



# City of Santa Barbara California

## PLANNING COMMISSION and TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** March 5, 2009  
**AGENDA DATE:** March 12, 2009  
**PROJECT SUBJECT:** Update on the Las Positas/Mission Circulation Options Report –  
(a.k.a. Improving access to Cottage Hospital)  
**TO:** Planning Commission and Transportation & Circulation Committee  
**FROM:** Transportation Division  
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For questions please call (805) 564-5470.

### I. RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission (PC) and the Transportation & Circulation Committee (TCC) provide feedback on the transportation improvement options being considered to improve access to and from Cottage Hospital and adjacent neighborhoods.

### II. INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Division is in the process of developing a Las Positas/Mission Circulation Options Report (Circulation Options Report), which will identify access improvements to Cottage Hospital and the adjacent neighborhoods. This is the second of three joint PC/TCC meetings regarding this topic. The first meeting covered the purpose and need of the Circulation Options Report along with the potential improvements to be analyzed in it. The March 12, 2009, meeting will focus on the public input to date and further refine the scope of improvement projects to be investigated. The third and final meeting will be to review the draft of the Circulation Options Report (Draft Report) and its findings and to make recommendations to City Council regarding a preferred improvement project.

### III. BACKGROUND

The Circulation Options Report Study (Study) originated as a condition of approval for the Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital's Seismic Compliance and Modernization Project, along with the identified need for transportation improvements near the hospital resulting from the findings contained in the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the project. Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital is the only Level II Trauma Center between Los Angeles and San Jose and

responds to trauma emergencies throughout Santa Barbara County. Safe and efficient access to the hospital is a priority for employees, patients, and emergency response vehicles. The existing transportation issues are identified below:

- Cottage Hospital and other medical offices are located north of Highway 101 between Mission Street and Las Positas Road, along the most congested section of the freeway in Santa Barbara County.
- The three closely-spaced exit ramps along northbound Highway 101 create traffic congestion and can affect traffic speeds and operations on the freeway mainline.
- A California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) project in the 1980s created a one-way section of Calle Real which prevents access to Cottage Hospital from the Las Positas Road interchange. Providing access to the Cottage Hospital area from Las Positas Road would relieve some of the congestion from the Mission Street interchange which is currently operating at capacity.
- There are a limited number of locations available to cross Highway 101 which divides the neighborhoods to the west and east of the freeway. Local vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic are heavily impacted for short distance trips to the hospital or between neighborhoods, and it may be beneficial to create additional freeway crossing opportunities.
- Mission Street is a narrow four-lane road without left-turn pockets which constricts access to Cottage Hospital.

The Circulation Options Report is intended to identify and evaluate possible hospital and neighborhood access improvements to address these access issues. Potential improvements are intended to compliment the transportation demand management measures already planned by the City of Santa Barbara and Cottage Hospital. This Study is funded by Cottage Hospital and will help to identify a preferred group of improvements that will serve as the basis for the development of a Project Study Report consistent with Caltrans guidelines. The Study will also set the stage for pursuing sources of available transportation funding.

#### **IV. PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING**

##### **Public Workshop #1 and Stakeholder Meetings**

On November 18, 2008, a public workshop was held to gather public input and ideas regarding potential access improvements. The public workshop was well attended and was a good cross section of Cottage Hospital employees and neighborhood residents. Following the public workshop, Staff and the hired traffic consultant, the IBI Group, compiled a list of all suggested transportation improvements. Next, we received feedback from Caltrans on the freeway related

improvements and narrowed down the list of improvement options to be analyzed in the City's travel demand model. Finally, IBI Group categorized all public input and suggested transportation improvements into four main categories:

1. **New Freeway Overpass** – A new overpass would serve local traffic and provide an alternative crossing of Highway 101, allowing local residents to avoid the Las Positas Road and Mission Street interchanges improving both. The overpass would likely be located between Las Positas Road and Mission Street.
2. **Reconfigure Las Positas Road Interchange** – The reconfiguration of the northbound Highway 101 off-ramp to Las Positas Road or the extension of the southbound off-ramp to Junipero Street could address traffic congestion at the interchange and allow for the reintroduction of two-way traffic on Calle Real east of Las Positas Road. There could also be improvements to the Las Positas Road and Mission Street Interchanges by widening the off-ramps from southbound Highway 101 to both local streets which would increase capacity and improve traffic operations.
3. **Local Street Improvements** – These projects would be focused on improving local traffic and could include options to signalize intersections on Pueblo Street, extend the one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street, and extend the limit for two-way traffic on De la Vina Street.
4. **Transit/Non-motorized Projects** – These projects would modify existing MTD routes, install sidewalks along Calle Real, improve pedestrian crossings at major intersections along Las Positas and install a new rail passenger station near the existing Junipero Street pedestrian overpass.

A brief description of the various transportation improvements options under the above four categories are included in Exhibit A. Exhibit A also includes whether the City Transportation Division recommended analyzing a transportation improvement further based upon feedback received by the IBI Group, Cottage Hospital, and/or Caltrans.

### **Preliminary Project Analysis**

Following the identification of access improvement alternatives, the City's travel demand model was employed to determine how the larger infrastructure improvements (a new overcrossing and two-way traffic on Calle Real) would influence travel behavior. This preliminary analysis step was performed without any recognition of individual intersection improvements that would also need to be done to improve level-of-service (LOS) analysis. The goal is to use the results to further hone the number of options via public, stakeholder, and Commissioner and Committee Member comment, so that only the best alternatives are fully analyzed in the Circulation Options Report. In that report, specific intersection improvements that will complement the larger infrastructure changes will be added to ensure that the City's LOS goals will be reached.

For use in the travel demand model, the selected transportation improvements were grouped into three separate packages of potential improvements as outlined below. Refer to Exhibit B for a diagram of each alternative.

- **Alternative 1: New Overpass at Pueblo Street and Local Street Improvements** (The local street improvements include extension of two way traffic on De La Vina Street from Constance to Pueblo Street and extension of Castillo and Bath Street one-way couplets from Mission to Pueblo Street).
- **Alternative 2: Three potential Las Positas Interchange Reconfigurations** (2a – NB Off-Ramp Flyover, 2b - a hook ramp to Calle Real west of Las Positas and 3b – SB Off Ramp Flyover) and Local Street Improvements (same as Alternative 1).
- **Alternative 3: Combination of Alternatives 1 and 2**

Next, the performance of each alternative was compared with the baseline Year 2030 traffic conditions to determine the benefits and constraints associated with the various improvements. The travel demand model results will be presented at the meeting.

### **Public Workshop # 2 and Stakeholder Meetings**

On February 11, 2009, Staff held a second meeting with Caltrans, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), and Cottage Hospital to go over the preliminary results of the traffic model. Staff is expecting written correspondence from Caltrans in mid-March which should give them enough time to review the model data and concept drawings of the alternatives Staff selected to have analyzed.

SBCAG's initial observation was that there was only a small difference in LOS observed at most Study intersections between the baseline Year 2030 condition and the project alternatives. The IBI Group noted that the value of these improvements occurs not only in LOS improvement, but in overall mobility/access improvements for this section of the City. The improvements are intended to improve access to the Cottage Hospital area and to reduce neighborhood impacts. These objectives are not necessarily reflected in LOS values. Further intersection improvements will be recommended to address LOS issues in the next phase.

Cottage Hospital representatives were generally supportive of extending two-way traffic on De la Vina Street to Pueblo Street, improving the Las Positas interchange, and modifying Calle Real to restore two-way traffic east of Las Positas Road. They were less supportive of the Pueblo Street Overcrossing and extending the one-way couplet on Bath Street and Castillo Street due to the changes that would result for local traffic circulation under these alternatives.

The second public workshop was conducted on February 24, 2009, where the preliminary results of the transportation improvement alternatives were shared with local residents and Cottage Hospital employees. Feedback from the local residents and Cottage Hospital employees was received on these alternatives to ensure that the City is considering the best options to improve access to and from Cottage Hospital and the adjacent neighborhoods.

There was an overall consensus from the public workshop attendees that Alternative 2B was the preferred alternative because it provides the greatest benefit with the least capital cost and the least amount of disruption during construction. Generally, the attendees preferred all Alternative 2 options over the overpass option because Alternative 2 provides the most direct access to the hospital. Although the public workshop attendees were not opposed to an overpass (Alternative 1), they felt it should only be explored if Alternative 2 will not work. They were generally supportive of the local street improvements, but need more information on how the improvements would impact the on-street parking.

V. **NEXT STEPS AND ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC FEEDBACK**

After all feedback is received, including comments from PC and TCC, the IBI Group will document the evaluation of the transportation improvements in the Draft Report. Based on the feedback, a short list of improvements will be further refined and analyzed in a more complete report, including LOS analysis and more detailed intersection improvements. This report will go to City Council for review during Summer 2009. The findings from the Circulation Options Report will feed into the Project Study Report, which is needed for the second phase of this study in order to pursue project funding opportunities.

- Exhibits:
- A. Summary of Potential Transportation Improvements
  - B. Maps of Alternatives 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, and 3

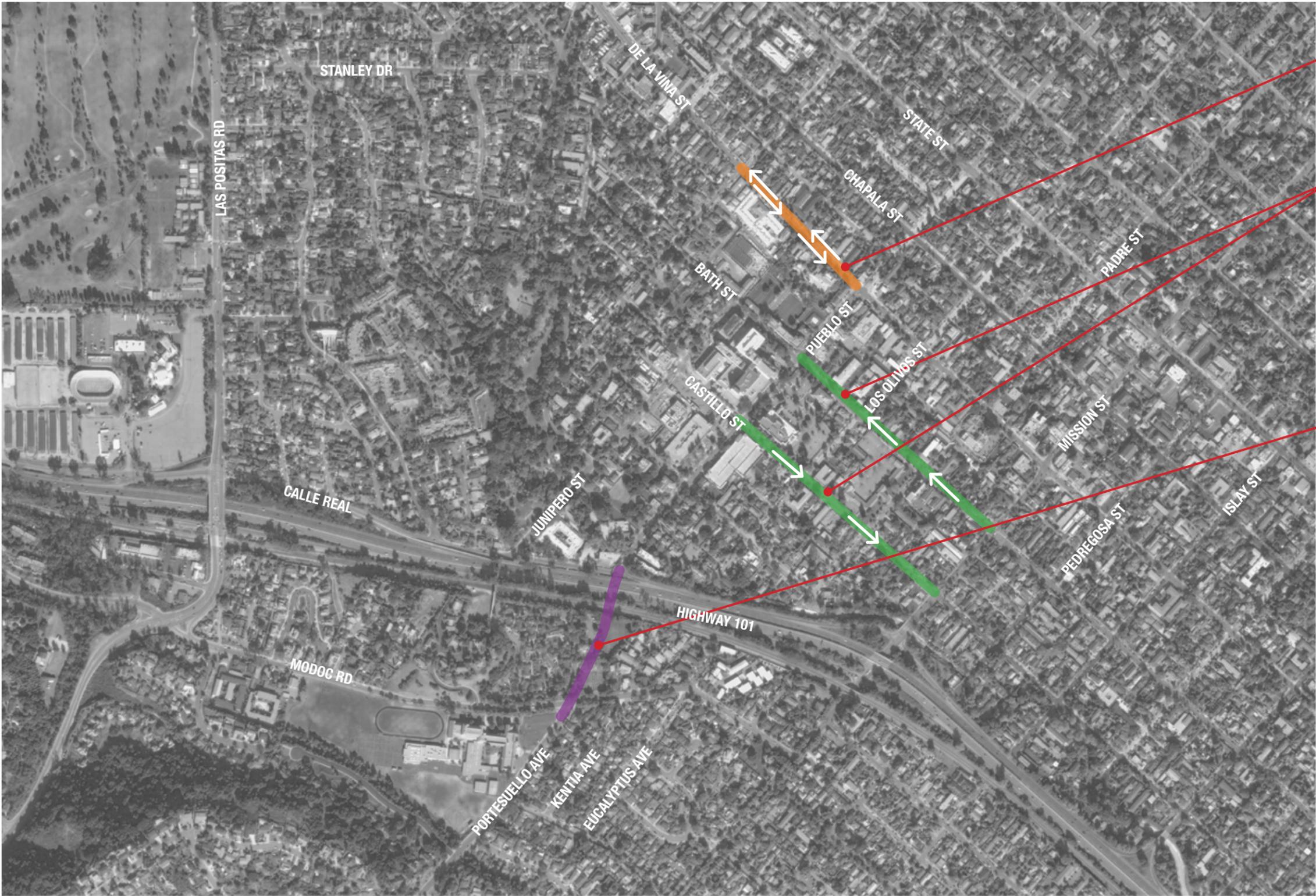
## Exhibit A – Summary of Potential Improvement Options

Alternative Number	Name	Description	Recommendation
<b>Overcrossing Alternatives</b>			
O-1	Pueblo Street Overcrossing	Construct new overcrossing of US-101 at Pueblo Street, connecting to Modoc Road and Portesuello Avenue south of the freeway	Include in analysis of alternatives
O-2	Junipero Street Overcrossing	Construct new overcrossing of US-101 at Junipero Street, connecting to Modoc Road south of the freeway	Remove from consideration (substantial residential impacts)
O-3	Los Olivos St/Kentia Ave Overcrossing	Construct new overcrossing of US-101 at Los Olivos Street, connecting to Kentia Avenue south of the freeway	Remove from consideration (substantial residential impacts)
O-4	Pedregosa Street Overcrossing	Construct new overcrossing of US-101 at Pedregosa Street	Remove from consideration (substantial residential impacts)
O-5	Islay Street Overcrossing	Construct new overcrossing of US-101 at Islay Street	Remove from consideration (substantial residential impacts)
<b>Interchange/Freeway Ramp Projects</b>			
I-1	Junipero Street Northbound Off-Ramp	Remove existing Las Positas and Pueblo Northbound Off-Ramps, create new northbound off-ramp at Junipero and signalize intersection. Allows for two-way traffic on Calle Real between Las Positas and Junipero	Remove from consideration (No support from Caltrans)
I-2	Las Positas Northbound Off-Ramp Relocation	Relocate Las Positas Northbound Off-ramp to west of existing overpass as a hook ramp, consolidated with existing northbound on-ramp. Allows for two-way traffic on Calle Real to Pueblo Street. Removal of Pueblo Street northbound off-ramp possible.	Include in analysis of alternatives
I-3	Las Positas Single Point Interchange	Reconfigure Las Positas Interchange to a single point design. Convert Calle Real to two-way traffic and lower the roadway below Las Positas Road.	Remove from consideration (substantial cost and property impacts, limited support from Caltrans)

I-4	Las Positas Northbound Off-Ramp Flyover	Reconfigure Las Positas Interchange to a single point design, shifted to match the location of the existing SB on/off-ramps. Convert Calle Real to two-way traffic.	Include in analysis of alternatives
I-5	Realign Northbound Las Positas Off-Ramp	Realign existing NB Las Positas Off-Ramp to accommodate EB traffic on Calle Real on separate structure that would be aligned between the off-ramp and freeway lanes. Suggested as part of Upper State Street Study	Not modeled at this time. Only limited support from Caltrans. May warrant further consideration.
I-6	Las Positas/Junipero Southbound Off-Ramp Flyover	Extend southbound off-ramp from Las Positas Road over Highway 101 to link with Calle Real near Junipero Street.	Include in analysis of alternatives
I-7	Las Positas Road/Calle Real Roundabout	Replace existing intersection with a roundabout and relocate existing NB Las Positas off-ramp to intersect with roundabout.	Remove from consideration (grade issues and impacts to residences likely preclude this option)
I-8	Pueblo Street Interchange and Overpass	Construct new interchange at Pueblo Street and remove existing Mission Street interchange	Remove from consideration (proximity of this interchange to Mission and Las Positas does not meet Caltrans design standards, need a minimum of 0.9 miles)
I-9	Highway 101 Auxiliary Lanes	Add southbound auxiliary lane between Las Positas and Mission. Consider additional auxiliary lanes south of Mission Street	Continue consideration of this alternative
I-10	Widen Las Positas Southbound Off-Ramp	Add a third lane to the southbound Las Positas Off-Ramp to better accommodate traffic volumes	Include in analysis of alternatives
I-11	Mission Street southbound Off-Ramp Widening	Add additional lane to SB Mission Street off-ramp. Identified in Cottage Hospital EIR.	Include in analysis of alternatives
<b>Local Street Projects</b>			
L-1	Extend Two-Way Traffic on De la Vina Street to Pueblo Street	Would extend two-way section of De la Vina Street from Constance St to Pueblo Street.	Include in analysis of alternatives
L-2	Pueblo Street Access Improvements	Signalize Intersections of Pueblo Street with State Street and De la Vina	Include in analysis of alternatives

L-3	Castillo/Bath One-Way Couplet	Extend Castillo Street and Bath Street one-way couplets with bike lanes from Mission Street to Pueblo Street	Include in analysis of alternatives
L-4	Mission Street Through Lane Reduction	Convert Mission Street from four lane roadway to two through lanes with a center left turn lane	Include in analysis of alternatives
L-5	Las Positas/Modoc Roundabout	Convert Las Positas/Modoc intersection to a roundabout	Include in analysis of alternatives
L-6	Signalize Arrellaga St Corridor	Convert existing stop signs to signalized intersections.	Include in analysis of alternatives
L-7	Mission Street Traffic Signal Modifications	Modify traffic signals on Mission Street at Castillo Street and Bath Street to provide permissive-protected phasing for the NB left turns.	Include in analysis of alternatives if Mission Street lane reduction proves to be infeasible
<b>Transit Projects</b>			
T-1	Modify MTD Route 3	Modify MTD Route 3 to use new Pueblo St or Junipero Street overcrossing across US-101 and then follow Modoc and Las Positas to connect to Route 5 at Veronica Springs Rd.	Include in analysis of alternatives
T-2	Modify MTD Route 8	Modify MTD Route 8 to continue on Calle Real south of La Cumbre and use Junipero Street, Bath, Pueblo, and De La Vina Streets to access Downtown Transit Center. (Requires two-way traffic on Calle Real to Junipero St)	Include in analysis of alternatives

Alternative 1: Pueblo Street Overcrossing



- Extend two-way traffic on De La Vina Street
- Extend one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street to Pueblo Street
- New freeway overcrossing at Pueblo Street

**Legend**

- █ New freeway overpass
- █ Convert street to 2-way traffic
- █ Remove existing off-ramp
- █ Convert street to 1-way traffic

Alternative 2A: Northbound Off-Ramp Flyover



Extend two-way traffic on De La Vina Street

Extend one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street to Pueblo Street

- Legend**
- █ New freeway off-ramp
  - █ New freeway overpass
  - █ Convert street to 2-way traffic
  - █ Remove existing off-ramp
  - █ Convert street to 1-way traffic

## Alternative 2B: Northbound Hook Ramp



- Extend two-way traffic on De La Vina Street
- Extend one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street to Pueblo Street

**Legend**

- ▬ New freeway off-ramp
- ▬ New freeway overpass
- ▬ Convert street to 2-way traffic
- ▬ Remove existing off-ramp
- ▬ Convert street to 1-way traffic

## Alternative 2C: Southbound Off-Ramp Flyover



- Extend two-way traffic on De La Vina Street
- Extend one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street to Pueblo Street

- Legend**
- ▬ New freeway off-ramp
  - ▬ New freeway overpass
  - ▬ Convert street to 2-way traffic
  - ▬ Remove existing off-ramp
  - ▬ Convert street to 1-way traffic

## Alternative 3A: Pueblo Street Overcrossing & Northbound Off-Ramp Flyover



# Alternative 3B: Pueblo Street Overcrossing & Northbound Hook Ramp



- Extend two-way traffic on De La Vina Street
- Extend one-way couplet on Castillo Street and Bath Street to Pueblo Street
- New freeway overcrossing at Pueblo Street

- Legend**
- █ New freeway off-ramp
  - █ New freeway overpass
  - █ Convert street to 2-way traffic
  - █ Remove existing off-ramp
  - █ Convert street to 1-way traffic

## Alternative 3C: Pueblo Street Overcrossing & Southbound Off-Ramp Flyover

