

City of Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

BikeWalk Oceanside

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October 24, 2022

Mr. Michael McCann
Regional Director of Acquisitions and Development
Toll Brothers Apartment Living
C/O North County Transit District
810 Mission Avenue
Oceanside, CA 92056

RE: Oceanside Transit Center Redevelopment Plan

Dear Mr. McCann,

The Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is a citizen's advisory committee whose role is to advise the City on programs, projects, and policies which improve bicycling and walking in the community. The Committee's membership includes over 75 Oceanside residents who are concerned about bicycling and walking infrastructure and opportunities. Our goals are to promote bicycling and walking in the community for health, recreation, and transportation, to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety, and to improve bicycling and pedestrian facilities.

On September 15, three members of the Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee attended the OTC Redevelopment Plan "Open House" at the City. We have a number of comments and concerns about the proposed redevelopment plan from the transportation, transit, and active transportation perspectives which we wish to share with NCTD at this time. Our comments are based on the overall site plan graphic which was posted at the Open House and is attached for reference. We realize that this layout may still be somewhat conceptual at this time.

Transit Related:

1. The current OTC is strategically the most important transit facility in the entire NCTD system, if not the entire county, with 3 intercity/commuter rail lines, the SPRINTER Light Rail Line, seven NCTD bus routes, FLEX service, and intercity bus service. The Committee understands and appreciates that NCTD wishes to modernize the facility and pursue revenue generation opportunities, and believes that both transit- and mixed-use development goals can be met on the site. However, it is the Committee's belief that the transit functions should be highly visible, with a "grand transit entrance" or plaza on one of the key street frontages, designed with the transit and active transportation user in mind. Such a transit plaza could serve as the entrance to all the transit services available, provide real time traveler information, and include access to bike storage, rental bikes and other services. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) refers to such centers as "Mobility Hubs" and has developed an extensive list of the types of services such facilities can offer (see for example: <https://www.sdforward.com/fwddoc/mobipdfs/mobilityhubcatalog-features.pdf>).

With the proposed Plan layout, it seems like the transit facility is practically hidden from view of the rest of the community to the north, east and south, behind large residential buildings and parking structures. The transit and transportation functions appear to be a far lower priority in the proposed Plan than residential uses, despite the major importance of this transportation facility to north county.

2. The current OTC was opened approximately 1983 and will have served the community for at least 40 years by the time the redevelopment occurs. The current OTC has 17 bus stalls for NCTD buses and 5 bus stalls for intercity bus services. In addition to the regular routes, some of these stalls are used by backup or layover buses. The proposed plan shows only ten NCTD bus stalls and two Greyhound stalls. Where will the other stalls be located? Is NCTD envisioning a significant reduction in bus services with this plan? If this facility will potentially serve the community for another 40 to 50 years, shouldn't growth in service, not reduction, be planned for?
3. Bus-to-rail integration is a major concern with the current transit facility. It is roughly a 3-minute walk from the bus island to the SPRINTER platforms currently, and an even longer walk to the COASTER Platform #3 which most COASTERs use. Bus-to-rail integration needs to be carefully thought out to ensure it is as convenient as possible. It is not clear from the overall site plan how this integration will work.

Active Transportation:

4. Access to the facility for transit users arriving by bike or on foot is not very user-friendly. It appears biking and walking transit users must enter between large residential building blocks on roadways used by motor vehicles, rather than entering through an inviting "grand transit plaza" as suggested above. There should be safe, separate bike lanes or paths into the facility to lead the user from points north, east, and south of the facility, to the transit services area. Use of active transportation modes to access the facility will become more and more important as we address climate change, and the facility should encourage this and be as easy as possible to access on foot or by bicycle.
5. Bicycle parking and storage needs to be carefully planned to encourage use of alternative modes. Specifically, such bicycle storage must be in clear view of NCTD Customer Service or Security offices and staff, to provide a greater sense of security for those leaving bikes at the facility. Bike parking must also accommodate three different user groups:
 - a. Daily commuters, who will leave their bikes for extended periods, multiple days per week. This parking should be in the form of a secured "Bike Shed" similar to the one recently added at Oceanside City Hall, with secure access provisions.
 - b. Casual bike users, who may come to the OTC to visit Customer Service or other services in the center. For these users, secure bike racks in clear view of Customer Service office staff should be planned for.
 - c. Bikeshare bikes – Eventually, a docked bike share program similar to Encinitas' Bicycle e-bike share will come to Oceanside. The site plan should identify multiple locations on the facility grounds for these bikeshare dock installations, again, in open view of other activities on the property to promote security.

Car Parking:

6. This facility will have one of the largest car parking facilities in the City of Oceanside. The proposed site plan does not indicate how the identified parking resources will be managed. The OTC redevelopment should include a comprehensive car parking system that will tie the various uses together. A good car parking system will be automated, value-priced, and have congestion pricing algorithms as needed. It will also be shared among all site users and it will provide earnings to those currently losing money (i.e., those who don't solo drive) because car parking is being provided.

Car parking is very expensive to provide. We should not ignore the cost and how it discriminates against those that might like to drive less than average. On the other hand, there must be an "add-in" payment, as needed, so that workers that must drive everyday will not lose money. We must accommodate disabled drivers and protect privacy.

The proposed parking system would increase economic fairness and modal choice while it would reduce driving. It would maximize transit ridership instead of maximizing driving to and from the Transit Center. This shift in mode choice is critical to help meet regional and state-wide climate stabilization targets and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The car parking system we are proposing is identified in the Oceanside Climate Action Plan (CAP) Transportation Demand Management Ordinance. However, it is only suggested, not yet required. Future updates to Oceanside's CAP may require such a system at large projects such as this one.

On-Going Community Input:

7. A project of this magnitude and potential impact on the community deserves an on-going community outreach and participation process. We strongly urge NCTD and its partners to establish a community stakeholder and advisory commission to guide the development plans. This commission should include representation from all affected community members, including transit users, modal service providers, local residents, merchants, and City management, and their input and advice should be carefully considered in order to achieve the best outcome for all parties. The Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee would be honored to be a part of that outreach process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tom Lichterman
Chairman, Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

cc: Oceanside Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Members
Oceanside Mayor and City Council
Matt Tucker, NCTD
Lillian Doherty, NCTD
Katie Persons, NCTD
Jose Cervantes, NCTD
Marisa Mangan, SANDAG

ATTACHMENT

Improved Circulation

The design of the bus terminals will improve circulation through the site. Passengers will have easy paths from the new Transit Center, which is just north of the shaded waiting area.

