

CITY OF SAN DIEGO

SAFE STREETS & ROADS FOR ALL ACTION PLAN

WORKING PAPER 1: PLANS & STUDIES REVIEW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of San Diego has made considerable progress in advancing traffic safety through enacting many policies, plans, and standards. The project team reviewed relevant plans to strengthen our understanding of the issues previously identified, prior leadership and public input obtained, and policy guidelines established. This review will be used to identify opportunities and challenges for the design and implementation of low stress networks and potential new traffic calming and quick-build concepts that have been introduced in recent years. The existing and funded multimodal transportation facilities identified in prior plans will be mapped to provide a citywide context and to identify missing links and opportunities for establishing a quick build program, speed management plan, and comprehensive slow streets program.

Themes among the adopted plans include safety and access for people who walk, bike, and roll. **Table 1** outlines recently implemented and active policies, plans, and standards that the project team reviewed.

Table 1 Previous Plans Reviewed

Document	Document Type	Date Adopted	Quick Build	Focus Speed Management	Slow Streets
San Diego Climate Action Plan	Citywide Plan	2022			
Vision Zero Strategic Plan	Citywide Plan	2020			
Systemic Safety Fatal Crashes	Citywide Plan	2024			
Systemic Safety Injury Crashes	Citywide Plan	2019			
SANDAG Regional Plan	Regional Plan	2021			
San Diego Traffic Calming Guidelines	Citywide Plan	2006			
Pavement Management Plan	Citywide Plan	2024			
Mobility Master Plan (Draft)	Citywide Plan	2024			
Bicycle Master Plan (being updated)	Citywide Plan	2013			
Pedestrian Master Plan	Citywide Plan	2006			
Street Design Manual (being updated)	Manual	2017			
California Code, Vehicle Code - VEH § 21101 (f)	Code/Policy	2023			
Assembly Bill No. 43	Code/Policy	2021			
Criteria for Installation of Traffic Signals 200-06	Code/Policy	1996			
Criteria for the Installation of Stop Signs 200-08	Code/Policy	1994			
Complete Streets Policy 900-23	Code/Policy	2024			
Mission Valley Community Plan	Community Plan	2019			
Keany Mesa Community Plan	Community Plan	2020			
Mira Mesa Community Plan	Community Plan	2022			
Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment	Community Plan	2024			
University Community Plan Update	Community Plan	2024			
Encanto Neighborhoods Community Plan	Community Plan	2015			
Barrio Logan Community Plan	Community Plan	2023			

CITYWIDE AND REGIONAL PLANS

The City has several citywide plans that address mobility, access, safety, climate, and asset management citywide. These plans provide valuable context to the City's initiatives to encourage active transportation and improve neighborhood safety and quality of life through roadway improvement strategies.

Mobility Plans

- **Bicycle Master Plan Update:** Updated recommendations and prioritization plan for active transportation projects to meet citywide goals, with increased emphasis on equity and serving areas with the greatest needs.
- **Pedestrian Master Plan:** Multi-year framework for planning, implementing, and prioritizing pedestrian improvements and fostering walkable communities.
- **Mobility Master Plan (Draft):** A guide for implementing, evaluating, and prioritizing citywide projects and programs to advance mobility in a sustainable and equitable manner.

The City's Mobility Plans emphasize the demand for safe and comfortable citywide bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Each of the listed mobility plans conducted robust public engagement and administered surveys that will inform this project's efforts. Key findings include:

The City's Bicycle Master Plan survey found that over 70% of residents *prefer off-street paved bike paths over other bike facility types, followed by on street bike lanes*. The survey also found that most respondents indicated that *more bike lanes on major streets* would influence their decision to ride. The Pedestrian Master Plan survey found that over 80% of survey respondents walk recreationally (without a specific destination, e.g., exercise or dog walking). Survey respondents indicated the following as high priorities: *making crosswalks more visible, installing Leading Pedestrian Intervals, and improving connectivity*.

The Mobility Master Plan outlines several mobility trends, including traffic calming and slow streets initiatives that promote safer infrastructure for vulnerable users. Public engagement for this plan included pop-up events, surveys, committees and advisory boards, and community-based organization engagement. One survey found that the majority of San Diego residents agreed that bike lane improvements/expansion would improve community mobility, followed by sidewalk improvements/expansion. The robust public engagement from this plan can help streamline engagement conducted as part of this project. Additionally, the Mobility Master Plan introduces a prioritization plan using a pedestrian model and bike model to predict inclination for people to walk, roll, and bike.

The feedback, goals, objectives, recommended projects, and prioritization methodology from these plans will be used to inform this project's recommendations for the historically disadvantaged community quick build program, the speed management program, and the slow streets program.

Vision Zero/Safety Plans

- **Vision Zero Strategic Plan 2020-2025:** Course of action to eliminate severe injuries, road deaths, and eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by designing safe streets.
- **Fatal Report:** Ten-year analysis (2014-2023) that evaluates intersection characteristics where fatal crashes occurred.
- **Injury Report:** Report summarizing injury crashes, identifying trends and roadway characteristics, and proposing actions to reduce injury crashes.
- **San Diego Traffic Calming Guidelines:** Report summarizing the City's approach and processes for traffic calming, including approved treatments.

The Vision Zero Strategic Plan involved a robust data collection and assessment of existing facilities, which will help inform the recommendations proposed in this project. The plan advances a data-driven approach through the Systemic Safety Analysis Report Program (SSARP), including using crash data to identify predictive crash patterns based on street typologies. The plan also identifies improvement locations where pedestrian hot spots are located and identifies over 500 potential locations for roundabouts citywide, with approximately 100 located in communities of concern. This data-driven, systematic approach to safer streets will be used to help identify locations for speed reduction and traffic calming treatments.

The 2024 Systemic Safety Analysis reviews fatal crashes at intersections over a ten-year period (2014-2023). The report found that common intersection characteristics included:

- Intersections between *four-lane and two-lane streets along transit routes* and with three or more injury crashes in ten years
- Intersections between *two two-lane streets along transit routes* with two or more injury crashes in ten years

The 2019 Injury Crash Report discusses crash trends and found that *75% of fatal and severe crashes occur at or near intersections*. The report explores safety countermeasures installed and implemented by the City and recommends incorporating safe systems like designing roundabouts and medians, as well as reducing vehicle speeds to help minimize crash impacts.

The City's Traffic Calming Guidelines serves as a foundation for defining and making the case for traffic calming. The Plan outlines the City's traffic calming goals, policies, guidelines, process, implementation, and design guiding principles. Additionally, the plan is a traffic calming toolbox for speed and volume reduction strategies that will be used to inform the slow streets program.

Climate and Asset Management

- **Pavement Management Plan:** Comprehensive plan for identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing pavement maintenance with considerations for land uses and equity considerations. Starting in FY24, the City will begin using an equitable community investment factor when selecting streets for maintenance and rehabilitation.
- **San Diego Climate Action Plan:** A roadmap for the City to move towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 through six strategies: decarbonization, renewable energy, transportation and land use planning, clean communities, resiliency, and emerging climate actions.

The City's climate and asset management plans provide guidance on maintaining the City's existing infrastructure while advancing plans and new infrastructure in alignment with climate action goals. The Pavement Management Plan emphasizes the importance of incorporating equity into decision making through:

- **Equity in Access:** Enhancing access to city services, destinations, and programs.
- **Equity in Infrastructure:** Addressing disparities in infrastructure maintenance.
- **Equity in Communities of Concern:** Maintaining a Climate Equity Fund that targets Council Districts to prevent enduring underinvestment.
- **Equity in Processes:** Ensuring processes like budget decisions and policies are being guided by an inclusive equity lens.

The Climate Action Plan establishes targets and actions for increasing the number of San Diego residents who walk, bike, and take transit. The guidance provided in these plans will inform this project's plans for implementation and prioritization of recommended treatments.

Other City/Regional Plans

In addition to the City's citywide plans, the **San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG) Regional Plan** was adopted in 2021 and provides guidance on identifying, prioritizing, and planning for disadvantaged communities in the region. The plan outlines a Fix It First strategy, which prioritizes funding in disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the plan outlines "5 Big Moves" to rethinking regional mobility.

The plan describes expected population and job growth, with most growth occurring within the City, as a result of focused infill development. SANDAG expects the majority of job growth to occur in the community planning areas of Downtown, Kearny Mesa, and Otay Mesa. SANDAG's Regional Plan will inform all three of this project's sub-plans by highlighting priority areas within the region due to their proximity to transit, density, and growth.

Relevant to active transportation, the SANDAG plan identifies criteria for the selection of bikeway facilities which are comfortable for people of all ages and abilities based on context such as posted speed, number of vehicle lanes, and functional classification of the roadway (**Figure 1**). It also identifies criteria for bike network density and directness to create networks which are convenient for all. Regarding network density, the plan recommends a primary network grid of high quality bike corridors spaced approximately ¼ to ½ mile and a network of local slow streets approximately every 800-900 feet.

Figure 1 | SANDAG Bike Facility Selection Tool

Corridor Typology	Road Classification	Traffic Volume (ADT)	Motor Traffic Operating Speed ⁱ (mph)	Lanes per Direction	Facility Type ⁱⁱ		
					Local Network	Primary Network	Bicycle Highway / Regional Network
Corridor F ⁱⁱⁱ	Local or Minor Collector	<1500	≤20 mph	No Centerline or 1 Lane	Mixed Traffic	Bicycle Blvd.	Bicycle Blvd. w/ Priority at intersections
		Bike Lane				Protected Bikeway w/ Priority at intersections	
		>4000			Bike lane or Protected Bikeway ^{iv}		
Corridor E	Collector or Arterial	Any	≤30 mph	1 Lane	Buffered Bike Lane or Protected Bikeway		
	2 Lane						
	3 Lane						
Corridor D	Arterial		≤50 mph	Any	Protected Bikeway		
Corridor C	Highway						
Corridor B	Freeway ^v				Protected Bikeway or Alternate Route		
Corridor A	Freeway		>50 mph				

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

In addition to citywide plans, San Diego has many documents that provide guidance, direction, and standards for new projects and programs. The project team reviewed the following guidance documents, codes, and policies that are relevant to the work that will be completed as part of this project's scope:

- **Street Design Manual:** Guidance for providing information for the design of the public right-of-way that recognizes tradeoffs and the varied purposes that a street serves.
- **California Code, Vehicle Code - VEH § 21101 (f):** Code that allows local authorities to implement slow street programs by limiting access or speed to certain streets through identified Slow Streets programs and roadway design features
- **Assembly Bill No. 43 - Chapter 690:** Bill that amends the law that allows local authorities to reduce speed limits based on defined criteria
- **Criteria for Installation of Traffic Signals 200-06:** Policy states that only intersections meeting the minimum warrants should be considered for traffic signals. The satisfaction of a warrant is not necessarily justification for signals.
- **Criteria for the Installation of Stop Signs 200-08:** Policy states that the installation of stop signs shall be made using engineering judgment along with the stated criteria.
- **Complete Streets Policy 900-23:** Policy to guide improvements to the public right-of-way so they are designed, operated, and maintained as a well-connected network of multimodal facilities and services that balance access, mobility, and safety for all foreseeable users regardless of location, physical ability, age, or income.

The Street Design Manual provides design details for pedestrian and accessibility design that will be referenced when identifying locations and recommendations for treatments as part of this project's scope. The manual provides limited guidance on bicycle infrastructure and refers users to the City's Bicycle Master Plan. Chapter 3 provides guidance on traffic calming that will be incorporated into the recommendations for this project's slow streets subsection. The plan details horizontal and vertical deflection strategies, intersection pop-outs, traffic diverters, and channelization, with examples, use cases, and design details for each strategy.

The California Code, Vehicle Code VEH § 21101 (f) allows local agencies to implement a slow streets program, which may include closing streets to vehicular traffic or limiting access and speed on local streets that connect to bicycle networks, green spaces, or business districts. It also states that local authorities can use roadway design

features like curbs, islands, or traffic barriers to implement slow streets programs. The code outlines the process for implementing a slow streets program, including *adopting an ordinance for the program, conducting engagement, safety and mobility analysis, and maintaining a publicly accessible website with information on the program*.

Assembly Bill No. 43 – amends the traditional speed limit setting process to provide local agencies additional opportunities to reduce speed limits. Traditional studies allow local agencies to set speeds based on an engineering and traffic study based on the 85th percentile speed. The bill allows rounding down to the next 5 mph instead of to the nearest, and then provides three specific cases in which speed limits may be further lowered:

- **Safety Corridors:** Speeds may be reduced by up to 5 miles per hour lower than the speed indicated by the engineering and traffic study if the corridor is on a designated roadway where the highest number of severe and fatal injury collisions occur. Only 1/5 of the City’s roadway can be designated as safety corridors.
- **High Pedestrian & Bicycle Activity Generators:** Speeds may be reduced by up to 5 miles per hour lower than the speed indicated by the engineering and traffic study in the portions of the roadway within 1,320 feet of one or more of 13 designated generators. Generators include employment centers, street facing retail, parks/trails/recreation, schools/universities, senior centers, cultural/entertainment/community centers, religious facilities, health/medical facilities, transit stops, transit oriented developments/transit priority areas, sidewalks, crosswalks, bikeways, four-way signalized intersections, presence of micromobility devices, presence of vulnerable groups (children, seniors, people with disabilities, people using assistive devices, and unhoused people), MPO/RTPA defined disadvantaged communities, students, and needs identified in safety plans.
- **Business Activity Districts:** Allows for the prima facie speed to be set to 20 or 25 mph in areas defined as business districts. The road must be 4 lanes or less, have a speed limit of 25 or 30 mph, and also meet 3 of the following 4 criteria: at least 50 percent of contiguous property as retail or dining use; on street parking present; traffic controls or stop signs every 600 feet or less, and/or marked crosswalks not controlled by a traffic device.

COMMUNITY PLANS

The project team reviewed local community plans to gain insight on community-level goals, policies, and visions. The community plans that the project team reviewed include:

- Mission Valley Community Plan
- Keany Mesa Community Plan
- Mira Mesa Community Plan
- Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment
- University Community Plan Update
- Encanto Neighborhoods Community Plan
- Barrio Logan Community Plan

The policies and strategies outlined in the community plans were informed by the San Diego General Plan, San Diego’s Climate Action Plan, and the SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan. Several community plans incorporate equity as a vital role throughout the document; like in Barrio Logan, the plan emphasizes policies that mandate equitable community engagement and project prioritization. The plan lays a foundation for equitably approaching and involving historically disadvantaged communities and prioritizing serving these communities during project prioritization and selection. Other community plans like Hillcrest’s and University City’s describe incorporating design and mobility policies to improve traffic calming and identify streets and neighborhoods that would benefit from lower vehicle speeds. Finally, some plans, like Mira Mesa’s, point to specific streets and intersections where non-motorists would benefit from lower traffic speeds.

The information provided in these community plans will inform slow street strategies, traffic calming measures, and locations to consider for speed reduction.