



Walk SanDiego
P.O. Box 122491
San Diego, CA 92112-2491
mail@walksandiego.org
www.walksandiego.org

City of San Diego City Council
Land Use & Housing Committee
202 C Street, MS 3
San Diego CA 92101

October 17, 2008

Dear LU & H Committee Members,

Re: C Street Master Plan

As a WalkSanDiego (WSD) Board member, I have served on the C Street Advisory Committee since its inception in 2006. WSD has concerns over the current alternatives for transit service along C Street, which are detailed below:

1. To date, neither the C Street Advisory Committee nor the public has not been fully briefed yet on the two-car Centre City Loop Study, which is scheduled for completion in November. Furthermore, Councilman Kevin Faulconer, who heads up the C Street Master Plan effort is not an LUH Committee member. WSD feels that updated input from the CSAC, the public, and Councilman Faulconer are essential to this process and need to be considered before any decisions are made or the process goes too far.
2. We are dismayed that current alternatives give preference to vehicular traffic, to the detriment of downtown pedestrians and merchants. WSD considers C Street an integral part of downtown that should be carefully designed as a place where pedestrians, trolley riders, shoppers, downtown residents and office workers can safely walk and conduct their business. The design of C Street should be about the public realm first and foremost, designed for people and place. Any solution that proposes reduced sidewalk widths and pedestrian crossing widths to its absolute minimum is completely inappropriate and unacceptable because it puts public safety at risk and creates an unpleasant environment that does not attract people to shop and walk. C Street will not thrive commercially under such conditions nor will it achieve its potential to be a vibrant part of our city.
3. Our light rail system is a success story for San Diego -- we hear it mentioned at conferences and cited in publications. However, additions to the system need to be designed to fit within our downtown blocks, and not the other way around.

Other cities have successfully integrated pedestrians with their transit systems, such as Portland and Denver. There are many solutions to the C Street design issues, but they do not seem to have been fully explored for this project. We need to consider solutions for the long-term and discard short-sighted thinking. This country has entered a new age of smart growth, sustainability, and design that better integrates pedestrians, transit, and land use. The City of San Diego has the opportunity to incorporate some of the ideas already tested in other cities to design and implement a C Street corridor that will be an example to the rest of the country and also remind our city's residents that San Diego can again become America's Finest City.

WalkSanDiego urges you to consider these issues as you hear today's presentation on the C Street Master Plan and as you direct comments to CCDC staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Danielle Putnam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Danielle Putnam, AICP
Board Member, WalkSanDiego
Member, C Street Advisory Committee