

**COASTAL RAIL TRAIL
Project Working Group Meeting
October 23, 2013**

Members in Attendance

Robert Clossin (on behalf of Todd Pittman), UCSD
John Keating, Penasquitos Planning Board
Kathy Keehan (on behalf of Andy Hanshaw), San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
Debby Knight, Friends of Rose Canyon
Janay Kruger, University Community Planning Group
Peter Krysl, University Community Planning Group
Joe LaCava, La Jolla Community Planning Association
Margaret Schmidt, Clairemont Community Planning Group
Jim Stone, Walk San Diego
Karin Zirk, Friends of Rose Creek

City and Agency Staff/Consultants in Attendance

City Staff

Abi Palaseyed, City of San Diego
Nitsuh Aberra, City of San Diego
Greg Parkington, City of San Diego

Agency Staff

Chris Carterette, SANDAG
Chris Kluth, SANDAG

Consultants

Pete Ritchey, Nasland Engineering
Larry Thornburgh, Nasland Engineering
Mike Singleton, KTU+A
Mark Carpenter, KTU+A
Dick Rol, AECOM
Kristen Byrne, MJE Marketing Services

1. Call to Order

Abi Palasayed called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

2. Meeting Overview and Administrative Items

Abi reviewed the topics to be covered at the meeting and the input that we are hoping to obtain. Janay Kruger indicated that a lot of members of the community were here tonight and she thinks we should allot more time to public comment.

3. Review Project Goals/Benefits

Chris Carterette from SANDAG provided a review of the goals and benefits of the Coastal Rail Trail project so that Project Working Group members could keep the goals in mind as they are commenting. The overall goal is to create bicycle facilities that attract people to bicycling as a transportation choice. The way to do this is to create lower stress bicycle facilities (less traffic) that make a larger number of people comfortable with bicycling.

4. Potential Alignments and Facility Types

Larry Thornburgh from Nasland Engineering gave a presentation of the alternatives under consideration and the facility types that would be used along each route. The alternatives remaining under consideration are:

- Alternative 1: Gilman Drive to North Torrey Pines Road to John Hopkins Drive to Sorrento Valley Road
- Alternative 2: Gilman Drive to Caltrans I-5 segment to Sorrento Valley Road
- Alternative 4: La Jolla Colony Road to Palmilla Drive to Lebon Drive to Caltrans I-5 segment to Sorrento Valley Road
- Alternative 5: La Jolla Colony Road to Palmilla Drive to Lebon Drive to Roselle Canyon to Roselle Street to Sorrento Valley Road
- Alternative 6: Rose Canyon south to Regents Road to Caltrans I-5 segment to Sorrento Valley Road
- Alternative 7: : Rose Canyon south to Regents Road to Roselle Canyon to Roselle Street to Sorrento Valley Road

He also reviewed the Baseline alternative, which was the alternative that resulted from the prior study. This alternative is only included for comparison purposes.

5. Evaluation Matrix

Mark Carpenter from KTU+A reviewed the evaluation matrix and how all of the remaining alternatives scored based on the scoring criteria. He reviewed how each alternative did in each category (user experience, connectivity, safety, environmental, community and costs) as well as the overall score. The overall average score of the alternatives is as follows:

- Alternative 1: 1.96
- Alternative 2: 3.07
- Alternative 4: 2.20
- Alternative 5: 2.46
- Alternative 6: 2.32
- Alternative 7: 2.42

6. Discuss Alternative Alignments to Move Forward

The meeting was opened up to comments from Project Working Group members and members of the public. The following comments were received (comments from PWG members include the name of the commenter).

Q: (Debby Knight) Did you include the Caltrans Class 1 facility in this evaluation?
A: Yes, it was included.

Q: (Peter Krysl) Did you take into account the Regents Road Bridge, which is in the City plan for 2017? You will have trouble getting permission from the City to construct anything on

Regents Road, given that the bridge is approved. Some of these proposed classes of bike facilities might not be viable on Regents Road.

C: (Janay Kruger) There is a proposal in the next couple of years to widen Eastgate Mall. You might not be able to get right of way. There are a lot of constraints on Sorrento Valley Road, like wetlands.

A: The proposal is to use an old road that is already paved.

Q: (Debby Knight) For a cycle track, do you have both directions on one side of the street?

A: There are two versions, but most of the cycle track provided is one way on each side of the street.

C: (Janay Kruger) Most of the people here tonight live in the community and would be using this facility. Their input should be of great value to you.

Q: Will you ultimately get down to just one alignment?

A: Ultimately yes, but not now. Tonight we are trying to narrow down the alternatives to share at the next public workshop and study further in environmental review. CEQA and NEPA require that a reasonable number of alternatives be reviewed, though does not specify how many. All feasible alternatives should be looked at in more detail, and once more information on issues and opportunities is fully known, then narrowing it down to a community preferred alternative with a few back up alternatives is probably the best approach.

Q: What is the purpose of alternatives vs. the Baseline? Have same criteria been used to evaluate the Baseline as the alternatives?

A: The Baseline is the alternative that was recommended in a prior process. It is here for comparison purposes only, and it was evaluated with the same scoring criteria as the rest of the alternatives.

Q: (Joe La Cava) Please clarify that you mean one Coastal Rail Trail will be built, but that doesn't preclude other bike facilities from being constructed.

A: Yes, that is correct.

C: My concern is that you also talk about bike lanes as totally protected, but on SR 56 there was a rider that got hit by a car.

C: I ride with the San Diego bike club and we are one of a few bike clubs that ride in this area. Bike clubs will not deviate from their original path. Going through HOA land doesn't make any sense because there is no way to get to I-5.

A: We understand that not all cyclists will use this facility. They will still use roads and other routes, but this provides a regional connection.

C: (Peter Krysl) At one point we had UCSD listed as its own destination because it is such a big destination.

C: The weight for the ability to connect should be higher. It has a weight of 2.0 just like everything else.

A: 2.0 was the maximum weighting that the PWG decided to allow.

C: (Karen Zirk) We are trying to balance the factors of local connectivity with a shorter commuting distance. It took us a while to come up with all of these things, so we can balance interests.

Q: How new is the connectivity data you looked at?

A: We used an existing data set, but it was not confirmed on the ground.

Q: Did you consider bike facilities proposed on UCSD campus itself?

A: Yes, except in cases where we are utilizing UCSD paths as part of the route.

Q: (Kathy Keehan) Alternatives 4 and 5 cross La Jolla Village Drive. Why don't they have a negative score for high volume intersections?

A: La Jolla Village Drive scored better than some other intersections, such as Genesee and Torrey Pines Road.

Q: I understand that you didn't take the Regents Road Bridge into consideration. What about future improvements for other streets?

A: All were considered as existing conditions.

Q: Are you assuming that the project would have to pay for lights?

A: Yes, it is assumed that the project would incorporate lighting when needed, unless this is not wanted by the community and if there are environmental impacts associated with this lighting.

Q: Are these really safety issues, or are they cost issues? Whatever route is constructed it will be made safe, it's just a matter of how much it would cost to fix.

A: Some of the criteria could be both safety and cost issues (i.e., lights) but for others it is not, such as number of driveways or intersections to cross.

Q: Did you think about safety going through the HOA area? What about pedestrians and people who walk their dogs? You're thinking only about bikers, not the other people.

C: A bike route going through the HOA park is not well-supported.

Q: Did the environmental assessment include disturbed vs. native habitat? Did you think about what could be mitigated vs. unmitigated?

A: We have not considered mitigation at this point, just potential impacts. We just considered native habitat, not the quality of habitat. These issues would receive more in-depth study during the CEQA/NEPA environmental review.

C: (Debby Knight) It is a broad, random assumption that more pavement improves water quality and resolve sedimentation issues.

A: The improvements that are required by the RWQCB would result in an improvement. This is required by environmental laws and regional standards.

Q: Did you consider that the HOA residential areas use on street parking to meet the parking requirements for some of these communities?

A: This was not considered at this level of analysis, but it will be as the analysis gets more detailed.

Q: On alternatives 4 and 5, were they scored based on the route going through the HOA park or on the road?

A: It was scored based on the most impactful condition, which would be going through the park.

Q: So you have not yet eliminated going through the HOA improved park?

A: Not at this stage, but it could be taken off the table and we could just move forward with the road option.

C: The user experience going through the park is only considering path users, not park users, where we let kids run free.

Q: Are you saying that the visibility of the trail is a positive or negative?

A: We counted it as a positive, to make it known to the community that the facility would be available.

Q: Was the baseline cost indexed for inflation or was it just the original number?

A: We used the original, so the cost of the baseline alternative could be higher.

Q: (Joe La Cava) Did alternative 2 include the cost for the Caltrans I-5 segment?

A: We assumed some cost because the Caltrans project is over budget and may or may not move forward. We assumed \$10 million for those alternatives that utilize the I-5 segment. Even if the project moves forward, it is still a publicly funded project and a cost should be assessed.

Q: (Robert Clossin – UCSD) Did you include a Class 1 facility south of Voigt Drive?

A: No, it is Class 1 only from Voigt Drive to Sorrento Valley Road on the Caltrans segment.

Q: (Robert Clossin – UCSD) Is Gilman Drive factored in?

A: Yes, but not the Gilman Bridge, because that is happening regardless of the project.

C: (Peter Krysl) It may be too arbitrary to assume that a future condition could affect three routes, but you didn't take future conditions into account for others (i.e., Regents Road). If Regents actually does handle as much traffic as it is proposed to do, building a facility there could be much more expensive. You might have to design that route with three lanes of traffic in each direction. Then you are out of space.

Q: (Debby Knight) What are you recommending moving forward?

A: The city is recommending that alternatives 2, 5 and 7 move forward to the public workshop and for further environmental review.

C: (Debby Knight) Alternatives 5 and 7 miss UCSD entirely.

Q: (Karen Zirk) Since alternatives 4 and 7 are so close, are you suggesting that all 4 of those alternatives move forward along with alternative 2?

Q: You dumped a lot of information into Excel ... Did you have people checking the math to make sure that there were no errors made? I want to make sure that it is accurate for a decision this big.

Q: Does the Genesee project include a bikeway from Sorrento Valley Road all the way to Genesee? Has anyone looked at using Regents Road straight to Genesee?

C: (John Keating) The choice we have to make is the Caltrans I-5 segment vs. Roselle Canyon.

C: I want to confirm that the route through the HOA-owned park will be eliminated.

A: Yes, based on comments we've received tonight, this will be eliminated and we will only consider Palmilla Drive.

C: (Debby Knight) I am extremely opposed to alternative 7. It goes through both Rose and Roselle Canyons. I also don't like alternative 5 for its impacts to Roselle Canyon. There is no benefit to that over the Caltrans I-5 route. I would like to eliminate alternative 7.

C: I'm concerned with any options that have a bike path through any of our parks (HOA or open space). I'm concerned about environmental destruction and the dangers that this road will pose to kids, dog walkers, etc. Alternative 2 speaks for itself. The matrix was constructed to bring alternatives together to reduce the spread, and it minimizes the distance between the best route and others.

Q: (Joe La Cava) What type of facility did you assume would be used in Rose canyon?

A: We assumed a Class 1 pedestrian/bike path, not separated.

C: (Joe La Cava) I'm inclined to support alternative 2 as preferred, but carry alternatives 4 and 5 forward for further analysis.

C: I have small kids, and I am concerned with alternatives that go through neighborhoods. We use Palmilla to walk to school and walk in Rose Canyon. It's clear that alternative 2 is the way to go.

C: If it's in the canyon, it will have much higher use and will be a world class facility. There will be much lower ridership for a facility on busy streets.

C: Bicycles are still a type of traffic that can be dangerous to small children.

C: Bicyclists do not like to stop at lights so they trend toward lower traffic areas and run red lights.

C: There is no value added for the most direct route. That should be in there. Going up Gilman is a route that a lot of people walk. If a Class 1 facility went up there it might benefit pedestrians, too.

A: A cycle track is proposed for Gilman, which does not allow for pedestrians. A Class 1 multi-use path does allow pedestrian use, but pedestrian improvements are not included in the segment on Gilman.

Q: Do you have a number of new users that are anticipated on the facility? You should consider this number compared to the number of impacted homeowners along the route.

C: (Peter Krysl) You should consider alternatives that best separate pedestrians and bicyclists.

C: (Kathy Keehan) I would support full analysis on alternatives 2, 5 and 7 without a preferred alternative. This gives you a lot of options to pull together a hybrid route at a later time. We need to remember the goals of the project – it will be used for recreation and commuting. An analysis that considers the Caltrans I-5 segment and Roselle Canyon as equal experiences is flawed. We need pedestrian access on Gilman. As you create spaces for bikes, it normalizes the behavior of cyclists. There seems to be a dynamic here tonight of cyclists vs. the community, but the idea is that this facility will benefit the community – we want to create a facility that encourages more people to ride.

C: (Joe La Cava) When you take alternative 2 forward you should include fixes to the intersections as part of the cost. Alternatives considered in Rose Canyon have to include separation of pedestrians and cyclists.

C: (Karen Zirk) I have a different perspective of a route along Palmilla. There is a potential that adding a bike facility could introduce traffic calming along Palmilla to slow traffic. A bike facility could provide an opportunity to revise the street as a community street rather than a shortcut to I-5.

Q: What is going to happen with the baseline alternative?

A: Based on the evaluation, it will be dropped from any further consideration.

C: (Debby Knight) I strongly support alternative 2 and would like to make that the preferred alternative. I would not support alternative 5 or 7. I'm not clear why alternative 4 is not in here when 5 and 7 are? I would like to see alternative 7 dropped. If you're going to do alternative 5, why not also do alternative 4? We will ultimately oppose alternative 5, but if you carry forward 4 and 5 you will have options.

C: (John Keating) am opposed to designating a preferred alternative. I want Roselle Canyon and Rose Canyon considered because of the easier grade and better user experience.

7. Public Comment

No additional public comment was offered.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.