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To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Anne Dolid](#); [Jennifer Hawn](#); [Lindsay Thomasson](#)
Subject: Follow up: parking (item 3, May 5)
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Thank you Council Members for the robust discussion about the parking in city center.

As mentioned, I'm Daniel Sherman and I am a traffic/transportation safety volunteer at Havens. Additionally, I have a bit of history in volunteer traffic planning input in SF and SSF.

I ran out of time to give my full input, had to leave before the vote, so I am following up via email. (Even if there was a decisive vote these comments will also be relevant for the phase two traffic striping of the project.)

First, I appreciate the effort of everyone and see that the planners and Director Gonzales have done an amazing job balancing their various mandates. I do have a few safety concerns I feel are important.

1) Preserve the Bonita drop-off:

- Even with a double sided Highland drop-off, the increased traffic turning up from Oakland Ave. onto Highland will cause real issues. In discussions with Jim, the corner crossing guard, he cited backup around this lower corner and also backed up traffic straight through the Highland intersection from Moraga as his biggest concern. It endangers the kids crossing, blocks sight lines, and blocks through traffic causing "angry driving."
- the parking loss can be minimal. If you model the Bonita drop off loading zone after the Vista drop off zone it looks to be 5 angles spots lost. Part looks to be a cut out for the new ada parking that could double as part of the drop off and also be used by bikes. The parking could possibly be saved by moving it to angled parking on the other side of the street in that section and also help traffic calming. (Example Alabama st near Precita park SF)
- light on Bonita/Oakland Ave. The counts and safety assurances Director Gonzales stated in the meeting do not represent the danger of the left turn off of Bonita down oakland or across oakland. Bike, car, both DANGEROUS now... then add two blocks on one way Bonita and angled parking on Bonita driving traffic to this intersection more than before... not safe. I think Bonita will get lots of cut through traffic from people leaving the pool. Consider a light.
- if the residents on Bonita are truly concerned about being caught behind a mail truck they can all chose to have their mailboxes on the curb instead of having the mail person deliver and pick up from their door. The mail truck would flow instead of stopping and getting out, but I doubt they want that compromise.

2) Double sided Highland (and Craig) drop off zone safety:

- We need safe routes to Schools. (Safe routes to schools often has grant money opportunities for matching funds available.)
- There needs to some form of crossing plaza that is broader to accommodate rushing kids that will now cross from the new section on the other side of Craig currently without a crosswalk. This "plaza" treatment will also help dissuade the illegal U-turns everyone knowledgeable highlighted as a huge concern. A "crossing plaza" will especially help prevent u-turns if it includes a pedestrian safe-haven (pun intended) in the middle such as an island or space surrounded by raised traffic dots. This would also deter the left turn from Craig into the loading zone that cuts the line from Highland lane 2, causes crazy traffic turbulence, and causes attempts to double park and drop off in the lane 1 of Highland. And it would also be that safe haven for a pedestrian that starts to cross but is scared to continue do to a car.
- Despite the comments by Director Gonzales, it is not currently such a safe crossing and, while a proper design could be great, without additional measures will be far more dangerous. Speeds are not self regulated and controlled

by the congestion here. Maybe the average speed is safe, but a significant subset of motorists speed right through without regard to kids, crossing guards, or congestion. Although only a subset, these drivers need more than enforcement. They need physical infrastructure as a deterrent because they are too dangerous and too unfazed by public response. Please ask the crossing guards. Ask Lawrence, now retired after working this crossing as a crossing guard for years. Ask Mr Antonio who works drop off at the curb. I fear a wait and see strategy of starting with only the two sided drop off without anticipatory safety measures is risking too much even short term.

- traffic entering the zone is too fast. Highland needs stop signs going toward Havens at Piedmont ct. to stop the momentum of cars before they enter the school zone. They have too much momentum going into this complicated section. Also, the crossing there for pedestrians and bikes is straight up dangerous. Cars are indignant and the physical infrastructure effectively gives them signals to feel entitled to keep going despite crossers. This feeling the drivers have carries through as they pass by Havens. With a drop off zone on the other side, there won't be (as stated in the meeting) natural traffic slowing, there will be traffic turbulence. Traffic turbulence: angry speeding lane changes from blocked lane 2 into lane 1 and attempts to get through it as quickly as possible. We need to stop the momentum at Piedmont ct.

- keeping the loading zones clear. Change the limited 2 hour parking use of these zones to 30 minutes only and revert back to loading zone 1/2 hour *before* drop-off/pick-ups. This still allows parents to run in for a quick something during school time but doesn't promote overstaying. ENFORCE this everyday with a sweep and tow *before* it turns to a loading zone or you will have dangerous blocking of the zones. Cars beginning up well before the pick up/drop off times. A Havens rep can call for tows other times as needed... in fact... a sign with a posted hotline: "call for enforcement" would be great and allow any parent to help bring enforcement.

- volunteers can't enforce traffic moving violations. Too dangerous. Volunteers including 5th grades and the janitor have been yelled at while enforcing simple parking requirements and preventing double parking.(Response to Council comment.)

Revisit Mountain/Highland Way/Highland Ave./Piedmont ct. Intersection:

- Honestly, the intersection is the Wild West. Director Gonzales stated that the plan attempts to direct traffic off of using Craig and directly into this intersection. I appreciate getting traffic off Craig and preventing that dangerous left turn. But then this intersection needs safety improvements.

- as stated above, the cars on Highland going into city center don't stop for anything. There should be a stop sign at Piedmont Ct.

- bikes can't get from Piedmont park across this intersection to go up Mountain. Flow along Highland in both directions prevents it. Can't go to Piedmont ct and use the cut through path either because cars don't stop. And every once in a while a car closes to go on Highland Way and scared everyone! Plus the high school kids being kids and are crossing every which way without concern for themselves or others. (They also cross that way at the triangle in front of the Exedra.)

- Cars leaving Mountain must merge with cars that don't stop from highland and (while watching for teenagers) must guess if the cars are continuing on to Highland Ave or Way.. and if they should take Ave or way themselves. The intersection needs clarity. Maybe even traffic circle (just thought of this, but I think it is "European" but perfect.)

Bike parking:

- promoting biking is great TDM (traffic demand management) and can lower the need for auto parking.

- council member Plimier highlighted the need for bike parking. This is easy infrastructure and relatively cheap. It doesn't take up road curb space, but doing it well takes thought.

- before "replacing" some bike parking "behind" or "around" an destination, consider smarter locations. Inside the pool facility (in the plan)... perfect. It's not demanding to give bikes "rockstar" parking locations. You should do it. As a practical matter cyclists only park their bikes at line of sight locations. Too easy to steal if out of sight. Old generation planners tucked the bike parking away "behind," in corners, near the street instead of near the building. Then these same planners cited how the racks weren't being used. They weren't being used because they were relegated to undesirable spots. Pick desirable spots.

- Especially on high school and middle school campus. You want them to drive less? Put the bike parking right there on campus center. Rockstar parking. Then add further incentives and see what happens.

Finally: Director Gonzales discussed various discussions to study traffic calming along Highland. As I understand it, a number of years ago there was work on a "Traffic Diet" traffic calming analysis and plan in front of Havens on Highland. I have asked about it but have not seen it. I think we'd all like to see the recommendations and the plan that came out of that study. I disagree that traffic calming in front of this school is unwarranted at this time, as do

most of the safety people working the crossings.

Thank you all for the incredible amount of work and thoughtfulness going into this update of the city center. What a gift this is. What an opportunity to do it right for the future of transportation and the safety of our littlest ones here in Piedmont. We can transition this work in this plan now into safe routes to schools soon, get grants for matching funds (maybe in 4 years) and really build something safe and special for our kids.

Thank you anyone that successfully made it through this email. It contains a lot of passionate detail. Please join us for our "Gear Up to Bike 2 School" Festival at Havens May 10th 12-4.

Keep up the good work!

-Daniel Sherman

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Havens traffic/transportation safety volunteer

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