

BIRD ROCK NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, PARKING AND TRAFFIC CALMING CHARRETTE

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

FINAL REPORT
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Sponsored by:

City of San Diego

Prepared by:

DAN BURDEN

WALKABLE COMMUNITIES, INC.

Bird Rock Traffic Management, Parking and Traffic Calming Charrette Report

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This report was prepared for the City of San Diego and the Bird Rock Neighborhood by Walkable Communities, Inc. Special thanks is provided to the 18-member volunteer group, Bird Rock Traffic Task Force, for significant background and developmental work. Brad Raulston and Leslie Puneli, with the Co-Planning Corporation, were especially helpful to the community for the many hours of work and coordination they provided in conducting workshops, marketing each event and preparing study documents before the Walkable Communities, Inc. team arrived. Walkable Communities provides a website at www.walkable.org. Details on this plan and referenced studies can be obtained through Siavash Pazgardi, P.E. Senior Traffic Engineer, City of San Diego. Contact: Spazargadi@Sandiego.gov

**Bird Rock Community Workshops --
Building a Vision for Sustainability and Livability**

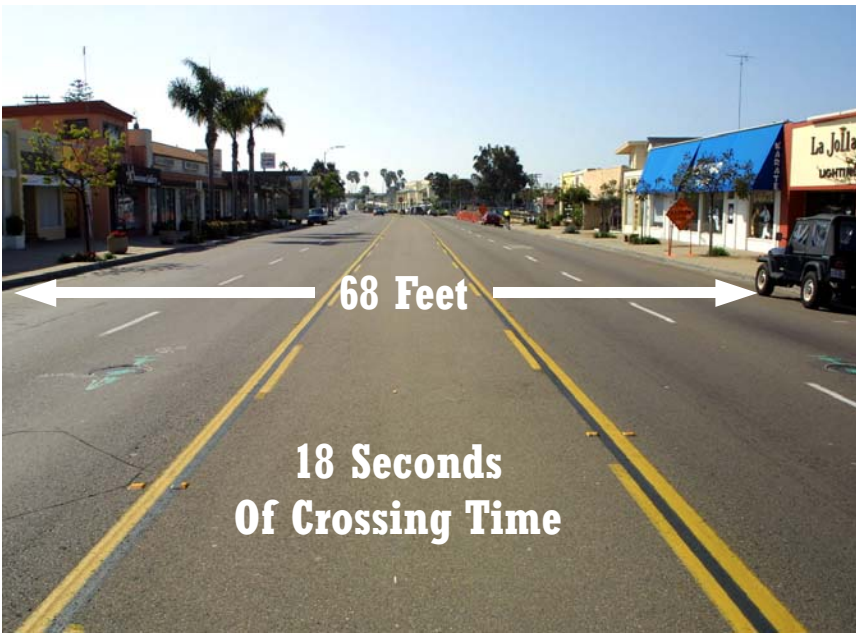


COLIMA

COLIMA

The Master Plan Overview on Page 11, and this rendering, were graciously contributed by architect Manuel Oncina and landscape architect Jim Neri.

Residents identified dozens of issues, problems and needs that will be addressed. Solutions to these problems will determine traffic speeds and volumes, and establish essential quality of life elements. Under this plan Bird Rock will manage its traffic through focus on a village center that meets many daily needs. Some auto trips will be converted to walking and bicycling.



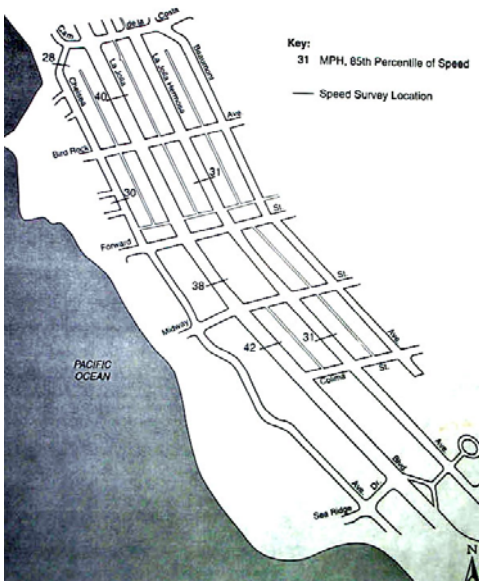
La Jolla Boulevard — 68 Feet Wide, 38-42 mph, 22,000 vehicles per day
Bird Rock's first priority for resolving its problems.

Traffic Speed	85th percentile
La Jolla Boulevard	40 mph (north)
	38 mph (central)
	42 mph (south)
La Jolla Hermosa Chelsea	31 mph (most areas)
	30 mph (central area)
	28 mph (near park)

INTRODUCTION

Today the five-lane boulevard moves 20,000 vehicles per day. This number is projected to grow to 23,000 at community build out. Many people speed as they pass through Bird Rock. This situation not only creates risk, it creates noise, vibration and detracts from the ambiance of shopping, walking or visiting businesses in the area. Lack of a village identity, erosion of a well defined sense of place and public space along La Jolla Boulevard, recent traffic injuries, difficulty getting across the wide boulevard by foot and even by car, and the inability of the village center to sustain long term businesses ... all are impacting neighborhood quality of life.

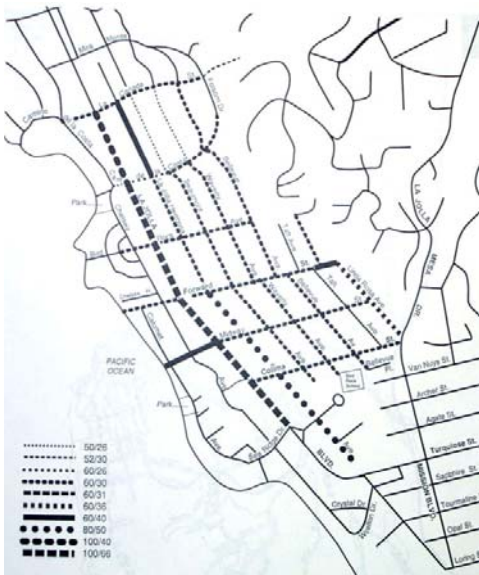
Future changes are also a concern. New development of condominium housing, with the potential for added residential units and other redevelopment are issues. The issue of commercial parking is a concern. There is insufficient parking on La Jolla Boulevard. Many employees park on adjacent neighborhood streets. This situation especially impacts residences on parallel and other nearby neighborhood streets. Many of the 1,600 Bird Rock residents are concerned with both the speed and volumes of traffic on La Jolla Boulevard and many other streets. People speed and cut through neighborhoods for a variety of reasons. Most neighborhood streets, built in the past fifty years, are designed for high speeds (30-40 mph) even though they may be posted at lower limits. Meanwhile appropriate speed for typical local streets is 25 mph. La Jolla Boulevard is currently classified as a 4-lane modified collector street in the La Jolla Community plan. There are limited destinations near Bird Rock homes. This pattern results in families in single family homes making an average of 10 car trips daily. Thus, as many as 16,000 trips are generated by Bird Rock residents, as well as others from homes in the general area. Many motorists may be late for events and try to make up time. We (motorists) are all guilty of these practices.



The maps to the left provide some of the traffic counts, street widths and traffic volumes on key streets in Bird Rock. Additional counts and measures were taken, and can be found in the project file. In general, the volumes and speeds are characteristic of local streets, collector streets and principal streets throughout the San Diego area. Speeds are excessive in many areas. Traffic volumes can be expected to remain relatively stable, even with some addition of bedrooms, mixed use development and other change. Over time, as Bird Rock develops more of a village quality, and as other communities develop similar concepts there is likely to be a leveling of auto based trip making and longer distance driving.

This report provides guidance on reducing unwanted, unsafe behavior. Before entering into design of traffic management and traffic calming features, all neighborhood residents are asked to accept that many of the problems come from inside the neighborhood. Even more significant, any measures introduced to overcome these problems impact those living on these streets more significantly than others who may pass by once or twice a day or once a week. Solutions therefore must be developed by the “stakeholders.” Residents, business people and other property owners, who have much to gain from working together, are the backbone of finding workable solutions.

HISTORY



Many of the 1600 residents and other stakeholders of Bird Rock and La Jolla Boulevard have been actively engaged in the growing issues associated with La Jolla Boulevard, parking, speeding and related issues. These concerns brought about this series of workshop events to help achieve resolution of a consensus built vision. The goal of this work is to design and implement a comprehensive plan to improve safety and walkability throughout all of Bird Rock.

The Bird Rock Community Council (BRCC) organized community and political leaders to address many, but not all, of the above issues. This effort resulted in the La Jolla Boulevard Traffic Study, a proposal for angled parking on La Jolla Boulevard plus stop sign deterrents on residential side streets. Once approved, the proposal met with protests from concerned citizens.



In August, 2001, Councilman Scott Peters asked Bird Rock resident Brad Raulston to coordinate Bird Rock community members to address the proposed plan, amend or revise it, and present it to the community for support. The community was asked to take part in the review and refinement of this plan. A workshop was held. Later, an 18-member volunteer group, the Bird Rock Traffic Task Force (BRTTF), emerged to represent the neighborhood. Many meetings later, after many but not all issues were formalized, the group lent its support to have Dan Burden and a team from Walkable Communities, Inc. conduct a highly engaging series of events, known as a Charrette, to more fully identify issues and work toward consensus on a series of solutions. This report documents that process and the outcomes with more than 150 people participating.

Six Step Process

Step 1

Traffic calming the Bird Rock Neighborhood began with a partnership. The City of San Diego and the Bird Rock Traffic Task Force agreed to develop a study and process leading to a community built consensus.

Step 2

City staff and volunteers collected traffic volume, speed and crash records to determine existing conditions.

Step 3

The Walkable Communities, Inc. team was oriented to the neighborhood through a walking audit and site inspection. Still and digital photos were taken, and a windshield audit of all principal streets in the neighborhood was conducted. Additional observations were made by walking most blocks. The staff and team took street width measurements, estimated block lengths, observed motorists' behaviors, interviewed pedestrians and other residents, and gathered available maps.

Step 4

The Bird Rock Neighborhood hosted a community Charrette on April 19-22, 2002. Neighborhood residents and other stakeholders took part in focus groups, walking audits, issues identification, priority setting for problems and issues, consensus building activities and design tables. Stakeholders were presented with community graphics and given examples of traffic management, parking and traffic calming possibilities.

Step 5

The Walkable Communities team worked out a system solution to traffic management, parking, speeding and volume. They prepared conceptual engineering sketches for several locations, and then selected the most appropriate tools for enhanced illustrated drawings. A master plan map was prepared, and suggested phasing was developed. This rough sketch plan was presented to more than forty citizens who came to a preliminary presentation. The team took additional comments into consideration and prepared this report.

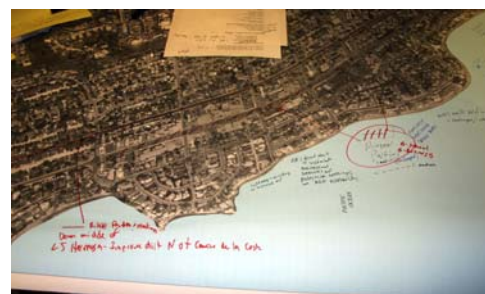
Step 6

The Bird Rock Neighborhood hosted a final workshop in which residents fine tuned the recommendations of the Traffic Management, Parking and Traffic Calming Team. Consensus was achieved. Comments were received and incorporated into the final report. This report provides the final conceptual system map, and makes recommendations for implementation.



Powerful new traffic management, traffic calming and village development tools are being applied to a number of California cities. This before and after photo is an example of a potential rebuild of SR 99, the road adaptation will work with a 25,000 projected volume of daily traffic.

(Photo Cover and above rendering by Steve Price)





EVENT SUMMARY

Focus groups sessions were held throughout the day on Thursday. Many individuals were able to share their ideas, issues and concerns in small group discussions.

An evening workshop was held on Friday, April 19th, between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm. More than 60 residents attended the meeting to learn the process, tools and applications of traffic calming.



Residents shared their values (see table in Appendix). Following a 40-minute presentation on traffic management, parking and traffic calming tools by Dan Burden, residents were asked to “Identify the Big Problems.”

From the brainstorming list a set of top priorities were established (see below). Residents would like to slow traffic and protect pedestrians from automobile traffic. Participants addressed biking, walking and vehicular challenges in discussing the improvement of the community. They are concerned that any changes to La Jolla Boulevard might impact adjacent and other neighborhood streets. They welcomed additional designs and suggestions.



On Saturday a walking audit was conducted, along with added training relating to the priorities identified. A special session was held just after lunch to determine those issues where consensus had already been achieved. Groups were then assembled and asked to reach consensus on the remaining topics.

Later in the afternoon a design table session was held where people worked at six tables to come up with both general consensus and listing of tools that they would like to see applied to the community. They also identified locations for improvements.



Priority Issues Identified by Participants

Speeding	19
Speed reductions on La Jolla Blvd	10
Forward, speeding	9
Linda Rosa speeding	7
Bellevue, speeding	45
Speeding, total	
Getting across La Jolla Boulevard	20
Underground utilities	15
Fix neighborhoods first or concurrently	14
Street lighting	14
Reducing neighborhood traffic	12
More useful stores	12
Pedestrian refuge / medians	11
La Jolla Mesa/Linda Rosa Intersection	10
Landscape plan	10
Architectural theme	10
Cut thru on Chelsea, Wrelton, Linds Rosa, Colima	8
Maintain La Jolla Hermosa as a closed street	8
Traffic impacts of proposed condos	7
More public space	7
Forward, Parking, narrow lanes	6
Midway & La Jolla	6
Tree standard - maintain	6
Create off-street parking in La Jolla	6



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Walking audits are site inspections undertaken initially to review the streets and the problems along them. From the team's visit and residents' input, the following conclusions were drawn:



- 1 La Jolla Boulevard** Traffic speeds on La Jolla Boulevard are excessive, and crossing distances present challenges. The roadway environment is unfriendly to business and does a poor job of defining a village center. The street may be approaching its ultimate traffic capacity, since intersections to the north and south are approaching long term critical capacity.



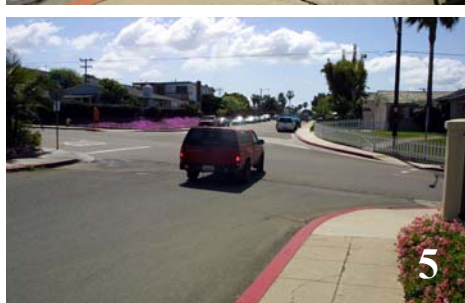
- 2 La Jolla Hermosa** Traffic volumes are well dispersed, but speeds are uncomfortable to many. The roadway width is much wider than needed. The southern end has a shortage of on-street parking, while northern portions are experiencing spillover commercial parking. Near Bird Rock Elementary School parent pick-up and drop-off access is congested.



- 3 Forward, Midway and Colima Streets** These East-West streets form long blocks and handle moderate volumes of traffic, some at unwanted speeds. Cut-thru traffic is a concern.



- 4 Linda Rosa** Traffic from adjacent neighborhoods can enter this roadway at high speeds. A four-way stop control was placed at Midway Street as a temporary traffic calming tool. Speeding is reported by area residents around the curve onto Forward Street. High speed turns are made onto this street from La Jolla Mesa.



- 5 Sea Ridge Drive, Calumet Avenue and Chelsea Street.** Residents are concerned with issues of speed, volume and parking. Some residents voiced interest in closing Colima/Linda Rosa and Wrelton Drive at La Jolla Boulevard. Other residents are concerned about negative effects of such closures.



- 6 Turquoise and La Jolla Boulevard.** Residents are concerned with the exceptionally wide pedestrian crossings and low potential for motorists to yield, as well as speeding into and around these curves.

- 7 Chelsea and Wrelton, La Jolla Blvd and Wrelton.** Residents are concerned with the need for visual geometric and other treatments to slow motorists. Vehicles speed through the lower curve. It is difficult to pull out onto La Jolla Boulevard.