



City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 18-0437, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-6.

CC - (1) Receipt and Discussion of Final Report of Transit Oriented Development (T.O.D.) Visioning Study and Recommendations; and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: November 6, 2017

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Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Public Hearing: **Action Item:** **Attachments:**

Commission Action Required: Yes No **Date:**

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (11/01/17);

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (10/30/17)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) receive and discuss the final report of the Culver City TOD Visioning Study and Recommendations; and (2) provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

On March 14, 2016 the City Council authorized a study of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District to examine area circulation and prepare recommendations on "first and last mile" mobility solutions around the Culver City Expo Station. On August 28, 2017, the consulting team of Johnson Fain, Steer Davies Gleave, and the KOA Corporation, gave an informational presentation of the team's preliminary recommendations to the City Council for its members' comments and further direction. Subsequent to the City Council presentation, the consultant team met extensively with the Council's TOD Visioning Subcommittee and the department heads of Community Development, Public Works, and Transportation, for their comments and direction.

The Culver City TOD Visioning Study and Recommendations centers on re-focusing mobility planning in the TOD area to include multiple modes - pedestrians, transit, and bikes, in addition to automobile traffic that has guided mobility planning historically. Beginning with the Expo Station at its core, the mobility visioning study has explored linkages to connect the station area better with Downtown and with its surrounding neighborhoods. Through a series of eight public workshops and numerous interviews and focus group meetings, the project team has identified mobility issues of primary concern to residents and other stakeholders and outlines in its report multiple interconnected measures for addressing them. In addition to the workshop series, interested parties within the greater area of the TOD have mapped and posted their comments on an interactive website at www.culverTODvision.org <<http://www.culverTODvision.org>>. In total, approximately 170 people participated in one or more of the workshop sessions, and approximately 450 unique comments were posted on the interactive website.

The major issues of concern that emerged from this stakeholder input and the consultant team's own research included the following:

- There is too much traffic - especially too much of the "wrong kind" of traffic (i.e., through-traffic originating outside of Culver City).
- Of the three kinds of automobile traffic having impacts on the area, there is too much through-traffic on local streets, impeding the mobility of residents (i.e., local circulation) and local employees (i.e., destination traffic).
- Culver City's historic street network threads through-traffic on to streets and neighborhoods not designed to accommodate it.
- The distribution of land use in the city exacerbates the through-traffic problem.
- The street network is disconnected and insufficiently designed to encourage mobility through alternative modes.
- The road infrastructure is insufficient and rapidly approaching its ultimate capacity for cars.

The central goal defined through the engagement process is to provide more and better choices for circulation, by increasing the viability of alternative mobility mode choices for residents and other users alike. Priorities were established with pedestrians first, transit next, then bikes, and finally cars. Under this central goal, supporting objectives include:

- Establishing the TOD area and its neighborhood vicinity as a pedestrians-first environment;
- Advancing the use of transit for first/last mile connections and local circulation;
- Providing a safe and protected network for bicycling as a choice;
- Managing the flow of traffic around and through the TOD area to minimize conflicts

with other modes; and

- Conserving and protecting the character of existing residential neighborhood quality.

The consultant team's recommendations are based on a framework of connected mobility networks to allow people to drive less and walk, bicycle, and take transit more. Principles of the mobility framework include diverting vehicular through-traffic to major arterials around the perimeter of the area; servicing the downtown/commercial core and the eastside employment centers from the "outside" (i.e., from the major perimeter arterials); protecting interior neighborhood circulation from cut-through traffic; protecting pedestrian circulation through improved street crossings, better sidewalks, and better connectivity; facilitating local transit use through improved infrastructure and more responsive service; and facilitating bike use through a connected network of cycling routes.

Within this framework of mobility principles for the TOD area and pursuant to the defined goals, the TOD Visioning report presents a series of categorical recommendations for physical intervention.

Pedestrians - To improve walkability, improve pedestrian safety, and encourage circulation on foot:

- Redesign street intersections in the district for pedestrian priority.
- Initiate the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) process for a specific set of possible neighborhood protection interventions.
- Redesign sidewalks on Washington and National to meet minimum standards of 10 ft.
- Coordinate with City of Los Angeles and Metro to improve crossings on Venice and connections with the Metro transit system.

Transit - To improve the efficiency and convenience of transit as a mobility option:

- Establish a system of micro-transit for area residents and employees.
- Facilitate the efficiency of transit and micro-transit through dedicated street lanes and strategic "hinge" connections.
- Clarify connections to regional Metro transit through improved wayfinding systems and real-time "smart" communications.

Bikes - To improve convenience, safety, and efficiency of a cycling infrastructure and encourage biking as an alternative mobility option:

- Establish the Washington/Culver corridor as the major local east/west bike spine with a southside alignment.
- Establish a network of bike lanes, paths, and sharrows to connect local and regional systems and initiate a bikeshare program.
- Add connections to the Ballona Creek bike path.
- Consider a grade-separated bike/ped bridge overcrossing to connect both ends of the Metro Bike Path across the Expo Station area.
- Proceed with phased implementation of the Downtown Connector project as an initial step in Washington Boulevard "complete street" improvements, considering the southside alignment.

Traffic - To improve mobility for pedestrians, transit and bikes, as well as to relieve certain traffic congestion conditions on local streets:

- Implement traffic disincentives to discourage through-traffic and protect the neighborhoods.
- Initiate the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) process for a specific set of possible neighborhood protection interventions.
- Work toward a peripheral shared parking plan with congestion pricing.
- Plan for additional crossings of Ballona Creek for vehicular access to east side employment centers.
- Coordinate with other jurisdictions toward an improved through-traffic bypass solution.

Washington Boulevard - To establish Washington Boulevard, from Downtown to its crossing at Ballona Creek, as the principal spine of the TOD area:

- Implement over time a 'complete streets' design for Washington Blvd.
- Place priority on enhancing the convenience and safety of the pedestrian experience.
- Facilitate use of the street by transit and other high-occupancy vehicle circulation.
- Provide a safe and connected place for cyclists.

In addition, the TOD Visioning Study makes certain policy recommendations to help in the implementation and management of the physical interventions described above:

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District Policies - To guide development within the TOD area, to define and design certain improvements that address mobility, and to clarify and document the City's expectations regarding conditions for new development:

- Expand the existing TOD district boundaries to account for future development demand.
- Adopt a TOD ordinance (specific plan) including urban design guidelines that require pedestrian easements, modified setbacks, and active street frontages.
- Encourage more mixed use and affordable housing to address the jobs/housing balance and to promote walk-to-work options.
- Reduce or re-define parking requirements to encourage alternate mode use and require funding of a Mobility Fund.
- Develop shared parking strategies and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Policies - To encourage, facilitate and promote the use of alternative mobility modes:

- Develop a strategy for TDM measures, for the TOD area and, over time, city-wide. Begin with a clarification of conditions to be used in the current planning discretionary review process.
- Enact a TDM ordinance and establish a Mobility Fund.

- Establish a Transportation Management Association / Organization (TMA/TMO) to oversee compliance with TDM requirements and to manage the uses of the Mobility Fund (first, for the TOD district, then later, citywide).
- Develop an education and outreach program.
- Introduce other mobility services, including a mobility hub program, bike- and car-share, shuttle / micro-transit services, and “smart” wayfinding and information systems.

The TOD Visioning Study concludes with an itemized summary of recommendations, identification of responsible parties within the City, and narrative about the timeline for their implementation. Overall, the recommended implementation strategy is to approach each major intervention incrementally in a step-wise fashion with initial “test” installations and specific evaluation of each action before proceeding to the next. Oversight of this process is recommended to be interdepartmental, with management support for all mobility measures ultimately realized through a TMA/TMO and the establishment of a Mobility Fund.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact in the discussion of this item.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Transit Oriented Development (T.O. D.) Visioning Study Final Recommendations
2. Transit Oriented Development (T.O. D.) Visioning Study Final Recommendations Appendices

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Receive and discuss the final report of the Culver City TOD Visioning Study and Recommendations; and
2. Provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.