



Ms. Linda Da Silva  
Associate Vice Chancellor, Facilities  
City College of San Francisco

June 6, 2017

Dear Ms. Da Silva,

The SFMTA is pleased to have been able to participate in City-City College meetings on the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) over the past 10 months. While City College's Facilities Master Plan proposes a number of concepts that represent improvements to access and mobility for users of the Ocean Avenue campus-- orienting buildings towards Ocean Avenue, gateway plazas to connect people walking to their transit and neighborhood destinations, the SFMTA remains concerned that the parking access proposals for City College's Ocean Avenue campus present threats to pedestrian safety, transit reliability, and area traffic congestion.

The comments below relate to the most up-to-date presentation available on the FMP website (dated March 20, 2017) along with details shared verbally by City College's FMP team at the February 16, 2017 City-City College meeting regarding access and circulation related to the Ocean Avenue campus. This letter reiterates concerns that SFMTA staff have raised to the FMP and underscores the need for them to be addressed before the FMP is finalized.

The FMP proposes at least two primary parking structures: one on the eastern side of campus, to be accessed via Ocean at Howth; and, a second garage on the western side of Phelan. It is our understanding that the proposed amount of parking conceived in the FMP would be significantly higher than what is provided at either of these sites currently, though specific amounts have not yet been determined.

### **Parking access at Ocean and Howth**

The primary access to the garage and parking facilities on the Ocean Avenue side of Campus would be via Ocean at Howth. Left turns are prohibited in both directions on Ocean at Howth, and Howth between Ocean and Geneva is one-way heading northbound. This means the primary entry to the parking facilities would be from westbound Ocean and northbound Howth. Those driving to City College from the west would likely take Geneva to Howth in order to access the parking facility.

The FMP team has suggested two network changes to address the circulation challenge: permitting left turns in from eastbound Ocean at Howth and making Howth between Ocean and Geneva two-way. Both proposals pose serious operational and safety concerns.

Allowing the eastbound left turn into the site at Howth would cause delay to Muni's K-Ingleside Line as well as to other trains as they go in and out of service, and to the 29-Sunset and 49-Van Ness/Mission lines. Furthermore, there would be significant concerns about potential collisions associated with vehicles turning left across the K line tracks at this location, even if the turn were accommodated with a left turn phase.

Howth is a residential street that provides limited capacity; volumes would likely remain a source of area congestion even if Howth was two-way.

Further, the FMP team proposes a left turn exiting from campus onto eastbound Ocean Avenue. This movement would present a conflict with people walking across Ocean Avenue via the crosswalk on the east side of the Ocean/Howth intersection. Ocean Avenue is on San Francisco's High Injury Network, the 12% of streets where 70% of severe and fatal injuries occur, and is among the City's highest priorities for reducing threats to people walking and bicycling. This crosswalk is an important safety and access amenity and will remain open. Depending on the traffic volume exiting the campus and making this southbound left turn, this east crosswalk may have to be signal phase separated from turning traffic, causing transit delay concerns.

### **Parking access at Phelan**

The FMP proposes a new signalized driveway directly north of the Phelan Loop to create a southern access point to new parking facilities west of Phelan Avenue. This would present problems for people walking, for transit, and would increase overall conflicts on Phelan.

Phelan Avenue is a primary pedestrian access point to the Ocean Avenue campus for those walking from the west and for those on foot after taking transit to the campus. People accessing campus on foot stop at the signalized intersection at the Phelan Loop. The addition of another signalized crossing at the driveway and the likely backup of vehicles at this driveway would cause additional delay to people walking and also presents pedestrian safety threats. These conditions are contrary to City College's goal of making the campus more walkable, and contrary to the City's goals to reduce safety and other barriers to walking.

Muni buses run on Phelan and exit the Phelan Loop onto Phelan. The signalized crossing would negatively impact the 43-Masonic, which travels north and south along Phelan, and the 8-Bayshore/8BX-Bayshore Express and 49-Van Ness/Mission, which exit from the Phelan Loop. All of these lines would experience additional delay from the additional signal.

Phelan already experiences high levels of congestion. Adding another signal would increase delay, even with optimized signal timing. Given the existing volumes on Phelan Avenue, it would be very difficult for vehicles to enter and exit the proposed new driveway due to the on-street back-up. As vehicles wait to exit, they may block the crossing of the driveway, creating additional conflicts with pedestrians.

Instead of the proposed signalized driveway north of the Phelan Loop, the SFMTA encourages City College to keep the existing midblock signalized driveway across from the Science Hall. This could mean shifting the proposed location of the Performing Arts Center. If that is not possible, the alternative would be to access the parking via an extension of Lee Street north of Ocean into the Balboa Reservoir site. Note that left turns off of Ocean onto Lee are likely to remain prohibited to prevent transit delay and minimize safety concerns.

### **Analysis**

The level of analysis that the FMP team has conducted in support is not sufficient to move the FMP proposal forward with confidence that the transportation issues have been assessed and are being addressed. To ensure that informed decisions are made about the future of the Ocean Avenue campus, the final FMP proposal and associated environmental analysis must include the following information: projected traffic volumes, garage sizes, garage operations plans, time of day egress/ingress analysis, level of service and delay analysis of intersections, queuing information-- both for the parking lot/garage and on roadways, and a thoughtful discussion of how the project will impact the existing roadway network, transit system, bicycle and pedestrian access and safety, and the surrounding neighborhoods. We encourage you to conduct this analysis and revisit your designs in light of the resulting findings before finalizing the Facilities Master Plan proposal.

## Transportation Demand Management and Complementary Improvements

In addition to assessing and mitigating the transportation impacts outlined above, the SFMTA encourages City College to create a robust transportation demand management program to support access while reducing the volume of vehicles to be accommodated on-site. This would be in line with City College's Sustainability Plan's call for a 15-20% reduction in auto trips and should be achievable given Ocean Avenue campus' transit rich neighborhood. A 2016 travel behavior survey of students, faculty, and staff at the Ocean Avenue campus found that 65% of students take transit, bike, or walk to the campus and 29% drive themselves. While a larger share of employees (40%) drive alone, 54% walk, bike, or take transit to the campus. Nelson/Nygaard's 2017 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Framework for the Balboa Area (attached) recommends a host of measures that could be implemented in support of City College's various populations and transportation needs.

The SFMTA would be happy to collaborate with City College in identifying ways to implement these or other TDM measures that support City College's growth goals and access needs. There are also capital improvements, such as the addition of bicycle lanes along Ocean Avenue, which would support access by modes other than driving and which City College and the SFMTA could pursue together. And, the SFMTA can also work with City College to consider participation in our Class Pass program, which enables students to receive a Muni FastPass as part of enrollment.

My staff is available to provide additional details on any of the issues raised in this letter. Carli Paine ([carli.paine@sfmta.com](mailto:carli.paine@sfmta.com)) will be our point of contact for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Tom Maguire  
Sustainable Streets Director  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

