

Mid-City Communities Plan Update Working Group Existing Conditions and Draft Public Engagement Summary Meeting Summary

MEETING DETAILS

The Salvation Army Kroc Center
Community Room
6845 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92115

The meeting was conducted in a hybrid format allowing participation in-person and via Zoom.

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

During the first part of the Working Group meeting, the City presented highlights from the "Land Use & Development," "Mobility," and "Parks, Public Facilities & Open Space" chapters of the *Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report (Mid-City Atlas)* and Working Group members were encouraged to share their comments and provide feedback after the presentation. In addition, a portion of the meeting was dedicated to presenting key information and findings highlighted in the *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts*. Members of the Working Group discussed which aspects of the summary stood out to them and provided other feedback.

BACKGROUND

As a part of an inclusive engagement process, the City has convened a Working Group for the Mid-City Communities Plan Update. The primary role of the Working Group is to inform the Mid-City Communities Plan Update process. Additional details can be found by reviewing the *Mid-City Communities Plan Update Working Group Protocol and Membership* (April 16, 2024).

In addition, an orientation was held for Working Group members on April 24, 2024, to encourage members to make connections with other members, and inform the Working Group on what to expect of their role and timeline of their involvement. The City published the *Mid-City Atlas* online on June 14, 2024. A Working Group meeting on June 26, 2024 included a presentation and discussion of the "Introduction," "History and Place," and "Sustainability, Climate, Equity, and Resilience" chapters of the *Mid-City Atlas*. The City released a *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts* on September 4, 2024. The *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts* includes key engagement efforts such

as online surveys, in-person workshops, pop-up events, office hours, community interviews, emails, and youth engagement. Additionally, it features appendices with detailed information from the workshops, including attendance records, comments from community members, poll results, Zoom chat transcripts, and discussion group notes.

WORKING GROUP MEETING PARTICIPANTS

A total of 13 Working Group members attended the meeting as shown in Table 1. Ten Working Group members attended in person, three attended virtually, and four were absent.

Table 1 - List of Working Group Attendees

Working Group	Attendance	Community
Steve Aldana	In-Person	City Heights
Marcellus Anderson	Absent	Designee - City Heights CPG
Thomas Aristide	In-Person	Normal Heights
Madeleine Baudoin	Virtually/Zoom	Normal Heights
Emilie Colwell	In-Person	Designee - Normal Heights CPG
Lynn Edwards	Virtually/Zoom	Designee - Eastern Area CPG
Brittany Gordon	In-Person	City Heights
Eric Kelley	In-Person	Eastern Area
David Moty	In-Person	Designee - Kensington-Talmadge CPG
Nam Nguyen	In-Person	City Heights
Victor Ponce	Absent	City Heights
Angelica Rocha	Virtually/Zoom	Eastern Area
Kristen Spittle	Absent	Kensington-Talmadge
Lisa Stone	Absent	Kensington-Talmadge
Randy Torres-Van Vleck	In-Person	City Heights
Zach Young	In-Person	Eastern Area

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

In addition to the Working Group members, there were Thirty-five members of the public that attended the meeting. Twenty-four members of the public attended in-person, and eleven attended virtually.

STAFF ATTENDANCE

The Working Group meeting was supported by City staff and consultants working with the City including staff from Ascent and Imagine. Staff are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Staff Attendance

Project Team	Attendance	Affiliation
Alexander Frost	In-Person	City of San Diego
Apharna Padmakumar	In-Person	City of San Diego
Selena Sanchez Bailon	In-Person	City of San Diego
Scott Sandel	In-Person	City of San Diego
Destiny Reeder	In-Person	City of San Diego
Veronica Alatorre	In-Person	Ascent
Christine Babla	In-Person	Ascent
Matt Gelbman	In-Person	Ascent
Isaac Ing	In-Person	Ascent
Paul Kronser	Virtually	Ascent
Catherine Hanna Schrock	In-Person	Imagine
Peter Schrock	In-Person	Imagine

MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTIVITIES

At the beginning of the meeting, staff welcomed Working Group members and the public to the meeting. Working Group members were encouraged to share their names, and which community they represent. Introductions were also made for City staff and team members. Food was provided for members of the Working Group and was also available for members of the public. The meeting started with a presentation summarizing the "Land Use & Development," "Mobility," and "Parks, Public Facilities & Open Space" chapters of the *Mid-City Atlas*. Working Group members shared their feedback through a facilitated discussion. The questions used to prompt discussion included:

- Anything that stands out to you?
- Any ideas on how to improve this section of the report?
- Is there anything missing that we should explore further?

Notes from the Working Group’s discussion related to the *Mid-City Atlas* are included in Appendix A. After concluding the Working Group discussion about the *Mid-City Atlas*, there was a short break for attendees to grab snacks and use the restrooms.

Following the break, the meeting continued with the City giving a presentation focusing on the key findings of the *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts*. This segment highlighted various types of engagement and feedback collected by community and zip code. After presenting these findings, the Working Group members provided their feedback based on the following questions:

- What is most significant to you from the public engagement summaries?
- What resonates most for you as it pertains to your community's experiences?

- Are there any surprises?

Notes from the Working Group's discussion related to the *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts* are included in Appendix A.

The meeting concluded with the City outlining upcoming events and engagement opportunities. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to gathering comments and feedback from the public, both in person and virtually. The public offered comments on the *Mid-City Atlas* chapters, the *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts*, and raised various questions. Attendees who were present in person had the option to sign up for public speaking or submit their comments using comment cards. Those participating virtually could either request to speak through Zoom or provide written comments via the Zoom chat.

Records of the questions and answers during the public comment portion of the meeting are included in Appendix B; comments from the Zoom chat are compiled in Appendix C; submitted written comment cards are included in Appendix D; Sign-in sheets are included in Appendix E; and photos from the meeting are included in Appendix F.

NEXT STEPS

- The date of the next Working Group meeting will be mid-December.
- Existing Conditions Mobility Assessment is planned to be released in Fall 2024.
- Public Engagement Summary is planned to be released at the end of 2024/early 2025.
- Historic Context Statement & Survey is planned to be released at the end of 2024/early 2025.
- A Draft Framework Vision & Concepts is planned to be released in Spring 2025.

APPENDIX A – WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES

Feedback provided from Working Group members related to the "Land Use & Development," "Mobility," and "Parks, Public Facilities & Open Space" chapters of the *Mid-City Atlas*, and in response to *Draft Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts* included the following:

Land Use and Development:

- City clarified the Planned District Ordinance (PDO) will be replaced by citywide zoning that will be determined as part of the CPU process.
- Undeveloped land identified in the *Mid-City Atlas* is not open space and is developable, but City will confirm as part of future analysis.
- The feasibility of development on the acres highlighted as potential development areas in Mid-City was questioned.
- A map showing the date infrastructure was installed and details of other improvements should be included in the report.
- Increasing housing in Kensington would promote fairer distribution, as communities like City Heights and North Park are currently carrying a disproportionate share of the housing burden.
- Need for more refined housing data, that includes recent development types.

Open Space and Parks:

- Parks and open space are not the same thing; open space is not accessible for recreation.
- Calculations of Recreation Value Points for Mid-City do not align with the Parks Master Plan. Calculations should be done for each community plan area instead of for all Mid-City.

Mobility and Transportation:

- Unpaved alleys should be included as part of the existing conditions and should be shown on mobility maps. City shared that this would be included as part of the Existing Conditions Mobility Assessment.
- Existing Conditions Mobility Assessment will also include a map of missing sidewalk segments and may include information on conditions of roads.
- Transit ridership data should also be included to understand which routes and stops have the highest ridership.
- Map showing walkability to community facilities should also include grocery stores and should reflect access to transit.

- An overlay of income per household and transportation expenses to understand if there is a correlation should be included in the *Mid-City Atlas*.

Community and Historical Context:

- Fairmount Ave is not historically designated, but steep hillsides and open spaces are conserved, and it is unlikely that the area will be redeveloped.
- A map displaying organizations, temples, and faith-based places would provide a more comprehensive view of the diversity in Mid-City that can help the plan.
- There should be an effort to preserve historical landmarks and document African American community in Mid-City.
- Ensure that we preserve the multicultural diversities of the communities while combating the historical underfunding of some of these communities.

Draft Overview of Key Engagement Efforts:

- Create more third spaces for community and youth to gather beyond school and home, which are important when taking into consideration the impacts of COVID on the youth; consider spaces outside the noisy and busy streets of El Cajon Blvd and University Avenue.
- Support for the valuable and unique perspectives shared by the youth, their perspectives differ significantly from those of adults as they are constantly navigating their neighborhoods on foot.
- Creation of a “Community Land Trust” was suggested as a way to prevent displacement and support land ownership within Mid-City.
- Input highlighted the good and bad things that make up the communities in Mid-City.
- Data should have more detail. Instead of using zip codes, since neighborhoods in Mid-City can change quickly depending on each street.
- Cleanliness and safety in neighborhoods are not directly included in the focus of the Mid-City CPU but are important to the future of Mid-City.
- Share which Community Based Organizations (CBOs) the city reached out during their engagement (refer to Question 18 in the Appendix G).

Other:

- SANDAG population estimates for 2022 are inaccurate and may change with annual updates.
- Explore joint-use opportunities at schools to maximize use of space.
- There will be continued opportunities for engagement as part of the plan update process.

APPENDIX B – PUBLIC COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS FROM THE CITY

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following are comments, feedback, and concerns shared by the public attendees during the public comment period of the meeting and through the comment cards submitted after the meeting.

1. Opposition to the proposed location for a planned fire station off Fairmount Ave. near intersection of Home Ave. due to concerns about impact on habitat and animals that live in the canyon near mobile home park.
2. Important to improve bike and pedestrian connections neighborhoods in Mid-City, including Fairmount Park, to other surrounding areas.
3. The City should consider a process for substituting Working Group members that continually do not attend meetings. The City Operations Yard should be included as an industrial area because of the large number of employees that work there; there is also a parking problem along College Grove Drive; and there are no transit connections. “Park points” are still confusing and it is unclear how they are calculated.
4. Should be a better east-west connection in areas east of Kensington. Kensington has a lot of great historical properties and is a high resource area and should plan for more housing.
5. North Park used to be diverse but was gentrified. Want beauty in City Heights and don’t want people to be forced out.
6. Chollas is not a community park, it is a regional park.
7. The Navy housing near Chollas Lake should be included as a historical site.

City Response: Chollas Heights Naval Radio Transmitting Facility (NRTF) was a component of the U.S. Naval Communication Station San Diego. The site is located in the Chollas Heights area of the City of San Diego, approximately six miles east of downtown San Diego and adjacent to the Chollas Reservoir.

The Navy acquired a total of 74.552 acres; 73.65 acres in fee from Mr. Harry Flavel Carling in 1914, and 0.902 acre in easement from the City of San Diego. The Navy constructed a high-power radio transmitter facility, including three 600-foot towers, a powerhouse, condenser house, pump house, blower house, office, garage, shop, and housing for a small number of officers and enlisted men.

The NRTF was the first Navy Global Transmitting Facility. In 1941, the Japanese attack on the fleet at Pearl Harbor was first broadcast by Radio San Diego through the radio towers. Demolition of the 600-foot towers occurred in 1995, after detailed Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documentation occurred.

The site is now home to 412 Navy housing units. The Transmitter Building remains and a part of it has been converted into a museum. Four of the original navy housing units as well as the top piece of one of the 600-foot towers remains on site.

The City does not have the ability to regulate resources on Navy-owned property, including listing on the City of San Diego historical register. The history of this site was researched and discussed as part of the draft Mid-City Historic Context Statement, which is scheduled to be released later this year.

8. City should not be catering meetings or paying consultants to facilitate.
9. Parking is an issue in City Heights and throughout San Diego. The federal income limit affects the middle class, and we should raise it up to help people.
10. There is a lack of tree canopy in Mid-City, and it is an important issue for youth. The CPU should design a community to be resilience and protect those that are most vulnerable.
11. The University Ave. Bikeway project is being built right now and the community would like more trees to provide more tree canopy, but the project is currently being planned.
12. Displacement should be addressed; people should be the focus not trees. People's voices are not being heard. There should be bathrooms for homelessness. Parks should be attractive to kids. Community fundraisers can help contribute to improvements.
13. Beyer Park is the first new park built by the City in a long time. Can parks be expected in Mid-City if it takes so long?
14. More trees are coming to University Ave, not sure how many. Chollas Triangle is in Eastern Area. Chollas Creek Watershed Park will be a huge new regional park created one piece at a time.

APPENDIX C - RECORD OF COMMENTS PROVIDED THROUGH ZOOM CHAT

- Person 1:** can't hear the intros
- Person 2:** Reacted to "can't hear the intro..." with 👍
- Person 3:** The mic doesn't seem to be working.
- Person 4:** we can't hear anyone talking right now
- Person 5:** Perhaps you'll get to this, but how does our existing LU's category distribution compare to other CP areas? For example, is 13% of LU designated to parks and open space comparable to other CP areas?
- Person 6:** Reacted to "Perhaps you'll get t..." with 👍
- Person 5:** Sorry I don't think you can hear but glad someone was able to read it. Thanks!
- Person 5:** Re: The walk sheds to destinations - What was the distance used for a 15-min walk? I thought I heard 2.5 miles, so I just wanted to confirm.
- Person 7:** Normal Heights "Open Space" canyons are not accessible. Only those living along the canyon get to enjoy them. Trails, overlooks, benches, please!
- Person 5:** Replying to "Re: The walk sheds t..."
I found the answer in the Atlas report thanks! It's 0.25 miles :)
- Person 5:** I have to drop, but thank you for the presentation and for everyone's great feedback!
- Person 6:** I can vouch that Alex's presentation at Normal Heights Planning Group was consultant-free ;-)
- Person 1:** Yes, and he also presented last night at EACPC, just Alex and planning staff.
- Person 4:** Reacted to "I can vouch that Ale..." with 👍
- Person 4:** Reacted to "Yes, and he also pre..." with 👍

APPENDIX D – COMMENT CARDS SUBMITTED

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



DATA ON PARK USAGE,

We would greatly benefit from some
spot counts of park utilization and how
users have reached the park (walk, park)
and where in the area they came from.
There is a large park (Chollas Lake) that
most likely will show very low users per
acre with most visitors coming by car.
That is not a successful park definition.

Please provide your contact information below.

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



Park Scoring

- does it take into account condition of parks?
(many of our park facilities are dilapidated.)

Climate resilience - is there a discussion on
assets + deficits?
e.g.:

- tree canopy
- cool zones
- preserved open space
- low stress walk + bike routes

Please provide your contact information below.

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



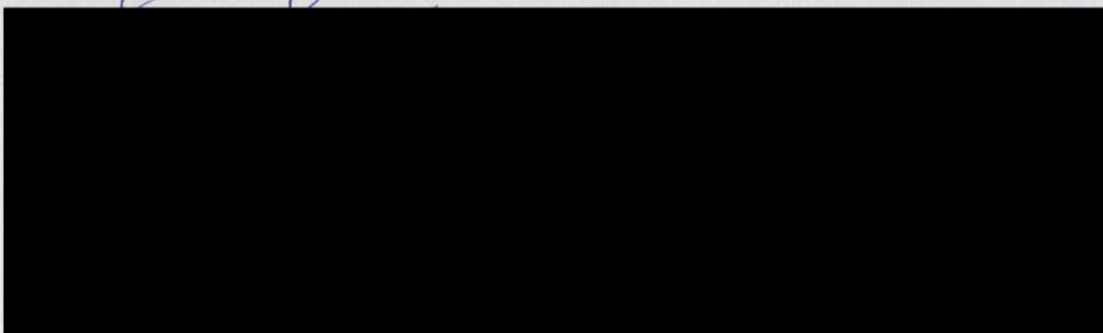
Thank you for your hard work. You have a very challenging assignment given the diversity of needs, interests, etc. The data shows the sharp differences in wealth, etc.

I'm surprised that more affordable housing was not rated more highly in the ideal vision of mid-city as I see that as the ^{high} cost of housing as a ~~very~~ serious problem for the entire city.

I was happy to see that there are others who believe that more density ^(housing) should be shared by all communities - not just areas that already have apartment dwellings. I was afraid that the "Save our Neighborhoods" people would dominate the discussion. Preserving ~~area~~ the character of a neighborhood too often means no change and benefits the well-to-do.

Thank you for including students, they are the ~~best~~ future.

Please provide your contact information below.



One comment about the range of communities,
How ~~low~~ are you ^{going to} choose priorities? As it is,
there is no way the city can make ^{significant} progress
on ~~all~~ so many suggested needs.

A working group member wants A Ocean
American sites etc to be preserved ~~in~~ My
impression is that community members
have to take the initiative. Is that right?
For that reason most sites are in affluent
neighborhoods like Mission Hills + Kensington.

I live in Talmadge. I question the need for
^{more} ~~people~~ ^{albeit small} in Talmadge. Many people have yards
1 whereas people in some parts in City Heights
do not.

Although Talmadge has more trees than other
communities, I've noticed that not many
trees are near sidewalks - many are in back
yards. I recently walked from ECBT Wmaine
to my home on Lorraine Dr. It was a hot
walk because of the lack of shade.

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



• Clarifying question - When we saw the jobs #'s by sectors - (eg: healthcare, retail) were those representative of residents in the area or jobs in the area?

In other words, for people that commute ~~there~~ out of the community, work in a specific sector, was that counted or not?

• Is it beyond the scope of this report to address why ppl are leaving mid-city? Anecdotaly, I ~~see~~ ^{hear} neighbors can't afford it any more + leave. I feel like the plan should ~~address~~ address this issue and ^{find} we would need data ^{now} to understand the extent of the **problem**.

Populati
decline
over
time

- Does this report address climate threats?

Please provide your contact information below.

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



AN ALTERNATE IDEA TO REDEVELOP THE FRONT AREA OF COLINA DEL SOL PARK (ALONG ORANGE AVE) - IS TO EXTEND THE GOLF COURSE TO THE SIDEWALK ALONG ORANGE AVE TO 52ND ST. THIS IDEA WOULD ELIMINATE THE RIFF-RAFF OF THE HOMELESS GROUPS THAT ARE A DAILY NUISANCE. THEY CREATE EXCESSIVE NOISE, TRASH & CITY BLIGHT. EXTENDING THE GOLF COURSE WOULD BENEFIT THE CHILDREN, THE GOLFERS, THE HOMEOWNERS/RENTERS, THE SCHOOL KIDS WALKING BY DAILY AND IT WOULD MAINTAIN THE BEAUTY OF THE GREEN SPACE WHILE OFFERING MORE GOLF SPACE FOR THE COMMUNITY - KEEPING IT CLEAN, GREEN AND BEAUTIFUL.

• THE CURRENT IDEAS ARE TO MAKE THE SPACE A COMMUNITY GARDEN / DOG PARK - WHICH ARE ALSO GOOD IDEAS, BUT I FEEL THE GOLF COURSE EXTENSION WOULD BE THE BEST IDEA

Please provide your contact information below.

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



Quorum take attendance
if W & E members miss 3, then
substitute in the "public" who
applied to be on W.E.
op yard is Industrial over
1,000 employees
MTS needs to connect 54th
to College Grove Shopping Center
Park Points tutorial requested
Kental 8% Eastern Area 88%

Please provide your contact information below.

Name: _____

E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Are you affiliated with any community organizations? _____ Zip Code: _____

Please list: _____

How did you hear about the Mid-City Communities plan Update?

Email from City Other Email Social Media Saw a flier Friend/Colleague

Other: _____

Comment Card

Please share your comments about the Mid-City
Communities Plan Update below.



For consideration:

- Why is it that the Mid-City population, particularly young people in the area, has declined? Also, how are young people being defined in this context?
- There are still many alley ways in Mid-City that are unpaved.

Please provide your contact information below.

From Bri-Hang Gordon 9/11/24

Community-Led Dispute Resolution System (City Heights Justice Circle)

Concept:

- Create a “City Heights Justice Circle” or “East San Diego Justice Tribunal”, a community-based forum where disputes are settled by local residents in an open, transparent, and fair process. The idea is to bring issues out into the community, where members can voice concerns and seek solutions in a restorative justice model, rather than relying solely on formal legal systems that may not serve the community’s unique needs.

Key Principles:

1. **Restorative Justice Approach:**
 - Instead of punitive measures, this system would focus on repairing harm done, holding individuals accountable, and working toward resolutions that restore community trust and unity.
2. **Community Participation:**
 - Disputes would be heard by a jury or panel of local residents who understand the community’s values, challenges, and history. This would include rotating members who volunteer to serve on the jury or council.
3. **Handling Local Issues:**
 - The system could address local disputes, such as neighborhood conflicts, housing issues, or even minor offenses. Rather than escalating small problems to law enforcement, this system would aim to mediate and resolve conflicts on a community level.
4. **Transparency and Fairness:**
 - All hearings would be held in public spaces, allowing for full transparency. Decisions would be made by a consensus or majority vote of the community members involved, ensuring fairness and broad participation.
5. **Empowerment Through Local Justice:**
 - This system would empower City Heights residents to take an active role in resolving issues that affect them directly. It also reinforces the idea that the community has the knowledge and capacity to handle its own problems in a fair and equitable way.

Structure:

- **Judge and Jury:**
 - The "judge" could be an elected community leader or elder who helps facilitate the process, while the "jury" would be a group of local residents selected for each case.
- **Mediator:**
 - Consider having a trained mediator who can guide the process and ensure both sides are heard and understood.

Process:

6. **Community Forum:**
 - Set up a regular schedule for community forums where issues can be brought forward.
7. **Hearing the Case:**
 - Both sides of the dispute present their perspectives. The mediator and jury listen, ask questions, and gather input from the community.
8. **Community Decision:**
 - The jury or council discusses possible solutions and votes on the best way to resolve the issue.
9. **Restorative Solution:**
 - Solutions could include community service, apologies, or agreements to change behaviors. The goal is not punishment but resolution.

Benefits:

- **Community Control:** Residents maintain control over how conflicts are resolved, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** The system reflects the values and culture of City Heights, ensuring fairer and more relevant outcomes.
- **Reduced Legal Burden:** By addressing minor disputes locally, it reduces the burden on courts and law enforcement, making it easier to solve issues that matter to the community.

[sdnews.com](https://www.sdnews.com)

The College-Rolando Library disaster, time for some righteous indignation



by [SDNEWS staff](#)

September 11, 2024

in [College Times Courier - Opinion](#)



Hello again to *Courier* readers!

Many of you have stood up repeatedly to convince our political leaders that parking for the College-Rolando Library is important, and that the loss of parking will result in a non-functional library.

For four long years our interests have been ignored. It's time to tell the mayor how upset we are.

What are we facing today on the lot next door to our library? A very dense development identified as a hotel/apartment with 126 hotel rooms and 50 some apartments. This building of five stories has 525 bedrooms, with many four-bedroom units. Its plans have

been approved ministerially by the Development Services Department, without Planning Commission review, community input, or Council action.

And what about parking (pictured above)?

The building completely covers its 1.8 acre lot with the exception of the existing driveway built by the city for the library and 25 parking spaces. The city assures us that these spaces will be available for library use, but as the ONLY surface parking on site, with no street parking, they will in no way be surplus to project needs. Library patrons will be out of luck! Our library will be non-functional. The city's head remains in the sand.

The city has a long string of stories to explain why this is OK. "The owner had the right to build this project." "It did not require a Planning Commission vote, or any Council review". "There was no required environmental review of this project." "The city has the ability to ignore a zoning restriction on a property that prohibits residential development (zoning designations no longer matter)."

What do these stories tell us? Only developer voices count. We don't count.

The city wants more housing units, and it will line developers' pockets handsomely to get it. What gets destroyed in this process doesn't matter. Without parking, the library will no longer be a functional resource for the community.

Let's just look at the real estate decisions.

We've heard a lot about Ash Street. Sadly, we can offer 6650 Montezuma Rd. as another example. One dumb decision has led to another. In 2005 the city built a significant part of this library on land it did not own, and then ignored its first right of purchase when, in 2016, the land came up for sale at \$2.3M. The city-built library access and parking subsequently fell into private hands. Library access remained

blocked for a whole year. The owner chained the driveway because he could, not because he had a conflicting use. He clearly felt little concern over losing city-favor. Finally, at the community's urging, in the process of granting the owner a zone upgrade, the city secured some protection for the library access and parking it had constructed.

Then in 2022, it ripped those protections to shreds when it accepted this project as a "by right" construction, even though that violated our hard-won zoning protections. Now in 2024, the city bureaucracy has approved the project, and the owner's land value has skyrocketed. \$8M, \$10M, \$12M?

What's the value of our hamstrung library? It's worthless to our communities. There is no Plan B to replace what has been lost.

What would it cost to build a new library for us? Upwards of \$45M. Consider that the city's list of needed new libraries is shamefully long, with few funding sources available. It will be lifetimes until our number comes up for a new library. Meanwhile, every year, the funds required to operate this library, given the severely damaged opportunities for community use, will be wasted. Inexplicably, every year, the city will pay the owner upwards of \$12,000 for parking access that doesn't exist. A disgraceful situation.

How do we know our library will become nonfunctional? In 2017, the entry driveway and parking was blocked for one whole year. Our community room stood unused. Why? "No parking" destroys attendance at events. Kids coming to homework help sessions and other children's programming fell off by ½ or more.

Similarly, adults stopped coming for services and programming. Book circulation dropped by 1/2. Inaccessibility produced a library that was fatally compromised. The remaining 28 parking spots at the back of the library were insufficient. Now, they, too, will be overcome by spillover-use from the parking-starved adjacent building.

Sadly, the city's project approval has placed us another step closer to this grim future. The decision to approve this project is so egregious that it requires a review by the mayor to correct its course.

A refusal to do so tells us several things: Older communities don't matter. Wise real estate decisions are not within city reach. Calls for equity are but hollow words. "More housing" at any cost is what we can expect.

This is not the city we want.

We urge you, once again, to email Mayor Todd Gloria and Council President/ D9 Councilmember, Sean Elo Rivera. Express your frustration. Call on them to stand up for us. MayorToddGloria@sandiego.gov and SeanEloRivera@sandiego.gov.

For more information, here's a link to a recent *Union-Tribune* commentary piece. [UT Commentary Aug-14-2024.docx](#) If you are not on our supporter email list, ask to join with an email to hintzman2@gmail.com and we will keep you informed about future actions.

Editor's note: This piece was written by Jan Hintzman, a long-time activist living in Rolando and president of the Friends of the College-Rolando Library.

APPENDIX E – IN-PERSON SIGN IN SHEETS AND ZOOM ATTENDANCE

In-Person Sign-In Sheets

Working Group Meeting
Mid-City Communities Plan Update
Wednesday, September 11, 2024



Name	Affiliation / Organization	E-mail Address	Mailing Address
Scott Sandel	COSD		
Danna Givot	ECCC		
YVONNE JONES	ECCC		
DREW IACONO			
Valerie Traina			
Daniele Laman	CDQ Parks & Rec		
MARINE ELHAFIDJAN			
Micah Modesto	COSD		
Kevin Modesto	CH Resident		
Ally Wilborn			
Noah Gonzalez	OTTA		
Karen Kinney			
Maya Ma			
Marta Waller			
Anastasia Brewster			
Kathy Pham			
Amye Hogan			
Jan Hintzman			
Andy Kuelstkamp			
Edwin Loh			
Evika Vasily	CHAPC / Corridor Neighborhood Association		
Masiti Madua	Our Time To Act		
Rocio Benguer			
Alan Berger			

Finny Darnawan	UCSD	[REDACTED]	
Krisna Jenie	UCSD	[REDACTED]	

Zoom List of Public Attendees

- Christine Young
- Manny Rodriguez
- Jesse Ramirez
- Paul Jamason
- Bettina Rausa
- Alex Zukas
- Carl Luster
- Alicia Arlow
- Benjamin Dalton
- Noema Aguilar
- Jacob Koopmann

APPENDIX F – EVENT PICTURES



APPENDIX G – 09/11 WORKING GROUP MEETING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following questions were submitted by public members during the September 11 Working Group meeting and answered by the City of San Diego staff during the meeting or after the meeting.

1. Is the plan considering connectivity within and outside of Mid-City?

A: Yes, the city will address the issue of inadequate connectivity in the plan update.

2. How will the plan address climate change and resilience?

A: As noted in the Existing Conditions report, portions of the Mid-City planning area face exposure to floods (100-year and 500-year floodplain) and wildfire, and are at high risk to extreme heat events. The plan will address these climate change-driven risks and enhance community resilience through various strategies consistent with Climate Resilient SD. One of the primary approaches that addresses both flood and heat risk, is through the greening of Mid-City, which includes expanding the tree canopy, bioswales, and adding more parks and open spaces.

The plan will also support community resilience through policies that support resilience hub locations and/or the identification of where additional cooling centers would be beneficial to the community.

As the plan seeks to support a more multimodal transportation network, consideration of climate change impacts on both the network and the user will be incorporated. This could include ensuring shading at public transit stops or prioritizing cool pavement materials.

The Mid-City Communities Plan Update will support climate action planning through policies addressing wayfinding for evacuations, restoration of urban canyons, urban greening and infrastructure to provide shade and opportunities for cooling the community.

The Chollas Creek Watershed encompasses a large portion of the Mid-City planning area. The watershed plays a crucial role in maintaining the region's ecological balance, providing essential habitats for numerous plant and animal species and opportunities for community-serving recreation. The Chollas Creek Park Master Plan will be a long-term planning document to guide the sustainable future of Chollas Creek Watershed as a regional park. The Chollas Creek Park Master Plan aims to address climate change through

goals and policies to restore local habitats, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve stormwater management to enhance flood resilience. It will focus on ecological restoration, environmentally sustainable recreational spaces, and connecting communities with green trails, supporting environmental health and climate adaptation.

As part of San Diego's Equity Forward program, this project also seeks to ensure equitable access to green spaces for underserved communities, promoting inclusive planning and environmental justice. More details can be found on the [project website](https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/chollas-creek-master-plan) (<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/chollas-creek-master-plan>).

3. How will the presented framework handle existing proposals that are ongoing, given the urgency to incorporate these principles (i.e. expanding urban canopy) into current plans? For example, University Avenue Bikeway (UAB) project didn't budget for the addition of new street trees. How can you help with that?

A: The Community Plan Update is a long-range planning document, so it will typically not be able to impact any existing proposals or projects under current land use and zoning. Regarding the UAB, thanks to community advocacy and follow up from Council District 9 and other City staff, SANDAG, the project lead for the UAB, will plant up to 70 street trees along University Avenue.

4. How likely is it that a new park will be built in City Heights, considering that other parks have taken more than 20 years to complete?

A: Yes, park development can indeed be a lengthy process, often due to factors like funding, planning, and resources. For example, Phase II of the Mira Mesa Community Park took nearly 20 years to complete. Smaller parks, however, typically have shorter timelines of around 5 to 10 years.

City Heights has seen progress in new park spaces over the past two decades, with parks completed since the adoption of the 1998 Mid-City Community Plan. Examples include Charles Lewis III Memorial Park (2016) and Wightman Street Neighborhood Park (2017). In 2022, a General Development Plan for Chollas Triangle Park was also approved, providing a conceptual master plan for the park's layout, amenities, and activities.

Additionally, the current plan update will explore opportunities for new public spaces, such as plazas and paseos, that can be realized through private development partnerships. This approach can accelerate the creation of accessible recreational areas beyond traditional park development timelines.

Parks have been built or enhanced in City Heights since 2001:

- Teralta Neighborhood Park (completed in 2001)
- Park de la Cruz Neighborhood Park and Recreation Center (Phase 1 completed in 2001, Phase 2 in 2018)
- Cherokee Point Neighborhood Park - construction completed in 2005
- City Heights Square Mini Park (completed in 2013)
- Charles Lewis III Memorial Park (completed in 2016)
- Wightman Street Neighborhood Park (completed in 2017)

In addition to traditional parks, City Heights has benefited from joint-use agreements with local schools, creating shared park spaces such as Cherokee Point Elementary Joint Use Park (2004) and Rosa Parks Elementary Joint Use Park (2015).

With these recent developments, along with the continued focus on park planning and partnerships, the likelihood of new parks in City Heights is promising. The City is actively exploring more flexible options for public spaces, which can be implemented through private partnerships and community-driven projects.

5. How can we reintroduce joint use with schools in Mid-City?

A: The City meets with the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) quarterly and will raise this issue during those meetings. While the timeline for a joint use agreement is uncertain, SDUSD has been a reliable partner, and we will continue to advocate for its implementation.

6. Can the public substitute for non-attending Working Group (WG) members?

A: The Working Group members were selected through a specific process outlined on the City's website. Working Group members are aware of their responsibility to attend meetings, and they are given the flexibility to participate virtually or be absent if personal issues or time conflicts arise. The only way a public member could substitute for a Working Group member would be if a member either drops out or misses meetings beyond a reasonable limit. In that case, a selection process would be implemented.

7. If the city is facing budget issues and taxes are increasing, why are we hiring facilitators and consultants for these meetings? Why spend money on consultants, food, etc.? How does the funding for this work?

A: The Mid-City Communities Plan Update secured grant funding from both the city and the state through a competitive process. While these funds do come from taxes, they are allocated based on need. Some meetings may not require food or facilitators, but others do. For instance, in this specific meeting, both Working Group members and the public expressed appreciation for having food available, which helps them attend comfortably. Additionally, there has been a request for high-quality hybrid meeting formats. To facilitate

this, the city needs support with room setup, audio and screen arrangements, Zoom coordination and logistics, collecting responses both in-person and virtually, managing online capabilities, recording the meeting, and other related tasks.

8. Can parks be expected in Mid-City if it takes so long?

A: Please see the response to question 4.

9. How does our existing Land Use's category distribution compare to other Community Planning Areas (CPAs)?

A: The City of San Diego is divided up into 52 Community Planning Areas (CPA) which have their own Community Plan, so it would be difficult to compare the Land Use distribution of Mid-City with other CPAs. However, there was a similar question related to the fulfillment of current recreation value standards between Mid-City and other Community Planning Areas. For example, in 2022, Mid-City met 53% of the existing park standard, but please note that there is a variation between the four CPAs within Mid-City. In comparison, to 25% in Uptown CPA, 56% in University CPA, and 56% in Mira Mesa CPA.

10. Does Park scoring take into account the conditions of parks?

A: The recreational value scoring for parks considers the acreage of community-serving park spaces and includes park amenities. The condition of amenities — whether they are new or nearing the end of their useful life — is generally not considered unless amenities are removed or decommissioned. Notably, where 1:1 replacements are planned (e.g., for playgrounds), there is no increase in the park's recreation score. However, park planning does assess opportunities for adding new amenities that could appropriately expand user capacity when old features require replacement. As new capital investments are made to update and modernize parks, the community plan's Existing and Planned Parks and Recreation Facilities Matrix will identify opportunities to expand amenity offerings to meet the demands of growing populations. In such cases, the recreation value score will not increase for 1:1 replacements of aging infrastructure, but it will increase to reflect the addition of new amenities.

For example, if a new playground and an off-leash dog area are planned to replace an unused turf area, the park's recreational value score would reflect both a reduction due to the loss of turf and an increase due to the added value of new amenities. As mentioned above, these proposed changes and their impact on recreational value scoring will be outlined in the draft community plan's park matrix.

Additionally, the Park Needs Index, currently under development, will factor in park conditions to assess park needs. Parks rated as poor in the Parks and Recreation

Department Park Condition Index will lead to a lower Park Needs Index score thus prioritizing investments and funding opportunities for improved parks.

11. Is there a discussion on asset deficits for climate resilience?

Key challenges and opportunities related to Climate Resilience are highlighted in Chapter 3. The existing conditions report identifies the tree canopy coverage in Mid-City as the primary asset deficit. Additionally, the report identifies over \$1 billion in streets, water, sewer, stormwater, parks, and other public facility projects recently completed, ongoing and/or scheduled to begin in Mid-City.

The City of San Diego Five-Year Capital Infrastructure Planning (CIP) Outlook for [Fiscal Year 2024 to 2028](#) provides information on policy, regulatory, and other criteria used by Asset Managing Departments in determining capital infrastructure needs, as well as the basis for revenue projections of capital funds, and other considerations. Over the next five fiscal years, the CIP needs are estimated at \$9.75 billion. An estimated \$4.58 billion will be available for future capital needs, and an estimated additional \$5.17 billion would be required to meet all the needs outlined.

12. How are you going to choose priorities with so many suggested needs?

The Mid-City Communities Plan Update:

- Provides guidance and policies for how a community will be planned over the next 30 years;
- Considers land use, mobility, infrastructure, urban design, public facilities and services, natural resources, and economic development in the long-term plans for the community;
- Addresses Citywide goals in the General Plan and Climate Action Plan; and
- Guides how future planning applications are assessed.

The plan update's priorities and potential improvements are identified through the combination of inclusive public engagement processes and technical studies (i.e., existing conditions report).

In addition, the City of San Diego recently released the [Infrastructure Priorities Summary Report](#) (2024) which offers a comprehensive review of community feedback on infrastructure priorities, incorporating input from Asset Managing Departments (AMDs) and highlighting how community input influenced the formulation of the Five-Year Capital Infrastructure Planning Outlook. To learn more about the Citywide Infrastructure Priorities Engagement please visit: <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/work-programs/infrastructure-prioritization-engagement>.

13. When we saw the number of jobs by sectors, such as healthcare and retail, were those representative of the residents in the area or jobs in the area?

A: The jobs in the area (referring to Table 4-4 Employment Profile in the Mid-City Atlas).

14. For people that commute out of the community was that accounted for in the jobs by sector slide?

A: The jobs by sector (referring to Table 4-4 Employment Profile in the Mid-City Atlas) represent existing jobs within Mid-City.

15. Is it beyond the scope of this report to address why the population declines overtime and why people are leaving Mid-City?

A: It is beyond the scope of this report to look at specific reasons why people might be leaving Mid-City, but there are several state and county level reports that may provide some insights:

- According to the Public Policy Institute of California:
 - [California lost 433,000 people between July 2020 and July 2023](#). Most of the loss occurred during the first year of the pandemic and was driven by a sharp rise in residents moving to other states. However, fewer births, higher deaths, and lower international migration also played a role (Jan. 2024).
 - [Housing has become the dominant reason cited for leaving California](#). Most people who move across state lines cite employment, housing, or family as the primary reason for moving. Since 2014, California has experienced net losses of almost 700,000 adults who cite housing as the primary reason for moving, a sharp increase from 2004–13, according to the Current Population Survey (Feb. 2024).
- According to the San Diego Union Tribune:
 - [Demographers agree that the leading motivator](#) (driving people to move out from San Diego) is the region's unabated rise in the cost of housing, coupled with a still lingering willingness of many employers to permit remote work.
- According to inewssource & KPBS
 - [Majority of San Diegans \(61%\) consider moving, citing housing crisis, living costs, survey says](#) (Oct. 25, 2023).
- According to the Economic Innovation Group:
 - [Young families have continued leaving big-cities post-pandemic](#) (July 10, 2024).

The findings from Mid-City Atlas shows Mid-City population peaked in the year 2000. The Mid-City Communities Plan (1998) significantly reduced the opportunity for new homes due

to inadequate community facilities. The update to the plan and rezoning action reduced the zoned capacity by over 10,000 homes along major commercial corridors.

The implementation of community plan also created additional development requirements via the Central Urbanized Planned District. Homebuilding, also, did not keep pace with job and population growth in San Diego, with a regional housing shortage estimated to be between 90,000 to 100,000 homes.

16. Does this report address climate threats?

A: Yes. Chapter 3. Sustainability, Equity & Climate Resilience highlights major threats, such as, air pollution, wildfire, flooding and urban heat island effects. Also, please see our response to question 2.

17. Why is it that the Mid-City population, particularly young people in the area, has declined? How would young people be defined in this context?

A: Please see our response to question 15. In the Mid-City Atlas, Figure 1-5 illustrates the Mid-City Population Change between 2000 to 2022 by age group. There are fewer young people (under 40) living in Mid-City today, while there has been a significant percentage increase of older people (50 to 79). The most considerable % decrease in age cohort were children under 10, with a 38% decline, while those aged 60 to 69 saw a 95% increase compared to year 2000. The impact of fewer children and youth help explain the 36% decline in student enrollment in the San Diego Unified School District from 2000 to 2022 (Figure 6-3).

18. Which Community Based Organizations (CBOs) were reached out to during the engagement process?

A: City staff sent invitations to forty-two CBOs and heard back from eleven organizations. The City held eleven community interviews as part of the Mid-City Communities Plan Update to allow community organizations to share their mission and community priorities and to inform them with an overview of the plan update; for more information please review our [Overview of Key Community Engagement Efforts](#). The forty-two CBOs contacted by the City Planning Department are listed below:

1. City Heights Business Association
2. Love City Heights
3. Friends of the Kensington-Normal Heights Library
4. Rolando Community Council
5. El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association
6. Adams Avenue Business Associations

7. Southeastern Diamond Business District (SDBD)
8. City Heights Community Development Corporation (CDC)
9. Peace Resource Center of San Diego and Library
10. Mid-City CAN (Community Advocacy Network)
11. LISC San Diego
12. Speak City Heights
13. Price Philanthropies
14. Normal Heights Urban Art (NHUA)
15. Normal Heights Community Association
16. Friends of Normal Heights Canyons
17. City Heights Community Recreation Group
18. Talmadge Community Council
19. Kensington Talmage Community Association
20. Kensington Talmadge Business Association
21. San Diego Canyonlands
22. San Diego College of Continuing Education- Mid City Campus
23. Environmental Health Coalition
24. Bikes del Pueblo
25. Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans — PANA
26. San Diego Food System Alliance
27. Little Saigon
28. Oak Park Community Council
29. Chollas Lake Recreation Council
30. Friends of the Oak Park Library
31. El Cerrito Community Council
32. Rolando Park Community Council
33. City Heights Town Council
34. Ridgeview Neighborhood Association
35. Webster Community Council
36. Webster Neighborhood Watch
37. Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association
38. Azalea Park Neighborhood Association
39. Bike SD
40. Friends of the Oak Park Library
41. Reality Changers
42. Normal Heights for Smart Growth