

Humboldt Street Bike Boulevard

August 6, 2008 Community Meeting Comments

At the meeting which was attended by 120 residents, there seemed to be a positive consensus for the Humboldt Street bike boulevard design concepts.

Below is a summary of the comments/questions and responses:

❖ Traffic Volume, Speed and On Street Parking

- Will a left turn from Humboldt to College, increase traffic onto Orchard and Slater?
- Is there data on how many bikes will use Humboldt? Could there be a roundabout at 5th to help traffic flow?
- Volume of traffic on bike blvd [Humboldt]? Will it [the bike blvd] decrease the volume? Has a study been done, are there numbers?
- I live and bike on Humboldt. It can be busy and people drive fast. Why not slow traffic with speed bumps.
- Isn't this to reduce traffic? It doesn't seem like it will. Are there any plans that will reduce traffic?
- Why wouldn't 4 way stops on every corner work just as well?
- I think the traffic circles are wonderful; they worked well in Massachusetts when I lived there. Decrease in homicide rates. People speed up and down Pacific even more. People speed up to catch the green light.
- As a resident, I applaud effort to calm traffic. Pacific to College seems to have the most traffic flow, thus you need more on that segment.
- As a resident, I agree with your graph on the speeding up after stop signs, and calming traffic would be great.
- There are two elements to a successful bike blvd, low traffic and low speed, 4000 cars seems like a maximum so we need to enforce speed and really have it monitored. If the speed gets to high it won't work.
- It seems to me if you take out the 4 way stop you got, Benton, to Howard, to Spencer, with only a yield speeding will occur. You should put K-rail at Benton to only allow one-way turns.

- I like these proposed changes but I don't think they are going to slow students down.
- I heard a lot a people who are skeptical about traffic circles, but in other areas where there are traffic circles they work to slow the traffic down.
- Removal of centerline everywhere except at specified intersections? How is it helpful?
- Some of the neighbors received fliers about bike lanes and parking removed.
- I think it's a great idea to slow down traffic, but I'm a corner lot and losing all my parking.

Responses:

As part of the project, City staff will be collecting before and after data which will assist us in evaluating any changes in traffic conditions and circulation. The data gathered will include bicycle and vehicles counts and speed data.

Overall the proposal will not remove parking along Humboldt Street between Lewis Rd and 5th Street with this exception- the proposal includes the installation of traffic circles at four intersections. It may be necessary at these four locations to either extend or install red curb. It is estimated that this would impact a possible 10 - 12 on street parking spaces. However, even with the possible reduction in on street parking, it is expected that all the residents at these locations would continue to have some on street parking.

Engineering studies indicate that traffic circles keep speeds within a narrower range, i.e. speeds range from 12 – 22 MPH, whereas, at stop signs drivers tend to accelerate faster as they move out of the intersection and slow down more quickly as they approach the next stop sign. This behavior results in erratic speeds i.e. speeds range from 0 – 40 MPH.

With a centerline, motorists tend to stay to the right in a travel lane. Without a centerline, motorists will tend to stay more in the center of the roadway. Therefore, motorists approach oncoming traffic with more caution because there is no centerline delineation.

❖ Bike Box

- In the bike box, bikes have the right away, when do cars have the right away? Bikes need to obey the law if they want fair share of road.

- I live on Spencer and Humboldt, I've noticed a lot more motorcycles and scooters; are they allowed in bike box? Speeding down Spencer is really bad; need something to slow it down.
- How are the vehicles going to be detected if farther from the crosswalk?
- What about right turns from behind the bike box, [when] can I [as a vehicle] go into the area?
- [How do cars make a] right on red behind a bike box?
- If there's a red light how do I approach on a bike to the bike box?

Responses:

The bike box is an intersection design feature to reduce the potential of bicycle/car collisions. It is an area painted on the road with a box and white bicycle symbol inside.

When the traffic signal is red, cyclists approach on the right to front of vehicle queue and wait in the bike box for signal to change.

When the traffic signal is yellow or red, motorists must stop behind the white stop line behind the bike box. When the light turns green, motorists and cyclists may move through the intersection as usual, with cyclists going first.

❖ Enforcement

- Are they going to give tickets for illegal left turns?
- Bikes should stop at stop signs, but cars don't give us a turn when we sit there.
- Past few years, there has been a lot of vehicle traffic, and bikes. Particularly young people don't wear helmets and don't stop at Stop signs. Get young people to follow traffic laws
- Are we going to have more patrolling on this road after we change the conditions?
- How are you going to monitor the progress of this with the residents?
- Why don't you put a motorcycle cop out there for a while?
- Citizens can make a citizens complaint by making note of vehicle type, license plate number, and action.
- My biggest complaint is that young people won't follow the traffic laws.

Responses:

Concerns about enforcement were forwarded to the Police Department which included requests for more presence in the neighborhood and locating a speed trailer on Humboldt Street.

❖ Education

- Will skate boarders be involved? Will bioswales improve drainage?
- Thanks for the efforts; Bike blvd will improve the area. Bikes do get tickets. Sign up your kids for bike classes to improve their knowledge of rules, it will help everyone.
- On behalf of young people who ride bikes, we're not all bad. Kids want to rebel, you have to help. I've ridden in Oregon and the bike box just helps you as a motorist to know bikes are there.
- In trying to understand how a bike blvd works, can cars still go around bikes, with the centerline removed, or do they have to follow the slow bike?
- Go to Palo Alto if you have any questions about bike blvd for positive support. Stamped concrete hopefully is not like Mendocino and 4th that knocks your glasses off. At Lewis and 5th end the short cut.
- There are people who live on Humboldt who should each get a vote.
- We can't categorize people [law breakers] as young or old, by sex, race, or gender.

Responses:

The City of Santa Rosa's has two programs in place to help educate the community about pedestrian, bicycle and motorist safety.

The Santa Rosa Street Smarts Program is a public education campaign to promote safe driving, bicycling and walking behavior. Some of the behaviors this campaign focuses on are speeding, aggressive driving, distracted driving, red light running, speeding in neighborhood and school zones.

The Santa Rosa Police Department administers a bicyclist and pedestrian safety program aimed at educating the community about safe pedestrian and bicycle practices.

❖ General Comments

- Live on Humboldt and so excited, wish it were already done.
- Adjustment to Lewis Rd from Humboldt. Not a lot of room for bikes to cross.
- Is there any further consideration on making further adjustment to Mendocino to make it a more bike friendly street?
- Thank City for efforts in gathering info and presenting it. Admit I've not come to complete stop on bike and in car. Yield controlled traffic will be calming, must look to ourselves. Hopefully enhance behavior.
- Driven in England, circle flow is nice. I live on an adjacent street to Humboldt and I'm worried about the diverted flow. Sometimes I feel like you're strangling the neighborhood, it's already hard to cross College.
- In support of this project, I lived on a bike blvd in Palo Alto and it was great
- How can we submit comments after this?
- Thank you all for bringing this forward, Santa Rosa is finally going to get a bike blvd and making the commitment to be a bike friendly city.
- Approximate cost?
- Pilot project is in the spring? How long will this take to implement?

Responses:

We hope to install a pilot project in the next 6 – 9 months.
A preliminary cost estimate for the long term project is \$250,000.