 brought up?
45

46 Mr. Steve Emslie, Planning Director: There is nothing in the Charleston action that the Council
47 took that would preclude the City from installing devices in the public right-of-way. The
48 moratorium limits the issuance of development permits within the study area, which was as

1 pointed out by the speaker, one-quarter mile north and south of Charleston except along Alma,
2 which it extends to a half-mile in either direction. So there is nothing legal that would preclude
3 the installation of these. I want to point that these are a trial. We do all of our traffic calming on
4 a trial basis and evaluate them as we would evaluate the traffic patterns that were addressing the
5 corridor. So we don't think that it would inhibit the work that we are conducting on Charleston
6 to have the speed tables in place with the clear understanding that modifications to those speed
7 tables could be considered along with other improvements with the Charleston corridor.
8

9 Mr. Kott: Further the ordinance, I don't have a copy of it with me but, it specifically and
10 explicitly states that ongoing operational improvements and traffic management planning and
11 installation of improvements shall not be prohibited or precluded from continuing and being
12 done due to the ordinance on the [north] moratorium and the direction given to us to do the study
13 of Charleston and Arastradero traffic.
14

15 Commissioner Bellomo: I appreciate that clarification.
16

17 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.
18

19 Commissioner Packer: I have a concern about that pole in the middle of the sidewalk. The
20 sidewalks in that area are usually no more than three feet wide anyway except where it goes
21 down. If you put it in one foot in you are not going to have room to push a stroller through or
22 kids on bikes on training wheels. I think it is creating a hazard for pedestrians. That is a tradeoff
23 that I guess we have to consider. Can you put in the sign at half a foot in? Does it have to be a
24 whole foot? Or is this just some rule that you made up that applies whether there are rolled curbs
25 or straight curbs?
26

27 Mr. Stoffel: I don't have a good diagram here to show you. The sidewalks are five feet wide
28 from the back of the sidewalk next to people's lawns and so on out the crack and that is where
29 the curb begins to roll down which is the curb and the gutter is three feet. So the flat part of the
30 sidewalk is five. People said why don't you put them right on the edge of the sidewalk on the
31 crack where the gutter is so that you leave the five feet of the sidewalk open. The reason is that
32 we consider the traveled way includes the gutter up to the edge of the sidewalk. If we put the
33 pole right at the edge of the sidewalk the sign is hanging over into the street and our City Traffic
34 Engineer just felt that the pole is too close to where cars travel and the sign hangs over into the
35 street. No other signs do that. So we felt that we had to put it one foot back, which means the
36 edge of the sign is right at the edge of the sidewalk. Now, they don't have to go there. We
37 didn't specify in the mailing to the residents where the signs go. We originally had thought let's
38 just keep them where they were behind the sidewalk. Then we thought well let's be a little safer
39 rather than sorry in this case. If you feel strongly about that and certainly a lot of residents do
40 you can direct us otherwise.
41

42 Commissioner Packer: If I may I have another question on the cost and how the trial would
43 work. When the speed cushions were there one of the advantages you liked about them is that
44 you could just screw them in and just take them out and there was less construction involved.
45 With these speed tables do you actually pour stuff and it actually sticks to the road and then you
46 have to scrape it off if it doesn't work out? What is that going to cost? Also how much has been
47 spent already on this project?
48

1 Mr. Stoffel: Somebody had said the speed cushions were inexpensive. Actually the speed
2 cushions turned to be quite a bit more expensive than a normal asphalt bump. There is a lot of
3 cost in the rubber product, they are quite labor intensive to put in. When they were put in they
4 were screwed down but the idea of screwing them down was not so they could be taken out
5 easily that is just the way they are installed. It was difficult to take them out too. There were a
6 lot of screws and bolts and little holes to fill up so that also is not a simple process.

7
8 The speed tables and speed humps and so forth are poured in place asphalt. They are installed in
9 a permanent fashion even though we treat it as a trial. Actually we have never had any of our
10 trial humps come out so we don't have that experience but essentially they would be scraped off.
11 They are added on top of existing asphalt so they would be scraped off. They would leave an
12 area of the street that would have to be kind of slurry sealed back over again. I don't actually
13 have a cost for that but it costs about \$5,000 to \$7,000 to put in each one including the signs. I
14 suspect that the removal is a couple thousand each. We don't anticipate that they would be
15 removed but it certainly is a trial and that is a possibility.

16
17 Chair Bialson: Let's have a motion if someone has it ready? Karen, and then a motion.

18
19 Commissioner Holman: Can I just ask one potentially silly question but what the heck? If you
20 are putting the sign out further to the street and keeping the sidewalk clear is there any example
21 or precedent for a soft-sign, if you will? I understood you to say that the sign portion is what
22 sticking out and that is what the concern is but if the pole is there but the sign is a soft sign does
23 that satisfy the concern of the street department?

24
25 Mr. Stoffel: Well, it is not a silly question because we have agonized over that and different
26 options. In fact one option we considered was keep the sign and the pole back behind the
27 sidewalk where they originally were. Then if a problem develops then we go in and install on
28 that crack area a four-foot flexible plastic post, you have probably seen these. When you see
29 them they are usually leaning because people hit them and they never seem to get straight again.
30 That is an option and it is flexible. It doesn't hang over and if it is hit it is okay. We thought that
31 first of all it is adding more aesthetic unappealing things. We now have two things on each side
32 of the table rather than one and eventually they are going to get hit, need to be maintained and
33 look kind of crummy. That is why we decided against that but again that is another option we
34 just didn't think it was the best option.

35
36 Chair Bialson: Karen.

37
38 Commissioner Holman: Follow up to that. Is there any cost impact to not installing the sign and
39 then determining there is a need and coming back and doing it later? Is there any cost impact to
40 doing it that way?

41
42 Mr. Stoffel: You mean not installing a sign at all or putting it behind the sidewalk and coming
43 back later and putting in these plastic things?

44
45 Commissioner Holman: Not installing at all to begin with.

46
47 Mr. Stoffel: Well, we have determined, and if Joe wants to jump in, that Menlo Park actually
48 they don't use signs next to their speed tables. I haven't talked to them I don't exactly know why

1 they have a different view of that. We have felt that since we don't have any of these on major
2 streets that we need to be a little cautious at the beginning and put a sign at each table. So we did
3 not consider it an option to not put in a sign at all. In the future after we get some experience
4 with these we might find that we can live without it. One of the primary reasons for putting a
5 sign is so that the Fire Department knows where they are. We thought that if residents or drivers
6 see the hump and they see a sign they may take the hump more seriously if they see a sign than if
7 it is just a little roll of asphalt in the road. Joe might want to say something else.
8

9 Mr. Kott: It is just our view and we have been pretty consistent about it that it is a good principle
10 to provide motorist advisories.
11

12 Commissioner Holman: My questions are coming at the end here. If we install the speed tables
13 though is the method that is proposed to be used, it isn't the visual that is up there, but there are
14 these arrows on the ones in Menlo Park. So there certainly is an advisory that you are coming up
15 to something. Is the City proposing to do the same thing? It seems like that would be quite a lot
16 of notice.
17

18 Mr. Stoffel: We do plan to use that same striping. We went through all this. We thought gee,
19 these are gentler devices, Menlo Park doesn't use signs, we have the striping why can't we do
20 that? Well, sometimes if there is a car up ahead that thing is covered up and the car behind it
21 isn't going to see it until the last minute under certain situations. The other is that at night those
22 are reflective but signs are much more visible than any of these markings, even more than
23 putting the legend "bump" in the street which is another option which is just to put the legend in
24 the street. That also is less visible especially at night it is flush and the sign is vertical. Also the
25 car ahead of you can be blocking it and you are kind of following maybe too close behind and all
26 of a sudden you don't see it until it is too late. So again that was our judgment that we want to
27 start out with the sign in addition to that triangular striping.
28

29 Chair Bialson: Joe and then let's get to the motion. We have four items tonight.
30

31 Commissioner Bellomo: One follow up question. Where is the sign? Is it at the bump?
32

33 Mr. Stoffel: If we put it in the sidewalk, which is what we are planning to do, it needs to be
34 somewhere in the area where the bump is, just from one front edge to the back edge or within a
35 foot or two. Enough that it will deter a car from going up on the sidewalk. If the sign is behind
36 the sidewalk the sign doesn't have to be so closely related to the bump it could be maybe 20 feet
37 ahead or something like that. The way we are planning to do it does need to be with that 22-foot
38 length of the table or one or two feet either side. We will try to find places that are somewhat
39 hidden from homes or not quite such eyesores as they might be because they are not pretty and
40 nobody really wants those in front of their houses.
41

42 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Yes, Michael?
43

44 MOTION
45

46 Commissioner Griffin: I move that the PTC approve a four-month trial of two speed tables on
47 Louis Road as per the Staff Report.
48

1 Chair Bialson: Do I have a second?

2

3 SECOND

4

5 Commissioner Burt: I'll second that.

6

7 Chair Bialson: Do you care to speak to the motion?

8

9 Commissioner Griffin: I think that traffic volumes and speeding seems to be increasing on a
10 yearly basis to the dismay of all of us. While a motorcycle cop behind every bush would be a
11 dandy way perhaps to enforce the speeding laws we don't seem to have the money in the last
12 couple of years to do that sort of thing which means that we need to use these passive traffic
13 calming devices that Joe and Carl have been talking to us about this evening. Whether we like
14 traffic calming devices or not it seems to be something that's time has come. Traffic calming
15 isn't a slam-dunk solution as we learned from the first trial on Louis Road. We clearly learned
16 from that unhappy experience and now we have an improved scheme. I think that we have
17 looked at this evening that we are confident of testing. I support this new plan because I think
18 that based on my experience with speed tables in Menlo Park I find them to be much less
19 intrusive in terms of driver impacts and more effective in achieving the drop of speed that we are
20 trying to achieve. There has been some discussion tonight about the issue of fairness. I can see
21 why there is some discussion on that point but the project area support rate being 87% and those
22 people living right in the teeth of these traffic impacts that personally talks to me. I was also
23 impressed by the fact that the wide area support was in the neighborhood of 44%. So those are
24 the main points that spoke to me about this scheme. I look forward to seeing the results of the
25 test.

26

27 Chair Bialson: Pat.

28

29 Commissioner Burt: I would just like to add to Michael's comments. I certainly appreciate why
30 the first trial resulted in apprehensions by a lot of the folks in the surrounding areas. We have a
31 history of innovation in this community and this was a worthwhile experiment that we learned
32 from but I think that we need to differentiate between what went on then and what is being
33 proposed now. The two are drastically different. I really think that it would have been beneficial
34 of all of the folks who had apprehensions about these speed tables if they had really spent the
35 time and gone tried them out at a variety of locations. Frankly, as we have had various proposals
36 before us over the last several years and have seen speed bumps and diversions promoted and
37 proposed I have asked Staff a lot of times why aren't we looking at speed tables more, they seem
38 to be the most effective measure? They actually jar the vehicle far less than either of the other
39 methods. With the contrasting of materials and angles the perception of the driver is that they
40 have to slow down more than actually have to when they go through it. Whereas with a bump it
41 seems to be the other way around, it looks like you can plow through a bump and go through it
42 too fast. Speed tables they cause the driver to intuitively say, gee, I better slow down, then they
43 slow down and say, gee I didn't have to slow down as much as I thought and drive over them
44 pretty smoothly. I do really trust that these two speed tables in this area are not going to cause
45 any significant traffic diversion and if I felt otherwise I wouldn't support them. I do not believe
46 in traffic diversion. When you look at the maps here there is just no way that I as a driver would
47 choose to go around to these adjacent streets to avoid slowing to 25 miles an hour to go through
48 these tables. Twenty to 25 is a reasonable speed to pass through speed tables. I know that first

1 hand from multiple experiences and I don't have any doubt about it. So I hope that the residents
2 who do have these apprehensions will give it a fair evaluation and we will all see in the end
3 whether it was successful but I don't think this is a drastic measure. I believe it is a modest
4 measure and that those are the sorts of measures we should take. If we approach these programs
5 with modest measures initially then we may not initiate the sort of real strong concerns that we
6 have had from a lot of the neighbors here.

7
8 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.

9
10 Commissioner Packer: I am not going to support this motion for a number of reasons. The issue
11 is not speed cushions versus speed tables. I think speed tables in the right place sound like a nice
12 traffic calming solution. My concern is a bigger one and that is the nature of Louis Road and the
13 fact that there is an attempt to address certain residents' concerns on a road that is really a very
14 important collector for South Palo Alto. Of all the Planning Commissioners I am the one who
15 lives closest to the area. In fact my house is within the wide area. I think I mentioned earlier my
16 husband did send a postcard about improvements. So that is my disclosure. That is not the
17 issue. The issue I think we should think about, as Commissioners is that when you are looking at
18 a road like Louis Road that is in a sense it is kind of like an equivalent to an arterial for our area
19 of cul-de-sacs. We don't have any other choice but to use Louis Road. As Pat correctly pointed
20 out it is unlikely that traffic will be diverted because there isn't any other place to go. That is
21 where you go to come back into our neighborhood and to go out. So that is why there are a
22 number of cars there. That is why you have a higher volume of cars for that kind of a collector
23 road. This is a road that goes all the way to Embarcadero down to Charleston. It is a big long
24 street and to take one little section, one block, and put in a spot treatment is not traffic planning it
25 is simply a response to a more organized group of neighbors.

26
27 It is not looking at the issue from a larger perspective, which I think we should be putting more
28 of our energies toward and not have a program that is reacting solely to residential request. I
29 know that is what this traffic-calming program is supposed to be about and next on our agenda
30 we are going to be looking at the whole program. I would like Commissioners to think about
31 that in terms of this experience with Louis Road and say should we be doing very tiny spots on
32 collector streets? Is this really smart traffic planning? I think it is not. It is not because I am
33 going to have any personal objection going over the speed tables that is not the issue. I wouldn't
34 mind them as such. I just think it is the concept and approach that I think is flawed. With all due
35 respect to my neighbors who are supportive of these humps that is the reason why I would
36 oppose this motion. I also have to say that the Staff Report emphasizes the 44% support but
37 really it is a 56% of the people in the wide area that did not support it. The majority of the
38 people in the wide area, which includes half of the people that were in the original project area,
39 oppose this plan. Again from a fairness perspective and concern that maybe the working group
40 did not represent a balanced set of viewpoint, as was pointed out by one of the public speakers,
41 also has me concerned and is another reason why I will vote against this. I am mostly concerned
42 about the signs and the sidewalk but that is not my major point. My major point is I don't think
43 this is smart traffic planning.

44
45 Chair Bialson: Karen.

46
47 Commissioner Holman: Louis Road while it is a collector is a residential street and people live
48 on these streets that have children and ride their bikes and walk the sidewalks and with all due

1 respect to Bonnie's comments because while they are valid I happen to disagree. I think
2 anything that can be done on our residential streets to slow the traffic is appropriate. I live on
3 Homer. Homer is a very, very busy street. If I talk to my friends who live nearby who use
4 Homer instead of going down Forest to go Downtown they don't want Homer to become two-
5 way because it inconveniences them and means the traffic will be on their street. My perspective
6 is pretty much worldwide that we are all selfish beings and I certainly include myself in that and
7 I think when any of us consider, and I don't mean this to be insulting to anyone, I think we are
8 all creatures of habit, we all like not to be inconvenienced and I think slow and steady as she
9 goes I think is a good axiom to follow. So I think if this does slow down traffic to some extent I
10 would hope people not necessarily divert their patterns to another street but just go more slowly
11 which is a more safe practice for the neighborhood.

12
13 I have driven the speed tables on Willow Road and went back and did that again this week just
14 so I would have those fresh in my mind. They are very gentle and I agree with Pat that I would
15 have been probably a little bit more sympathetic to some of the speakers if they had taken
16 advantage of an opportunity to go experience those tables. We also have memory to overcome
17 here because the speed cushions I also drove after they were installed and they were pretty abrupt
18 and I certainly understand those concerns that the neighbors had and I am thinking are maybe a
19 little bit of a residual impression that is left here. I also think while the survey indicates that in
20 the broader area there wasn't the support there is in the more immediate area. I think that
21 neighborhoods ought to be a little bit more in control of their own destiny. So I give more
22 weight to those people in the immediate area.

23 24 **AMENDED MOTION**

25
26 I would ask for a friendly amendment to the motion and that is to eliminate the signs. Menlo
27 Park doesn't use them and our streets and certainly our neighborhoods get so littered with eye-
28 litter. I don't really see that the signs might be necessary. I concur with Staff that while a car
29 trailing another car might not see the markings on the speed table, when you are following
30 another car you are aware certainly of a car's rising motion and falling motion. So if you are
31 following a car you are going to see that activity. So I don't think that the signs should be
32 installed and if it comes to that then we will address that at the time. So I would ask for the
33 friendly amendment to be that the signs not be installed.

34
35 Chair Bialson: Maker of the motion, what is your response?

36
37 Commissioner Griffin: Carl, help me here a little bit. Tell me the signage that Karen is talking
38 about is specifically right at the point of the speed table. Are you also proposing that there
39 would be signage further upstream and downstream from that in addition or would this sign, the
40 sign that Karen is talking about, be the only signage for the event?

41
42 Mr. Stoffel: Our signage plan was to put an advance bumps ahead sign, 20 miles per hour sign,
43 at the beginning of the segment in each direction and those go behind the sidewalks. Those are
44 just like advisory signs. The ones I think that are the main subject here are the ones that also go
45 at each bump in the sidewalk, one in each side. If you did not want to put the signs in we would
46 still need to put in those advance-warning signs. There would still be one sign before the section
47 in each direction. I think we would also like to put a bump legend then on the street if we don't
48 have the sign, which Menlo Park doesn't do either, just as a point of information.

1
2 Commissioner Griffin: Say that again. You would like to have a bump legend, is that the word
3 you used?
4

5 Mr. Stoffel: In other words, if you didn't want a sign for each bump and alternate then would be
6 in addition to the triangular striping on the bump is 50 feet before the bump, which we do at all
7 our other speed hump locations, you stencil the word "bump" in eight foot letters on the street. It
8 is a type of sign but it is on the pavement. Now Menlo Park doesn't do that either just so you
9 know.
10

11 Commissioner Griffin: I accept the amendment.
12

13 Chair Bialson: Seconder?
14

15 Commissioner Burt: I do as well.
16

17 Chair Bialson: Joe.
18

19 Commissioner Bellomo: Good, I won't have to speak to the sign issue. I do think your
20 colleague in Menlo Park mentioned "a delightful experience" and I think I have traveled over
21 these speed bumps often and I find them effective and fairly easy. I am apprehensive about this
22 item, although I will support it, only in respect to its again possibility of a piecemealing nature. I
23 think we will speak to this in the next item, the overall calming program. In deference to time I
24 will be supporting this.
25

26 Chair Bialson: I will not be supporting the motion for several reasons. Again in respecting
27 Commissioners and public time I will point out number one I think the signs are extremely
28 important. Otherwise you will have people going up on the rolled curbs. I live on a street with
29 rolled curbs and I see it happening. So I think that they are a necessary safety function for both
30 pedestrians and bicyclists. I have driven on speed tables they aren't very bad but what we have
31 here is a somewhat scared neighborhood and we put the scar there. That scaring may result in
32 more diversion that we really want and I am very concerned about that. I think posting it at 20
33 miles per hour is going to result in people slowing down and then speeding up and it is not
34 necessarily going to add to the enjoyment of the neighborhood as a quiet residential one. I think
35 the signs that you are talking about before, the legends, etc. are going to make this look like an
36 arterial where it is not really one now. So overall I would say it would be great if Palo Alto
37 could gain some experience with speed tables but I am not willing to impose that on a
38 neighborhood that has already suffered through one trial of our ideas. I would rather have some
39 speed tables somewhere else in Palo Alto and have the entire community surrounding this area
40 decide that this is something that they want. So I will be opposing the motion.
41

42 MOTION PASSED
43

44 I think with that perhaps we should have a vote. All those in favor of the motion say aye. (ayes)
45 All those opposed say nay. (nays) the motion carried four to two with Commissioner Packer
46 and Bialson voting nay and Commissioner Cassel not present. Thank you very much.
47

48 Commissioner Holman: Madam Chair may I ask a follow up?

1
2 Chair Bialson: A short one.

3
4 Commissioner Holman: It is a brief one. Could I ask in relation to this if the Staff would give
5 consideration to accelerating the elimination of rolled curbs at locations where speed tables are
6 installed since that is a Comp Plan goal and in the CIP anyway?
7

8 Mr. Kott: Yes Commissioner Holman, we do advise Public Works Department as to the
9 Comprehensive Plan policy of replacement of rolled curb with vertical curb. There is a cost
10 increment and that is a consideration. We routinely, because our job is traffic safety above all,
11 we routinely advise that that be done.
12

13 Mr. Emslie: Just a clarification. What you are suggesting is that in areas where we have
14 installed these in the past that they be given priority. That we wouldn't at the same time that we
15 put in any speed tables or humps or any other devices it wouldn't be conditioned on converting
16 that to vertical curb.
17

18 Commissioner Holman: I am not recommending conditioning I am just saying give these
19 locations priority so that the concerns raised by the other Commissioners that voted against the
20 motion could be addressed. I think it is a good point that they make.
21

22 Mr. Emslie: So we understand that after the devices are installed that those areas would be given
23 priority.
24

25 Commissioner Griffin: What about simply installing a square cut curb at the event itself? In
26 other words, not trying to do an entire block upstream and downstream.
27

28 Mr. Emslie: That is not feasible. We would need to do it in a larger area and if that were the
29 case then we would be severely limited in the amount of traffic calming that we would be able to
30 do within our budget.
31

32 Chair Bialson: Okay, I think we have explored that. So this matter is closed finally and we will
33 go on to item number two, however, we are going to take no more than a five-minute break. So
34 we will be back in five minutes.
35

36 I would like to reconvene this meeting. The next item is Neighborhood Traffic Calming
37 Program. Would Staff care to proceed?
38

- 39 2. **Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program**: The Commission will discuss and make
40 recommendations on additional staff-recommended revisions to the City's Neighborhood
41 Traffic Calming Program procedures. Revisions include changes to the qualifying/ranking
42 criteria, procedure for collector street projects, and mandatory resident funding of
43 permanent measures. **SR Weblink**: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cityagenda/publish/planning-transportation-meetings/1910.pdf>
44
45

46 Mr. Kott: Thank you Chair Bialson. We did come to the Commission at an earlier meeting to
47 present proposed changes in our Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program guidelines for

1 Commission review and consideration and in turn recommendation to Council. Of course
2 Council makes decisions as to how our program operates.

3
4 Subsequent to the Commission review we did some additional discussion inside our division and
5 decided we didn't really catch all of the changes we thought were desirable in the first go around
6 and the list kept increasing. So we thought it advisable to come back to the Commission with
7 some further thoughts, which is why we are here tonight.

8
9 Our Council, as I mentioned in the first item, adopted the traffic-calming program, in April 2001
10 in response to mandate from the Comprehensive Plan. The program was intended to treat and
11 address rather localized traffic management problems. Those problems for example where
12 vehicle speeds substantially exceed of the speed limit and in a much lesser way the problem of
13 traffic volumes particularly when they are concentrated in time as cut-through traffic is. So cut-
14 through traffic is a subject of our spot treatment program. Of course we had some extensive past
15 discussions with the Commission about the proper emphasis of this particular program. It is not
16 a neighborhood wide program. In Palo Alto we have a long history of doing traffic calming
17 before it became [deregare] to call it traffic calming. It was called Neighborhood Traffic
18 Management and I am not sure what it was called before then but I am sure it had a name. We
19 have been doing it for a very long time. We have done neighborhood wide plans and projects,
20 College Terrace and Evergreen Park come to mind right away. We are about to install traffic
21 calming measures in the Downtown North neighborhood.

22
23 The neighborhood wide efforts are quite extensive they involve considerable consultation,
24 considerable data collection, considerable work. They are only undertaken when there is a very
25 strong basis for doing so and of course at direction of Council. This particular program was
26 meant to continue our long-standing practice in Palo Alto of addressing localized problems but to
27 do so in a way that is perhaps a little more predictable, a little more rationale, had some criteria
28 that were fairly objective and measurable for initiating work or not initiating work. The intent
29 was to widen the array of measures that we could use rather than relying solely on speed humps
30 which was our practice in Palo Alto, which was augmented later by traffic circles, and I should
31 say earlier we did some street closures as in College Terrace. We wanted to include the
32 possibility of a wider array of measures. That list of measures in included in the booklet, which
33 is adopted as an attachment to our Traffic Calming Program Guidelines. So tonight we have a
34 few more thoughts on traffic calming and we are very interested in and anxious to engage the
35 Commission on the nature and extent of our work particularly in ways in which we may improve
36 it. We haven't yet batted one thousand and I don't anticipate we ever will but we like to increase
37 our batting average over time in a continuous improvement mode.

38
39 So if don't have any questions of me, I just made a general statement, I would be glad to turn the
40 item over to Carl Stoffel.

41
42 Mr. Stoffel: Madam Chairman, members of the Commission we have had two years of
43 experience roughly with the program since April 2001. These procedures that we are following
44 were by no means new when we adopted them. They were adopted from the City of Portland,
45 Oregon, which has a very successful and extensive traffic-calming program. Nevertheless over
46 the two years and since we last met on this we found some things that do need to be adjusted as
47 we anticipated.

1 Just by way of status since we are here talking about the program we talked about the numbers of
2 projects we had started. This is not in the Staff Report there are an actual ten projects that we
3 have started since 2001 and nine of those are active right now. The only one that is not is the
4 Churchill project, which we talked about last September which is basically stopped and may go
5 on as a much bigger neighborhood study in the future but that has not yet gone to the City
6 Council. Numbers two through ten are in some process now. We have five trials that have been
7 implemented included one non-physical trial, which was the education and enforcement program
8 on Ross, it is number two under the trials. They are now voting their number one under three
9 possibly nearing a trial. They are voting now to see if they want to try three speed tables. So we
10 have five trials that have been implemented including the one on Louis that is now over. The
11 Ross one is over. We have three active, number three and four are actually installed and active.
12 Number five we think will be the speed table and will be installed Friday. There are actually
13 three projects up there that we have had direction on. We got direction from City Council to do
14 even before this traffic-calming program was adopted in 2001. So we are actually doing them a
15 little bit outside this procedure. For instance the Lincoln/Channing speed table that I just
16 referred to City Council directed us in 1999 to put in traffic calming measures on Channing at
17 Lincoln and we didn't do it until the residents finally called us on it and we are doing it now in
18 an expedited manner. So it didn't come to the Commission for a vote because the City Council
19 said go ahead and do it. Then we have three projects waiting to start which are the three on the
20 waiting list that at some point we will be getting to those. So that is a rough status of where we
21 are with these projects.

22
23 The biggest issues so far in the three years are working on collector streets as you can see tonight
24 those are difficult. We have the Churchill project, the Louis project that we talked about tonight
25 and will still be going on for awhile and then we have a new one coming up which is the entire
26 length of Channing from Guinda to West Bayshore that also came out of the City Council
27 direction in 1999. These are going to have the same issues of who drives on the streets, is it fair
28 that the people that live on the street are the ones who carry the most weight, how about all the
29 other people, it will be all those same issues.

30
31 Another issues which really stands out is the speed cushion trial. We really tried something
32 brand new fully tested and fully liked in Mobile, Alabama where they call them speed lumps but
33 they just didn't work out here. Everybody remembers those. They are still in our program. It is
34 one of our items tonight that we want to reserve the right to use because the Fire Department
35 loves them. We want to reserve the right just mostly for that reason to use them on local streets
36 where the residents really want them and where the volume is low and we have vertical curbs
37 and where we won't have those problems that we had with the prior use of them, which we will
38 talk about tonight.

39
40 The other issue is residents really there are a lot of people that don't like traffic calming. They
41 want to see the police out there. It is a constant request at all of our meetings. Why can't you
42 have police enforcement instead of traffic calming? We had a discussion on this at our study
43 session in August where we presented a lot of the cost data and issues. We had the Assistant
44 Police Chief here and we went over that but it comes up all the time.

45
46 The changes that you approved last year, there were 12 of them, and I don't know if you want to
47 refresh yourselves as to what they were. I won't go over them in much detail but a couple of
48 them we are revisiting tonight. Probably the big change is number two, to take all the volume

1 reduction measures out of the spot treatment program. So we are no longer doing any of those
2 turn prohibitions, diverters, barriers and so on unless it is in terms of a full neighborhood study
3 like the Downtown North project. A number of little things and so on that we don't want to go
4 into those. You approved all these. They have not yet gone to the City Council. We have not
5 been able to get on their agenda and it has been so long that when we finally did get on the
6 agenda the City Manager said you have so many new things on here you better go back to the
7 Commission. So that is why we are back to you tonight with a few of these new things.

8
9 So the things that we are focusing on tonight we have eight recommendations. The ones with
10 asterisks actually follow on or relate to the things we talked about last year as part of the 12
11 items. The last three are totally new. So these are described in your Staff Report. Number one,
12 is just follow through on your request for additional changes in the ranking and qualifying
13 criteria. We actually did that and now have that proposed for you to look at following your
14 direction.

15
16 Also following your direction, it wasn't a formal direction but you said let's get another name for
17 this program so we don't think it is for a whole neighborhood and emphasize that this is only for
18 these very small little areas. So we are going to put this proposed name, feel free to change it, it
19 is kind of long but we figure we will shorten it to the RTCP or maybe just call it the Residential
20 Street Traffic Calming Program. We really wanted to emphasize the spot treatment aspect of it
21 and take the name "neighborhood" out of it.

22
23 Number three came out of the Louis Road project. You directed us for the collector street to go
24 back and have a different kind of working group, one that includes people from the wider area.
25 That was for that particular project. We felt that since we were going to be notifying people in
26 these wide areas for the collector street projects they should have a chance to participate in the
27 working group so we are not going to make it mandatory but we will offer them the chance to
28 come and join the working group as long as they want to work towards some traffic calming.
29 There is no use having a working group if people are sitting there saying they don't want traffic
30 calming because the purpose of the project is to have traffic calming and the purpose of the
31 working group is to try to come up with something. The chance for the people to say they don't
32 want any traffic calming is after the working group develops a plan and then they can vote on it
33 and vote no. So we want to have a working group for collector streets that does involve up to
34 one-third membership from outside the area of the immediate street.

35
36 Here we are with the speed cushions. We talked about that. I don't think there was actually a
37 vote on it. We just want to include it and keep it in our inventory of measures if residents are
38 brave enough to want to request these. We feel that if they are on a short local street with a low
39 volume where we are not going to have bike lanes and rolled curbs that they should have a
40 chance to try these because they are very effective as you know and the Fire Department can go
41 through them and not have all of the delay problems that they have with normal regular speed
42 humps not a speed table. For the Fire Department they are almost like a stop sign. That is the
43 way they want us to describe it. They have to almost stop at each one.

44
45 Number five is we had recommended a change about alternative trial plans and a threshold in
46 June, which you approved. Now we want to after some experience we feel that that was not a
47 good recommendation. We want to go back essentially to what we have now which is the
48 working group can develop one plan if they want or at their choice they can have a couple. We

1 are sticking to our 50% of survey responses or 50% of survey households rather than the 60% we
2 talked about last year. We think the 60% just kind of stuck out. All of our other votes are 50%.
3 Sixty percent is quite difficult to attain especially on the local street projects where we require
4 60% of all the households on the street. As it turns out there are a lot of people out there that
5 when they get our letters I think they throw them away. They don't care about traffic calming.
6 They don't want to get involved in some bureaucracy. A lot of these people just don't vote so it
7 is difficult on the local street project to get even 50% approval among all the households on the
8 street. So we thought that 60% was just a little to strong. That was number five.

9
10 Number six then just ties in with out collector street projects and our wider area. We have had
11 some trouble at a couple of our meetings where we try to gain consensus and nobody really has a
12 good idea of what consensus is so we want to change the project area meetings to just looking at
13 the plan, entertaining suggestions for fairly minor changes and instead of trying to get consensus
14 there we will go out and do our neighborhood survey. At the survey level is where we will find
15 if people like that plan or not because the whole neighborhood will get a chance to vote instead
16 of the few people that show up at these neighborhood meetings.

17
18 Number seven is a fairly big one. We want now to not have the City pay anymore to put in the
19 nice looking landscaped measures that you see in our traffic circles with irrigation, landscaping,
20 these kind of things. We want to put in much less expensive things on a permanent basis and if
21 the residents want to fund something nicer they can do so. We think with the budget situation
22 the way it is the program just can't support that. As an example, a simple traffic circle with just
23 a concrete ring and some compressed granite or decomposed granite in the middle is about
24 \$5,000 and a fully landscaped circle is \$35 to \$40,000, a tremendous difference in cost.

25
26 Finally number eight is a fairly minor one. We thought even collector street projects are bigger
27 streets but let's keep the process moving and let's keep our trials as short as possible. The four
28 months seem to work.

29
30 So that is just a rough outline of the eight revisions. These are in addition to the ones that you
31 already approved. Then hopefully we will get this whole package to the City Council for final
32 approval.

33
34 Chair Bialson: Thank you very much. Any preliminary questions before we go to the public?
35 Michael.

36
37 Commissioner Griffin: Just to clarify what you were talking about Carl. This list of eight is a
38 modified list consisting of five items that were previously recommended plus you have added on
39 three more for a total of eight. So this eight supplants the original list of 12?

40
41 Mr. Stoffel: No it is in addition to the 12. There is one exception there where number five is
42 really reversing and invalidates one of the previous ones. So item there automatically the prior
43 one which was number six on the prior list, which I don't have up there right now, was just the
44 opposite of this. So adopting this one just invalidates the prior one. It supercedes it.

45
46 Commissioner Griffin: So then is there a list here in the packet that has the 12 plus this eight for
47 a total of 20?
48

1 Mr. Stoffel: Well the 12 stand by themselves in your old June Staff Report that is attached.
2 These eight now are in the new Staff Report. So the 12 you have already adopted and there is no
3 action required there. The eight then are in addition and one of these when you adopt it will
4 automatically cancel out one of the 12. Some of these are merely getting your formal approval
5 of something you had requested before. For instance you said change the ranking criteria and
6 include these other factors. Well we had to go back and actually do the changes. So now we
7 have had a chance to go do them and we are asking your approval of the way we handled your
8 June recommendation. You can see how we did that. Number two, you talked about let's
9 change the name so now we are proposing a name change.

10
11 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.

12
13 Commissioner Packer: I have a question that I don't know if it is philosophical or not. The issue
14 of the designation a street has as local versus collector. The Comp Plan defines a local street as
15 having 100 to 3,800 cars average daily volume and a collector street as having 1,000 to 11,000.
16 Also the additional definitions that are in the traffic calming is local street is primarily for people
17 to reach their homes, residential/local, whereas collector you have to get from one place to
18 another so you use a collector street. I believe there are streets in Palo Alto that are a cross
19 between a local and collector. I think when you get the requests for traffic calming treatment
20 that becomes more evident. I was wondering if you would consider maybe not in this revision
21 but in a future revision looking at high volume local streets and treating those more like collector
22 streets in terms of evaluating the acceptability to the neighborhood of the proposed spot
23 treatment. I think the difference in the process between local and collector is very dramatic in
24 terms of the percent of survey responses required versus the percent of households and that kind
25 of thing and also the use of a wide area, which has an impact. I think a lot of streets that are
26 designated local are really used as collector streets in this City yet they are still called local. So I
27 would wonder if you have considered that and maybe later when we have our discussion if it
28 would be appropriate to raise that with the Commission members and see if that is a direction we
29 would like to see you study or add to this plan.

30
31 Mr. Stoffel: Just a comment on that is that in addition to the differences that you mention in the
32 procedure collector streets have a different qualifying level of speed and volume. It is higher so
33 it is harder for a collector street to qualify for the program than the local street. So that is another
34 area of difference between the ways the two are treated.

35
36 Commissioner Packer: The other problem with the definition of local street is being able to have
37 as much as 3,800 cars is that there is a restriction on diversion. If something diverts traffic to a
38 local street and creates traffic there of more than 2,500 cars then you can't have the traffic
39 calming and that is in conflict with our own City's definition of how much traffic is allowable on
40 a local street. So it would seem to me that the City needs another type of street designation and
41 some processes to think about in order to look at this whole process more intelligently and fairly.

42
43 Mr. Stoffel: I think there might be, the Comprehensive Plan itself has a definition of local,
44 collector and so on that is similar to what is in here which is land access and so on, that kind of
45 thing, there are no numbers.

46
47 Commissioner Packer: There are because I looked them up.

1 Mr. Stoffel: I am wondering if you are thinking about the Comp Plan EIR, which may have
2 numbers in it.

3
4 Commissioner Packer: Yes, the EIR that was what I was looking at.

5
6 Mr. Stoffel: I think those numbers are not the maximum allowable. What they are, since I wrote
7 that many years ago, I believe I was identifying the ranges of existing volumes that we have on
8 those streets. Local streets carry this or that it doesn't mean they must carry or can't carry more
9 than that. In our guidelines here in our qualification area we do identify a maximum volume for
10 a local street of 2,500. We don't want to have any traffic-calming project divert traffic at all onto
11 a local street that carries more than 2,500. So that number is in there and it is in our traffic
12 calming program but not that 3,800 and we don't have anything for collector streets. It is kind of
13 an aside to what you are really saying.

14
15 Chair Bialson: Let's not get off track on this. We are trying to address the matters here and we
16 are beginning to start bumping up against time limits, which may keep us from addressing
17 everything we are supposed to tonight. Given that statement, do you want to speak, Pat? Thank
18 you. Why don't we hear from the public at this point? We have two speaker request cards. First
19 is Kerry Yarkin to be followed by Sheri Furman. You will have three minutes.

20
21 Ms. Yarkin: Good evening again Commissioners. Actually I would like to respond a little bit to
22 what Bonnie Packer was saying because the numbers 2,500 and 3,800 stand out really strongly in
23 my mind. You know I live on Churchill Avenue and three years ago we wrote our first letter to
24 the City. I did our petition. We went through the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. We
25 do have 2,500 cars a day on Churchill and I guess we are at the top of the local street numbers.
26 Between 1999 and 2001 we increased 46% to 3,800 cars. Now Park Boulevard at that time had I
27 think similar numbers they were able to reclassify and redesignate from a collector to a local
28 street. We just want the same kind of attention to our livability and protection of our
29 neighborhood, our livability, everything that has been said, ability to cross the street, our dogs,
30 our bikes, back out of your driveway, the same kind of protection as street like Park Boulevard
31 has received.

32
33 Now I know we are hopefully going to the whole neighborhood wide not the spot treatment but I
34 do want to bring up a main focus that I think is a problem with the whole program. We keep not
35 admitting that the volume of cars on the collector streets or local streets or whatever you want to
36 call them is something that we are just kind of pushing under the rug. When you define a
37 collector street however you are going to define it I guess Churchill might be an example you are
38 saying that only speed tables which will reduce the volume by ten percent is the maximum that
39 you are going to allow in this program. Where we have street right next to us that has 500 cars a
40 day. Now they have stayed at 500 for probably the last 20 or 15 years. Our volume has been
41 allowed to increase 46% that was in 2001 so maybe now we are up to about 70% due to various
42 reasons such as cut-through traffic, all kinds of things, the intersection, just the volume on Alma,
43 the volume trying to cut-through. So we really need to be able to look at that volume. I think the
44 toolbox should offer flexibility. I would not allow the full time turn prohibitions, diagonal
45 diverters, moving barriers, forced turn channelization, and street closures. I think this is because
46 it is in the toolbox is a sign. We have that sign at Alma and Churchill, left turn only, Monday
47 through Friday, 7:30-8:00. I thought I would just show you because that sign should stop people
48 from going straight through the intersection because they are supposed to make a left turn. If

1 you look at the inconsistent police enforcement the sign doesn't even match the times Pally starts
2 in the morning. It is really ineffectual. Unless we are going to beef up the police enforcement I
3 think you need to start to really include the full time prohibitions, diagonal diverters, all the stuff
4 that you are pulling out of the traffic calming program.

5
6 As our congested intersections which are the arterials get more and more congested I find myself
7 using Kellog, Bryant, Coleridge, other ways to get out of my neighborhood because now we
8 have an LOS of F. I could go on but the congestion and the volume is really something that
9 needs to be looked at. It is consistently getting worse.

10
11 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Sheri Furman to be followed by Kathy Durham.

12
13 Ms. Sheri Furman, 3094 Greer Road, Palo Alto: Hi. Although I am the Chair of the Midtown
14 Residents Association Traffic Committee we are not meeting about this issue with Joe for a
15 couple of weeks yet so tonight whatever I say is strictly my opinion.

16
17 While I support these changes to the plan I also wanted to outline just some of my concerns that
18 some of you have voiced. If you notice the majority of these traffic-calming projects are in
19 Midtown. I don't know if that is just we are high on the NYBY factor or if because we are
20 Midtown everybody is going from here to there. I am concerned about us doing a little too much
21 spot treatment. There are a lot of people that are perfectly happy to say I don't care if traffic is
22 on your street I just don't want it on mine. I am concerned that we don't over-apply the spot
23 treatment. So I would like to have these conditions be rather strict, which this seems to be doing.

24
25 I am also concerned that everybody wants traffic elsewhere. We have a lot of traffic in town and
26 what we really need to do is encourage people to slow down. I need to get from here to there and
27 people want me to just travel on three streets to get wherever I am going and as far as I am
28 concerned as a resident of this town I should be able to drive on any street I want, if for nothing
29 more than to look at somebody's garden or take a different way home just to get to know my
30 town. So I just want you to keep all those things in mind. I think this is a good program and we
31 need it. I just think there is a tendency just in my neighborhood to try and be over-applying it.
32 My street is okay and you know everybody else can bear the brunt of the traffic. Thank you.

33
34 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Kathy Durham to be followed by Angelica Volterra and she will be
35 the last speaker.

36
37 Ms. Kathy Durham, 2039 Dartmouth Street, Palo Alto: Good evening. I am speaking tonight for
38 myself, our Board of Director's in College Terrace and our Traffic Committee did not have time
39 to digest this latest. I can say however we were involved in the beginning, the first public
40 meeting about the program in March 2001. I found something that we rolled out for our
41 members at that point. We feel the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program is a sound one and
42 could help reduce the negative effects of cars on our City's neighborhoods. The weakness to the
43 plan is its bottom line. There is just \$100,000 per year budgeted for all aspects of spot treatment
44 traffic calming and this is for all of Palo Alto. Neighborhood wide treatment such as that being
45 considered for Downtown North will need to be separately funding. All of those are still true. I
46 think that I do support the name change here for the Residential Street Spot Treatment.

1 I do hope that we don't lose sight of the fact that we do need something in between the
2 residential arterial traffic calming program that is mythically out there and will sometime come
3 back to us, I hope and this spot treatment program with \$100,000. I think that is something that
4 we need to get the political will to do. It is not impossible for the Staff to come up with that
5 when we don't have the political will to do that but I do hope that we can move toward that in
6 this town.

7
8 The other comment that I had was that I was disappointed to see, I made comments last time
9 about the education and enforcement program being very small and not linked to the other things
10 that we are doing in this town. If we had a driver awareness education program, speed
11 enforcement and traffic calming, choose an area, choose a focus and work together rather than
12 this group of Staff doing this program, this group of Staff doing this one and so on. I think we
13 would get a better benefit in terms of the concerns that the neighbors have about the speeding
14 cars. So let's give that a try and remember that bumper stickers that say friendly things like,
15 "Drive like you would in your neighborhood" might get more changed behavior on the part of
16 drivers. Thank you.

17
18 Chair Bialson: I have one question for you, Kathy.

19
20 Commissioner Burt: Kathy, when you were just talking about the coordination between education
21 and enforcement is that what I understood you to be saying, that there needs to be a greater
22 coordination between those areas?

23
24 Ms. Durham: I would like us to work toward that, yes.

25
26 Commissioner Burt: Okay. Thanks.

27
28 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Angelica Volterra to be followed by Joy Ogawa.

29
30 Ms. Angelica Volterra, P.O. Box 1724, Palo Alto: Good evening. I am a resident of Channing
31 Avenue and have lived on Channing for five years. As many of you are aware I have a special
32 interest in traffic and transportation issues and have followed traffic issues in the Channing
33 Avenue area. I want to start out by saying I support strongly the idea of traffic calming in Palo
34 Alto. With regard to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program I do not believe that we yet
35 have a formula that ensures the timely advancement of projects to completion while ensuring that
36 resident's concerns about traffic and traffic related issues on their streets are fairly and equitably
37 considered. We have extremes represented on the one hand by such projects as Churchill
38 Avenue which has involved considerable delay in implementation on the other hand we have the
39 experience of Channing Avenue currently under review which is process driven in my opinion
40 by very rapid decision-making by members of the working group without their careful
41 consideration of relevant issues. I believe we must find the middle ground between these two
42 extremes. I am currently serving on the Channing Avenue Working Group, a group that was
43 formed to address traffic calming issues for Channing Avenue. I have a number of important
44 concerns regarding the group and the process that has gone into its review of traffic calming for
45 Channing Avenue. My comments this evening regarding the traffic-calming program are offered
46 as the experience of someone who is currently actively involved in the Neighborhood Traffic
47 Calming Program process. The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program as a collaborative
48 process between City Officials and Staff on the one hand who provide expertise and guidance

1 and a working group comprised of neighborhood residents who offer their experience and
2 knowledge of local traffic problems. I believe that through the active participation of its
3 membership and its informed consideration of relevant issues a working group could and should
4 actually save Staff a considerable amount of time in the planning process. To this end and based
5 on my experiences I would like to see the Transportation Division Staff dedicate a small amount
6 of additional time to defining a specific set of protocols that guide working groups to ensure their
7 compliance with the traffic calming program, to ensure that members perform their job
8 adequately and to ensure an effective working group relationship with Staff. A carefully
9 considered set of protocols for the working group would, I believe, help to ensure careful and
10 informed decision-making by the group, would facilitate Staff's work and would help in the
11 timely implementation of traffic calming measures.

12
13 Finally and very, very importantly I must emphasize the centrality of consideration of volume
14 and cut-through traffic issues to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. The City should
15 not remove from the list of objectives the goal of improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and
16 neighborhood livability by reducing cut-through traffic on local and collector streets. Unless
17 traffic volumes and cut-through traffic remain a focal point of issues that are considered as part
18 of this program neighborhood traffic calming will never achieve its goal of improving safety and
19 neighborhood livability and will only provide a diversion from the real and significant traffic
20 issues that our City faces. Thank you.

21
22 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Joy Ogawa and she will be the last speaker unless someone puts in a
23 speaker request card.

24
25 Ms. Joy Ogawa, 2305 Yale Street, Palo Alto: When the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program
26 was first presented to the residents about three years ago I was an enthusiastic supporter. I was
27 then a true believer in the promise that traffic calming would help address the traffic problems in
28 our neighborhoods. Now three years later I am disillusioned for several reasons. For one thing
29 this neighborhood of spot traffic calming program has been whittled down and had the teeth
30 removed from it. First it was decided that traffic volumes would not be addressed by the
31 program and then several of the most effective tools were removed from the program measures
32 toolbox. Now I see that Staff is recommending that the important objective of reducing cut-
33 through traffic that it no longer be an objective of the program. Policy T-30 of the
34 Comprehensive Plan says, "Reduce cut-through traffic on residential areas by designating certain
35 streets as residential arterials," and the description of Policy T-28 of the Comp Plan starts with a
36 statement that, "Palo Alto desires to keep traffic flowing as freely as possible on major streets to
37 minimize a diversion of through traffic onto local residential streets." The Comp Plan also
38 described traffic calming measures under Policy T-34 by stating that, "Traffic calming measures
39 can reduce speeds and return some through traffic from the local and collector streets to nearby
40 arterials." I want to point out that College Terrace very recently conducted a cut-through traffic
41 study of the neighborhood. I live on the corner of Yale Street and Cambridge Avenue, both local
42 streets, both are very short stretches of street length. Yale and Cambridge have the highest
43 measured percentages of cut-through traffic in the entire neighborhood. Yale measured 81% cut-
44 through of inbound vehicles on April 30, 2002 and Cambridge measured 70% cut-through of
45 outbound vehicles on the same date and this includes cut-through from vehicles from other parts
46 of the neighborhood who could use the California Avenue intersection but choose to cut-through
47 on Yale and Cambridge instead. The volumes on Yale and Cambridge are about 2,200 and 1,850
48 cars per day respectively, well above the 1,200 vehicles per day qualifying criterion. Under the

1 existing program criteria Yale and Cambridge would both qualify for traffic calming under this
2 program, however, under Staff's and the Planning Commission's recommended new program
3 neither of these streets would qualify because significant cut-through traffic is no longer a
4 qualifying criterion. As I said, these are short streets so while there is very fast acceleration it is
5 not long enough to get up to over 30 miles per hour, the 85th percentile speed. I am referring to
6 the qualifying criteria on Attachment A of the Staff Report. I no longer have any confidence in
7 this traffic-calming program. I believe it is a resident calming program in order to placate
8 residents with the promise of a band aide that will not deal with the real problem which is the
9 volume of traffic in Palo Alto that creates near gridlock on the arterials and forces traffic onto
10 residential streets.

11
12 Chair Bialson: Thank you. I have one more speaker. Carl Anderson.

13
14 Mr. Carl Anderson, 4044 Amaranta Avenue, Palo Alto: I have lived for 44 years in Palo Alto. I
15 lived on Emerson and South Court and for the last 33 years in Barron Park on Amaranta. I
16 hadn't planned on speaking but I thought I few observations to throw in. About 30 years ago I
17 was on the Barron Park traffic committee because I was so irritated at all those people cutting
18 through my street. I was convinced that those were people from Los Altos and other places
19 going across my street to shortcut El Camino. When you are on the traffic committee you begin
20 to learn that those are your good neighbors of two, four, six, eight blocks away. So I backed off
21 of issues of speed bumps and big walls that we had contemplated at that time. Generally we
22 found that enforcement seems to work from time to time and when it speeds up they come out
23 for a day or so and then it calms down for a whole month. So I generally am a proponent of
24 letting the traffic flow with some controls. I think there are a couple of cultural issues which
25 don't always come up in the context of physical fixes however which is what we are talking
26 about here. My observation from our neck of the woods which is primarily Amaranta and
27 Maybell and related streets going both to Gunn High School and to _____ is the greatest
28 problem and the greatest challenge we have is the school traffic. That is the drivers and the
29 parents who are driving their kids four blocks to drop them off at high school. I don't know how
30 we change that culture but there are so many that are doing that as well as many high school
31 drivers these days. So there has to be some sort of efforts between the City and the Board of
32 Education to figure out if there is some way we can eventually get that back down to where it
33 was 15 or 20 years ago when there was far less auto traffic on the streets. The auto traffic on the
34 streets then causes parents to perceive them to be unsafe so they take their kids to school. So it
35 compounds. During a half hour to 45 minutes before school opening Arastradero is a mess. The
36 rest of the day it flows just fine. I see that in other places around town as well. There is this great
37 constipation but it is not a 24-hour constipation it is just certain times and appears to be driven by
38 the school traffic. The second cultural thing is one that has already been addressed and is hard to
39 get people to cooperate perhaps but that is if we can just get a few more of us to drive the speed
40 limits in our own City. We may not like it. I don't know that we have to advertise with stickers
41 on the back of our bumpers but if we can figure out through various communication vehicles and
42 persuasions to have everybody slow down a bit I think we would all be a little bit happier with
43 our traffic situation. Thanks.

44
45 Chair Bialson: Thank you. That is the last speaker so we will close the public portion of this
46 matter and take it back to the Commission. I just want to remind people that we are now at 9:35
47 and we do have two more items to address this evening. So let's have questions and comments
48 combined. Who would like to be the first to start? Joe, thank you very much.

1
2 Commissioner Bellomo: I probably have the least to say as I am becoming more educated on
3 this calming program. I have no questions. I would like just briefly to make a comment. That is
4 I think my main focus is in the education facility to facilitate calming. Last weekend my
5 daughter had a birthday party, actually a slumber party, and I was trying to as I have two children
6 going through school I always wrestle with the trips that parents take. I am always arguing with
7 myself and my own behavior of what is convenient. I decided to pick up all the kids and make a
8 circular trip to pick up all the children. There were five girls. I looked at the map and I noticed
9 that I saved four or five trips of parents going back and forth and doing this thing. I heard
10 speakers talk about Palo Alto High School. I see a group of adults at this meeting and somehow
11 it seems generationally and culturally we perpetuate the kind of problem of traffic in kind of a
12 taught environment. I believe that before we know it our children will be 25 and driving the
13 streets of Palo Alto and still having these types of problems and maybe we have enforced or
14 maybe we haven't enforced what we hope to calm. So I am a proponent of outreaching into the
15 various supermarkets that are picking the goods up from local vendors really looking at it from a
16 broader vision of reducing trips and reducing people in cars and trying to get out of them. I am
17 fortunate to live and work Downtown. I ride my bike back and forth to projects. I am fortunate
18 to do that. I do have to argue with myself daily to drop out of cars.

19
20 Chair Bialson: So are you supporting what Staff proposes?

21
22 Commissioner Bellomo: I am supporting it. I am adding to the educational component of it.

23
24 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Michael.

25
26 Commissioner Griffin: I am going to tell you that I am a little incensed on item number seven
27 which is requiring residents to fund the cost of putting in permanent traffic calming measures. It
28 seems to me we are looking at a situation where the neighbors through no fault of their own are
29 hammered by traffic impacts and then we turn around and make it even more excruciating for
30 them, as if the pain weren't already sufficient, and now we are asking them to actually pay for
31 solving a problem that they didn't cause.

32
33 Commissioner Burt: Michael, I think you might be misinterpreting that one. That is talking
34 about the differential between the cost of the pragmatic solution to the problem and higher costs
35 associated with certain aesthetics or other abnormal aspects that certain neighborhoods may
36 want. Maybe Staff can clarify on that.

37
38 Mr. Kott: Yes. I once use the term utilitarian, I regretted using that term so I used the term
39 functional. We can advise on devices that will function in the way the program intends them to
40 function and that is to reduce incidents of speeding. We can do that in a way that is we hope not
41 ugly and not diabolical. On the other hand we are really constrained by the amount of money we
42 have in our program. It is \$100,000 a year and Carl has illustrated one example of an irrigated
43 traffic circle that can run up to \$35,000 a piece. For one-fifth of that cost we can have a perfectly
44 functional, we hope not ugly, traffic circle. So we are proposing the functional and not the
45 aesthetic be funded through the traffic-calming budget.

46
47 Chair Bialson: Does that answer your question, Michael? Are you a little less incensed? Why
48 don't we let Karen speak while you ponder that.

1
2 Commissioner Holman: Actually the description is not different than what I had understood and
3 I actually share Michael's concern. In the description that Staff provided about, I have forgotten
4 what kind of stone you talked about, I see a lot of gray in that kind of environment that is
5 suggested by this. So I do share Michael's concern. If it is absolutely necessary from Staff's
6 perspective to make this a temporary situation due to budget concerns I would be a little bit more
7 amenable to being understanding but I would like to see something absolutely indicating that this
8 is temporary and when budget concerns are rectified that these amenities in these traffic calming
9 measures do get implemented. So I am not sure what the best way to deal with this is other than
10 making sure that it is a temporary concern because of budget issues. I do share Michael's
11 concern. They seem very austere solutions to me.

12
13 Chair Bialson: Karen, do you have any comments about the rest of the items?
14

15 Commissioner Holman: Yes. Cut-through traffic is a concern. As a member of the public
16 mentioned it is a mention in the Comp Plan as well that it should be addressed. So maybe Staff
17 would like to comment on how best to better address that given what changes are recommended.
18

19 Chair Bialson: Karen, I have a concern because that is really not what this program is about is
20 my understanding and that was decided by a previous Commission meeting that we had I believe
21 last year.
22

23 Mr. Stoffel: You did decide that. I suppose you could change it if you want because it hasn't
24 gone to Council yet.
25

26 Chair Bialson: Well perhaps we will but maybe not tonight. Pat, did you want to say
27 something?
28

29 Commissioner Burt: I do have something to say. First I am pleased with the greater emphasis
30 that the program now places on pedestrian safety. I am looking at the top of page three. I would
31 like to recommend that maybe some clarifications be made in the Staff Report that actually I
32 think would make it more consistent with the actual changes in the program just so that Council
33 won't have any misunderstandings of the Commission's previous position. It says the concerns
34 revolved around bicycle and pedestrian safety on school routes that are narrow and lack
35 sidewalks and bike lanes. I think that the example in Barron Park was an example we used but it
36 is not the criteria. So you might say, "or may lack sidewalks or bike lanes," but that was only
37 one example of a circumstance and that it is not particularly lacking bike lanes but as you stated
38 elsewhere it is really fundamentally getting down to adequate bicycle access and safety.
39

40 Then finally as I saw later that you emphasized not only school access but senior facility access.
41 So rather than merely alluding to the school aspect, it may be too technical a term but, say
42 sensitive subgroups or populations or just say children and seniors. I think it is important that we
43 just have that premise clear.
44

45 Then the other thing that I was still concerned with as we look through Attachment B and the
46 currently recommended criteria we have moved in the appropriate direction of trying to sculpt
47 this program to not just look at formulaic volumes and speeds but trying to integrate these
48 concerns of sensitive groups that really we have particular concerns for. As the criteria are laid

1 out right now I can see some circumstances that crosswalks across from elementary schools that
2 might be heavily used and have stop sign runners that endanger children, treating that kind of an
3 issue wouldn't fall within the criteria as we have set them in a formulaic manner. I don't have a
4 simple solution to this problem. We all know that in trying to move toward consistency so that
5 all people will feel that they have a formula that treats each fairly and not favorably to one area
6 versus another you then handcuff yourself on being able to exercise discretion and judgment
7 when we might look at a circumstance and say that is obviously a problem and it would have an
8 easy fix but it doesn't fit our formula. So I appreciate that that's a dilemma but I wanted to raise
9 that issue. I think we have moved in the right direction but I think we still have some issues that
10 need to be addressed in that regard. So I would simply like to encourage Staff to pursue that
11 aspect some more and I don't pretend to have the magic solution to the problem tonight.

12

13 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.

14

15 Commissioner Packer: I would like to say that I support all the changes with one concern about
16 one of them and one I would like to add. I am a little concerned about the statement that the
17 working group has to include members who are all for traffic calming. I think we might want to
18 include some skeptics so that you can have a broader perspective or have an opportunity to
19 educate a skeptic. I don't know how to put that so that is the one caveat. I can understand the
20 point that you want a functional working group. A public speaker recommended protocols for
21 having the working group work well and that sounds like a good idea that you might want to
22 have as an additional aspect to pursue. I think we could all use some help at good facilitated
23 processes in working groups where there may be wide disparities of points of view.

24

25 The area that I would like to propose is an additional criteria or an opportunity to add a process
26 for local streets that are high volume and consider those where appropriate under the collector
27 street process. Where you could have a wide area involvement in what's happening. The reason
28 I raise that is because I got the notice about the most recent Ross Road proposal. I live in that
29 area. Ross Road is a local street but it behaves because the Ross Road YMCA is there and has a
30 lot of traffic and that has been very traffic studied when they put in the extension there. It is just
31 one of these long streets and people may use that as an alternate route to Middlefield and Louis
32 at certain points. It is a higher volume street so you may want to say something in there about
33 collector streets and appropriate high volume local streets for that additional process. If anyone
34 makes a motion I would like to propose that as an additional change. If any of the
35 Commissioners want to discuss that now before it becomes part of a motion if anyone thinks that
36 is a good idea.

37

38 Chair Bialson: Maybe will discuss it as an amendment to a motion.

39

40 Chair Bialson: Right. Let's give that opportunity to Karen if she has any other comments.

41 Okay, Pat.

42

43 Commissioner Burt: Could Staff clarify for me, we have Attachment A and Attachment B and I
44 was trying to follow the relationship between the two.

45

46 Mr. Stoffel: Well, what you really need to look at is the right-hand column on each of those
47 because that is what we are recommending based upon the things that you asked be included in
48 June. The qualifying criteria are the basic things that when the residents come and say we want

1 traffic calming on Ross Road south of East Meadow for instance. We have to see if that request
2 should in fact be worked on because we can't work on them all and we just want to work on the
3 ones that are the most needy. So that is what the qualifying criteria do. You have to have the
4 certain speed, certain volume and we have the thing about the school commute route and so on.
5 So if a street doesn't qualify then nothing else happens and they don't go through anything more.
6 If they do qualify then they go on a list, we can't start them all at once, they go on basically a
7 waiting list. They go on the list according to their ranking and that is where Attachment B
8 comes in, we assign points based on some of the same things that were evaluated for qualifying
9 but we have added a few other things and we give them points. Then the ranking is where we
10 bring in some other things that perhaps weren't in the qualifying but once they do qualify then
11 we can move them high up on the list for instance if they have a lot of these school commute
12 issues and bike boulevard or near senior center and so on. So that is how that part works.
13

14 Commissioner Burt: So Carl on the qualifying criteria for instance on item two if we have a
15 collector street such as Churchill that is at 3,600 vehicles per day, I think was our last survey,
16 they would not qualify on that basis?
17

18 Mr. Stoffel: Well, Churchill, you see the little footnote there we go out and do a count there is
19 always a chance for error and random changes. You go out one day and the count is ten percent
20 high or lower than the other day. So we multiply and we give them a little benefit of the doubt.
21 We multiply volume measurements by ten percent and figure maybe it was really ten percent
22 higher than what we measured. Churchill happened to just barely qualify. Their count when you
23 multiply it by ten percent was right at 4,000 and same with their speed. So they just barely
24 qualified as a collector but they did.
25

26 Commissioner Burt: Yet you go to Churchill and a lot of the day it seems awful heavily used
27 and it just barely qualifies. It seems like something is amiss in the formula.
28

29 Mr. Stoffel: Well, the part of Churchill we are talking about is the part east of Alma. Not the
30 other part. It is from Alma to Embarcadero the maximum volume there is about 4,000 or less.
31 The other part is much higher. That would more than qualify.
32

33 Commissioner Burt: Then the other thing on item four it says it needs to be a primary school
34 commute route and one or both of the other in the total absence of sidewalks. Then any school
35 commute route that has sidewalks would not qualify for this unless it has an absence of bike
36 lanes or an absence of adequate width for bicyclists. So if we have a school commute route that
37 has adequate bike lanes and needs pedestrian issues addressed it wouldn't qualify.
38

39 Mr. Stoffel: Well first of all of course you note that only two of these things need to be met to
40 qualify not all four. When you do get to the fourth one if that is one of the two that you need to
41 qualify, if it is a primary school commute route that has bike lanes but does not have the
42 sidewalks that meets number four then.
43

44 Commissioner Burt: Yes, but I am talking about a primary school commute route that has
45 sidewalks and may have adequate bicycling but it doesn't have adequate child pedestrian routes
46 and safety. So that problem doesn't qualify it under any of the four criteria.
47

48 Mr. Stoffel: I am not sure what that problem is.

1
2 Commissioner Burt: Kids walking to school and they are in danger of being hit by cars.

3
4 Mr. Stoffel: On the sidewalk?

5
6 Commissioner Burt: No, crossing the street.

7
8 Mr. Kott: It might be helpful Commissioner Burt if I could comment on that. In the next item
9 on school commute corridors we will be discussing with the Commission the emphasis that we
10 propose to be given on school commute corridors with respect to public investment particularly
11 at crosswalks to make them as safe as possible for the kids.

12
13 Mr. Stoffel: I guess we are getting into number four and what we interpreted last year's
14 discussion to mean that not just the fact that it was a school commute route but a deficient school
15 commute route. I think you were clarifying earlier that perhaps you didn't really mean that, that
16 maybe any school commute route whether it had all the facilities or not should still be on the list.

17
18 Commissioner Burt: I am looking at deficiencies other than those that you have defined. I
19 appreciate that this next item does in fact address many of the concerns I have and I am
20 concerned with the consistency between this program and the next item on the agenda. I think
21 the next item addresses my concerns much better but I think the two should be more consistent.

22
23 Chair Bialson: Michael.

24
25 MOTION

26
27 Commissioner Griffin: I would like to move the Staff recommendation to have the City Council
28 approve the eight additional proposed revisions to the NTCP program as we see here in the Staff
29 Report.

30
31 SECOND

32
33 Chair Bialson: Any seconds? No you have o second it as is. I will second it.

34
35 Would you care to speak to the motion?

36
37 Commissioner Griffin: Briefly, yes. I appreciate from our discussion this evening that Staff has
38 clearly gained wisdom and a greater level of understanding as to how these traffic calming spot
39 programs actually play out in the light of day and that we have used our failures to in fact come
40 up with a better program. I think it is time now to go to Council with the previous items that we
41 discussed last year as well as these new items. I would continue to express a little bit of dismay
42 with having to charge residents for the different treatments but I am presuming here that you
43 fellows will deal with this in an equitable manner and not be nicking people unnecessarily. I can
44 count on you cant I?

45
46 The last item had a little bit to do with what Carl was about to address, which is the fact that we
47 are not using this scheme to deal with cut-through traffic. As I recall from previous discussions
48 we said there just wasn't enough money in this, we didn't have enough tools to really deal

1 adequately with that. I know that this is in addition to the motion here but just quickly give us a
2 squirt on that.

3
4 Mr. Stoffel: I think the thrust was that any time you have to call into play those kind of volume
5 control measures whether it is a street closures or banning a turn and so on it causes traffic to
6 move around to other streets and it quickly, immediately, gets us out of the realm of this very
7 limited spot treatment program and begins to call in many other streets and even a whole
8 neighborhood and it just doesn't seem to work.

9
10 Commissioner Griffin: Thank you for that clarification.

11
12 Chair Bialson: Speaking to my second I agree with everything that Michael said. I agree with
13 one of the public speakers that this is a problem that is often caused by cultural sort of habits and
14 values that we have adopted recently. This program does the best it can and I think that we have
15 got to keep tinkering with it over time to try to make it be as effective as possible and recognize
16 just what it can and cannot do. I recognize that there are a couple of Commissioners who want to
17 offer friendly amendments and I am open to some of those so let's hear about them. Bonnie.

18
19 AMENDMENT

20
21 Commissioner Packer: I would like to propose that we allow local streets that qualify but have
22 an average daily volume of 2,500 cars or more be treated in the process as collector streets so
23 that you can have more input. It is mostly a process question, you either qualify with the 32
24 miles per hour but they have 2,500 daily volume. So they are at that threshold where we really
25 think it is too many cars already on a local street so maybe it is being used as a collector street at
26 that point even though it hasn't been designated. So I would recommend that we treat it that
27 way.

28
29 Chair Bialson: Is this item number three as to the process? Is it changing the composition of the
30 residents working group?

31
32 Commissioner Packer: I would say add another item. It would have to be another item on the
33 list that would say add an allowance that a local street that qualifies but has 2,500 average daily
34 volume be treated as a collector street for the process purposes. I think that would just be a few
35 parentheticals where we talk about collector in the process section. The reason for that as I
36 explained before there are a lot of streets that have been historically designated local but have a
37 higher volume.

38
39 Chair Bialson: We have a question from a Commissioner.

40
41 Commissioner Burt: Bonnie, can you clarify what would be the impact of that? If you are
42 basically taking a local street that would already qualify for the program based on being above
43 1,200 vehicles per day.

44
45 Commissioner Packer: The impact is significant in terms of neighbor input and people who use
46 the street and their ability to have input into the survey. We added the whole wide area concept
47 with the collector street and that would include the wide area concept and sending the postcards
48 to the wider area for people to consider whether they want the traffic calming for that area.

1
2 Now one thing that I do realize is that this makes this whole program somewhat of a
3 schizophrenic program. As long as you have collector streets in this program it is questionable
4 whether it should be considered a spot treatment for collector streets. I raised that in connection
5 with Louis Road. I am not recommending that we eliminate collector streets at this point
6 because we have gone too far along and too many of the items in the pipeline are collector
7 streets. I am making it a little bit less of a spot treatment by doing this but there is a certain
8 reality that all of us use all of the streets and we have to recognize that. that is why this traffic
9 calming program is not a perfect solution to all of our traffic calming issues but this is just one
10 way to get more citizen input on changes that are being proposed to streets they use.

11
12 Mr. Stoffel: Also understand that part of the collector procedure involves bringing those to the
13 Planning Commission for decision as opposed to Staff level for the trial. So it is more time and
14 more work for the Commission and for everybody. It is a longer process because we come to the
15 Commission.

16
17 Chair Bialson: What I understand is you are saying that there are some local streets that operate
18 as collectors almost and that we capture those in terms of allowing input from neighbors. Is that
19 what you are proposing?

20
21 Commissioner Packer: That's right. Just do it based on volume and if you are looking at volume
22 that is over 2,500 and we have indicated in other documents that we think that is really too high
23 for a local street then it should be looked at as if it were a collector street.

24
25 Chair Bialson: Thank you. The maker of the motion, do you accept the friendly amendment or
26 not?

27
28 Commissioner Griffin: With all due respect Bonnie I do not.

29
30 Chair Bialson: That answers that. Karen, do you have an amendment?

31
32 AMENDMENT

33
34 Commissioner Holman: I think it would be an amendment. I agree with Pat that there should be
35 a consistency between this program and the following item that is coming to us as far as school
36 commute corridors are concerned. Also I would like to have some language and perhaps Staff
37 can help with this about item number seven. Before I came I had that one circled as a concern
38 and I just went back and reconfirmed it in previous Commission minutes and it was a concern
39 that was expressed then. So perhaps the amendment could be that it would be, again Staff is very
40 welcome to help out with this, that this could be a temporary situation and as soon as budget
41 concerns would allow that this would be alleviated and that in the meantime while this would be
42 in place that neighbors be consulted and invited in to participate in the design phase. I am not
43 trying to make this a bollox review situation but just to give the neighborhood some input so they
44 don't just go out and find this very austere installation in their neighborhood with no opportunity
45 to provide for designs that would add some greenery or whatever. Would the maker of the
46 motion accept both of those amendments?

47
48 Commissioner Griffin: Both of them?

1
2 Commissioner Holman: One would be making this program consistent with the school commute
3 corridor program that follows this time. Pat was identifying that the language was inconsistent
4 with our previous comments.
5

6 Commissioner Griffin: I accept.
7

8 Chair Bialson: As seconder, I don't understand it so I am going to have to not accept until it is
9 explained better or if Staff understands what is being said that's fine but how can we incorporate
10 the language of the school commute corridor into this? We haven't decided one yet. You have
11 an open matter then.
12

13 Mr. Kott: The Commission may wish to consider caveating that by using the statement, "should
14 a school commute corridor network be established that the school commute corridor segment be
15 treated in effect in a preferential way in the traffic calming program." We would have to work
16 out some precise language and the Commission with all due respect would have to rely on us to
17 work out some precise language because I can't think of any right now. Rather than coming
18 back to you again just go forward with the understanding we hear what you say and we will
19 proceed accordingly.
20

21 Chair Bialson: With regard to the school commute corridor I would be happy to accept that.
22 Now with regard to item number seven could you explain that again?
23

24 Commissioner Holman: Yes, I did go back again and look at comments of previous Commission
25 meetings and my thoughts were then and still are somewhat along the same lines as
26 Commissioner Griffin's this evening that neighborhoods and people who live in this community
27 have a right to expect a level of safety and if through action on their own parts traffic gets worse
28 in a particular neighborhood and if a traffic circle for instance needs to be installed to create a
29 safety pattern in their neighborhood it seems unfair to me to ask those neighbors to pay for that
30 improvement. If in the current budget situation that needs to be a temporary situation then so be
31 it given that the budget for the whole program is \$100,000 I am respecting that. I think it should
32 be identified as a temporary situation and that neighbors be invited to participate in the design. I
33 am sorry for the long explanation.
34

35 Chair Bialson: I appreciate that because I wanted to know what I was agreeing to or not agreeing
36 to. I am not going to accept that because I think the improvement and the safety matters would
37 be addressed it is the aesthetic issues that are at issue. I wish we could address them but I think
38 if we do address them for each neighborhood we are thereby shorting other neighborhoods from
39 having their matters handled with a time period of that \$100,000 budget period. So I am not
40 going to accept that second.
41

42 Commissioner Holman: I do have one other one. I can't find at this moment but I swear to
43 goodness that at a previous meeting we had agreed to include Churchill all the way to El Camino
44 and I had overlooked this in preparing for this meeting that it stops now at Alma still. I am
45 certain that we had, and I am always subject to being wrong, but I am certain we had extended
46 Churchill's consideration to El Camino.
47

1 Mr. Stoffel: I think what you did was do that when we look at the whole neighborhood study
2 that we would look at the entire length of Churchill when we get to that study if it goes through.
3 The one we were working on, the spot treatment project, was ended to be perhaps later
4 incorporated into a neighborhood wide study that included all of Churchill.
5

6 Commissioner Holman: It looks like I stand to be wrong here as I said, so thank you.
7

8 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.
9

10 SUBSTITUTE MOTION
11

12 Commissioner Packer: Yes. I would like to make a substitute motion. I would like to move that
13 we accept the Staff Report recommendations, plus the amendment that Karen had related to
14 language referring to school commute corridors and in addition to that a proposal that we allow
15 the opportunity for local streets that qualify for the plan that have a volume of 2,500 cars or
16 greater have the option of being included in the collector street process so that they can identify a
17 wide area opportunity for people to participate.
18

19 Chair Bialson: Do you feel the need to speak to that motion?
20

21 Commissioner Packer: I think I spoke to my concern earlier.
22

23 SECOND
24

25 Chair Bialson: I have to get a second first. Anybody willing to second? I will second. I believe
26 I can second both motions. Do you want to speak to it?
27

28 Commissioner Packer: I think I spoke to it. Let me say this, I do like all the recommendations
29 that are in the Staff Report for reasons that have been said earlier and I spoke to my concerns
30 about certain local streets that have high volumes of traffic earlier when I was presenting the
31 friendly amendment so I won't say it all again.
32

33 Chair Bialson: Thank you. I am offering my second because I agree with Bonnie that in fairness
34 to neighbors around streets that may be defined by us as local but whose volume indicates they
35 are really treated as collectors to the neighborhood I think that it is appropriate to have the
36 neighbors involved in the process just as we found with Louis Road it is unfair to not include
37 other neighbors that are not immediately impacted or adjacent to the street that is being
38 considered. Now I understand Louis was a collector but there are local street and I think Bonnie
39 and I are thinking of the same ones that will have the same problem if we do spot treatment on
40 them and not consider the neighbor's input. So that is why I am supporting this motion with a
41 second. Comments? Pat.
42

43 Commissioner Burt: Question. Since you suspect that you and Bonnie are envisioning the same
44 streets it may help me in my decision on this motion to have those examples so that I can
45 envision them as well and other Commissioners can. Which streets are you thinking of that are
46 local streets that would be over 2,500 vehicles per day?
47

1 Commissioner Packer: Ross Road is an example and I just got the notice and there are 3,200
2 vehicles per day or something like that. It qualifies as a local street but the process would be a
3 local traffic-calming project. I don't have traffic counts for all the streets that are local streets. I
4 suppose Carl does but there were some in the Comp Plan from 1995 but I didn't have any other
5 information. I do know the Ross Road one because we just received that in a May 3rd letter from
6 Staff.

7
8 Chair Bialson: You are nodding your head, Joe. Are you nodding with regard to the traffic
9 counts or something else?

10
11 Mr. Kott: I am suggesting comprehension.

12
13 Chair Bialson: Pat, does that answer your question?

14
15 Commissioner Burt: Did you have others that you had in mind, Annette?

16
17 Chair Bialson: No I was also thinking of Ross because that one I have the figures on. I don't
18 have the other figures.

19
20 Commissioner Burt: So that one is currently 3,200 vehicles per day? Okay, thank you.

21
22 Chair Bialson: Let's vote on that substitute motion. Hold it.

23
24 Commissioner Burt: I just want to be sure I understand. The only difference between Michael's
25 motion and the amendment that he accepted from Karen is this 2,500 vehicle per day on the local
26 street threshold?

27
28 Commissioner Packer: That's right.

29
30 Commissioner Burt: Okay.

31
32 SUBSTITUTE MOTION PASSED

33
34 Chair Bialson: All those in favor say aye. (ayes) All those opposed say nay. (nay)

35
36 That motion passes five in favor with Commissioner Griffin opposed and with Commissioner
37 Cassel not in attendance. I guess that closes this matter. Thank you very much.

38
39 Now we move on at the hour of 10:15 to item number three, School Commute Corridors. I am
40 mentioning the time Commissioners because you asked me to do so in our retreat and I will try to
41 keep us all focused on that.

42
43 I have a question from my left asking whether or not we have to do the CIP tonight. Steve?

- 44
45 4. **Capital Improvement Program**: Review of FY03-04 and FY04-05 Capital Improvement
46 Program.
47

1 Mr. Emslie: We were doing a little checking on that thinking that we might have to continue it.
2 It does have to be acted on before the budget is approved. The budget is going in early June.
3 You do have one more meeting on the 28th of May, you have three items already scheduled, two
4 appeals of HIEs, single family and then you do have an open space house a site and design for
5 Los Trancos also on that agenda. So that is your option, to continue that to the 28th and you do
6 have three other items where there will be testimony.

7
8 Chair Bialson: Pat.

9
10 Commissioner Burt: I don't expect that if we do continue it to the 28th that it will be a major
11 portion of that agenda item but it is a major portion of our remaining hour so I would support the
12 move.

13
14 Chair Bialson: Unless I have an objection from the Commission I would like to put that over to
15 the next meeting.

16
17 We are now down to just one more item left, a very important item the School Commute
18 Corridors Network. Joe.

- 19
20 **3. School Commute Corridors Network**: The Commission will discuss and comment on a
21 proposed citywide school commute corridor network comprising streets and street sections
22 most heavily used by school commuters in Palo Alto. This network is being developed in
23 response to community concerns about rising traffic levels make commuting to and from
24 school on foot or by bicycle more difficult for kids in our community. **SR Weblink**:
25 <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cityagenda/publish/planning-transportation-meetings/1911.pdf>

26
27 Mr. Kott: Thank you very much Chair Bialson and members of the Commission. The School
28 Commute Corridors Network we are presenting tonight will be a long step forward we think in
29 enhancing safety for children commuting to and from school and a good start at reversing this
30 downward spiral in the use of more environmentally beneficial modes of travel out of concern
31 that there are simply in some cases not safe to use.

32
33 It is real startling to note this but over the last 20 years according to the Nationwide
34 Transportation Survey there has been a 40% decline in cycling and walking on behalf of children
35 ages five to 15 nationwide. We think that decline is at least partly based on rising levels of
36 traffic congestion and perceptions that parents have, all too often grounded in reality, that it is
37 simply not safe for their children to cycle to school or to even walk to school.

38
39 The purpose of establishing a School Commute Corridors Network, and this I believe will be the
40 first in the nation, was to focus our attention and resources as a community on protecting the
41 most important routes of the most valuable commuters or vulnerable travelers, that is young
42 people, and to create a policy framework for filling in all the detail and follow up action. A very
43 powerful statement of policy that due attention needs to be given to enhancing safety for school
44 kids commuting to and from school. This is isn't just a broader review of the detail in your Staff
45 Report. We will concentrate our public investments as we are able to do so. For example in our
46 report we have enhancements of crosswalks, enhancements of cycle lanes and striping and
47 signing, establishment of new bicycle lanes and then grant applications as we are able to file
48 them. We are about to file a grant application for Safe Routes to School Grant. We are

1 assuming that that grant program will survive the state budget cuts but we would very much like
2 to focus all of our attention on the most vulnerable users of our street system. As we get
3 opportunities for additional money to improve conditions that we make sure that money gets first
4 placed on the priority of making school commuting safer.
5

6 As this Commission discussed earlier we would like to include a school commute corridor
7 network status as a factor, an extra credit factor if you will and a positive factor in an array of
8 programs. The traffic calming program, the sidewalk replacement program and even the street
9 repaving program. We aren't saying it would necessarily be a determining factor but it would be
10 a positive factor, a factor to consider as important.

11
12 We especially want particular attention given in traffic impact studies for development and
13 redevelopment to impacts on school commute corridors. We are, and I will speak quite frankly
14 and personally here, not pleased the level of attention and the seriousness that is typically
15 accorded to school commute routes by many of the traffic impact study analysts whose work we
16 routinely review. We communicate our views to them quite forcefully but we would like to have
17 the backing if you will of a strong policy statement on the part of this community that impacts of
18 additional trips, particularly turning movements, on school commute routes are very important.
19 They shouldn't disallow any addition development but they should require really more careful
20 review or enhanced review of effects.

21
22 The intent is to establish a comprehensive that is City-wide, north and south, continuous, literally
23 no gaps it is just no good to setup a network that has gaps in it school commute corridor routes.
24 To improve the network over time and create a model for the Bay Area and the nation.

25
26 Chair Bialson: Joe, I think we are getting some feedback.

27
28 Mr. Kott: I need to add here that in creating this network we are not implying in the least that
29 there should be any toleration for an unsafe condition on any street particularly a residential
30 street. That is not part of our proposal. What we are suggesting is a special focus on those
31 streets that we know are important school commute corridor routes. Another caveat that is very
32 important is that not all of these street segments are ready for prime time. There are many that
33 need improvements. In fact we have identified what we call critical crossings. We have very
34 serious concerns at some of our major intersections and other locations in town along our street
35 system about existing conditions. We are not saying that all of the street segments in the
36 proposed network are ideal for school commuting rather they present a vision or they present a
37 mapped goal if you will toward which we will work for attainment as quickly as we can with the
38 resources we have.

39
40 Where did this all come from? That is a question we are always asked. Sometimes it is in the
41 form of did you make this up? No, we didn't make this up. This proposal is recommended in
42 the Charleston Road Traffic Safety and Management Study, which this Commission
43 recommended unanimously. The School Commute Corridor Network is one of our Council's
44 milestones within the Traffic Calming Alternative Transportation Top Five Goal. The top five
45 milestones were again revalidated by our Council on Monday. The corridor network was
46 endorsed unanimously by the City School Traffic Safety Committee, which is an assembly of
47 school, PTA, traffic safety representatives. It was early vetted by a residents advisory panel we
48 worked with which comprised delegates from neighborhood associations, all neighborhood

1 associations were solicited for nominations for membership on our advisory panel as well as
2 school site traffic safety PTA representatives. Again that whole list, that roster of representatives
3 Citywide, all of our ten public school sites everyone was invited. The people who agreed to
4 participate did so and were very useful in helping us arrive at what we think is a very good
5 network.

6
7 A bit on the timing of the process we have gone through. We hope to go to Council, we may be
8 optimistic about this, we hope to go to Council in June or July. As you all know, Council's
9 agendas get very, very full in the run up to the August Council recess so it may be somewhat
10 difficult to do that but we will try.

11
12 Outcomes. We hope for enhanced safety for cyclists and pedestrians. By the way, a very nice
13 secondary benefit, an important one, is that as you make travel conditions safer for kids you
14 make travel conditions safer for everybody else. So we all benefit.

15
16 We hope to reverse this downward spiral, this decline in biking and walking to school because
17 parents are afraid for their children's safety, by making the routes over time safer will reduce the
18 reality and the perception of a lack of safety or danger on the school commute routes. As a
19 consequence particularly in the mornings when we have our school commute traffic mixing in
20 with all the other commute traffic in the peak period we expect traffic congestion reduction
21 effects. Not dramatic at first but over time on the school commute routes and on those major
22 intersections that serve.

23
24 Lastly, and this is increasingly important as our children become more and more sedentary,
25 which is a very sad commentary on American life these days we hope that there will be
26 additional benefits in the form of fitness and health for our children and also for air quality in the
27 community and in the region. A bit more detail on the network itself is indicated in the Staff
28 Report particularly in the map. I would be very happy to answer any Commission questions.

29
30 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Michael.

31
32 Commissioner Griffin: Joe, in the Staff Report you refer to something called Caltrans Safe
33 Routes to Schools grant applications and allude to some sort of a Caltrans program by that name.
34 Would you describe that for us and also explain how it ties in with your program here.

35
36 Mr. Kott: The California Legislature enacted or mandated a Safe Routes to School program of
37 Caltrans. The details of it are that a portion of the federal traffic safety funds that are remit to
38 California were designated under the Legislature's action to a program that would focus attention
39 on school routes to improve crosswalks, to improve bicycle conditions, bicycle lanes, bicycle
40 paths and the like. California was the first state in the nation to do so. The idea was really
41 borrowed from Australia but it has taken hold in the United States. Don't hold me to this but I
42 think three other states have since adopted a similar program. It is still modest and it was
43 adapted with some opposition from some of the old guard at Caltrans but it has become real. We
44 have been active in applying, we were unsuccessful last year, but we are hopeful this year to
45 obtain one of those grants.

46
47 Commissioner Griffin: So what exactly do we have to do in order to obtain grant in aid for our
48 program?

1
2 Mr. Kott: Well, we would most certainly trumpet the status of a street segment we are applying
3 fund to improve with regard to bike and pedestrian conditions in our grant application. Again, to
4 the best of my knowledge this school commute corridor Network will be the first in the Bay Area
5 and I believe in the nation. So I think we will have some competitive advantage in that strong
6 policy statement. It is very helpful to have gone through an analysis and have a program of
7 improvements very carefully thought through. We did do the initial Charleston Road Traffic
8 Safety and Management Study, which this Commission did recommend unanimously. We are
9 hopeful of applying for funds to implement a portion of the recommendations under that study.
10 We are telling Caltrans and showing them really the basis for our grant application in a very fine
11 piece of work that was done in connection with that study. Having the school commute corridor
12 designation, by the way Charleston as a residential arterial is one of the streets that is included in
13 our proposal. We hope that that status and the prior study will help us get the grant.
14

15 Chair Bialson: Pat.

16
17 Commissioner Burt: Out of consideration for a number of parents out in the audience who have
18 to get their kids up and on their bikes in the morning I would like to myself hold off on any other
19 questions until after the public has spoken.
20

21 Chair Bialson: I appreciate that and I am sure the audience does. We have quite a few speaker
22 request cards. Why don't we start with Penny Ellson to be followed by Sue Coonen. Each
23 speaker will have three minutes.
24

25 Ms. Penny Ellson, 513 El Capitan Place, Palo Alto: Hello. I am here tonight as the Co-Chair of
26 the Civic Affairs Committee for Green Meadow Community Association and also as the mom of
27 a kindergartner. I cross Charleston on bikes and on my feet and on scooter often, a couple of
28 times a day with my kids in tow.
29

30 I would first like to say that Green Meadow fully supports the proposed school corridor network
31 and we appreciate the collaborative work that was done by Staff and the school district and
32 community residents to implement this important project. GMCA has advocated designation of
33 Charleston Road as a school corridor since the Charleston Corridor Traffic Management and
34 Safety Study made this recommendation three years ago. So for us this is a very exciting day.
35

36 We are glad to hear that it sounds like they have added consideration of impacts into the
37 language since the Staff Report last came out. We would like to suggest that the following
38 language be added under Principles of Designation in the proposal. The language up on the
39 screen, "Land use decisions that affect volumes and speeds on a school corridor should be
40 consistent with the nature of the roadway and its role as a school commute route used by school
41 age pedestrians and cyclists." Our reason for making this change follows. The language comes
42 from and is recommended by the Charleston Road Traffic Management and Safety Study
43 findings and recommendations. Also it is reasonable to expect that land use decisions should be
44 made taking into consideration the traffic impacts they may have on the safety of school
45 children. The roads in this network are the primary carriers of our school kids, providing a safer
46 route for them is the whole point of doing this exercise. This language supports Comprehensive
47 Plan policies quoted in the policy implications section of the School Corridors Network proposal.

1 The language is sufficiently broad so it gives direction to provide unique protections school
2 corridors need without forcing any specific solutions.

3
4 On another note I have been asked to mention that we understand that the City meant to refer
5 only to the pedestrian over and underpasses in the document. We just wanted to make sure in
6 order to avert any misunderstanding that that language is used throughout. Again, we are very
7 glad and I personally am thrilled to support this important proposal. Nevertheless we hope that
8 you will make the changes to it that we have suggested and we thank you for considering our
9 point of view and hope you will recommend the proposal. Thank you.

10
11 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Sue Lattner Coonen to be followed by Kathy Durham.

12
13 Ms. Sue Lattner Coonen, 4035 Orme Street, Palo Alto: Hello. I am the Bicycle Safety Rep at
14 the Turman Middle School Traffic Safety Committee. I am here to thank you profusely for this
15 plan. Obviously we are very concerned with keeping Arastradero manageable. We are hoping
16 to keep it not to affect traffic as much as one might think it would through various alternatives. I
17 just have to tell you that the City has been wonderful. I have been so amazed at how much time
18 Gayle Likens has given us and how responsive she has been to our concerns. She came out to
19 the site and solved in one morning a problem that we had been struggling with. She brought a
20 traffic engineer with her who did the brainwork. Anyway, I wanted to thank you for that and
21 encourage you, I now understand she has had her directive from you guys, we are not really
22 dragging on her it is what she is supposed to be doing and thank you for doing the right thing.

23
24 We noticed that your map does not include routes to Turman and I guess we will be part of that.
25 I am sure you won't let that fall. Thank you very much.

26
27 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Kathy Durham to be followed by Kerry Yarkin.

28
29 Ms. Durham: Good evening. This time I am speaking as the Traffic Safety Rep for Palo Alto
30 High School and a member of the City School Traffic Safety Committee. I am personally
31 enthusiastic and I will report that Mr. Kott's statement about the City School Traffic Safety
32 Committee being enthusiastic I would say it is extremely enthusiastic about seeing this. One
33 reason is that some of us, and I was one of them, were involved in 1995-96 when school
34 commute corridors first started to be talked about. At that time there was the North Palo Alto
35 School Commute Safety Study. At the time I had a fourth grader and I was an Elementary
36 Traffic Safety Rep but he is now a junior in high school and probably won't benefit from any
37 designated signage or whatever priority on school commute corridors but other people in his
38 school and our neighborhoods will be.

39
40 A couple of points. I understand Commissioner Burt's prior comment on the prior item about
41 the idea of consistency between the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and the School
42 Commute Corridor Network but I would urge that that be something that is worked out in
43 process with experience coming back to you not further delay to either program, please. The
44 idea that school commute corridors would be a positive factor in the ranking I think is a good
45 one. I also am very pleased to see and one of the speakers on the previous item was talking
46 about neighborhood impact of school commute volumes. I think there is an emerging coalition
47 in this town between people who are concerned with neighborhood livability and those of us who
48 are concerned with school traffic safety or people like me who do both. It is not just me, there

1 are other people who are doing both and people who are working together, different generations,
2 and I am extremely pleased to see that.

3
4 I want to commend the inclusion of critical crossing of major arterial streets. This turns out to be
5 some of the significant barriers that we have to encouraging more kids to walk and bike. So we
6 need to focus on that and in particular I will mention that Stanford Avenue and El Camino
7 received the lowest ranking of intersection for bike and pedestrian friendliness in 1995-96 and it
8 is today as it was then. I do hope that we will be able to move forward soon. I think I will stop
9 there. Thank you.

10
11 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Kerry Yarkin to be followed by Angelica Volterra.

12
13 Ms. Yarkin: I won't say good evening because it is getting really late. The evening is going on
14 and this is my third comment. If the school network program outcome is for just traffic
15 congestion on school commute routes then I think you have to make a nexus that the
16 Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program should include fulltime turn prohibition, diagonal
17 diverters, median barriers, first turn channelization and one-way street closures because those are
18 the only devices that really deal with the volume. If you look at your school network you have
19 many collector streets. You have Churchill, you have Channing, you have Stanford Avenue,
20 California Avenue, East Meadow, Louis, Los Robles, you have most of the collector streets.
21 Now by the volume that you are going to reduce that collector street to ten percent which you
22 have basically done tonight by not including the traffic calming measures that are most effective
23 you are basically saying we are going to let all the volume go onto these streets but we are going
24 to make them safer and reduce the traffic congestion. Now I think you have to be realistic and
25 really deal with the traffic volume that you have on these collector streets, which are residential
26 and school commute corridor streets.

27
28 My second concern is Bryant and Churchill where I have seen many accidents. I have seen car
29 crashes. Many of my neighbors have complained. It is a very problematic intersection. There is
30 one stop sign one way but not on the Bryant school commute corridor. There is one more at
31 California Street and Churchill I think they missed some safety data in the study of putting
32 another stop sign at Bryant and Churchill because of all the accidents I have seen and anecdotally
33 I have heard from many of my neighbors.

34
35 I am going back to some items I didn't get to speak about on the Neighborhood Traffic Calming
36 Program. One is I am waiting for the transportation significant thresholds which were promised
37 to me. The preliminary results were to come to the Planning and Transportation Commission in
38 March and to discuss those transportation thresholds. The neighbors were supposed to come as
39 in the record they said the Planning and Transportation Staff was supposed to come with
40 permanent recommended changes for the thresholds. The next item, I think you need to hire
41 more traffic engineers. Menlo Park has five and one-half staff to deal with traffic as traffic
42 engineers and I think Palo Alto has about seven or about six and one-half. I think since we are
43 double the population of Menlo Park we need to start investing in traffic engineers who know
44 how to study traffic, analyze it and propose solutions.

45
46 My last comment will be about safety. I think any major safety concerns, which I have seen
47 many times on Churchill, should trump the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and the
48 School Commute Corridor Program. Traffic engineers in the Traffic Department should be able

1 to enact engineering devices that will correct, narrow and unsafe street problems. We shouldn't
2 have to wait until someone is killed or injured to be able to come here and get some action. So I
3 hope you really think about safety as your number one concern.

4
5 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Angelica Volterra to be followed by Betsy Allyn and that is the last
6 speaker request card I have.

7
8 Ms. Volterra: Good evening. As I mentioned earlier this evening I am a resident of Channing
9 Avenue and my comments will be brief. Channing Avenue between West Bayshore and Guinda
10 serves as a commute corridor for two schools, Duvenick Elementary School and Saint Elizabeth
11 Seaton School. Channing is designated in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan as a collector
12 street, however, Channing is being used as an de facto residential arterial to convey regional
13 traffic to and from Highway 101 and East Bayshore, to and from West Bayshore and East Palo
14 Alto and to and from the Downtown area, Stanford University area as well as Sandhill Road and
15 Highway 280 and Menlo Park. Also in recent years it has been used increasingly and
16 inappropriately to convey large trucks including City vehicles, construction vehicles, gardener's
17 trucks, etc. Importantly there is significant added traffic and congestion along Channing Avenue
18 especially near Duvenick School at peak school commute times because of the drop off and
19 pickup of children attending Duvenick. That occurs principally along Channing. The Staff
20 Report for the proposed School Commute Corridor Network states that, "Official designation not
21 withstanding all residential streets included in the network should be safely walkable and
22 bikeable." And, "The focus of the network shall be to maintain and improve cycling and
23 walking safety for school children." Staff also proposes, "Priority for traffic calming and other
24 vehicle speed mitigation measures." To this end I must again emphasize the central role to
25 traffic safety and specifically cycling and walking safety for school children of vehicle volumes
26 and cut-through traffic on our residential school corridors. Traffic volumes and cut-through
27 traffic must be given adequate consideration and priority in proposed development projects in
28 order to ensure the safety of our neighborhood streets and school corridors. Thank you .

29
30 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Betsy Allyn and that is the last speaker card I have.

31
32 Ms. Betsy Allyn, 4186 Willmar Drive, Palo Alto: Hi. I want to thank Joe Kott and his
33 wonderful meetings and his staff for an excellent project and report they did for us. I live right
34 off of Arastradero Road and much of the traffic on Arastradero Road is going from Highway 101
35 to Stanford and the Stanford Research Park. I am sure that eight out of nine of those cars have
36 no idea how many schools are on that corridor and how many children cross that corridor. Also
37 this fall we are going to have Turman opening and that will be another 650 students. So this
38 school corridor is an absolute necessity and shows a lot of imagination.

39
40 In addition to that it is mandatory that any and all future land use decisions on this corridor
41 absolutely take into account the safety problems for children, bicycles, pedestrians that they will
42 create. I want to be a little innovative tonight because I live near Gunn High School, because
43 60% of the students at Gunn High School drive to school and there were 400 parking permits
44 issued at Gunn this year which is the most ever. I think they issued 320 last year. This creates
45 some problems for us in Green Acres too which I am sure you have heard about. Parents coming
46 up on Maybell and turning right and going up to the back gate at Turman and sometimes we have
47 120 cars in the morning on Georgia turning around to leave their students off at that back gate.
48 We have now signs put up which are helpful saying in certain sections of Georgia "don't park

1 here between 7:00 and 9:00.” So they are not parking now on Georgia they park on Donald and
2 now they are beginning to park on Willmar. So it is not exactly a great solution but I have a
3 solution. The car culture. I think it would be wonderful if Joe would send a long a
4 recommendation with his report that we disallow students from driving to school to Gunn and
5 Palo Alto High School. Driving is not a right it is a privilege. I think it would simply be a
6 matter of educating the parents but it certainly would help us on Arastradero and it certainly
7 would help Churchill and it certainly would help Embarcadero. So if anybody is game enough to
8 take it on, Joe? Thank you.
9

10 Chair Bialson: Thank you. I have no other speaker request cards so I will close the public input
11 and take it back to the Commission. Karen.
12

13 Commissioner Holman: Can I ask a question of the last speaker?
14

15 Chair Bialson: Please come back up and that is Betsy Allyn.
16

17 Commissioner Holman: Do happen to know what the enrollment is of Gunn High School?
18

19 Ms. Allyn: 1,700.
20

21 Commissioner Holman: Thank you.
22

23 Ms. Allyn: I think it is a bit more at Pally. Of those 1,700 I think not quite 1,100 students are
24 involved in driving singly in their car. Carpooling is a long lost art.
25

26 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Commissioners, because of the late hour let’s have both questions
27 and comments. Joe.
28

29 Commissioner Bellomo: I have a question Joe for you. What is the dollar amount that is
30 proposed to be allotted to a program like this per year?
31

32 Mr. Kott: We are recommending what amounts to a reallocation of resources. The term I like to
33 use is at the margin because we don’t have a lot of resources but in terms of what we have in the
34 Public Works sidewalk replacement program, the pavement repaving program, our traffic
35 calming program there would be as a consequence of this some reallocation of resources. We
36 wouldn’t get more money, we wouldn’t get more money but the school commute corridor streets
37 would get more than would have otherwise and other streets would get less than they would have
38 otherwise with this reallocation. One addition to that is that we will be more competitive for
39 outside funds or external funds, grant funds. In that sense it is not just a shift around of funds we
40 may actually expand the pie somewhat.
41

42 Commissioner Bellomo: Okay. So it is reallocation. I have a couple more questions. So in
43 terms of grants I noticed that the inclusions from Staff number seven, in future private school
44 sites and public parks will be considered in revisions. Why aren’t some of the major or the
45 population schools that are a little larger, [Castilla], etc. aren’t included in any of the school
46 corridors?
47

1 Mr. Kott: We purposely limited our mandate to what we thought was achievable in the first
2 round. We would need to revisit it based on advice that we got from our resident's advisory
3 panel, the private school sites, and other issues as we revise the network. We would hope to
4 come back to the Commission as we do with our traffic-calming program periodically with
5 suggestions for revisions and receive Commission advice on those.

6
7 Commissioner Bellomo: My question on top of that question is with traffic impact studies and
8 level of attention that they would include with the adoption of this the private school areas.

9
10 Mr. Kott: I know the hour is late but I would like to make a special note of that. I have been
11 personally chagrined and disappointed at the amount of seriousness with which the school
12 commute routes are treated in traffic impact studies and EIRs. It is very important for this
13 community in my view to adopt a policy which will compel a more serious treatment of the
14 traffic safety effects of any changes due to development and redevelopment on sensitive streets,
15 school commute streets.

16
17 Commissioner Bellomo: That is why I allude to the fact that those should include private school
18 districts. I just want to make a comment in the late hour that I am just totally in support of this
19 document and the work you have done, Joe and with the community and Staff's efforts on a
20 program like this one. I am very much in support of it.

21
22 Chair Bialson: Bonnie.

23
24 Commissioner Packer: I too am thrilled and in support of this program. I do have a couple of
25 little questions. On the map it shows the red dash lines, the extension of bicycle routes, will
26 those be added to the school network or are they considered part of the network but they are just
27 shown in red dashes? I am a little confused about that designation.

28
29 Mr. Kott: Unfortunately Commissioner I don't have the colored copy. In order to save budget
30 we only have given the Commission that copy. The dashes are proposed bicycle boulevards, our
31 extension. As the Commission might recall we have per Commission recommendation created a
32 Draft Bicycle Master Plan and are about to take it to Council, which proposes additional bicycle
33 boulevards and supplement to our one existing bicycle boulevard at Bryant Street. Those dashed
34 segments indicate proposed per the Bicycle Master Transportation Plan additions to the bicycle
35 boulevard network in Palo Alto.

36
37 Commissioner Packer: But they are not school corridors?

38
39 Mr. Kott: They are both. Just in residential arterial streets where we enjoy both designations.

40
41 Commissioner Packer: Okay. I would suggest that the map be made a little bit clearer in that
42 regard because I thought it was one or the other. In one place there is both red dashes and blue
43 line and not all places.

44
45 The other question I had is that there is an Attachment B with a list of all the aspects of the plan
46 and then there is a Staff Report and in some respects they are not exactly the same. What would
47 we be approving? In the areas where it is a little bit different is the discussion about the
48 commercial driveways and the heightened review. The language is a little bit different and it

1 could have different implications so I wondered which one should we focus on the Attachment B
2 or the Staff Report?

3
4 Mr. Kott: Thank you very much for pointing that out Commissioner Packer I should have done
5 that in my remarks. I did give some additional thought to the applications and designation, those
6 nine proposed, and decided on reflection to change number five, to rewrite it. So in your Staff
7 Report on page three that is the list that would obtain not the Attachment.

8
9 Commissioner Packer: Okay so with regard to item number five where it says prohibition or
10 stringent restrictions on any new driveways, how would that be implemented? Are you
11 suggesting that that be implemented as conditions of approval of projects? That it be in the
12 Zoning Ordinance Update? All the other items affect the Public Works aspect of the street
13 whereas this one would affect in some way a private work on the driveway or are you just talking
14 about the public as part of the driveway? That is why I was a little bit confused on how it would
15 be implemented.

16
17 Mr. Kott: These driveways access the public rights-of-way and they affect travel safety on the
18 public right-of-way so they would certainly be proposed to be implemented as conditions of
19 approval. The language is written somewhat loosely because in not all cases would you need to
20 prohibit any new uncontrolled driveways. There may be other means to mitigate the safety
21 problem including a restriction on hours. But it would part of conditions of development
22 approval and would be certainly part of the review of development proposal. It is a policy basis,
23 which would then be a very strong policy basis for requiring certain actions on the part of a
24 developer potentially up to not opening a new driveway onto a street because it would be deemed
25 to be unsafe due to the expected turning movements out of and into that driveway.

26
27 Mr. Emslie: To the Chair, I just want to supplement what Joe is talking about. We very much
28 support the language in number five under the proposed applications of the designation and
29 would point to the Policy T-29 as really the overarching policy from the Comp Plan that does
30 inform this. Just to put it into perspective, you cannot adopt a plan in this corridor you cannot
31 adopt a policy that would countermand a direction that is adopted as a part of the Comprehensive
32 Plan. This is not adopted as official policy under the Comprehensive Plan so when there would
33 be a need to interpret the application of number five we would rely on policies such as T-29 to
34 help us focus and to put that in the proper perspective.

35
36 Chair Bialson: T-39?

37
38 Mr. Emslie: Yes, 39, I'm sorry. Excuse me. I am talking about T-39 on the last page of the
39 Staff Report.

40
41 Chair Bialson: Okay, that is understood. Bonnie, are you through?

42
43 Commissioner Packer: I would just like to add a couple of things. I would support what Joe said
44 about private schools and when you are looking at this again in the next go around community
45 centers where children go a lot, the parks which children bike to for soccer games, the YMCA,
46 all these places where there are a lot of family/children traffic should be identified on this map.
47 That will help us in future iterations. I would strongly encourage that.

1 The other question I have is there are proposals about the land use decisions language that has
2 been proposed by public speakers, land use decisions that effect volumes, the language that
3 Penny Ellson proposed, was that discussed at any of the meetings and why was it not included in
4 this? Should we be considering that and what are the pros and cons? Do you have any
5 comments on that?
6

7 Mr. Kott: It was discussed in our resident's advisory panel and it was deemed to be I think we
8 had good discussions. Some people were very strongly in favor of doing so but I think it was
9 deemed to be difficult to implement in practice. Whereas the language on heightened review
10 tells us a lot and it would tell developers and their consultants quite a lot too.

11
12 Commissioner Packer: Thank you.

13
14 Chair Bialson: Karen.

15
16 Commissioner Holman: I will ask my questions in no particular order. As a follow up to that I
17 would ask if you could clarify for me why would that be considered hard to implement? It
18 seemed like it would be very much a criteria to be considering in considering a development
19 project.
20

21 Mr. Emslie: We support the fact that it should be a criterion in considering land use
22 development. We are concerned that the language provides enough flexibility that all the
23 policies of the Comprehensive Plan can be implemented. Legally you cannot adopt a policy now
24 and with the strong language even if you wanted to in this plan it would not carry the force of
25 law because it is not part of your Comprehensive Plan. You have not gone through the due
26 process of airing this and considering it with many of the other competing policies of the
27 Comprehensive Plan. So even if you wanted to put it in there, if Wynne were here she would tell
28 you, that if we had to make a judgment between a policy that was adopted in the Comp Plan and
29 one that it is an advisory document such as this the Comp Plan would take precedence. So in
30 that spirit we think if the language we have in here we feel very comfortable with because it does
31 inform, it does definitely address private development and it does address land use decisions and
32 makes it a very strong factor in your consideration. That is what we are comfortable
33 recommending to you tonight as a way to keep this plan moving, getting it adopted but not
34 raising significant conflict issues with a Comprehensive Plan review. So we are comfortable
35 with the language the Transportation Staff has proposed.
36

37 Mr. Kott: May I add two quick points? One is the Comprehensive Plan and this proposal is
38 highly congruent, highly congruent. The second point is that policy language is important. You
39 will notice if you have read the Hyatt EIR that there was specific mention to the lack of official
40 status of school commute corridors in appraising likely effects and the claims of effects on
41 school commute safety due to that particular development project. The language is somewhat
42 dismissive and I think it was very unfortunately so. On the other hand if this community does
43 adopt a statement of policy that compels serious attention to school commute corridors we will
44 get serious attention. Other issues come into play and I am not a land use guy but in terms of the
45 Comp Plan there are other issues about housing and gosh knows what else that need to be
46 balanced out. We are confident in terms of the transportation portion of the Comp Plan that what
47 we are proposing here is highly compliant and highly congruent.
48

1 Commissioner Holman: I guess I need, and all of us recognize that it is late, but I do have a
2 handful of questions. Without hopefully seeming testy if this document is congruent with the
3 Comprehensive Plan how would Staff suggest that we have experienced such an erosion of our
4 school commute corridors in the last years?
5

6 Mr. Kott: I think that my own view is that we needed and we need better focus. We need to be
7 crystal clear that the particular streets are to be given more attention and treated more sensitively
8 and in effect protected. That is an obligation that would be imposed and effect not only the
9 public sector, that is us, but also on the private sector as well as their activities affect the school
10 commute corridors all of which are on the public right-of-way.
11

12 Commissioner Holman: Thank you for that clarification. So having a spotlight on this is what is
13 going to make the difference. So thank you. On page two, number one, it talks about a
14 combination of street segments, entire streets and several streets linked together. I noticed that
15 there is only one occasion on the map that has an off-street linkage and that was for Walt Hayes
16 School on Rincinada Park. Isn't there at least one other way that was considered at some point
17 or has been considered like along Adobe Creek? I think that is a good connector to schools too
18 and it would be safe in that it is not competing with cars.
19

20 Mr. Kott: We have heard that advice before Commissioner Holman and we are listening to it
21 and taking it seriously. We don't think though that the use of Adobe Creek is at the same
22 readiness as making a current collector street into a bicycle boulevard in the future. We would
23 be glad in returning to this Commission with proposal for revising the School Commute Corridor
24 Network to include consideration of additional segments including Adobe Creek. we are hopeful
25 that we would have a network in a high state of readiness.
26

27 Commissioner Holman: Okay. Sorry, I do have a few questions here.
28

29 Chair Bialson: Okay, just keep in mind that we do keep the public and Staff, and I understand
30 one of the Staff members has quite a commute ahead of him.
31

32 Commissioner Holman: Understanding that and understanding that this is really an important
33 item I beg your indulgence. Could Staff comment about the cooperation and how much there
34 has been work with the school system in terms of trying to coordinate school hours with fewer
35 drivers and would you comment on Betsy Allyn's suggestion of working with the schools to
36 prohibit perhaps kids from driving to school. It is a very high percentage if there are 1,100
37 drivers driving kids at Gunn for instance and 400 drive to school, 400 permits given, that is a
38 very, very high percentage.
39

40 Chair Bialson: Just a point here. I would like to stay very focused on this plan. I think that your
41 question goes to the issue of traffic surrounding schools I don't know if it really impacts this plan
42 and our decision that needs to be made.
43

44 Mr. Kott: Just a quick comment. We will probably be more involved with the schools and with
45 the traffic safety PTA representatives at the schools than nearly any traffic department in the Bay
46 Area. When all is said and done each school site has its own needs you might say. For traffic
47 guys like me the simplest and cheapest solution is to shift commute hours, stagger shifts, stagger
48 start times. It is a great travel demand management tool. It is real cheap you don't have to do

1 anything on the public side. But the school sites have other issues. They have parents who may
2 not wish to have that done. They may have union contracts that may prohibit gosh knows what.
3 So we can't compel them. We do advise them as to the desirability of doing so every chance that
4 we can.

5
6 Commissioner Holman: I will only comment on this and not ask a question. It would be kind of
7 interesting to discover what is more cost effective doing traffic calming programs in
8 neighborhoods because of cars going to schools versus some kind of coordinated effort with the
9 school system.

10
11 I think those are my only comments. Thank you.

12
13 Chair Bialson: Thank you. Pat.

14
15 Commissioner Burt: First real quickly one of the audience members had commended the
16 Commission on its commitment in this area but I think I need to clarify. We have an
17 exceptionally committed Transportation Staff in this area and I know that they don't need our
18 encouragement but they welcome it. They not only talk the talk they ride the ride.

19
20 Onward, I would like to endorse the further evaluation of the Adobe Creek bike commute
21 corridor. Also while the inclusion of private schools and parks as destination would be in phase
22 two their practical use as a primary route particularly Mitchell and Rincinada Parks is important.
23 I see that you have an off-street path designated on the map for each of those but in the case of
24 Rincinada there is no linkage between the dotted line proposed bike route that goes from Guinda
25 and Melville to Rincinada. I know by the dozen of middle school riders who pass me each
26 morning that that is a real need.

27
28 And it goes to another issue which is we are moving our Capital Improvement Plan discussion
29 until our next meeting but the integration of these items in the CIP I know Joe is very concerned
30 with and as much as in our subcommittee we brought this up, I think that the Public Works
31 Department needs to even further engage themselves in this prioritization. I have lived on two
32 streets in our neighborhood one that is a heavily used child pedestrian route and has not been
33 paved in 20 years and another that is not heavily used and has fresh pavement on it. So we just
34 have to get our priorities right on treating those routes.

35
36 Also under the discussion at the top of page two the second sentence says, "Adopt associated
37 policies that address minimum levels of accommodation." Joe, I know that to you and your Staff
38 minimum levels mean safe and adequate levels and that they are not what someone else might
39 think of as minimal. I wonder if we ought to change the wording there to safe and adequate or
40 something along those lines so people who have lower standards than you would not be able to
41 misconstrue what that means. It is just a suggestion.

42
43 There were comments from Green Meadow that also suggested that we clarify that the underpass
44 and overpasses are referring to pedestrians. I think that covers my issues. Thank you.

45
46 Chair Bialson: Michael.

1 Commissioner Griffin: I wanted to say that I am pretty empathetic to the letters that were written
2 by Penny Ellson and Debra Ju. I know you have addressed that already this evening Steve, I am
3 not sure I want to drag you through that again but I don't know. If the language was in the
4 Charleston Road Traffic Management and Safety Study findings and recommendations and
5 number five here that talks about prohibition or stringent restrictions on commercial driveways
6 and heightened review for all higher volume driveways. To me that, if you will pardon the pun,
7 allows us to back into some land use ramifications here and that is the window to get to land use,
8 so why not?
9

10 Mr. Emslie: We think it is covered. I think it is covered in the language that is there. I think this
11 provides us with the highlight, the spotlight, on land use decision. It mentions traffic volumes,
12 which is clearly the holy grail of the concern of the traffic concerns. So I think it is covered. To
13 me the language here is adequate. I think as Joe says it comports extremely well with the
14 balance of the Comprehensive Plan and it is the language that we are recommending that you
15 adopt. If you wanted to consider proposals that are put before you I would recommend that we
16 have a chance to look at that and perhaps wordsmith it and come back to you if that were the
17 case, but I would want to have a chance to have a close look at the full implications of that in the
18 overall Comprehensive Plan. I would really hate to be in a position to recommend to you some
19 language that would somehow be a variance at some future time with a competing interest in the
20 Comprehensive Plan that we haven't fully analyzed. So if you did want to consider that I think it
21 is moving in the direction that we definitely want to go but we want to make sure that our
22 recommendation to you is based on the full compliment of the objectives of the Comprehensive
23 Plan.
24

25 Chair Bialson: I get to say something now. I understand what you are saying Steve, I agree with
26 all the comments made by my fellow Commissioners. I too feel that we should not tamper with
27 the legal Pandora's box that would be caused by coming up with land use terms that were put on
28 the projector there. They sound good but I do think that we would have a lot of problems with it
29 and it is like handing a weapon to those who would want to use any inconsistency between our
30 Comp Plan and this to perhaps cause them to be able to have a project where we wouldn't want
31 them to. So I think we are going in the right direction. I for one would definitely not want to
32 have any additional language put in without a great deal of review. Bonnie.
33

34 MOTION

35
36 Commissioner Packer: I want to make the motion this time Michael because I am a mom of two
37 bikers to school. I think this is a great plan and I want to move that we recommend to the City
38 Council the proposed Palo Alto School Commute Corridors Network as in Attachment A and the
39 principles of designation, applications of designation and criteria for inclusion as spelled out in
40 the Staff Report and not in Attachment B. I would also include this minor change or clarification
41 that the undercrossings and overcrossings are referring to cyclist and pedestrian crossings and
42 not vehicle over and under crossings. Maybe with a little clarification of the map that the dashed
43 lines are meant to be part of the school commute corridor wherever that is appropriate.
44

45 I am very happy to make this motion because not only is it a great plan but it is a wonderful
46 product between the City and the schools and the PTA and all the people involved. It is really
47 nice that Palo Alto is going to be in the forefront again on something very important and will

1 hopefully with the implementation the priorities will really a benefit to all of our children and all
2 of our citizens.

3
4 Chair Bialson: I am going to count that as your comments supporting the motion. Do I have a
5 second?

6
7 SECOND

8
9 Commissioner Burt: Yes, I will second.

10
11 Chair Bialson: Pat, do you want to speak to your second or do you feel we have had sufficient
12 discussion already?

13
14 Commissioner Burt: I think we are in consensus.

15
16 Chair Bialson: Fine. All those in favor say aye. Hold it, Karen wants to say something.

17
18 AMENDMENT

19
20 Commissioner Holman: Yes. I would like to add to the motion as a friendly amendment to add
21 future consideration of Adobe Creek school commute corridor. I will leave it at that.

22
23 Chair Bialson: Maker?

24
25 Commissioner Packer: I am a little hesitant at this time because I understand that this document
26 is a living document and there is probably going to be a lot of corridors that will be proposed. I
27 also have been involved in a situation where a creek was being proposed to be used as a
28 pedestrian access and the residential neighbors were furious. So I don't know enough about it.
29 The document says that it is going to be changing and we are going to be adding new corridors
30 as more information comes forward. If the school liaison committee and the City come forward
31 with a proposal then I think we should consider it at that time. But right now I don't have any
32 information in front of me so I don't want to accept that at this point. Not that I am opposed I
33 just don't know anything about it.

34
35 Chair Bialson: Any other comments before we vote? It does not go to the seconder if the maker
36 declines.

37
38 Commissioner Bellomo: Can there be a friendly amendment that there be a consideration that
39 public parks and private schools be added to the network map?

40
41 Chair Bialson: Maker?

42
43 Commissioner Packer: Again I accept Joe's explanation that for the first go around we wanted to
44 keep it at this level. I support the idea enthusiastically but if this is the first go around and it is
45 going to come back that gives us a good reason for it to come back to us with enhancements at
46 the right time. Also most of the routes on here already pass by a lot of the private schools and
47 community centers. I looked at that and thought that most of it is already covered it just isn't
48 specifically identified on the map.

1
2 Chair Bialson: Okay. Any other comments? Karen.

3
4 SUBSTITUTE MOTION

5
6 Commissioner Holman: I would like to propose a substitute motion, which would for brevity
7 here be consistent with Bonnie's motion with the addition of adding future consideration of
8 Adobe Creek. I will leave it at that.

9
10 Chair Bialson: Pat.

11
12 Commissioner Burt: Yes, I would like to withdraw my second on the original and second this
13 substitute motion.

14
15 Chair Bialson: I am not sure whether you can withdraw the second at this point but you can
16 second both of them.

17
18 SECOND

19
20 Commissioner Burt: I will second this motion whichever is procedurally correct.

21
22 Commissioner Holman: Just a brief comment if I could speak to my motion. I don't think it
23 does any harm, this might come to something or it might not but I don't think it does any harm to
24 have it on the record and then there is a record of it. So I feel more comfortable with it being
25 there.

26
27 Commissioner Burt: I will add that with the prospective development at the Hyatt Rickey's and
28 the Elk's Club I think this is an exceptionally important prospective corridor and it is only a
29 request that it be evaluated and not a mandate that it occur.

30
31 Chair Bialson: So you are asking that within this creation of a School Commute Corridor
32 Network which is a policy issue the creation of a network you are then going on to the next level
33 and saying you want this network and you also want the organization that is going to be
34 operating within this network to consider the Adobe Creek. So you are going to two levels.
35 Fine.

36
37 SUBSTITUTE MOTION FAILS

38
39 Let's vote on the substitute motion. All those in favor say aye. (ayes) All those opposed say
40 nay. (nays) That does not pass we have three in favor and that would be Commissioners
41 Holman, Burt and Griffin and the other three do not.

42
43 MOTION PASSED

44
45 So let's go back to the underlying motion also seconded by Pat. Let's have a vote on that if no
46 one objects. All those in favor say aye. (ayes) All those opposed say nay. I think we have
47 unanimity there.

1 That closes this matter and I want to thank Staff for a wonderful program network.

2
3 Commissioner Holman: Madam Chair?

4
5 Chair Bialson: Yes?

6
7 Commissioner Holman: One comment or two comments actually as follow up to this item. One
8 would be to suggest Staff consider the cost implications of traffic calming measures compared to
9 the cost of shuttle in school commute corridors to reduce single occupant vehicles. Also that
10 Staff come back with a clarification if they could for us regarding the inclusion of the language
11 in the Charleston Road Traffic Management Study.

12
13 Commissioner Packer: Karen, are you making a motion for us to consider?

14
15 Chair Bialson: She is just making a couple of comments.

16
17 Commissioner Holman: And a suggestion to Staff to come back to us with that.

18
19 Chair Bialson: Thank you.

20
21 Mr. Emslie: Just quickly we will have plenty of opportunity to talk to you about that as we go
22 through the Charleston Road Traffic Study. I think this will be a core subject of discussion so I
23 think we will have plenty of time to talk about that.

24
25 Chair Bialson: All right. Item number four we have decided to put off until the next meeting.
26 That is the Capital Improvement Program. If anybody has any Questions, Comments or
27 Announcements please speak up.

28
29 ***COMMISSION MEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENTS.***

30
31 Chair Bialson: Karen.

32
33 Commissioner Holman: Yes, this past week I received a phone call from a woman wanting to
34 invite me and had invited other Commissioners to attend a meeting just to hear their working
35 suggestions about a project. I know that they had said that they had put calls into the Chair and
36 Vice-Chair. I then put a call in to the Chair just so that we could have a consistency with what
37 our discussion was at the retreat. We did discuss at the retreat without final action about how we
38 would conduct ourselves in regards to this kind of opportunity. So we did talk at the retreat
39 again about having these meetings in the presence of Staff as opposed to on our own. So I
40 wanted to make sure that we had some discussion of that in an ongoing fashion. We will have a
41 retreat coming up where we can clarify this but it is happening now so I thought we ought to
42 have a brief discussion about this.

43
44 Chair Bialson: I think it can be addressed at the retreat. I don't know if you are looking for
45 some comment by Steve, is that what you are alluding to?

46
47 Commissioner Holman: I would appreciate that yes and any comments by other Commissioners
48 as well.

1
2 Mr. Emslie: Real quickly if you were contacted by an applicant and the Commission doesn't
3 have a protocol that prohibits that at this point and you would like to have Staff present please let
4 us know and we will make arrangements to attend with you.
5
6 Chair Bialson: Thank you. And I think we will clarify this point further and I appreciate your
7 bringing it up.
8
9 With regard to Commission representation at Council meetings I believe that Pat volunteered
10 gleefully for the July month. So please put that down for July.
11
12 Commissioner Holman: Can I volunteer for August?
13
14 Chair Bialson: No. The Chair is saving that one for herself. You guessed that was coming
15 didn't you?
16
17 Commissioner Packer: I would just like to say that I will be representing the Commission this
18 coming Monday since Joe cannot represent the Commission on the item in front of the City
19 Council.
20
21 Chair Bialson: We appreciate that. Thank you.
22
23 Let's approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 8 and the Regular Meeting of April 9,
24 2003.
25
26 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 8 and the Regular
27 Meeting of April 9, 2003.
28
29 Chair Bialson: Do we have any changes or hopefully a motion for both of them?
30
31 MOTION
32
33 Commissioner Griffin: I move approval of both.
34
35 SECOND
36
37 Chair Bialson: I understand that Mr. Griffin is going to make a motion to approve both. I will
38 second that.
39
40 MOTION PASSED
41
42 Chair Bialson: All those in favor please say aye. (ayes) That passes unanimously.
43
44 **NEXT MEETING:** Regular Meeting of May 28, 2003 at 7:00 PM.
45
46 Chair Bialson: This meeting is now adjourned. Thank you so much and it is not quite 11:30 yet.
47
48 **ADJOURNED: 11:25 PM**