

Transportation Subcommittee, Commission on Disability

Minutes, March 9, 2001

Chairperson Shaw called meeting to order 2:45 p.m. Commissioners Craig, Shaw and Wilcox attended the meeting. No members of the general public or staff were present. There were no announcements.

MOTION: Submit the comments regarding the "Transportation Element" of the DRAFT General Plan, contained in the attached memo, to the full Commission on Disability. Motion made by Emily Wilcox, seconded by Karen Craig, and passed unanimously.

Our next meeting will be our "regularly scheduled meeting" on March 23rd, 2:30-4:30PM, 2180 Milvia, 3rd floor Conference room (Maple Room).

The meeting was adjourned 5:05 pm.

Commission on Disability / Transportation Subcommittee
Comments regarding the “Transportation Element” of the DRAFT General Plan

Page 2, Reducing Traffic and Encouraging Transit

We don’t have accident statistics for persons with disability. We must incorporate that into accident reports. See comments on page 57, Policy T-51.

Page 15, Policy LU-6 (Residential Areas)

Comment – Change to “safe, accessible and attractive”.

Page 16, Policy LU-11(Residential Areas)

Comment – Include that neighborhoods are accessible to persons with disabilities both as pedestrians and as drivers and passengers in vehicles.

Page 17, Policy LU-18 (The Downtown and Commercial Areas)

Action F

Comment – Take into consideration mobility impairments, taxis, drop-offs, etc.

Page 18, Policy LU-27 (The Downtown and Commercial Areas)

Comment – Sidewalks must be widened and kept clear to be accessible. Program access (interpretive communication / wayfinding) must be included.

Page 19, Policies LU28 & 29 (The Downtown and Commercial Areas)

Comment – Maintain access in commercial areas.

Page 22, Policy LU-39 (University of California and Institutional Uses)

Comment – Incorporate use of shuttles and satellite parking.

Page 27, paragraph 2 - Introduction

“The Transportation Element emphasizes the importance of making more efficient use of the existing transportation systems that serve these areas.”

Comment – We understand the drive for denser, transit-corridor, housing. And, we expect that accessible, Section 8, housing will be built on arterials which are transit corridors. However, we are concerned that the policies set out in this DRAFT General Plan do not adequately address the transportation needs for elderly and disabled residents who do not live along such corridors, particularly those who are homeowners or long-time renters and who do not wish to be relocated. Additionally, we are concerned that the current plans for traffic calming only address residential (better described as “interior”) streets. This traffic management plan does not address the impacts which the anticipated diversion of traffic will have upon collectors and arterials. Diversion and the accompanying congestion, pollution, noise and road-rage will have a serious negative effect on the safety, mobility and quality of life for the people who rely on Section 8 Housing. This is a serious issue for elderly and disabled residents who are coping with low income and the need for accessible dwellings. All stakeholders affected by the changes in traffic patterns must have options for relief and must be involved in the process from the earliest stages of the planning process.

Page 27, paragraph 2 - Introduction

“The City’s ... [maps]... are included at the end of the element.”

Comment – For years, the Commission on Disability has requested that paratransit drivers be issue maps showing speed humps (or any other vertical deflection devices) so they can find alternative routes when specified for a disabled passenger. We would like to see that map included with the other maps in this element. Additionally, we would like to see a map developed to aid in wayfinding for persons with disabilities. It could include accessible routes for pedestrians and for drivers (or conversely, mark routes which currently remain inaccessible). It could show the locations of accessible features like audible signals. It should also show destinations such as fire stations, senior centers, hospitals, etc.

Page 27, paragraph 3 - Introduction

“The following documents inform the Transportation Element: “

Comments – Although, due to the fact that it is not yet finalized, the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan is not able to “inform” this Plan, we hope that both the Transition Plan and the ADA will inform the planning process in Berkeley and would like to see that acknowledged. Additionally, we feel that Transition Plan, when approved, should be given priority since both the plan and its implementation are already overdue.

Pages 28-29, Policy Background - Traffic and Congestion

Comment - The addition of groups of people who in the past either did not have the economic opportunity to own private vehicles – or even the perceived ability to qualify for drivers licenses – has also added to the increase in vehicle ownership. Those groups include women, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities. In the case of pwd’s, not only do we have increased life-spans due to advances in medicine; due to advances in technology, some of us are vehicular owners, users and drivers. (Note, some vehicle owners who are disabled, drive themselves, and some arrange for others (including hired drivers) to drive for them.) We’d like to see the recognition that we are now licensed drivers with registered vehicles in an additional point under this category.

Page 29, paragraph 1 - Traffic Management, Traffic Calming, and Congestion
“temporary moratorium”

Comment – The word “temporary” is redundant.

Page 29, paragraph 1 - Traffic Management, Traffic Calming, and Congestion

“... the proliferation of speed humps **may** increase response times for emergency vehicles and cause problems for people with certain disabilities”

Comment - change to read “**does** increase response times for emergency vehicles and **does** cause problems for people with certain disabilities”

Additional comment - just because someone does not feel it, doesn’t mean the impact of going over speed humps isn’t causing damage. Parathesia is physical damage.

Page 29, paragraph 2 - Traffic Management, Traffic Calming, and Congestion

“Although the additional congestion caused by modifications to city streets in an effort to slow or calm traffic is often an uncomfortable side effect, many traffic and transit experts argue...”

Comment - Deliberately creating congestion and degrading air quality is a scheme with serious consequences for the disabled community. This is a plan which harms our community by exacerbating existing respiratory problems and creating new ones, such as the development of asthma. We cannot endorse social engineering which deliberately jeopardizes the vulnerable, particularly when it is based on many traffic and transit experts arguing.

Page 29, paragraph 2 - Traffic Management, Traffic Calming, and Congestion

“Any action that encourages more people to drive...”

Comment – Accessible vehicles, accessible parking, placards and blue-zones are some things that will encourage more of a particular group of people to drive. We insist that tools which allow or facilitate mobility for persons with disability be clearly excluded from this policy statement. (No matter how many times an abled-bodied individual repeats it, we don't all have the option of “just riding a bike” or “flying down to Rio”.)

Page 29, paragraph 3 - Traffic Management, Traffic Calming, and Congestion

“However, for public transportation to be an effective alternative, changes such as ‘transit-only’ lanes become necessary to ensure that public buses or trolleys are not caught in the automobile congestion.”

Comment – People taking taxi cabs are also caught in the congestion and paying dearly for it. In our experience, a short cab ride is often the most expensive portion of a multi-modal trip even though it is the shortest segment. Being delayed by congestion and rerouted due to traffic diverters and speed-humped road segments adds to the problem. We suggest that other vehicles be included in “bus only” lanes and suggest taxis, paratransit and other vehicles transporting persons with disabilities as well as satellite parking shuttles, van-pools, etc. There would be a positive economic impact on individuals, Berkeley's Paratransit Program and paratransit run by AC/BART.

Page 30 - Parking

Comment – Please include the need for enhancing blue-zone parking and the need to insure that all legal parking be maintained at optimal accessibility.

Additional comment – by optimal, we mean that infrastructure elements not be place to block lowering a ramp or lift, vehicles illegally parked in the disabled parking zones be ticketed and towed, etc.)

Page 30 Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Safety

Comment - Bicyclists with disabilities need to be safe on the Bicycle Boulevards.

Comment – Utilize blue way-finding path markings.

Comment – Change to read “make positive improvements to the street network to facilitate pedestrian travel, such as the widening of the Center Street sidewalks between BART and the University of California campus **insuring clear access for wheelchair users, blind & low vision pedestrians, etc.**)

Page 31, paragraph 2 – Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Safety

“Berkeley is home to a large disabled community, which faces the same dangers faced by pedestrians and bicyclists attempting to negotiate crowded streets”

Comment - Members of Berkeley's disabled community **are** pedestrians and bicyclists, (as well as drivers and passengers in private vehicles and public transit - as well as skaters and pogo stick riders!) The wording of the above sentence, as well as other text of this DRAFT, could be better phrased to indicate that we are regular participants with special needs.

Additional Comment - Some of us ambulate and some of us are pedestrians even when we don't “walk”. We aren't merely riders of public transit and passengers in private cars, we drive. When we drive, some of us have special needs for parking, including space to lower a lift or a parking space extraordinarily close to our destination. Our some of our widely-varying needs are the same as non-disabled individuals, some are similar, and some are unique. Due to disability we may be short/low, slow, balance impaired, blind

or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, mobility impaired – perhaps we can't turn head to "look left/look right" - perhaps we can't activate a signal with a tiny push button—perhaps we can't see a traffic signal – and so on. As we said, we have the same needs, similar needs and unique needs.

Public Transportation

Comment -

Page 31 – Public Transportation

Comment -may be within xx mile of transit line is meaningless if the buses don't come or limited schedule, not on time, broken lift, (evenings / weekends) – just because within ¼ of a mile of a transit line doesn't mean transit available.

Comment - Funding inequity important to us.

Page 32 – Public Transportation

Comment -needs to include background on the use of public transit by the disabled. See page 40

Comment - AC Transit has to get more money and that money must go into the nuts and bolts of providing good service.

Comment – One reason that public transportation ridership has not increased correspondingly since 1977 is the hellish rides for disabled folks. This includes people with all kinds of mobility impairments, deaf, wheelchair/scooter user, etc. who face a significant lack of accommodation. For example, try getting a driver to put down ramp! Try using BART with non-working elevators and escalators! To increase ridership, these problems must be addressed.

Comment - ADA-mandated "access" does not cover all motorized transit needs,. Paratransit keeps people locked in Berkeley. We need universally accessible transit, such as having cabs replaced with ramp taxis.

Pages 34-34, Streets and Sidewalks

Comment – Important points for persons with disabilities are

- Placement/relocation of infrastructure elements.
- Optimizing ramps
- Enforcing blocking paths of travel / ticketing

Page 34 - Spiral repair

Comment – This system always restarts with the business area and never gets out to the residential areas. Consequently, persons with disabilities are forced to use the streets, sidewalks and other rights-of-way that are less than optimal. Should be a priority to provide smooth surfaces, safe, and accessible (incl. ramps) so pwd's can get out of and into residences. Should be the responsibility of City, not homeowners..

Page 35, III Transportation Element Objectives: Objective 3:

Comment - Add "without creating unequal access for persons with disability and without degrading emergency response", so that the objective becomes –

3. Improve the quality of life in Berkeley neighborhoods by calming and slowing traffic through neighborhoods without creating unequal access for persons with disability and without degrading emergency response.

Page 35, III Transportation Element Objectives: Objective 6

Comment - Add "accessible", so that the objective becomes –

6. Create a model bicycle and pedestrian-friendly city where bicycling and walking are safe, accessible, attractive, easy, and convenient forms of transportation and recreation for people of all ages [and] abilities.

Pages 35, IV Policies, Public Transportation

Comment - Under one of these Policies (T1 through T9 – or a new one) all the outstanding major problems for disabled riders using public transportation need to be addressed. All public transportation modes need to be fully accessible in both programs and facilities and all modes need to have major improvements in training, outreach and complaint resolution.

Pages 35-36, Policy T-2 Public Transportation Improvements (Public Transportation)

Comment - All actions that involve creating new programs or enhancing old ones have an impact on the disabled and elderly population. Representatives of these stakeholders (residents, Commissions, activists, etc.) need to be involved in the planning process from the onset of development, not limited to public comment at the end of a plan. The needs of the disabled and the elderly must be incorporated into the planning process from the beginning and met in a meaningful way.

Page 35, T-2

Comment - All actions that include providing information to the public must be fully accessible. For example, under Action A, Point 4, information kiosks must be fully accessible (for example, braille, large font and readable from wheelchair height.)

Page 35, T-2, Action A and B

Comment - Add an item to implement a penalty that puts teeth into the concept that seats reserved for the elderly and the disabled are yielded to the elderly and disabled on AC and on BART.

Page 35, T-2, Action A – “Work with AC Transit to:”

Comment - Add an item (#6) to enforce existing policies, including the Bus Riders Bill of Rights.

Page 35, T-2, Action A

Comment - This assumes the existing system works. It does not address the problems like lifts that don't work, drivers hostile due to the delays caused by persons with disabilities and inadequately training on special needs. AC's equipment maintenance, driver training and complaint resolution, both for regular fixed-route service and on-demand paratransit need to be addressed.

Page 36, T-2, Action I

Comment - If validated passes become available, make them available equitably - include disabled and low-income people.

Page 36, Policy T-3 Eco Pass City Program (Public Transportation)

Comment - If free passes become available, make them available equitably - include disabled and low-income people.

Additional comment - If employer programs become available, a Citywide Transit Pass would be necessary to cover those individuals not employed in Berkeley.

Page 39, Policy T-5 Light Rail/Surface Rapid Transit (Public Transportation)

Comment – Add: For equal access, insure smooth surfaces across tracks at pedestrian crossings.

Page 40, Policy T-7 Para Transit (Public Transportation)

“Continue to maintain and improve access and mobility for the disabled, seniors, and youth with programs such as Para transit, the taxi voucher program, and senior vans.”

Comment – A distinction should be made between Berkeley’s Paratransit Program and AC Transit’s ADA mandated paratransit program. We feel it is important that the recommendation is applied to both programs.

Additional comment - Paratransit does not cover all transportation needs. For example, the ADA mandated paratransit program is only available during AC/BART hours for the parallel line - if there is a line.

Page 40, Policy T-7 Action

Comment – We definitely agree that improvements are needed in the various paratransit services. We are concerned that specific Actions are not listed. Unfortunately, for such an important issue, we did not become involved in this review process early enough to work through a series of recommendations. Perhaps this item could be left open for expansion?

Page 40, Policy T-7 Action

Comment – Add the development of a universally accessible “ramp taxi” program to replace the existing split between taxi-users and van-users. In other words, we would like to see Berkeley move toward a fully-accessible taxicab system. Include this as a policy.

Additional comment - This would allow equal, on-demand service. It would allow for spur-of-the moment trips, whether necessary or recreational. It would not segregate.

Page 40, Policy T-8 Amtrak (Public Transportation)

“Encourage additional Amtrak service to Berkeley and pursue platform and vicinity improvements to make the train stop more attractive and safe.”

Comment – change to “safe, accessible and more attractive”.

Additional comment – Amtrak is one of the ways persons with disabilities, including those who do not use private vehicles, can travel out of the immediate vicinity of Berkeley, including to our state’s capital. Optimal and accessible amenities at the Amtrak station are very important.

Page 40, Policy T-9 Ferry Service (Public Transportation)

Comment – Add that all lifts and elevators can accommodate the size and weight of all chairs and scooters with passenger.

Additional comment – This is currently a problem. (Roach-motel style access - you can get on, but you can’t get off!)

Pages 40-41, Policy T-10: Trip Reduction (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – Along with “Free bicycle” programs and electric bicycle programs.” add free scooters and free wheelchairs and free carry-carts, especially in “pedestrianization” project areas.

Page 41, Policy T-11 City of Berkeley Automobile Use Reduction
Actions A, B, and H

Comment – Grant exceptions to disabled individuals (placard holders) who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment.

Page 41, Policy T-12 Education and Enforcement (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – As suggested under page 57, T-50 Action F (new), enforce the requirement to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Additionally, enforce regulations regarding parking over sidewalks, ramps, etc.

Page 42, T-12 Action A

Comment – as with Policy T-11, do not penalize or stigmatize disabled individuals (placard holders) who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment.

Page 42, Policy T 13 Major Public Institutions (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – as with Policy T-11, do not penalize or stigmatize disabled individuals (placard holders) who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment.

Pages 42-43, Policy T-14 Private Employers (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – as with Policy T-11, do not penalize or stigmatize disabled individuals (placard holders) who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment.

Page 43, Policy T-16 Access by Proximity (Automobile Use Reduction)

Action D

Comment – When reducing or eliminating parking requirements for residential development, allow for disabled individuals (placard holders) who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment, allow for attendant parking, allow for delivery and service vehicle parking and allow for passenger pickup zones.

Page 43, Policy T-18 Transportation Planning (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – Persons with disabilities and all access issues need to be incorporated into planning from the concept stage through implementation. It is important that both program access and facility access are maintained no matter who is handling the process. (Eliminate possibility of discrimination by effect as well as by design.)

Page 43, Policy T-19 Automobile Congestion (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment – The negative impacts of congestion on residents (noise, pollution, etc.) should also be factored into the equation.

Page 44, Policy T-20 Air Quality Impacts (Automobile Use Reduction)

Comment –

Action A – Placard parking should retain highest access for proximate parking.

Action B – Allow for power chair and scooter charging, too.

Page 44, Neighborhood Traffic Calming

See comments on Page 27, paragraph 2 - Introduction regarding diversion of traffic to collector and arterials – and the impact on Section 8 Housing (accessible – purpose built) Senior Centers, Senior Housing, schools, etc.

Page 44, Policy T-21 Neighborhood Protection and Traffic Calming (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Comment – See the Commission on Disability's October 14, 2000 recommendation to City Council and City Council's January 16, 2001 referral to the planning process

regarding the policy that techniques used cause no harm and allow equal access. Also reference other Commission on Disability motions regarding traffic calming and equal access (1997-2000).

Comment – Add to the existing diverter signage, which exempts emergency services and bicycles, exemptions for taxis, shuttles and vehicles transporting persons with disabilities. Recognize the disadvantage to people who are paying by time/distance and alleviate problems associated with increasing the time/distance traveled by people who are unable to easily cope with motion.

Page 44, Policy T-21 Action H

Comment - Disabled people must be allowed to participate in the process – both through facility access and full program access. Pushing the process out into the neighborhoods with resident/Commission control creates great opportunity for discrimination by intent and by effect.

Page 45, Policy T-23 Traffic Circles and Roundabouts (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Comment – Landscaping must be low enough to allow sight-lines for people using wheelchairs and scooters, short-stature individuals and children.

Additional comment – many devices and techniques can be implemented so as to allow equal access or to create access problems. Landscaping which blocks sight-lines is one example of how a device can end up creating an access problem. This issue, as well as proper installation and maintenance, must be addressed.

Pages 46-47, Policy T-25 Street Maintenance (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Page 46, Action B

Comment – Include access improvements in street maintenance.

Page 47, Action C

Comment - Change “wheelchairs” to “mobility impaired pedestrians”.

Page 47, Policy T-29 Emergency Access (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Comment – Emergency access is an extremely important service. The routes must stay open.

Page 47, T-29 Action A

“Do not install new full diverters or speed humps on streets identified on the Emergency Access and Evacuation Network Map”

Comment – The wording of this section implies that speed hump installation is OK when not opposed by the Fire or Police Departments. It must be reworded to make it clear that this is the minimal requirement for City emergency services, but does not address the needs of all persons with disability for equal access.

Additional comment – change references to “speed humps” to “speed humps and other vertical deflection devices”.

Page 47, T-29 Action B

Maintain and improve pedestrian pathways throughout the City that are dedicated for public use and provide an alternative to the streets in case of an emergency evacuation.

Comment – insure full accessibility to emergency evacuation routes.

Page 47, T-29 Action C

Maintain and make available to the public up-to-date maps of all emergency access and evacuation routes.

Comment – Clearly mark any inaccessible routes and show alternatives.

Page 49, Policy T-30 Infrastructure Improvements (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Comment – When repairing and repaving the streets, consider the needs of disabled residents in the Paving Management System. Some of us who use vehicles can't ride on the worst road segments. (This is not a joke.)

Additional comment – To optimize accessible pedestrian paths of travel, the City needs to insure that infrastructure elements are not interfering with optimal accessibility. To this end, the placement of new elements and the relocation of existing elements need to be carefully evaluated during construction and renovation. For example, the placement and configuration of many sidewalk ramps are less than ideal, but necessary because elements like fire hydrants, sign posts and utility poles are in the way. Unless the gradual rearrangement of these elements is initiated, we will never achieve optimal access.

Page 51, Policy T-31 Traffic Signals (Neighborhood Traffic Calming)

Comment - Access to traffic signals is woefully inadequate. We absolutely need to have better rollout of audible signals with wayfinding aids as well as pedestrian activation that includes pushpad activation (both top and bottom pads).

Comment – The timing of signals needs to be adequate to allow safe crossing.

Page 51, Policy T-32 Residential Parking (Parking)

Action D – “Do not issue parking permits to residents of new car-free housing developments or to residents of projects, which have been granted variances to reduce required off-street parking.”

Comment - When reducing or eliminating parking requirements for residential development, allow for disabled individuals who rely on motorized transport due to mobility impairment, allow for attendant parking, allow for delivery and service vehicle parking and allow for passenger pickup zones. Accessible and affordable housing is already an issue for the disabled community. This policy puts a (probably unintended) burden on some persons with disability. The restriction on issuing parking permits to residents is offset for those who have state-issued parking placards. However, some members of the disabled community rely upon attendant care, which exceeds the time allotted in Residential Parking areas. We need to be able to get parking permits for our attendants.

Page 51, T-32 Action F

“Enforce regulations against parking on lawns and sidewalks.”

Comment - Parking over sidewalks and blocking safe pedestrian access is a serious problem for us. We emphasize our endorsement of this policy. We would like to see it read “Enforce regulations against parking on sidewalks and lawns” because while parking on lawns is a blight issue, we give greater importance to the safety issue of blocking safe sidewalk access.

Pages 51-52, Policy T-34 Disabled Parking (Parking)

“Assure that commercial and residential areas have adequate drop off and waiting zones for vehicles transporting disabled persons.”

Comment – First of all, this described policy isn't “disabled parking”, it is “passenger pickup zones”. (Blue indicates a parking space, white indicates a passenger pick-up/drop-off zone.) Both issues should be addressed, but each under a specific policy header. Put the above text under “Policy T-xx Passenger Zones” (or equivalent).

Additional comment – As frustrating as it is for us to not be acknowledged as licensed drivers, car/van/truck owners, pedestrians, and so on, we have to thank you for providing us with a good laugh. Nevertheless, we remind you that we are multi-modal in transportation matters – and that we are not one-mode-fits-all.

Pages 51-52, Policy T-34 Disabled Parking (Parking)

Comments – The primary comment is that disabled parking needs really must be addressed in the General Plan. Our issues include –

- Inadequate enforcement of blue zone parking (including non-placard parking both in the parking space and in the adjacent access area).
- ADA mandated blue-zone requirements are based on a fixed ratio. With Berkeley's disabled population being higher than average, we need a policy which gives us a higher than average ratio.
- We need accommodations in valet-type parking situations. (Note – this might become more of an issue as the Arts District evolves. The types of problems we encounter include valets not willing/able to park a vehicle which has been converted. Examples include driver seating removed for wheelchair use and modified controls.)
- We must have access to our passenger-side doors in legal parking spaces. If an object is placed in the way, it is impossible to lower a ramp or lift and impossible to open a door widely enough to allow a mobility-impaired person to access the vehicle. The curb area next to legal parking spaces must be kept free of obstacles such as trees, bikes and/or bike-racks, newsboxes, etc. to allow complete opening of doors and lowering of lifts and ramps.
- Not every disabled driver has a placard. We must be able to reach parking meters.
- We need a more extensive Disabled Parking policy which should follow the requirements of the ADA, meet the needs of Berkeley's disabled community and be addressed in documents such as the ADA Transition Plan.
- Policy including fees/exemptions need to be clearly posted in garages and lots.
- Garages must be accessible with adequate vertical clearances, smooth surfaces and accessible pedestrian routes.

Page 54, Policy T-40 Structured Parking (Parking)

Comment - Structure parking must be accessible with regulation blue-spaces, adequate vertical clearances, smooth surfaces and accessible pedestrian routes.

Page 54, Policy T-40 Action D

Comment – Add recharging facilities for powerchairs, scooters, etc.

Page 54-55 Policy T-41 - Policy T-45 Bicycle Funding (Bicycles)

Comment – We are concerned that special needs bicycling is being overlooked in the development of bicycle-related policy in Berkeley. Unfortunately, we haven't identified an advocate who understands, for example, what is necessary/optimal for a physically and developmentally disabled teen using a hand-operated tricycle. Perhaps by including this comment, someone will be able to refer a suggestion to the Commission on Disability members regarding how to address these needs.

Page 56, heading “Pedestrians and the Disabled”

Comment – This title strikes us as a bit bizarre. (See comments above.) Among other things, it doesn't seem to acknowledge that we are pedestrians (while at the same time, elsewhere in the document, we don't appear to be acknowledged as drivers...our

discussion included musings about how able-bodied folk think we get around ... hovercraft, perhaps?) Perhaps a better title would be “Pedestrians”.

Page 56, Policy T-46 Create A Pedestrian Plan (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Comment – Add retrofitting to optimize compliance access needs, including ADA regulations.

Page 56, Policy T-47 Disabled Access (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

“Improve access for the disabled community.”

Comment – Change to “Improve pedestrian access for the entire disabled community.”

Additional comments – The inclusion of the word “pedestrian” reinforces the fact that there are a variety of access needs in the Transportation Element which do not fall under the category of pedestrian. The inclusion of the word “entire” reinforces that there are a variety of disabilities which need accommodation. We must move away from the stereotype that all persons with disability use wheelchairs and that all wheelchair users only use their chairs or public transit for transportation.

Page 56, T-47, Actions A –

Comment – Change to read: “Fund -sidewalk, crosswalk, curb, signalization, signage, talking signal and wayfinding improvements.”

Additional comment – An simple exercise in understanding the need for wayfinding enhancement is to go to a City Council meeting and try to find the accessible route to the meeting room. If it is springtime and the shrubbery is in full bloom, chances are that you won’t spot the single sign, placed behind a bush, showing the route to the entrance for the ground-level elevator. A painted blue line on the sidewalk is an example of one simple way to solve this problem. Currently, we rely on instinct, word-of-mouth and trial-and-error to find accessible routes.

Page 56, T-47, Action C – “Encourage businesses to exceed the minimum standards set by ADA ‘readily achievable barrier removal’ requirement”.

Comment – Add that the City should also exceed the minimum standards set by the ADA and other regulations whenever possible.

Page 56, Policy T-48 Sidewalks and Pedestrian Paths (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Maintain and improve sidewalks in residential and commercial pedestrian areas throughout Berkeley and in the vicinity of public transportation facilities so that they are safe, clean, attractive, and appropriately lighted.

Comment – Change to “...safe, **accessible**, clean...”.

Page 56, T-48, Action C -

“Ensure that sidewalks are kept in good repair and level with a suitable grade for pedestrian[s] and wheelchairs.”

Comment - Change to “pedestrians, including mobility-impaired persons”

Page 56, T-48, Action D -

“Ensure adequate unobstructed sidewalk passage by appropriate placement of street furniture and amenities and prevention of obstruction of travel ways by such items as advertisement signs, merchandise, and utility boxes.”

Comment - Add “through education and enforcement of regulations”. Add unobstructed access to legally parked vehicles.

Page 56, T-48, Action E (new) -

Ensure that accessible crossings have proper drainage and that the drains are adequately maintained.

Comment – We aren't ducks.

Page 56-57, Policy T-49 Pedestrian Priority (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

"When addressing competing demands for sidewalk space, the needs of the pedestrian shall be the highest priority."

Comment – This is a very important policy for us. We'd like to be sure that it is intended to cover access for disabled pedestrians, too.

Page 57, Policy T-50 Pedestrian Safety (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Comment – Change to "... safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian crossings...".

Page 57, T-50 Action E

Comment – Add that all pedestrian medians and islands be fully accessible.

Page 57, T-50 Action F (new)

Enforce the requirement to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Page 57, Policy T-51 Intersections with Severe or High Collision Rates (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Comment – Both Actions refer to "fatal or permanently disabling collisions". We continue to be concerned about not being included in the accident statistics which are kept by the City. We would like to have Accident Reports include whether or not the person injured in accidents, particularly pedestrians, are disabled. We understand the problem for Traffic Division staff – that there is no definitive way to know by mere observation whether or not a person is disabled. However, we believe that meaningful information could be obtained by recording if the person was using a mobility aid (wheelchair, service animal, cane, etc.) or self-identified as disabled.

Additional comment – As it stands, we are left wondering whether a person who is already disabled would even count in the statistics for "permanently disabling conditions".

Page 58, Policy T-52 Pathways (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Comment – Add insuring that pathways offer accessibility for persons with mobility impairments. This includes adequate landscape maintenance so that accessible routes do not become overgrown to the point they become inaccessible.

Page 58, Policy T-53 Street Networks: Increasing Access and Mobility (Pedestrians and the Disabled)

Comment – Add the "Safe Paratransit Route Map" and develop an "Accessible Routes and Important Destinations Map". (See comments for Page 27, paragraph 2.)

Page 59, T-53

"In all cases, the City shall recognize that the transportation network is a shared network that requires shared use and that to effectively achieve the transportation, land use, community safety, and economic development objectives of the General Plan will require careful consideration and balancing of competing objectives and needs.

Comment – It would be heartening to see "equal access" as an objective of the General Plan. This a component of having the ongoing need for ADA retrofits and other accommodations acknowledged.