

1st and 2nd Street Couplet FAQ's

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Q. Will the proposed roundabout at Flume/2nd/1st Streets affect access to businesses nearby?

A. No. All current driveways will remain accessible. There will be no restrictions to access around the proposed roundabout.

Q. What if the project isn't received well by the community after construction?

A. The one-way proposal for 1st and 2nd Streets is mostly just simple striping changes, which could be removed and changed back to their original state relatively easily. However, physical changes like pedestrian bulb-outs, the proposed roundabout at Flume, and other improvements would enhance safety in the downtown area and could be easily incorporated into the existing circulation layout (as it is now).

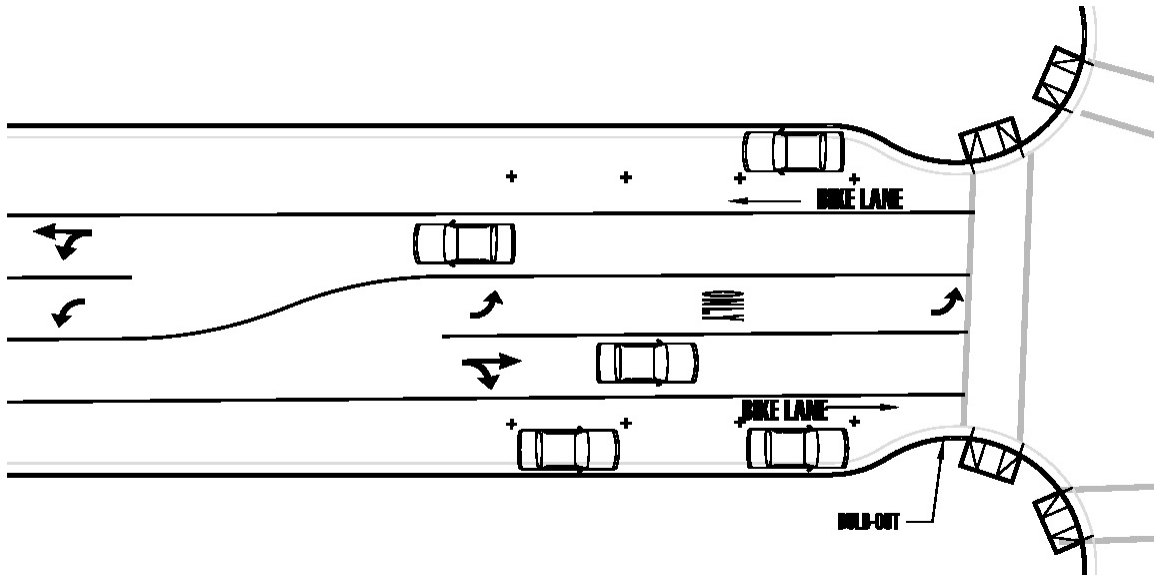
Q. How will the current parking meters work with the new layout?

A. The proposed project would include removal and replacement of existing meters with parking kiosks (smart meters) at mid-block locations that would be adaptable to any parking layout that is chosen. This would allow for a very dynamic and flexible parking plan. Other possible advantages could include tiered parking rates, credit card payment, and coupons for local businesses

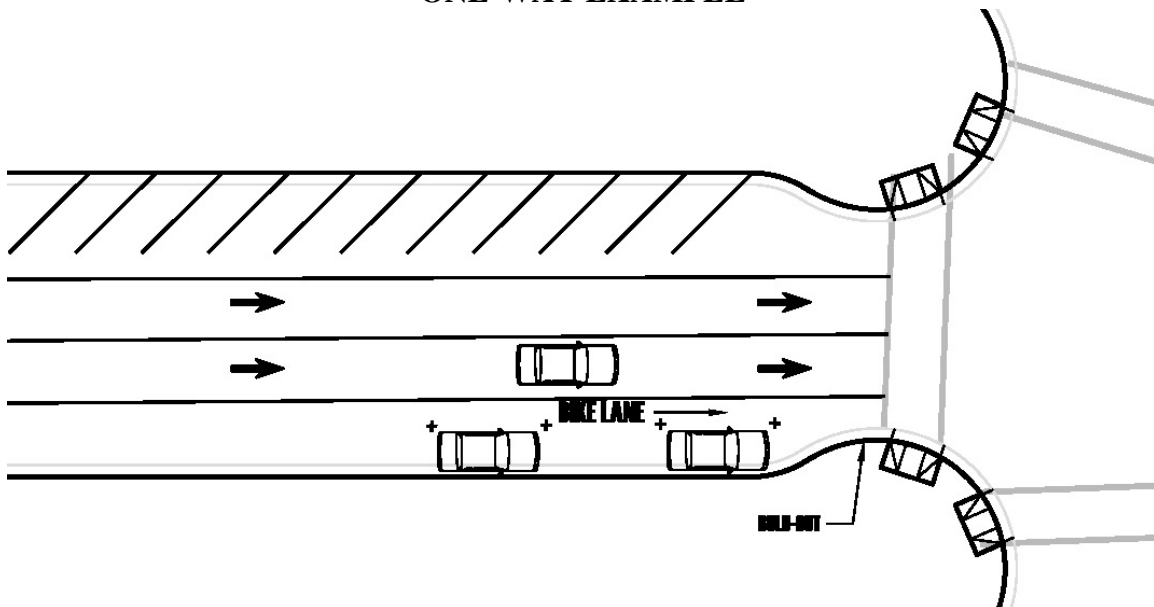
Q. Bulb-outs block bike lanes and push bike traffic into vehicle lanes, don't they?

A. Proposed bulb-outs will not interfere with the new bike lanes. New bike lanes maintain a dedicated 5-foot width through the intersections (see below).

TWO-WAY EXAMPLE



ONE-WAY EXAMPLE



Q. What is the proposed drop-off circle at 1st and Salem?

A. The proposed drop-off circle simply re-enforces its current function as a drop-off location. The ultimate plan is still very preliminary, and details will need to be worked out with Chico State University, Chico. The overall concept is to provide an area for the loading and unloading of passengers while still maintaining vehicle circulation. 1st Street west of Broadway will have a “driveway-like” feel to encourage pedestrian and cyclist activity. Also, major west-bound traffic from the east will be directed down Broadway and not down Salem.

Q. Loading and unloading zones were a problem for the two-lane scenario that was looked at a few years ago on Main and Broadway. Is this going to be a problem with this proposal?

A. Vehicle volumes on 2nd Street are much lower than Main and Broadway -- less than half-- and 2nd Street would function no differently than it does now when a delivery truck is blocking a lane. In fact, there would be more maneuvering room for bikes and vehicles to get around delivery trucks due to improved level of service at intersections, especially at Main and Broadway.

Q. Putting a roundabout close to Camelia bridge seems problematic. Aren't vehicle speeds an issue at that corner already?

A. Exactly! A great reason why traffic-calming features are needed there. The goal is to slow traffic before the turn using different traffic calming measures. Roundabouts are designed to travel comfortably at around 15-18 mph, which would create a safer situation than is currently there. Also, with the complexity of the intersection at Flume/1st/2nd Street, a roundabout is a perfect fit.

Q. Diagonal parking and bike lanes don't seem very safe when backing-up vehicles can't see behind an adjacent vehicle for oncoming bikes, right?

A. All proposed bike lanes are planned to be placed on the parallel parking side of the roadway, keeping bike traffic away from diagonal parking maneuvers.

Q. Why isn't back-in parking being looked at?

A. Due to the timing of the signals and what is called platooning of vehicles, Traffic Engineering analysis indicates that head-in parking works best in these situations. Platooning of vehicles means a group of vehicles that is released from a traffic signal and, for the most part, stays together as a pack. After the passing of a platoon of vehicles, a parked vehicle has ample time to back up out of a diagonal space before the next platoon of vehicles is released from the upstream traffic signal. The same is true for parking in a diagonal space; it is much easier to follow a vehicle parking head-in than waiting for the vehicle to maneuver into a back-in space.

Q. How many parking spaces are going to be added through diagonal parking?

A. Designs are still very preliminary, but on an average, approximately 6 to 8 spaces will be added to each block. We are estimating around 40 to 50 spaces being added in the downtown area.

Q. Will bike parking be affected?

A. Yes! Extra space that is created through diagonal parking will create many new opportunities for bike parking at bulbed corners and will also provide additional safety for the dismounting and mounting of bicycles. City staff is looking for as many opportunities and comments from the public regarding bicycle parking ideas as we can receive.

Q. Crossing 2nd Street during the Farmers Market is sometimes problematic. How will this help?

A. By minimizing traffic to one-way on 2nd and 1st Street, there will be many more open gaps in traffic to safely cross 2nd and 1st Streets, along with shortening the crossing time due to the corner bulbings.

Q. How can you reduce West 2nd Street to 3 lanes west of Salem and expect the same level of service?

A. As most drivers know, through traffic on W. 2nd Street tries to stay in the right-most lane to reduce the chance of getting stuck behind a vehicle trying to turn left on any of the side streets on W. 2nd Street. The 3-lane proposal can alleviate this by still having a dedicated left turn pocket for left turning vehicles so through traffic is not blocked. Also, major signal improvements and timing adjustments along 2nd Street allow for a much more efficient way of moving traffic.

Q. Why not convert 2nd Street to WB rather than EB

A. The most practical roadway to use would be 3rd Street, which is currently a one-way west bound roadway. Doing this presents some big questions.

1. There is no clear termination point on the westerly end of town, as well as having to put one-way traffic through residential neighborhoods and in areas that do not need the additional capacity that a one-way couplet provides. Eastbound would likely defer to 3rd Street. Between Walnut and Salem, 3rd Street is primarily residential with yielded intersections. Although these intersections can be changed to allow dominate motion of traffic, these volumes of traffic on a residential street near the college could pose issues, as well as residential neighborhood concern and pushback. Also, the City has recently been contacted by residents on 3rd Street. stating their unhappiness with the traffic patterns on their street. This alternative

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also creates significant bus circulation issues with the current Downtown Transit Center.

2. Eastbound traffic flows on 3rd Street east of Main Street would have two options to get over Big Chico Creek. The natural movement for a vehicle heading eastbound on 3rd Street would be to continue eastbound to the Pine/Cypress Couplet, which is a poor connection for vehicles intending to head north over Big Chico Creek.

The other option would be to head north on Flume or Orient. Flume is partially residential, but could accommodate the volumes. However, Orient would result in larger volumes within residential area as well as create additional conflicts at the entrance of Annie's Glenn Bike Path.

3. The proposed roundabout at 1st/Flume/2nd Street is a natural directional splitter, and the major vehicular conflicts are completely separated. If the couplet were switched to Westbound 2nd Street/East bound on 1st Street, the two major movements of traffic flow would be in direct conflict and the roundabout would suffer from a very poor level of service.

Q. Where did this project come from?

A. In 2008, the City Council approved and allocated funding for a project to incorporate bike lanes on 2nd Street (Project # 50126). Implementation of the 2nd Street Bike Lane Project began with the shifting of the bus storage at the Chico Downtown Transit Center from its original location back to a parking “pocket” which allowed for existing lane widths and future bike lanes to be maintained unobstructed by bus parking. The Bike Lane project was briefly delayed while a solution was found for the section of 2nd Street between Salem and Flume Streets, where staff needed to retain parking, the sidewalk, and accommodate the bike lane. Further, considering the recent bicycle connections made with the undercrossings at Annie’s Glenn and Manzanita, the last segment of the greater East/West connection for bicycles and pedestrians is the section of 2nd Street between Salem and Flume Street. Thus, the concept of the Couplet was really inspired by the existing project to provide bicycle facilities from State Route 32 to Bidwell Park. The 1st & 2nd Street Couplet project offers an opportunity to improve many existing conditions in the downtown that could otherwise hinder bicycle connections.

Q. Is this proposed project part of an overall plan?

A. There is a comprehensive plan for the Downtown. The Downtown Access Plan was prepared in 2006 and has been implemented steadily since its inception. The Bike Lane project incorporates numerous recommendations contained within Access Plan, specifically as it relates to the improving bicycle circulation and provision of east / west movement from CSU Chico through the Downtown along 2nd Street. It also provides for better and safer walkability by providing corner bulbing which reduces crossing distances and slows vehicle speeds. By providing better bike facilities bicyclist will be less likely to use sidewalks, thus making is safer

for pedestrians. Additional parking is added through diagonal parking and a parking management method is proposed to be employed through smart meters and a tiered rate parking approach. In addition, better viability is brought to under-utilized portions of the downtown which will enhance revitalization.

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