



UPTOWN REGIONAL BIKE CORRIDOR PROJECT
SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #1
December 5, 2012 □ 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Santa Fe Room, Balboa Park Club
2144 Pan American Road West, San Diego, 92101

S U M M A R Y R E P O R T

INTRODUCTION

On December 5th, 2012 the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) held the first Community Advisory Group (Advisory Group) meeting for the Uptown Regional Bike Corridor Project. The meeting was held in the Santa Fe Room of the Balboa Park Club, located at 2144 Pan American Road West, San Diego, 92101. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- introduce the project team and community advisory group members
- provide a project overview , including the regional planning context, project area, process and schedule
- present project’s draft visions and goals
- facilitate discussion regarding participants’ visions, issues and opportunities for the study area
- summarize the themes and findings from the workshop and next steps

Community Advisory Group Background

The Uptown Regional Bike Corridor Community Advisory Group (Advisory Group) was formed to provide input on issues, opportunities, and alternatives to share with the larger community. The Advisory Group will meet, to provide input to the SANDAG design team, at each stage of the design phase – kick off, existing conditions analysis, alternative design analysis, and preferred design. Throughout the design phase, Advisory Group members will help disseminate information and collect input from their representative organizations and other community members.

Established community groups, such as town councils, resident groups, business associations, and non-profit groups, were asked to nominate a person to participate on the Advisory Group. The individuals nominated by the community groups invited to participate were notified of the meeting date, time and location via email a month in advance of the meeting date. The meeting agenda was distributed the Friday before the meeting date.

All Advisory Group meetings are open to all community members. Members are encouraged to forward meeting dates and agendas to their respective community groups and distribute information in ways proven to be effective within their community.

Materials presented at Advisory Group meetings, information collected from community members, and future meeting dates will be posted on www.keepsandiegomoving.com/UptownBike.

Meeting Format

Approximately 49 community members attended the first Advisory Group meeting. Of those attending, approximately 30 were advisory group members, representing 30 of the 54 community groups invited to participate. Meeting participants received an agenda, the Advisory Group charter, a list of the Advisory Group members, a

project information sheet, a map of the Uptown bike corridors, and a comment card for submitting written comments from the meeting. Advisory Group members were seated around a large u-shaped table. Others in attendance were seated along either side of the room.

City of San Diego City Council President, Todd Gloria, provided welcoming remarks and encouraged participants' active involvement in the project advisory group and in the broader planning process.

Coleen Clementson, Principal Planner of SANDAG, served as workshop facilitator. Ms. Clementson introduced the SANDAG project team, City of San Diego staff, consultant team, advisory group members, and reviewed the meeting agenda. Beth Robrahn, Active Transportation Planner of SANDAG reviewed the regional planning documents that provide the framework for the project, Bicycle Early Action Program, highlighted the two projects currently in the design phase, detailed the phases of the Uptown Corridor Project, described the collaborative design process and the role of the Advisory Group as a public forum for the wide range of community interests in the project area.

Ms. Clementson then facilitated discussion with the Advisory Group members and clarified questions regarding the planning process and the role of the Advisory Group.

Ms. Robrahn continued the presentation by describing the design context for the project, including helping regular, everyday people feel comfortable riding their bicycle for everyday trips. She will also explained that the project aims to design and implement facilities that balance the needs of all users - people walking, people biking and people driving and promote great streets, applying the latest in best practices and innovation. Additionally, she emphasized that the projects will build on related planning efforts in the project area, including the ongoing community plan updates, supporting implementation of the community's vision. Ms. Robrahn finished with an overview of the draft goals of the project based on conversations with many community members over the last few months:

- Increase choices for getting around
- Create an exceptional bicycling experience
- Build on and support community efforts
- Enhance community identity
- Strengthen economic development

Ms. Clementson then asked the Advisory Group members to provide their input on the draft goals and their vision for improving how people get around their communities and how the project can help their communities.

Ms. Clementson, then introduced Seth Torma, Senior Transportation Planner of KOA Corporation, who provided an overview of the issues and opportunities based on the early outreach effort with the community and existing studies, including the Uptown Community Plan Update Existing Conditions. These sources express need for the distinct communities within the project area to be connected through safe, convenient, comfortable and direct bike and pedestrian connections.

Chris Kluth, Senior Active Transportation Planner of SANDAG, then introduced various examples of best practices in facilities design, definition of each bicycle facility type, and statistical data of benefits of currently operating facilities in Long Beach, California.

Ms. Clementson facilitated the final discussion and question and answer session with the participants. In closing, Ms. Robrahn thanked participants for attending the meeting and encouraged them to inform their respective group members about the project and encouraged their ongoing involvement.

During the meeting discussion, Andy Pendoley of MIG recorded participants' comments on a large wall graphic at the front of the room—a photo-reduced image of the wallgraphic is included in this report as Appendix A. Additionally, many participants submitted written comment cards before leaving the meeting, which are available to view or download on the project website. The following sections represent a summary of the comments recorded on the wallgraphic and received on comment cards and by email to the project manager.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Project Overview

Participants asked general questions regarding the regional planning context, project framework and multi-agencies coordination, and project team members answered questions during the meeting (summarized in italics.)

- What is the time frame to construct the project?
 - SANDAG anticipates construction to be done in 2 years.
- Explain the Regional Bike Plan routes
 - There is significant overlap between the Regional Bike Plan and the City of San Diego Bike Plan, including Bayshore Bikeway, Inland Rail and others. Within the Regional Bike Plan some projects were identified as priority projects and the Uptown Corridor project includes several of the priority projects.
- Is this project limited to the routes drawn on the map or can that be changed?
 - The routes on the map indicate the corridor. The final routes will emerge from the analysis, so the facilities might be designed on other streets within the project area.
- Where is the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) involved in this process?
 - The SANDAG project team plans to work closely with MTS.
- Is there coordination with Community Plan Updates?
 - City staff engaged in the process. They are attending this meeting and they will be members of the Technical Advisory Group.

Vision & Goals

Participants provided input about their vision and goals for the project and the communities within the project area. The general ideas and themes are summarized below.

- The project should improve connectivity among the various communities, land uses (residential/employment/recreation,) and destinations along the routes
- Improve safety by:
 - sharing the roadways among all users: pedestrians, bicycles, and cars;
 - providing separated facilities to enable all users to have safe interactions; and
 - resolving traffic issues, especially in highly congested areas.
- Coordinate planning and design to balance the needs of all groups:
 - Community services;
 - Business Districts;
 - Amenities;
 - Parks, especially Balboa Park; and
 - Neighborhoods
- Support multi-modal efforts
- Provide connectivity to trolley stations such as Old Town and Washington Street
- Avoid creating or increasing congestion
- Some members thought lane closures should be avoided; other members supported lane closures.
- Loss of parking was stressed by some members as a significant concern to businesses. Specific areas of concern were Middletown and along Washington Street.
- Promote desirable urban design by making the project visible, applying best practices and a holistic approach by incorporating:
 - visually interesting features, such as art;
 - innovative and sustainable design
 - interesting materials and green treatments
- Link the project to businesses and economic initiatives
 - Make it good for business
- Expand public outreach and education about the project to the broader community
- Enhance supportive amenities
 - bike parking
 - facilities (i.e.: storage stations)
- Create beautiful places by
 - considering the local context of the project
 - make project work for the community
- Expand Inter-Agency coordination
 - enhance traffic flow and safety;
 - expand bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure; and
 - improve transit access and options
- Engage local advocates and experts that can provide a new perspective and enrich the project
 - San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
 - Walk San Diego

Opportunities and issues

Participants provided input about opportunities and issues related to the project and the communities within the project area. The general ideas and themes are summarized below.

Opportunities

- Emphasize beautiful facilities
- Meet pedestrian and ADA design needs
- Coordinate with future Caltrans projects
- Promote multi-modal approach and strengthen connections with:
 - trolley and rail stations
 - planned BRT projects
 - integrate with pedestrian plan
- Promote facilities that are easy to maintain and cost-effective for:
 - traffic calming treatments
 - reduce cut through traffic
- Tailored amenities and facilities:
 - provide storage facilities
 - improve lighting for night riders and pedestrians
 - ground level lightening to avoid light pollution
 - create rest stops along challenging routes
- Provide direct connections through downtown:
 - core Downtown area
 - Little Italy
 - East Village
 - Cortez Hill
- Circulation and street directions:
 - Robinson:
 - consider one way circulation
 - restricting truck access
 - address access to SR-163
 - 4th and 5th consider converting one-way couplet to two-way circulation
 - Focus on Adams, which cyclists already use, instead of Howard Avenue or Texas
 - Richmond:
 - consider one way circulation (eastbound) to connect Uptown with Downtown via Little Italy (Curlew, State St)
 - Presidio Drive,
 - traffic could be changed to a one-way direction (preferably going uphill) providing a reasonable corridor from Old Town Transit center into Uptown
 - Bachman Place:
 - Widen road at upper length (?) (parking structure & up)
 - Install bike lift/rest points
- Add in nodes and destinations that further justify corridor choices.

- Look at projected growth corridors from plan updates and take further ridership into consideration.
- Enforce traffic laws and lawful behavior - both people driving and those bicycling.
- Train traffic enforcement personnel, cops and judges, about rights and responsibilities when bicycling.
- Evaluation – do counts before and after. Count numbers, count crashes, measure efficiency (time from place to place).
- Bicycle corral locations should be considered in the street design preferably located out of the standard sidewalk area and located in bulb-outs, islands, parking spaces or some other location

Issues

- Address street issues:
 - narrow streets
 - truck deliveries within the business districts
 - potential conflicts with cars
- Account for business district needs:
 - truck deliveries
 - parking
- Upkeep and maintenance of this project
- SANDAG should illustrate alternatives for bike paths and traffic calming with better pictures showing and describing what other cities are doing for bus, automobile, bicycle and pedestrian movement.
- Illustrate and provide data regarding how creating great streets with traffic calming can provide pedestrian safety, create new businesses and help existing businesses thrive with a pleasant pedestrian experience.
- Describe in more detail what great streets are.
- Try to get input from the committee about the use of stop signs as a means of creating pedestrian safety and slowing down traffic. Although stop signs can help a pedestrian to cross a street, there are other issues such as greater pollution, problems with mass transit, gas usage, bicycle movement and false sense of security for that pedestrian..
- Although traffic circles in certain locations can be helpful, there are also individuals that feel the cost is prohibitive and should never be considered. There are many designs for traffic circles and they come in all sizes and cost and they should be discussed in more detail; they are not appropriate for 4th and 5th between Elm and Thorn but could be considered in other locations.
- As a method of pedestrian crossings on two-way streets, pedestrian islands could be a possibility on two way and 4 lane streets. The islands provide mid-street safety areas.
- Comment on Department of Transportation objectives and requirements.
- Current bike lane on San Diego @ Hortensia Street ends and cyclist/car conflicts are a problem.
- Robinson is not a great E/W choice through Hillcrest; neither University nor Washington are perfect, both have constraints
- Provide data regarding:

- reduction in number of car trips when protected bikeways are introduced
- impact to businesses with introduction of protected bike bikeways
- decrease in road maintenance costs if number of car trips decrease.

Technical Approach

Participants provided input on the technical approach for the project. The general ideas and themes are summarized below.

- Pursue advanced design standards
- Collect business improvement data
- Integrate signage and way finding
- Learn from failed projects to avoid those mistakes
- Provide case studies
 - Before and after
 - Designs and trade-offs
 - Study pedestrian and bicycle facilities safety conflicts

Outreach and Communications

Participants indicated their preferred means for receiving information and communications about the project was by email.

Next Steps

Project team members indicated that electronic material including project information sheet, power point presentation and comment cards will be provided to the Advisory Group members via email for re-distribution among their association members. A website for the project will be operational in the near future. The next meeting would be scheduled for late January or February 2013 to present and discuss the existing conditions and begin to discuss ideas related to facility design.

Appendix A
 Wallgraphic (photo-reduced)



