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**EFFECTIVE CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT
IN THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS**

A CASE STUDY

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**CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
GOLDEN GATE PARK
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

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by

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Abstract

This paper discusses citizen participation in the planning process. It presents a case study of the citizen participation process used on a project in San Francisco, California, concentrating on transportation planning issues. The paper integrates discussion of general citizen participation concepts with specifics of how the citizen participation process took place in an example case study. A framework is presented for categorizing different types of citizen participants and how these groups function in the citizen participation process.

The paper also describes the effectiveness of the particular citizen participation process used in the example. Finally, recommendations are made for improving the citizen involvement process based on the case study and other projects with which the author has been involved. Two major recommendations are discussed, first working closely with the community in developing transportation plans, and second, using a task force structure to continue community involvement as development proceeds. The advantages of using these approaches to reduce a project's transportation impacts are described.

Introduction

The author took part as a citizen in the case study presented. He felt that citizen participation was well handled, and that others might benefit from learning about it. However, since he was

a participant in the process, what follows is not as objective as it might otherwise be. To begin, therefore, the author's views on citizen participation are presented.

There are many reasons to encourage citizen participation in the planning and decision-making process. Most importantly, citizen participation is the key ingredient in a democratic form of government. It is the hypothesis of this paper that citizen participation in the planning process leads to better projects.

An underlying theme in this paper is how to use the citizen participation process to achieve some specified goal. In this case, the paper analyzes the citizen participation process used to obtain approval for a particular project. At points the paper is written from the standpoint of one side (in this case advocates of a project). It is important to realize that the same process could (and in fact, this paper infers that it should) be used by those opposing a project.

It is the author's belief that projects should be environmentally benign as possible. This means that projects should be designed to minimize environmental impacts and that remaining impacts should be mitigated to the fullest extent possible. To do this, a negotiation process is necessary, where citizen support is traded for reducing and mitigating project impacts.

Case Study Background

The California Academy of Sciences is a nationally recognized science museum and research institution. The academy's main facility is located in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. Currently, approximately 1.5 million people visit the Academy each year.

The Academy moved to Golden Gate Park after its original facility was destroyed in the fire following San Francisco's 1906 earthquake. In 1910 the first building opened. Since then other facilities, including a planetarium, the Steinhart Aquarium, additional exhibit space, and research facilities have been added to the building.

In early 1986 the Academy of Sciences proposed a master plan for renovation and expansion of the Golden Gate Park facility. The plan's purpose was to provide additional space for public exhibits, visitor services, and research collections; to improve the building's efficiency; and to make needed structural changes.

Golden Gate Park is one of the world's largest and most famous urban parks. William Hall, a civil engineer, prepared the park's initial designs in 1870 and served as its first superintendent. In 1887, Hall selected John McLaren as his recommendation for superintendent. Mr. McLaren spent the next 50 years managing development of the park and it is his work which is most associated with the park today.

Few tourists visit San Francisco without a visit to Golden Gate Park. Within the Park's 1,017 acres are numerous lakes, the Japanese Tea Garden, the Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, the M.H. De Young Museum, the Asian Art Museum, the California Academy of Sciences, recreational facilities, bike and horse trails, and secluded areas. It is estimated that over 10 million people visit the Park every year.

In addition to its worldwide attraction, Golden Gate Park is loved by San Francisco's citizens who depend on it to provide them with recreation and a respite from the urban environment. Citizens actively monitor all plans for change in the Park and participate in the Park's planning process.

The Academy of Sciences' Master Plan project was initially regarded with significant skepticism from the City's organized environmental groups, neighborhood organizations, and civic groups. There were several reasons for skepticism. First, there is a general feeling against any institutional expansion in San Francisco's neighborhoods. Citizens feel that expansion will generate significant environmental problems including traffic congestion, and parking shortages.

Second, there is strong opposition to institutional uses in Golden Gate Park. Many people feel that the Park should be solely as a natural area or for active recreation. These people point to existing traffic congestion and parking shortages in the Park as reasons to prevent any institutional expansion and even to remove existing uses. Therefore, the changes proposed

for the Academy of Sciences were not viewed favorably, even though the Academy itself was regarded as an important cultural asset for the community. This case study discusses how that skepticism was turned into support for the project in some cases, opposition to the project in other cases, and how the project ultimately turned out.

The Environmental Review Process

The California Environmental Quality Act (commonly known as CEQA) requires local and state governments to consider the potential environmental effects of a project before making a decision on it. The purpose of this is to provide decision makers information on which to base their decision. The CEQA legislation is similar to the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). However, CEQA requirements are generally more comprehensive and apply to a larger number of projects than the national legislation.

The CEQA process begins with an initial study. This analysis often consists of filling out a checklist of possible impacts. More details are then given on the items marked with a positive response. If, on the basis of the Initial Study, a project is found to have a possible significant impact, then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared. If no significant environmental impact is found, a Negative Declaration is prepared.

An EIR is a substantial environmental analysis of the project. According to the Governor's office of Planning Research *an EIR discusses the proposed project, its environmental setting, its probable impacts, realistic means of reducing or eliminating those impacts, its cumulative effects in the context of realistic project alternatives.*¹

The government organization with the principal responsibility for issuing permits to a project is designated the "Lead Agency". In San Francisco, the Department of City Planning serves as the lead agency in preparing most EIRs. The Department performs the initial environmental assessment and prepares the Negative Declaration or the EIR. Often, a consultant will prepare

¹ State of California, Governors Office of Planning and Research, The Planning Commissioners Book, Page 13, March 1989.

EIRs when they are required. Generally, the City selects and manages the consultant, and the project sponsor pays the costs.

The EIR process generally consists of three steps:

1. Preparation of a draft EIR;
2. Taking public comments; and
3. Preparation of response to comments.

The Final EIR is a written document which includes all three parts. The process in San Francisco is described in more detail below.

The San Francisco Planning Commission ultimately approves or disapproves the environmental analysis and, in most cases, the project itself. The Planning Commission holds public hearings and takes written comments on the environmental analysis. CEQA regulations do not require public hearings on environmental analyses, but most jurisdictions do hold them.

The Planning Department responds in writing to all public comments on the Draft EIR. These written responses are included as part of the Project's Final EIR. Next, the Planning Commission considers the EIR for certification. At this point, the Commission can ask for further analysis, or certify the EIR. Further analysis is similar to additional comments; the Department must answer additional questions in the Response to Comments, and/or provide a clearer understanding of the project, impacts, or mitigation measures.

Following certification of the EIR, the Planning Commission and/or other commissions approve the project. Public hearings are provided before all decision-making bodies in San Francisco. Some projects require additional approval from the City's Board of Supervisors. Finally, the decision to approve a project can be appealed to the City's Board of Permit Appeals and could be challenged in Court.

In summary, the CEQA process is intended to provide information on the environmental impacts of projects. It is a detailed, long, and bureaucratic process. Citizen involvement is critical to the information gathering process, and to the quality of the ultimate project. Citizen support is also important in order to obtain project approval.

Citizen Participation Process

The philosophy behind the CEQA process is that decision makers be provided with information to help them make decisions. The opinions and thoughts of citizens are an important part of the information needed to make decisions. Thus, citizen participation is an important part of the environmental analysis and project approval processes.

Citizen participation can be divided into two types: the formal and what could be termed the informal citizen review processes. The formal process consists of fairly standard public hearings and written comments before government commissions and/or boards. The informal process consists of working with citizens in small, informal groups to design (or revise) a project which the citizens can support.

The informal review process is particularly important in San Francisco. San Francisco citizens have a long history of active involvement in government and planning decisions. Furthermore, the City's high density neighborhoods lend themselves to formation of relatively powerful neighborhood groups and coalitions of groups.

Because citizen activism in San Francisco is so important, frequently project sponsors use the informal process to discuss their projects with citywide and neighborhood groups and respond to their concerns before proposing a project for formal review by City agencies. While this process may seem onerous to some, it has many very beneficial aspects:

- o Citizens often suggest changes to projects which improve the project;
- o By incorporating changes requested by citizens, projects begin to generate support in the community; and
- o Existing City and neighborhood problems can sometimes be improved by considering them in project design.

In addition to the benefits listed above, the informal citizen review process yields one very important benefit; namely public support for the project. If a project can be planned to meet the needs of citizens, then the citizens will turn out to support the project in the formal citizen review. They will testify at hearings, lobby commissioners, and write letters of support for the project. Thus, while the informal citizen review process may take time; in the long run it will probably save time and money if the project is controversial, since if citizens mobilize against the project it will be difficult and time-consuming to get through the approval process.

This background provides the context for the citizen review process used in preparation of the Academy of Sciences Master Plan.

Academy of Sciences - Initial Review

As discussed above, San Franciscans are extremely concerned with preserving and improving Golden Gate Park. Therefore the Academy of Sciences realized that it would have to work closely with the community to develop a successful project. One of the first steps the Academy took was to select a public relations firm (McGuire-Barnes Inc.) to assist with community outreach. This firm had extensive background working with the community on planning projects and had worked with the Academy in the past.

After initial discussions on the project's environmental review, the City Planning Department proposed to give the project a Negative Declaration.

The Academy, to some people's surprise, rejected the City's proposal and asked that a full Environmental Impact Report be prepared for the project.

At first glance it may seem strange for a project proponent to reject a Negative Declaration (which would have found that the project had no significant environmental impact) in favor of a comprehensive review of the project. However, if the Negative Declaration had been issued it could have been challenged (and given the community's strong feelings on the park almost certainly would have been) and the project would have been delayed, or even rejected.

The Planning Commission agreed and recommended that a full EIR be prepared for the project. The Draft EIR (DEIR) was issued in September 1987. Below, environmental issues of concern to citizens are summarized.

Key Environmental Issues

There were four key environmental issues associated with the Academy of Sciences Master Plan project. They were:

- o Institutional expansion in the Park;
- o Shadowing of the Park;
- o Visual impacts of the building; and
- o Traffic and parking.

The institutional expansion issue centered on whether it was appropriate to increase the size of an institution in the Park. The shadowing issue was important because San Francisco has an ordinance which forbids construction of projects which will shadow any parkland. Therefore changes to the Academy structure could not create any additional shadowing. The visual impacts of the project were an issue because of the project's extremely sensitive natural setting. The transportation issues associated with the project centered on the impact of additional visitors to the Academy. Of particular concern were increased traffic congestion in the Park, spillover effects in surrounding neighborhoods, increased parking demand, and environmental impacts of motor vehicles in the park (air pollution, noise, and general intrusiveness).

Below, elements of the Citizen participation process with respect to transportation are discussed. It should be understood that similar efforts took place in the other areas of community concern.

EIR Transportation Analysis

The DEIR transportation analysis was relatively short, especially considering the high level of citizen interest.

The transportation analysis included in the project's DEIR consisted of the following:

Environmental Setting - Four pages describing the existing transportation conditions in the project area, including roadways, traffic volume, transit service (three lines), and parking.

Environmental Impacts - Nine pages describing the projected environmental impacts of the project, including construction traffic, a description of how project travel demand was estimated, intersection level-of-service analysis, transit impacts, parking impacts, and a discussion of cumulative traffic.

Mitigation Measures - Two pages of transportation impact mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor or by public agencies.

The City received numerous comments on the sufficiency of the transportation analysis, on particular transportation impacts, and on mitigation measures. Over twenty-four pages of comments and responses were prepared on the transportation analysis. The author of this case study became involved in the project as a commentator on the DEIR Traffic Analysis.

Effectively Responding to DEIR Comments

Once comments were received on the DEIR, the Academy's public relation firm went back to work meeting with groups and commentators to discuss comments and to help redesign the project to better address project impacts. This effort proved to be a key ingredient to the project's ultimate success.

While there is a long history of working with the community to improve project planning in San Francisco (what has been termed the informal review process above), in this case a significant additional effort was made by the project sponsor and its public relations firm. Everyone was contacted to discuss improving the project, even groups and persons who were firmly against the project. An honest effort was made to address community concerns and to develop broad-based support for the project. This is different from cases where project sponsors simply work with selected groups to obtain token community support. This effort cost more in terms of time and expense than less intensive community participation efforts, but ultimately led to a significantly better project and mitigation measures designed to effectively improve the Park's environment. Furthermore, in the long run this level of effort probably saved time and expense since the project was approved and not delayed by extensive appeals.²

Therefore, it is recommended that a significant effort be made to have effective citizen participation in the planning process. A framework for understanding citizen participation in the transportation planning process is discussed below.

Citizen Participants

The citizens taking an interest in this project could be loosely divided into four categories. Each category can be characterized by the strength of their feelings for or against the project, and by the ability to get them to change their mind on the project. The point of the citizen participation process is to address citizen concerns to improve the project (and convince citizens to support it) or to establish the fact that the project would cause more harm than good (and convince citizens to oppose it). Thus, the idea is to convince people to support/oppose a given project. The four categories are described below.

First, there were people throughout the Bay Area who felt that the project was excellent. This category included people who were either teachers (many of whom bring their classes to the

² The project was appealed to the City's Board of Permit Appeals, but the Board affirmed the project approval. The strength of the Project's Approval, based in part on the strong community support, led to the Project's Approval not being challenged in court.

Academy) or members of the Academy and many others. This group did not have a strong impact on the planning process because, as with many projects, people who basically agree with a project do not turn-out to strongly advocate it. Members of this group did attend and testify at public hearings, and provided a context for the project's importance, but were not a critical component in the project approval process.

The second category of citizen participants were people from throughout the City who were concerned about the environmental issues (transportation, institutional expansion, shadowing, design, and overall impact on the Park) but approached the project with an open mind. This group could be characterized as agreeing with the merits of the project, but opposed to the project because of concern over its negative environmental impacts. In order to support the project this group needed more information on the severity of impacts and on mitigation program's effectiveness.

The third category of citizen participants were similar to the second, but were more convinced that the project's impacts would be significant. In order to convince this group to support the project, additional measures to mitigate project impacts were required.

The fourth and final group were those who were firmly against the project. Members of this group had a basic disagreement with the project for one or several of the following reasons: environmental concerns, philosophy and political beliefs. Included in this group would be those who are called "NIMBYS" (not in my backyard). By this definition of groups, this group could not be convinced to support the project.

Transportation Concerns

It is interesting to view transportation issues raised by each of the four groups identified above. Again, the groups form a continuum, they all raise the same issues, but they view the impacts differently or question the objectivity of evaluation measures.

Those who unconditionally agree with the project basically take the position that the project is worth doing regardless of the impacts. In some cases, this group even challenges the

assertion that the project will have impacts. Because this group is already convinced about the project they do not actively take part in the citizen participation process. However, some will attend public hearings and testify in favor of the project.

The second group, those who approve of the project but are concerned about the impacts, realize that there are environmental problems with the project which need to be addressed. They feel that the impacts are important enough to block the project. They generally will question techniques used to evaluate project impacts. This group will comment on the environmental analysis with questions oriented towards achieving a better understanding of project impacts and analysis techniques.

The third group, those who feel that the project will cause significant problems which need to be mitigated, will almost certainly challenge the analysis techniques. They will argue that project impacts must be mitigated through an extensive improvement program. This group will ask for additional analyses, a more detailed study, evaluation of alternatives, and more information.

The fourth and final group, those totally opposed to the project, will adopt a shotgun approach. They will challenge everything about the analysis. They will also argue that the impacts are so significant that the project must be rejected.

Citizen Participation in the Transportation Planning Process

At this point it once again must be emphasized that this paper is presenting a particular view of the citizen participation process. Specifically, the citizen participation process is being used to modify the project in order to obtain approval for it. It is part of a complex negotiations process in which citizens act to protect the environment and project proponents attempt to design a project which will engender citizen support. In this context it is obvious that an effective citizen participation process will concentrate on the uncommitted (identified as groups 2 and 3 above) and attempt to sway them one way or the other.

An interesting strategy was applied in the Academy of Sciences Master Plan case to engender community support for the project. In terms of transportation, meetings with community groups led to several new mitigation measures proposed for the project. It was intended that these proposed mitigation measures be evaluated by a task force made-up of City staff members and project proponents.

At the suggestion of citizens, citizens were included on this task force. Placing citizens on the committee proved to have several advantages:

- o It gave the committee credibility with the outside community;
- o It provided the committee with a direct understanding of citizen concerns;
and
- o It helped foster a team approach to problem-solving.

The task force itself was not an unique idea; however, including citizens on it was. Furthermore, the task force approach was so successful that it was decided to continue it as a project mitigation measure. This continuing citizen involvement in the planning process was a key factor in obtaining the necessary citizen support for the project.

Below, specific task force activities, philosophy and actions are discussed in more detail. Finally, an assessment of the task force's advantages and disadvantages is provided.

The Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force

The Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force was made up of representatives from the Park's major institutions (i.e. the art museums, and the Academy), from the Recreation and Parks Department, from the City Planning Department, from the city transit authority (the Municipal Railway, or Muni), other activities located in the Park (e.g. Strybing Arboretum), and citizen representatives. Most of the citizen representatives were self-selected. People who commented on traffic issues were asked to participate along with representatives from neighborhoods surrounding the Park.

As discussed above, one of the first tasks addressed by the Task Force was to refine the transportation mitigation measures proposed for the Academy of Sciences Master Plan. At this point the project had not been approved and approval was uncertain based on the large number of comments and significant opposition from the community.

As part of the Response to Comments, the Academy had hired a transportation consultant to develop a detailed Transportation Demand Management Program. Results of this study were used by the Task Force to evaluate various project mitigation measures. Over a several month period the Task Force agreed on a series of programs which, they felt, would adequately mitigate the project's transportation impacts.

At this point, it is necessary to emphasize that many people participating in the transportation analysis realized that the project itself would probably have a small impact on traffic, but park traffic was growing for a variety of reasons, and this would have a significant impact on the Park's environment. Community groups wanted programs to minimize transportation problems regardless of their cause. The Academy did not want their Master Plan rejected because of growing transportation impacts. Thus, the Academy adopted a good neighbor type philosophy.

The good neighbor philosophy can be summarized as follows:

The future success of the Academy was closely linked to the Park. If the Park's environment was degraded, the Academy would suffer (it would become unattractive to visitors, and its programs would be limited). If the academy actively improved the Park's environment it would receive substantial direct and indirect benefits.

This good neighbor philosophy meant that the Academy was willing to take responsibility for improving the Park environment. This became a fundamental criteria for the Transportation Task Force. The Task Force ultimately developed a list of fairly standard transportation mitigation measures. These included:

- o Admission discounts for transit passengers;
- o Brochures encouraging and explaining transit access to the Park (and its institutions);
- o Customized bus stop signs and directions to the park;
- o Staff ridesharing programs;
- o Financial support for a shuttle bus service to be recommended by the Transportation Task Force; and
- o Continued administrative support to the golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force.

Once the mitigation program had been developed, the Academy's public relations consultant went out to community groups and explained its benefits. In some cases community members of the Task Force made presentations and explained why they felt the groups should support the project with the additional mitigation measures. Eventually, many community groups which were originally opposed to the project changed their positions based on the Academy's willingness to add additional mitigation measures.³

It is important to note that not all community groups were satisfied. Several groups continued to oppose the project throughout the review process.

During the early summer of 1988 project approval hearings were held before the City Commissions and Boards. In addition to the Planning Commission, the Recreation and Park Commission, and the County Board of Supervisors had to approve the project. At each hearing community group representatives and individuals presented their recommendations.

The Academy made a three part appeal for project approval at these hearings. These were:

³ It should be understood that transportation was not the only aspect of this project with which there was significant early opposition. Other impacts which were addressed using the same basic techniques (but not the task force concept) were shadowing, visual impacts, and the philosophy of institutional uses in the Park.

- o The Project was necessary; it would significantly improve the Academy, and it will be an excellent addition to the City's cultural and educational environment;
- o The Academy had made a significant effort to work with the Community to address problems with the Project and modified the Project to address community concerns (before and after comparisons were made to emphasize this point); and
- o The Academy accepted responsibility for working to improve the Park's environment beyond the impacts caused by the specific project. The Academy realized that they would be hurt by letting the Park be degraded.

The first two parts of the Academy's approval are relatively standard. The third part begins to break new ground, and will, therefore, be discussed in more detail below.

The Academy Master Plan project was approved by all the necessary Boards and Commissions. Support from community groups had a great deal to do with the approval. This support, in turn, was a direct result of the Academy's willingness to work with the community in changing the project and in taking responsibility for improving the Park's future.

Continuing Transportation Responsibility

Many citizen participation processes end after the project with which they are concerned is approved. This is a serious problem with the community participation process. There are two important reasons for the demise of participation: lack of administrative support and lack of interest among participants (from the community and from the project sponsor). In the case of the Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force both issues have been addressed. As part of the project's mitigation the Academy is required to provide administrative support while their Master Plan is implemented (at least six years), and because of the Task Force's success and future plans, interest remains high.

Since the project was approved the Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force has continued to meet monthly. The Task Force has assisted in implementation of the project's transportation mitigation measures and has provided a forum for discussing and taking actions to improve transportation conditions in the Park.

The Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force is an excellent means for including citizens in the transportation planning process and developing solutions to significant transportation problems. It has the following specific advantages:

- o It brings together representatives from all the major park institutions to discuss transportation programs. In many cases the ability to easily exchange information led to implementation of programs more easily, efficiently and quickly than would otherwise be possible. For example, at an early Task Force meeting the Academy of Sciences discussed its plans regarding new bicycle racks. One of the City's representatives had bike racks which they were not using and arrangements were made to transfer them to the Academy.
- o Task Force representatives who, initially, knew little about the complexities of transportation problems gradually came to understand how difficult problems are to solve (At first suggestions like, "*Why not build a huge parking lot?*" were proposed; now representatives are more sensitive to the impacts of these "simple" solutions.)
- o The Task Force has fostered a sense of common purpose. Everyone involved has begun to feel a personal responsibility for successfully solving the Park's transportation problems. The institutions understand that they will need to implement programs to improve transportation conditions before they will be allowed to begin improvement programs. Neighborhood groups understand that they must take responsibility for participating in decision-making and supporting proposed improvements, no small role in a city which relies on community involvement as heavy as San Francisco.

- o The Task Force provides a good resource for the institutions, the Park and neighborhood groups to obtain expert transportation advise. Representatives of the City's Planning Department and Transit Agency are members of the Task Force. Additionally, several Task Force members, the author included, have a significant amount of transportation planning experience.
- o The Task Force organization has served to strengthen the ability to obtain funding (and legitimacy) for specific improvement projects. For example, funding was obtained from a special city tourism fund to print and distribute the *Transit Guide to Golden Gate Park*.

The task force structure is strongly recommended to others seeking to solve difficult planning problems. Task forces are well suited to solving today's planning problems for several reasons:

1. They improve the likelihood and speed with which solutions can be implemented;
2. They increase the ability to develop and implement the comprehensive types of solutions necessary to solve problems; and
3. They serve to educate and inform the public on potential solutions to planning problems.

It is not enough to simply start a task force. In order to be successful it must have a clear purpose and be well organized. There are many excellent resources available on techniques for organizing task forces and using them to successfully accomplish tasks. Some of the factors which we have identified for success are discussed below.

Strong Common Purpose - The Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force's main purpose is accepted by all participants: to reduce transportation problems in the Park and

surrounding neighborhoods. While this purpose may sound unassailable, it was, at first, difficult to convince representatives of other park institutions that they had anything to gain through taking part in the Task Force and implementation of mitigation measures.

Regular Well Run Meetings - There is nothing which kills a task force more quickly than poorly run meetings. The Golden Gate Park Transportation Task Force receives administrative support (i.e. mailing agendas and minutes, and limited staff time for specific assignments) from the Academy of Sciences, but the meetings are very informal. Normally, one member acts as a facilitator at each meeting, and the others work together to develop a consensus for solving particular problems. The meeting format is generally the same from month to month: status reports are presented on particular projects; then more involved discussions are held on current needs; finally, actions are determined and responsibilities are assigned. This particular format works well for the Golden Gate Park Task Force, more formal procedures may be required for other groups.

Genuine Interest - Most participants in the Task Force are members because they are truly interested in seeing improvements to the Park's transportation conditions. This concern has proved the Task Force with the energy needed to be successful and the interest necessary to link several problems to a common solution.

Finally, it is interesting to discuss some of the innovative and comprehensive solutions the Task Force has developed.

One of the most interesting ideas to come out of the Task Force is to develop a shuttle bus service (to peripheral parking and/or City transit route stops) which adds to the Park experience. This is especially important because the Academy of Sciences is strongly oriented to natural history and the environment. This idea first surfaced over a year ago.

Since the idea was proposed, several shuttle services have been considered by the Task Force. Many were rejected due to their high cost. Recently it was suggested that there were funds available for an alternative fuel bus demonstration program. Obtaining those funds

would require writing grant proposals to private companies and public agencies. In order to increase the benefits of the project, it was suggested that the Academy coordinate the alternative fuel bus shuttle with an exhibit explaining the environmental impacts of automobile use and transportation in general. The alternative fuel bus would be part of the exhibit. This type of comprehensive problem solving is encouraged through the use of the Task Force approach.

A second example of success is the *Transit Guide to Golden Gate Park Brochure*. The Task Force proposed an initial design and worked with the Academy's design consultants to prepare a final layout. The brochure contains information on the major transit routes serving the Park and the Park's attractions. It is simple, attractive, inexpensive, and easy to use. This is in contrast to a larger brochure prepared for the Fisherman's Wharf area, which, while an excellent design, took several years to publish and was expensive to produce. The Task Force structure allowed members to make (relatively) quick decisions, use talents of Task Force members, and to obtain funding for the Park brochure quickly. Furthermore, as discussed above, the Task Force's legitimacy allowed the brochure to receive funding from the City's Hotel Tax Fund.

These two successes illustrate the key benefits of well organized task forces in encouraging effective citizen participation in transportation planning projects. The solutions were developed and fine tuned through interaction of a varied group of participants. Each Task Force member brings their expertise and experience together to help improve, speed-up, and find particular solutions. Furthermore, Task Force members become educated on the importance of seemingly small issues (such as the cost of parking) on solving larger transportation problems.

Finally, it should be noted that the Task Force was honored by the Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission in September 1988 for its efforts at improving transportation conditions. This award, along with the Task Force's other successes, has served as a strong incentive to keep the Task Force together.