

**ECOS TACQQ Meeting**

March 30, 2021

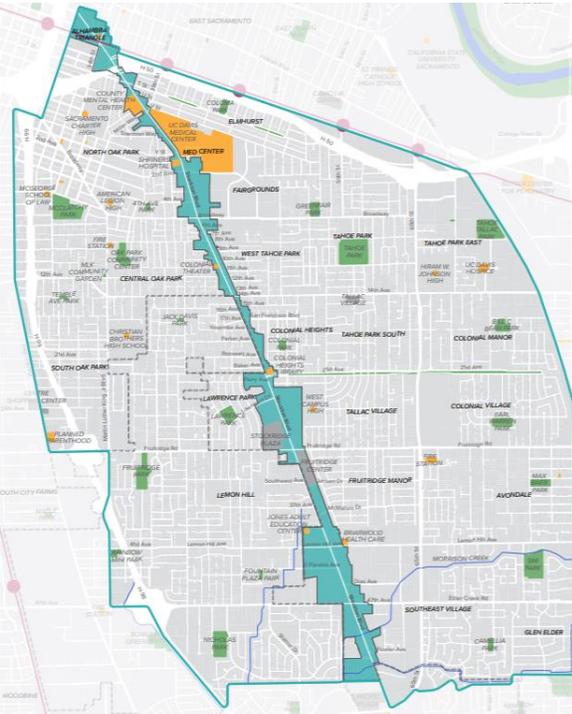
**Attendees**

Susan Herre  
Ralph Propper  
Muriel Strand  
Gabriel Balensiefer  
May Lin Chang

Alex Reagan  
Robert Meagher  
Janet Koster  
Sandra Hall  
Drew Hart

**Featured Presentation: Stockton Boulevard Corridor Study**  
**Drew Hart, Project Manager for City of Sacramento**

Drew Hart presented the **Stockton Boulevard Corridor Study** (below left.) He also mentioned the City’s Department of Community Development has begun the **Stockton Blvd Plan** (below right) to build a shared vision of the corridor as a great place for existing residents and businesses.

<b>Stockton Boulevard Corridor Study</b>	<b>Stockton Blvd Plan</b>
<p>Comments are due April 4 <a href="#">Stockton Blvd Corridor Study</a></p> <p>Submit comments on the website (stocktonblvd.org) or via email (<a href="mailto:ahart@cityofsacramento.org">ahart@cityofsacramento.org</a>)</p> 	<p>New effort by City Dept of Community Development <a href="#">Stockton Blvd Plan</a></p> 

Regarding the **Stockton Blvd Corridor Study**, Drew Hart presented the following:

- Study Location: Stockton Blvd from Alhambra to 47<sup>th</sup> Ave/Elder Creek Rd
  - Diverse stretch: includes dense housing at the beginning, then medical campus, then traditional grid pattern, then developments become larger and more set back from the street; going south the street gets larger and faster; Unique because it doesn't have a parallel route, so you can't remove access for any type of mobility
- History
  - Streetcar went down Stockton Blvd
  - The Study has been conducted for the last two years
  - Currently Highest traffic route of the bus goes down this blvd
- Goals: slow down the highway and bring people into the businesses
  - Safety
    - Vision Zero: reduce fatal crashes within the next 10 years.
    - Stockton blvd has the largest number of crashes
    - 15 new crosswalks
    - Signalized crosswalks
    - Better yield to pedestrians
    - Protected intersections for pedestrians
    - 23 new bus shelters
  - Mobility: make the corridor usable to all transportation types
    - 1.5mi new bike facilities + 2.7mi upgrades
    - 1mi of bus-bike lane
    - Traffic lighting will be synchronized
  - Community: make sure the community is inclusive to all needs
    - New tree lawns
    - More transit shelters
    - Adding u-turn
    - Lighting
- Community Outreach
  - Working to be attentive to the communities that reside along the blvd
  - Visited churches, sports events, libraries, etc
  - July 2020 Open House meeting ([watch video here](#))
- Study Questions (survey conducted online targeting zip codes – NextDoor, Facebook, etc)
  - *What are the top 3 wishes for Stockton blvd improvement?*
    - Lower stress bikeway (currently narrow or non-existent)
    - Trees and landscaping
    - Wider sidewalk/separation from traffic
  - *How do most people travel down Stockton blvd currently?*
    - 71% travel by car but they want to
  - *What do people who ride the bus want improvements on?*
    - More comfortable waiting areas

- Better amenities (lighting, bus stops)
    - Faster travel times
  - *What are the biggest transportation issues you see on Stockton Blvd?*
    - High speed traffic
    - Turning drivers not yielding to pedestrians on crosswalks
    - Long distance between crosswalks
    - Lack of transit amenities and poor lighting
- Improvement Plans by Section:
  - Alhambra to T ST.
    - Reduce vehicle travel lanes and add new bike lanes
  - T Street to 2<sup>nd</sup> ave
    - Traffic volume too high to take away a lane
    - Took away center turn lane, adding sidewalk shared use path for bikes/pedestrians
  - Aggie Square (2<sup>nd</sup> to Broadway)
    - Some UCD property to extend sidewalk/bike lane
  - Broadway to 21<sup>st</sup> Ave
    - Added shared bus & bike lane
    - Boston & Portland have done this
    - Bus frequency is low enough to allow bike traffic & space is large enough for bikes to pass
    - Bus drivers are more trained to safely drive with bikers
  - 37<sup>th</sup> Ave to 47<sup>th</sup> Ave
    - Will extend sidewalk to add a shared use path for bicyclists and pedestrians
    - Some businesses are built on this space, so as redevelopment happens the space can be reclaimed for the community
  - T street
    - Poor crossing for bikes as it crosses Stockton blvd
    - 5 leg intersection
    - Visibility issues
    - Design (information on pg 36)
      - Eliminate L hand turns on to Stockton blvd from T Street
      - Remove N side T st parking to make space for bikes
      - Force S car lane to be a R hand turn only
- Costs (~\$80M)
  - Preliminary Design & Env. Impact: \$1M
  - North segment: \$27M
  - Central Segment: \$19M
  - South Segment: \$33M
  - CURRENT: high likelihood of receiving the first portion of funding for preliminary work
  - NEXT: Other funding will come from grants, new developments (SACOG, State Activation Transportation Program)

- These improvements benefit...
  - People south of the county line: 80,000 people
  - People near the corridor: 16,000 people
  - Jobs along the corridor: 4,000 jobs
- Other related major developments
  - Community Development Dept will add in land use changes, economic development, anti-displacement, accommodating for unhoused persons
  - Lots of affordable housing planned on this corridor currently
- Current status
  - Public review & feedback until April 4, 2021
  - Approval by City Council, May 2021
  - Seeking funding for future phases
- Other Comments
  - Having walkways not next to the traffic is great!
  - Need to sell this as an improvement to life for the next 20 years
  - Fill in the photos with apartments to encourage adoption
  - New jobs available for local residents by Aggie Square and resulting business
  - Newly created jobs may not be suitable for current residents due to education requirements and could cause displacement

### **Questions**

1. Will there be large trees incorporated into the design to reduce urban heat islands? (Robert M.)
  - a. Designing for 8ft of tree lawn to allow for growth of a canopy (consulted urban forestry experts on how much space is needed for a healthy tree)
  - b. Issues relating to roots growing underground potentially – no answer
  - c. Homegrown Habitat: native plants that should do well and be available in the region
2. What are the barriers to approval of the plan?
  - a. Some concerns about shared bus & bike lanes
  - b. Corridor residents are concerned about displacement, gentrification
  - c. City doesn't use general funds for transportation improvements
3. Are you planning to accommodate autonomous vehicles?
  - a. Not currently in the plan; incorporating street lighting and improved streets will allow autonomous vehicles to operate safely.
4. Will existing parking along blvd remain?
  - a. Only on-street parking is under freeway – will be removed
  - b. Surface parking lots at businesses -- City property will be reclaimed for shared-use paths
5. Does the city use general funds to improve utility infrastructure?
  - a. Unsure
6. What are the major employment centers?
  - a. Aggie Square
  - b. The Cannery
  - c. Development opportunities in the south area of the project area
  - d. Large medical facility on the south end

**Additional Presentation:     Radical Changes are needed to deal with climate change –  
Muriel Strand, former CARB engineer**

Muriel Strand said communities have grown accustomed to cheap energy. To end our fossil fuel addiction will require radical changes and a greater appreciation for how energy is produced and consumed. She said we should absorb the notion that it would take an adult 100 hours of bicycle pedaling to make the equivalent energy in a gallon of gasoline. We must recalibrate our thinking.

Muriel said environmental groups need to change their typical approach of defending undeveloped open space. Muriel proposed that ECOS should review its philosophy and strategy, rethink our place in the world, expand ECOS' focus and related activities, define the problem, craft a technical remedy, and through a new strategic plan embrace a radical new approach.

See Muriel Strand's document attached below.

**Other Topics:**

- County Climate Action Plans (Susan Herre)
  - Comments on the CAP must be received by April 9
  - Several groups working together on comments: Land Use isn't as big of a factor as it should be (anti-sprawl); some goals are not enforceable or specific
- CapCity freeway bridge over American River
  - ECOS met with CalTrans expressing concern over the widening the bridge and induced demand. SB 743 requires freeway expansion projects to consider induced demand
- Start of construction on US 50 HOV lanes
  - I-5 to Watt article in paper recently; ECOS sued CalTrans over the widening and the settlement funds went to SacRT to double track the line to Folsom. Should ECOS put out a statement on this?
- Climate Emergency Declarations were signed by City, County & SMUD for 2030 carbon neutrality
- Mayors' Climate Commission Recommendations are slowly being incorporated into the City's CAP; Slow Streets in City is in progress; the City allocated \$4.4M for the CAP mobilization and will be hiring more staff

**Other Announcements:**

- Next TAQCC meeting, May 6<sup>th</sup>

**By Muriel Strand**

**November 2020**

**ECOS Organizational Development Committee**

Shortly after this essay was published, around the time Obama was elected, then-ECOS Executive Director Graham Brownstein arranged a discussion taking up these critiques of the conservation movement and environmentalism as ECOS has known and practiced it. John Deeter attended, along with at least half a dozen others. However, an outdoors event centered around several pitchers of beer did not lead to the discussion that I think should have happened.

Here are some key points from that aging essay:

**Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World**

The Death of Environmentalism by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus

The roots of the environmental movement are in the conservation movement, which sees civilization as separate from idyllic unspoiled nature. (Especially after the Native Americans were disappeared.)

Critique of the strategic framework for environmental policy-making that hasn't changed in 50+ years:

- 1) define a problem (e.g. global warming) as “environmental.”
- 2) craft a technical policy remedy (e.g., cap-and-trade).
- 3) sell the technical proposal to legislators through a variety of tactics, such as lobbying, third-party allies, research reports, advertising, and public relations.

Advocating for environmental goals as an individual special interest, rather than forming alliances and coalitions with sectors such as labor, has also limited the effectiveness of environmental activists.

“the environmental movement acts as though proposals based on “sound science” will be sufficient to overcome ideological and industry opposition. Environmentalists are in a culture war over our core values as Americans and over our vision for the future, and it won't be won by appealing to the rational consideration of our collective self-interest.”

“Environmental groups have spent the last 40 years defining themselves *against* conservative values like cost-benefit accounting, smaller government, fewer regulations, and free trade, without ever articulating a coherent morality we can call our own.”

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Okay, while Shellenberger, Nordhaus, and their Breakthrough Institute (and perhaps other subsidiaries) are advocating conventional solutions like nuclear power, their critique bears attention. I suggest that now is a good time for ECOS to step back and take a look at a bigger picture. While policies like cost-benefit accounting, smaller government, fewer regulations, and free trade don't exactly strike me as conservative values, what is our coherent plan for how to

live in reasonable comfort and security after and/or without fossil fuels?

**Ending fossil fuel addiction will require changes much more radical than those envisioned by the conservation/environmental movement as we have known it.** As with environmental government agencies, much of the outcome of the environmental movement to date is enabling the fossil fuel industry and lifestyles by softening and limiting the harmful effects mostly through externalizing and exporting.

But fossil fuels are very cheap. We need to recalibrate. It would take a healthy adult about 100 hours to generate, such as on a bicycle generator, as much energy as is available from a gallon of gasoline. Now the price at the pump is somewhere north of \$3 these days, which is nonetheless dwarfed by 100 times the minimum wage.

And the many industries based on fossil fuels are enabling people to use unnecessary energy in order to make more profit. And people are happy to use cheap energy – I believe that harvesting energy is THE most basic biological instinct.

It was at a meeting of the Air Quality Collaborative, back in the late 1990s, that I thought up a radical definition of efficiency (output/input) that bypasses a lot of unnecessary energy use:

(Clean air & water, healthy food, cooking, comfy shelter, and plenty of sleep and exercise)

(sun, soil, water, flora, fauna...)

So the kind of radical change we need to make is structural. Just as structural racism requires structural remedies, so does structural fossil fuel addiction. For example, the Endangered Species Act focuses on saving individual species from extinction rather than on the wholistic health of the eco-systems we depend on.

Looking for context, I found this strategic plan that was the work of the ODC in 2015:

[http://www.ecosacramento.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2015\\_ECOS\\_Long\\_Term\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_w\\_Workplan\\_27.pdf](http://www.ecosacramento.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2015_ECOS_Long_Term_Strategic_Plan_w_Workplan_27.pdf)

I think now is a great time for ECOS to have a Board Retreat and review this 2015 plan, and update it. (Alexandra informs me that CORE, the Coalition on Regional Equity has been dissolved and that the ‘Sac Investment Without Displacement’ is somewhat similar.)

Should ECOS add a radical agenda to its ongoing ‘work-within-the-system’ agenda?