



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego  
*Planning a Vibrant Downtown for All*

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**August 16th, 2023, 5:30 PM**

**12th Floor Committee Room, City Hall, 202 C Street, San Diego, CA, 92101**

**I. Call to Order 5:38 PM**

- A. Roll Call and June Minutes Approval
  - 1. Board members present: Manny (Chair), Chloé (Vice Chair), Bob (Secretary), Brendan, Chris, Edward, Jean Paul, Nancy, Nima, Tyler.
    - a) Quorum established with 10/14 members present.
    - b) Board members absent: Aldo, Emmett, Greg, Terry
  - 2. JUL minutes unanimously provisionally approved subject to board member review of written minutes as verbalized in meeting. Approval with three abstentions due to absence from JUL meeting: Edward, Nima, Tyler

**II. Non-Agenda Public Comment**

- A. Janet Rodgers re SANDAG proposed Airport elevated track people mover. Concerned expressed re elevated blight, funding, duplicative to MTS tracks/service. Board members Chloé, Manny spoke in response highlighting experience in other cities including Miami, 4-minute frequency alleviating traveler scheduling concerns, efficient, non-operator service.

**III. Community Reports**

- A. Representatives from Elected Officials and Agencies:
  - 1. DSDP Andi, Government Affairs –
    - a) Comic con attracted 130,000 pop culture visitors. Trash and signage disposed of in a day.
    - b). Highlighted urban Division C Street renovation plans
  - 2. DSD Urban Div – John Lewis
    - a) SEP 2023 Gr. Opening of Children’s Park
    - b) Urban Division website updated with Parks
    - c). Cameras for public viewing of EVG progress on website
    - d) Responded to board member question promising Gaslamp CPO update
  - 3. Mayor’s Office Kohta report to be attached to minutes
  - 3. Councilmember Whitburn’s Office
    - a) Emily highlighted return from recess on 9/6 with Rules Comm Mtg
    - b) SDPD is enforcing Unsafe Camping Ordinance in Parks which have city signage posted. Board referred to Get It Done as the best opportunity to report concerns.
    - c) other signage pending city action.
    - d) Manny highlighted ongoing Faultline Park maintenance with city

- e) Member referred to Mayor report re safe sleeping site population
- 4. Assemblymember Boerner's Office (Rep Margaret Doyle)
  - a) Highlights: Oceanography/Bluff Collapse bill in process, SB411 in process re zoom / virtual meetings, voluntary tax contribution State Tax form updated
  - b) New ASSY District Office Grand Opening Solana Beach 9.30.23
- 5. Senator Atkins' Office no rep
- 6. Supervisor Vargas' Office no rep

#### IV. Committee Report

- A PreDesign/Design Review Committee Recommendation 4<sup>th</sup> & J Housing
  - Chloé provided an overview and shared committee approval recommendation with adjustments.
  - Noted design revision recommendations consistent with Gaslamp Quarter Victorian character
  - Member questioned concern with GASLAMP CPO height restrictions
  - DRG (Gary Smith) noted DRG board approval due to enclosed trash room, Paseo compliant walkable 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, ADA option provided, Appearance is like Gaslamp, one concern is noise with Ballroom Retractable doors.
  - Union Rep recommended approval based on jobs
  - Public compared favorably with Developer's Pendry project
  - Developer Robert Green reviewed the project and commented in response to public questions re retail/restaurants confirming there would be a "curated" approach to select retail and food that would attract tourists.
  - Board Motion/2<sup>nd</sup> Chris/Chloé – unanimous approval
    - "To approve the 4th & J Hotel with the addition of Victorian design elements in the exterior facade consistent with the character of the Gaslamp District and the Gaslamp Design Guidelines." **Action Item**
- B. Communications Committee not present.
  - Manny briefed the status of the web site. There was unanimous member approval of recovering an active web site with historical and relevant action details.
  - Public comment requested that mobile views be provided with the DCPC site.
  - Manny committed to move forward with recommendation to restore the website.

#### V. Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) DCPC Recommendations

- Extensive discussion for Member CIP priorities including F & 15<sup>th</sup> traffic light, Ash Street traffic calming, G & 3<sup>rd</sup> mini park improvements, Greenways, Gaslamp Promenade, Crosswalks, DSDP recommendations.
- DRG (Gary Smith) provided insights re prior CIP approvals, highlighted that project recommendations result in city planning, CIP projects move on priority list

when anticipated projects are delayed.

- Motion/2<sup>nd</sup> Nima/JP for priority (spreadsheet) CIP list **Action Item**
  - Unanimous approval. Spreadsheet to be attached to minutes.

VII. Adjournment 7:30. Next Mtg: SEP 20th, 5:30PM, City Hall 12th Floor Committee Room

## August 2023 Board Meeting Emailed Comments

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### Alex Graff



**Alex Graff**  
to me ▾

Aug 16, 2023, 4:01 PM ☆ ↶ ⋮

Hello, my name is Alex Graff. I am a resident of Hillcrest, but I would be a regular and excited user of a rail connection to San Diego Airport. I am writing to express support for SANDAG's Automated People Mover (APM) proposal. In my mind, there are only two differences between the APM as proposed and our traditional MTS Trolley: 1) It is driverless, and 2) It is entirely grade separated—a necessary condition for making it driverless.

The fact that it is driverless contributes to making the airport connector the most reliable, robust system possible—we would not have to worry about driver shortages messing up our travel plans to the airport and a fully-automated system can run headways far, far shorter than the Trolley currently runs even at peak ridership. Take Montreal's new REM rail project as an example. It runs 90 second headways, versus the Trolley's minimum 7.5 minute headways. Imagine barely needing to wait more than a minute for your train to take you to the front door of the airport!

If you're a fan of those headways, then elevated rail is our only choice for grade separation. Tunneling would cripple the project in both cost and timeline and it would likely never get done—which is why Montreal cancelled a portion of the REM project when public pressure advocated for tunneling instead of elevated rail. Simply put, this project will not get done in our lifetimes without elevated viaducts.

The APM is the right solution for an airport connector to be completed as soon as feasibly possible. It would also provide the best headways and be resistant to staffing shortages. SANDAG should simply call it a "driverless Trolley" and paint it the iconic shade of red, because it would be hardly different than our current system that we're so used to.

### Chloé Lauer



**Chloé Lauer**  
to me ▾

Wed, Aug 16, 1:20 PM ☆ ↶ ⋮

Hi Chair Rodriguez,

I saw the SANDAG presentation and want to voice my support for the Automated People Mover option for connecting the airport with downtown. Being able to move more people faster and with frequencies so great you barely notice any wait time would be an enormous win for our region and would position us to remain America's Finest City into the future, meet our Climate Action Plan goals for shift in mode share, and make connecting to the airport more convenient for tourists and locals alike.

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**Chloé Lauer**

Urban Planning Consultant  
San Diego | San Francisco | California  
[chloelauer.com](http://chloelauer.com)

## Alex Wong



Alex Haowen Wong

to me

Wed, Aug 16, 12:01 PM



To the Chair of the Downtown Community Planning Council:

If possible, please include the below as a comment for tonight's meeting.

Thank you!

With Downtown San Diego (DTSD's) exceptional proximity to the airport, San Diego is exceptionally well-suited for airport transit.

I urge the Council to support the highest-frequency concept to connect the airport with Downtown San Diego (DTSD). With long, unpredictable wait times at airport security and check-in, the last thing airport-bound DTSD residents and visitors need is more waiting. So instead of waiting up to 15 minutes for an airport-bound Trolley, they'll take rideshare, especially if they're traveling on the company dime, worsening congestion in the process.

That's why I support SANDAG's [South Route Aerial Option](#) automated people mover (APM), which will provide a one-seat ride between Downtown and the airport while boasting [2 minute](#) frequencies vs. every [15 minutes](#) for the airport Trolley concept.

The South Route Aerial Option would run elevated through Downtown, but would not cut off Downtown from the waterfront like a freeway would. The APM's visual impacts would be minimal compared to a freeway. Rail viaducts like the Mid-Coast Trolley over Genesee have widths of under 40 feet, compared to the I-5 at over 160 feet. The APM would further reduce visual impact by running on third rail rather than on overhead catenary as with the Trolley. The noise of one electric, rubber-tired train passing by every minute would be minimal compared to 8 freeway lanes each carrying hundreds of vehicles per minute. And unlike a freeway, passengers would walk to and from the APM, thus bringing foot traffic to Downtown businesses.

Most importantly, building the APM elevated would deliver an airport rail link to Downtown as fast as possible, due to elevated construction being simpler and cheaper than tunneling. The aerial APM would cost only [\\$1.579 Billion](#) vs. [\\$3.121 Billion](#) for a tunneled APM. And while building an airport Trolley branch would result in [suspension/reduction](#) of Downtown-bound Amtrak, Coaster, and Trolley service, APM construction would not, as it would be physically separate from the Trolley.

Sincerely,

Alex Wong

## Kohta Zaiser

Zaiser, Kohta

to me

Aug 16, 2023, 5:02 PM



Hey Manny,

I'm not going to be at DCPC tonight. All I have is a brief update on HAP 2.0, please see below. I'll be getting the latest data on 20<sup>th</sup> and B this week, as well as progress on O Lot. I can send a follow up report later in the week when I receive that info.

As always, please encourage folks to reach out directly with any questions, comments, and concerns. Have a great evening.

### New Shelter for Families Open

- The City's [new shelter for families](#) at a former motel in Barrio Logan opened this week to families who had been staying at Golden Hall.
- Each family now has a private room. In total, there are 42 rooms, each able to house up to four people, for a total capacity of 168.
- Families at the new shelter also receives a full slate of supportive services, including assistance in securing permanent housing. The goal at all our City-run shelters is to offer wraparound services that help people get further on their path to finding permanent homes.
- This shelter is operated by Alpha Project, under a contract administered by the Housing Commission.

### HAP 2.0

On August 3, the Planning Commission voted to advance the Mayor's package of reforms and bifurcated SB 10 so that a working group can take more time to study SB10.

- Fight for environmental justice in communities of concern
- Address college student home insecurity
- Encourages the creation of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) homes
- Prevent displacement and preserve existing affordable homes, which complements the recently approved Tenant Protection Ordinance
- Implement AB2097, giving builders the flexibility to build the parking spaces they need
- Encourage the construction of ADUs for seniors and people with disabilities
- Provide public agencies like school districts and the San Diego Housing Commission greater flexibility in developing homes on publicly owned land
- Incentivize the conversion of empty strip malls and parking lots into homes.
- Build middle-income family housing in places with good schools and job availability

Next steps: **Land Use & Housing Committee (Sept 21)**

## **DOWNTOWN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP) & DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES (DIF) PRIORITIES FOR FY25**

Honorable Councilmember Whitburn,

As we strive to make our streets safer for all and achieve our Vision Zero goals, the Downtown Community Planning Council would like to elevate its top three CIPs and DIF expenditure priorities for Fiscal Year 25 (FY25) that we believe will help us get there:

- 1. CIP B22111: Traffic Signals at 15th & F, 15th & Broadway, and 15th & Market**
  - a. This CIP, currently in the design phase, is only partially funded. We urge that it be funded in its entirety.
  - b. 15th & F intersection is by far the most dangerous intersection out of all three.
    - i. Cars are speeding out of the freeway and never stop for pedestrians.
    - ii. The East Village business improvement district also voted to designate the 15th & F intersection as dangerous and in need of improvement.
  
- 2. Ash Street Traffic Calming (Proposed CIP): Install traffic calming measures on Ash street between 3rd Avenue and 9th Avenue.**
  - a. Traffic calming can involve:
    - i. Adjusting the traffic signals to slow down cars with consistent red lights.
    - ii. Installing pedestrian “pop-outs” at intersections.
    - iii. Road Diets:
      1. Adding parking spaces to curbs where parking is not present.
      2. Repurposing a lane to add bicycle facilities.
  - b. The Cortez Hill community has paid for studies by Rick Engineering and Circulate San Diego on this item (view attached),
  - c. We urge that the City accepts this CIP to make Ash Street a safe street to cross.
  
- 3. 5th Avenue Promenade Phase II:**
  - a. Closing 5th Avenue to car traffic has been wildly successful in creating a more vibrant Gaslamp Quarter. Residents, businesses, and visitors alike thrive when pedestrian safety & comfort is maximized.
  - b. We request that the City make this a permanent and beautiful promenade by funding Phase II.

These are our top three priorities. Please read below for the rest of our priorities:

- First Avenue Traffic Calming (Proposed CIP, study attached).
- Saint Joseph’s Park Design (Proposed CIP):
  - This is a full-block park as described in the Downtown Community Plan.

- The Cortez Hill community is deserving of a dignified and sizable park.
- Let us get a step closer to making a reality by funding its design.
  
- Downtown Complete Streets (CIPs underway)
  - Priority: Downtown Complete St Impl. Ph. 3A2 (CIP B22111)
  
- Flashing Yield Lights Near School Zones (Proposed CIP)
  
- Traffic Calming (Proposed CIPs)
  - On C and B Streets
  - On E and F Streets
  - On 10th and 11th Streets
  
- Crosswalks on Every Intersection (Proposed CIPs)
  - Priority Crosswalks:
    - C & 15th
    - 13th & J
    - 14th & J
    - 15th & J
  
- Enhancements to G Street Mini Park (Proposed DIF Expenditure)
  
- Downtown E and 14th Street Greenways (CIPs underway)

The Downtown Community Planning Council looks forward to continued collaboration with your office to plan a vibrant Downtown for all.

We hope to see our priority projects included in your budget memo for FY25.

Thank you for your consideration,



Manny Rodriguez  
Executive Chairperson  
Downtown Community Planning Council