



Pacific Beach Planning Group

www.pbplanning.org

January 9, 2020

VIA EMAIL

To: Michael Prinz, San Diego Planning Department

Cc: San Diego City Councilmember Jennifer Campbell
Monica Eslamian, District 2 City Council Representative
Brian White, President, Pacific Beach Town Council
Matthew Winter, President, BeautifulPB
Sara Berns, Executive Director, Discover Pacific Beach
PB Planning Group Board Members

RE: Mission Boulevard

This letter presents formal comments and recommendations that the Pacific Beach Planning Group (“PBPG”) requests you consider as you finalize the Mission Boulevard Public Spaces and Transportation study. These items reflect years of hard work by past and present members of PBPG, including Past Chair Chris Olson and ad hoc Committee Chair Ed Gallagher. Each item was voted upon and approved at PBPG’s December 11, 2019 meeting. The items are presented in bullet point format for your convenience.

Pocket Parks

- There is significant need for more public park space in Pacific Beach
- All the ‘feeder’ streets that abut the boardwalk between Mission Blvd and Ocean Front Walk from PB Drive to Diamond St offer ideal locations for ‘pocket parks’ and/or ‘pedestrian promenades’
- PBPG requests that every one of these ‘feeder’ streets include such open space
- Pocket Parks should extend on each street from every alleyway all the way west to Ocean Front Walk, and should include plans for the future extension of the Oliver St “paper street.” A pocket park should also be created on Ocean Blvd between Grand Avenue and Thomas Street.
- Oliver Street – once completed – should be completely closed to non-emergency service vehicular traffic and should be developed as a pedestrian promenade all the way from Ocean Front Walk to Mission Boulevard, which would further alleviate pedestrian congestion
- The pocket parks should be designed as community ‘gathering places’ and should offer a wide range of needed community amenities and ‘activity’ zones such as playgrounds, exercise areas, public art, seaside/sunset viewing structures, raised berms/hillsides and other attractions

- The pocket parks should include *shielded* illumination so that the gathering spaces are safe and useful both before daylight and after dark

Mission Boulevard

- The City's Final Report on MBPSAT vis-à-vis Mission Boulevard from PB Drive to Diamond St fails to include sufficient pedestrian safety improvements
- Eventual redesign of Mission Boulevard must include:
 - (a) much wider sidewalks on both the east and west sides of Mission Boulevard
 - (b) much improved pedestrian and bike crossing facilities east-west across Mission Blvd
- In order to calm traffic (reduce vehicle speeds) while keeping the flow of automobile traffic steady and consistent, PBPG strongly recommends **roundabouts** at every current signaled intersection along Mission Boulevard from PB Drive to Diamond St
- PBPG recommends that the plan for Mission Boulevard and adjacent streets include sufficient ride-share/drop-off locations
- PBPG insists Mission Blvd Redesign plans for a mobility hub that accommodates the placement of a mass-transit station (e.g., light rail transit, aerial gondola) and/or shuttle service near the beach to facilitate convenient and affordable transit from beach areas to nearby communities including the two trolley stations being built at Balboa Avenue and at Claremont Drive.
- Connect the bike lane on Mission Blvd to the broader bicycle path network (and/or PB Pathways)

Boardwalk and Ocean Boulevard

- Widen the Boardwalk from Grand Ave to PB Drive In every area possible, recapture PROW from businesses encroaching on public space and eliminate vehicular access on Ocean Blvd from Thomas to Grand (emergency vehicle access is okay)
- Restore/complete the seawall

Items We Endorse In Final Report of MBPSAT

- Roundabouts at PB Drive & Loring Street
- Oliver Street Pocket Park
- Widening boardwalk from Grand to Thomas
- Removing parking spots along Ocean (from Grand to Thomas) and conversion of those parking spaces to pedestrian promenade and park space
- Pedestrian Promenades, Widened Sidewalks, Pocket Parks at the feeder streets: Garnet, Grand, Thomas and Oliver (and partially at Emerald)
- Lighting improvements should be "shielded" lights (i.e., provide ground-level illumination while protecting the Dark Sky and not contributing to 'light pollution') that improve usage and safety after dark and before daylight.
- Northbound bike lane on Mission Blvd protected by parked cars and/or with buffer of empty parking spots

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl Rand', written in a cursive style.

Karl Rand, PBPG Chair