



Transportation Commission

ACTION CALENDAR

June 22, 2004

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: Transportation Commission

Subject: Hotel Task Force Report

RECOMMENDATION

Approve and adopt the transportation-related recommendations (Section 7) of the Planning Commission's Hotel Task Force April 27 Report as written.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Unknown

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Downtown Hotel Task Force was formed by the Planning Commission, which is currently lead commission for this project.

BACKGROUND

At its March 18 meeting, the Transportation Commission proposed specific transportation-related recommendations to the Downtown Hotel Task Force as conditions of the Hotel use permit. At its May 20 Regular Meeting, the Transportation Commission reviewed and voted to support the transportation portion of the April 27, 2004 Report of the Planning Commission Task Force on a Downtown Hotel/Conference Center/Museums Complex and Public Open Space. The motion:

It was MSC (Haselsteiner/Landau) to approve the Hotel Task Force's transportation recommendations and refer its report to the Council for adoption. Unanimous, Absent: Campbell

CONTACT PERSON

Dean Metzger, Chair, Transportation Commission 510-981-7010

Approved:

  
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Dean Metzger, Chair, Transportation Commission

Attachments: 1: Report of the Planning Commission Task Force on a Downtown Hotel/Conference Center/Museum Complex and Public Open Space

**7. Emphasize alternative and public transit instead of automobile access, and provide only limited on-site parking.**

The rationale for locating the hotel/conference center/museum project on this Center and Shattuck site is to create transit-oriented facilities that take advantage of the most significant transit transfer point in Berkeley.

A 200-room hotel and conference center, along with museums nearby, would generate a significant number of new trips by hotel guests, conference-goers, museum visitors, and employees. If incremental traffic is mostly delivered by automobile, then congestion, noise, and traffic volumes in Downtown will worsen and detract from the project's success. If the project must be planned for mostly automobile travel, it can be more advantageously located elsewhere.

A project transportation plan can reduce traffic impacts. Center Street is one of Berkeley's busiest pedestrian thoroughfares. The project can strongly encourage use of transit and alternative modes to minimize traffic and air pollution impacts. The project offers important transportation enhancement and coordination opportunities. BART would connect both airports and Amtrak to the hotel/convention center's front door. The project's transit-friendly siting and promotion can add profitability to the project.

- 7.1. Do not preserve or install any surface parking. Locate current bank and Center Street parking spaces under the hotel/conference center and museum sites.
- 7.2. Create shared-use public parking. Pedestrian exits from underground parking can lead directly to the Bank of America, the hotel/conference center/museums, and Center Street.
- 7.3. On the overall site's northern block, locate all off-street parking either (a) underground or (b) with a minimum setback depth of 20 feet, behind meaningful retail, commercial, or other uses that border the sidewalk.
- 7.4. On the overall site's southern block, provide all access to parking from streets other than Center Street and Shattuck Avenue.
- 7.5. Price parking to encourage short-term rather than all-day use.
- 7.6. Require a Transportation Plan as a condition of the hotel and conference center receiving a use permit. This Transportation Plan should include, among others, the following policies and practices:
  - 7.6.1. Require a separate parking charge for hotel guests, and make it expensive.
  - 7.6.2. Do not provide free parking for employees of the hotel.
  - 7.6.3. Limit dedicated hotel-guest parking, if any, to no more than 25 spaces per 100 rooms.

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- 7.6.4. Include transit information in marketing materials. In the hotel/conference center's brochures and website, emphasize use of public transit and airport shuttles and provide detailed travel information. De-emphasize access by car, and directions for drivers; instead, emphasize the cost advantages of transit and the hotel's close proximity to BART.
- 7.6.5. Display maps of public transportation systems routes, including local shuttles, in the lobbies (or other visible public locations) of the hotel, conference center, and museums. Make information on public transit use readily available.
- 7.6.6. Encourage conference-goers to use transit and provide them with detailed information about how to get to the conference center by public transit and airport shuttles. Consistently provide this information, and information on the scarcity and expense of parking, in conference brochures and on conference Web pages.
- 7.6.7. Consider providing hotel guests who request it with one day's free transit by means of a BART excursion ticket or other pass. Doing so as a policy may contribute to LEED certification.
- 7.6.8. Provide hotel employees with Eco Pass. Provide those who use BART with access to Commuter Check until such time, if ever, that BART is involved with Eco Pass.
- 7.6.9. Consider diverting a portion of parking fees collected to a special Downtown transportation fund.
- 7.6.10. Consider charging a transportation fee as part of the hotel room rate, which fee could be waived for guests who arrive by public transportation.
- 7.8 Close Center Street to delivery vehicles, except possibly for smaller trucks in early morning or other limited delivery periods.
- 7.9 If at all possible, avoid having any vehicular curb cuts on Center Street or Shattuck Avenue (even if some vehicular traffic is still permitted on Center).
- 7.10. Provide entry for emergency vehicles on Center via an obstacle-free area and removable barriers.
- 7.11. Create delivery spaces on Oxford Street to compensate for any removal of current delivery zones on Center Street.

## **8. Assure labor peace and equity.**

Close collaboration between hotel/conference center/museum developers and operators and employees or their union representatives is recommended. In the event of labor disputes which escalate, the City has a history of supporting boycotts. If they occur during either construction or operation, such disputes or boycotts would be both expensive and reduce tourist revenues, and they would jeopardize the profitability of the project and tax revenues to the City.

