



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Planning Commission

DATE ISSUED: March 12, 2026 REPORT NO. PC-26-007

HEARING DATE: March 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Mid-City Communities Plan Update Workshop

REFERENCES: [January 9, 2025 Mid-City Communities Plan Update Workshop, Report No. PC-25-003](#)

SUMMARY

This is a second workshop for the Planning Commission to provide input on the Mid-City Communities Plan Update. No action is required of the Planning Commission at this time. The workshop is for Commissioners to share their ideas and priorities for the community plan early in the process. A previous workshop with the Planning Commission was held on January 9, 2025, to gather input on the summary of the first phase of the public engagement and existing condition reports, which captured the community's ideas for the future and provided an overview of current conditions. This workshop will provide an opportunity for discussion on the Mid-City Communities Plan Update and for the Commission to provide input on draft documents that were released during the second phase of the community plan update, which include: *Draft Mid-City Ideas Report, Draft Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks, Corridor Concept Analysis and Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary.*

BACKGROUND

The Mid-City Communities Plan covers 8,052 acres and includes four communities: City Heights, Eastern Area, Kensington-Talmage and Normal Heights. The northern area of Mid-City is next to Interstate 8 and the College Area community, while the west adjoins Interstate 805, State Route 15, and the North Park and Greater Golden Hill communities. On the east side is the City of La Mesa, and the southern portion is bounded by State Route 94 and the communities of Southeastern and Encanto Neighborhoods. There are 24 neighborhoods within the four communities (Attachment 1). In 2024, Mid-City had approximately 135,172 people and 53,279 homes, while its businesses employed over 21,000 people in 2022.

Mid-City includes some of the oldest communities in the City of San Diego. Much of the western portion of the community saw rapid growth in the 1910-1930 era, before the Second World War, while development east of 54th Street generally occurred in the post-World War II period. Overall, residential development is a mix of single-family and multi-family homes, with pockets of varying multi-family densities ranging from duplex development to early century apartment courts, garden apartments and higher-density residential and mixed-use development. Commercial and business development have historically been concentrated along the three major east-west corridors: El Cajon Boulevard, Adams Avenue and University Avenue. These commercial corridors have a variety of existing uses, including neighborhood-serving businesses, restaurants, offices, auto repair shops, recycling centers and storage facilities.

Housing & Demographics

The Mid-City population peaked in 2000 at 146,394 people. Since 2000, the total population of Mid-City has declined by 8 percent, while the City of San Diego saw a 14 percent increase in total population (Table 1). Compared to 2000, in 2024, there were 11,222 fewer people estimated to be living in Mid-City.

Table 1. City of San Diego and Mid-City Communities: Total Population Change 2000 to 2024

	2000	2024	% Change
City of San Diego	1,223,400	1,394,317	14%
Mid-City Communities	146,394	135,172	-8%

Source: SANDAG Population & Housing Estimates Jan. 2024; SANDAG: Census 2000 Profile

In 2000, Mid-City had 52,033 total homes. Between 2000 and 2024, approximately 1,246 homes were added in the community, with a total of 53,279 homes, which is a 2 percent increase over 24 years (Table 2). In 2024, the persons per household in the City of San Diego was 2.51 compared to 2.49 for Mid-City.

Table 2. City of San Diego and Mid-City Communities: Total Housing Change 2000 to 2024

	2000	2024	% Change
City of San Diego	469,689	564,252	20%
Mid-City Communities	52,033	53,279	2%

Source: SANDAG Population & Housing Estimates January 2024; SANDAG: Census 2000 Profile

Affordable Housing

According to [San Diego Housing Commission data](#) from February 2026, there are currently 3,253 deed-restricted affordable homes in Mid-City, or about 6 percent of the total homes in the community, with almost 60 percent of those affordable homes located within City Heights (Table 3). City Heights also has 28 affordable transitional beds.

Table 3. Mid-City Communities: Deed-Restricted Affordable Homes - Existing

Community Plan Area	Deed-Restricted Affordable Homes	Percent of Total Affordable Homes
City Heights	2,148	63%
Eastern Area	716	21%
Kensington-Talmadge	395	12%
Normal Heights	147	4%
Total	3,406	100%

Source: San Diego Housing Commission, February 2026

What are the Community Plan Update's Key Objectives?

The City is updating the Mid-City Communities Plan to identify opportunities for new homes, businesses and infrastructure to benefit everyone in Mid-City, as well as community members across the City. The community plan update process will assist in the implementation of the General Plan City of Villages strategy and Climate Action Plan by further addressing the following key objectives, as well as others that arise through the update process:

- Increasing opportunities for additional residential and employment land uses within walking distance to transit stops;

- Revitalize major activity centers as walkable destinations;
- Identify appropriate locations to support a diversity of employment and mixed-use land uses;
- Address Climate Action Plan strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Strengthening Mid-City's commercial corridors and employment areas;
- Improving walking, biking, and transit connections to homes, jobs, and amenities;
- Preserving open space canyon areas; and
- Addressing public facilities, parks and recreation, and infrastructure needs.

How will the Community Plan Update be consistent with Blueprint San Diego (General Plan)?

In July 2024, the City Council adopted an amendment to the City's General Plan known as Blueprint San Diego, including the Village Climate Goal Propensity Map (Attachment 2) to identify areas with the greatest transit competitiveness and where opportunities for new homes can most effectively implement the General Plan's City of Villages Strategy. The Village Climate Goal Propensity Map serves as a guide for community plan update efforts, including the Mid-City Communities Plan Update, to align with Climate Action Plan goals for increasing people's ability to get around without driving alone. This map indicates that the Mid-City should include increased opportunities for new homes and jobs within the communities, given the existing and planned transit, which will help reduce the amount of driving and support sustainable growth.

PLAN UPDATE STATUS

What types of public engagement have been conducted so far?

Since the launch of the community plan update in winter 2024, the Mid-City Communities Plan Update process has engaged more than 3,000 people, who have provided over 9,300 comments through 103 events and two online surveys.

Mid-City Communities Plan Update Working Group

As part of an inclusive engagement process, the City conducted an open application process to form the Working Group representing Mid-City communities of City Heights, Eastern Area, Kensington-Talmadge and Normal Heights. The primary role of the Working Group is to inform the Mid-City Plan Update process by convening approximately every three months. To satisfy this role, the group will:

- Be involved in the community plan update from start to finish.
- Review project materials related to public engagement, research, and technical studies.
- Suggest ideas that could be included in the plan update.
- Provide feedback on proposals related to the plan update.

Four assigned seats are reserved for designees from the City Heights, Eastern Area, Kensington-Talmadge and Normal Heights planning groups. The rest of the twelve members were selected based on a combination of their community involvement, interests and objectives for representation across the Mid-City communities and demographics. The 16-member roster is designed to ensure that all members have an opportunity to participate in meeting discussions. The Working Group meetings are typically hybrid, allowing both in-person and virtual attendance for accessibility. The Working Group has convened seven times publicly since the launch of the plan update process:

Date	Meeting	Topic
Apr. 24, 2024	Orientation	Working Group Orientation
Jun. 26, 2024	First	<i>Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report (Part 1)</i>
Sept. 11, 2024	Second	<i>Mid-City Atlas (Part 2) and Overview of Key Engagement Efforts</i>
Dec. 11, 2024	Third	<i>Existing Conditions Mobility Assessment and Historic Preservation</i>
Mar. 19, 2025	Fourth	<i>Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary and Draft Historic Context Statement & Focused Historic Reconnaissance Survey</i>
Aug. 13, 2025	Fifth	<i>Draft Mid-City Ideas Report (Part 1)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability, Equity & Climate Resilience, Land Use & Economic Prosperity and Urban Design
Oct. 29, 2025	Sixth	<i>Draft Mid-City Ideas Report (Part 2)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History & Place, Mobility, and Parks, Public Facilities & Open Space
Feb. 25, 2026	Seventh	<i>Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary, Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks, and Corridor Concept Analysis</i>

Public Engagement Summary Reports

The City Planning Department has published two public engagement summary reports so far in the community plan update process. The *Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary* highlights what we heard in 2024, while the *Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary* highlights what we heard in 2025.

Phase 1 Engagement Summary was released in December 2024. During 2024, more than 2,500 people provided over 8,300 public comments through 90 events and two online surveys, which served as valuable input to guide the formation of the frameworks, visions, principles, goals, concepts and key policies highlighted in the *Draft Mid-City Ideas Report* (Attachment 3). A broad cross-section of community members participated in various activities such as:

- Two online surveys;
- Two interactive workshops;
- Four mini-workshops;
- Four working group meetings;
- Five community forums;
- Six community office hours;
- 11 community interviews;
- 13 planning group meetings;
- 16 pop-up stations; and
- 27 youth engagement sessions.

Phase 2 Engagement Summary (Attachment 4) was released in February 2026. During 2025, more than 670 people provided over 1,000 public comments to key planning documents through 13 community events, online public comment form, emails, letters and postcards. These comments will serve as valuable input to inform the first draft of the Mid-City Communities Plan. A broad cross-section of community members participated in various activities such as:

- One pop-up station;
- Three working group meetings;
- Four planning group meetings; and

- Five community office hours.

For more detailed information, please see the *Phase 1 Engagement Summary and Attachments* and the *Phase 2 Engagement Summary and Attachments*.

What types of planning studies have been completed so far?

Several planning studies have been completed so far in the plan update process:

- *Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report*
- *Mid-City Existing Conditions Mobility Assessment*
- *Historic Context Statement and Survey*
- *Mid-City Ideas Report*
- *Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks and Corridor Concept Analysis*

Each study is summarized in this section.

Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report

The City released the *Draft Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report* in June 2024 and the *Final Draft Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report* in May 2025 (Attachment 5). The Atlas provides a snapshot of existing conditions, challenges and opportunities and focuses on mappable resources, trends and critical concerns that will frame choices for the long-term physical development of the Mid-City communities. The Atlas includes maps, photos, charts and tables about the history and place, sustainability, equity and climate resilience, land use and development, mobility, and parks, public facilities and open space. The Atlas will help inform and facilitate:

- Community input on planning issues, priorities and vision for the future;
- Development of alternatives and concepts related to land use, mobility, urban design, public facilities, parks and recreation; and
- Formulation of policies and implementation actions for the updated Community Plan.

Accompanying the draft report is an Interactive Web Map and Appendices that contain supporting data broken down by community planning area related to existing park and recreation facilities, demographic, historical San Diego Unified School District enrollment, recent and upcoming Capital Improvements Program projects, and a list of previous plans and studies. The City Planning Department received and responded to 322 comments on the existing conditions report, with most comments incorporated in the final version.

Historic Context Statement and Focused Historic Reconnaissance Survey

The City released the draft *Historic Context Statement* in December 2024 and the draft *Focused Historic Reconnaissance Survey* in March 2025:

- *Historic Context Statement* (Attachment 6) identified the historic development themes and property types that shaped the built environment of the Mid-City communities. The Historic Context Statement is used to identify locations in the Mid-City communities that may contain significant historical resources.
- *Focused Historic Reconnaissance Survey* (Attachment 7) identified areas of shared development history and evaluated their potential historic significance. Through this high-level field effort, or “windshield survey,” potential historic districts are identified for further survey, and post-World War II tracts are assessed to determine whether they qualify for exemption from historical review.

The City Planning Department received 135 comments to improve the draft *Historic Context Statement* and *Survey*. Most comments were incorporated in the final versions, released in November 2025. Both documents will inform the heritage preservation policies and recommendations in the draft community plan.

Draft Mid-City Ideas Report

The *Draft Mid-City Ideas Report*, released in August 2025, explores preliminary visions, frameworks and concepts related to History and Place, Sustainability, Equity and Climate Resilience, Land Use, Urban Design, Mobility, and Parks, Public Facilities and Open Space. The document was informed by extensive public engagement and existing conditions analyses. The purpose of the report is to share ideas and concepts with the public to help further discuss and receive input that will inform the draft community plan. Key ideas presented in the report are highlighted below:

- The Introduction chapter provides insights and key findings from technical studies and an overview of the engagement activities so far, while highlighting the overall Mid-City visions, principles and framework.
- The History and Place chapter highlights the draft goals, proposed historic districts and key policies. Potential historic districts are:
 - Carteri Center
 - Kensington
 - Talmadge Park
- The Sustainability, Equity and Climate Resilience chapter highlights the draft goals, framework, case studies, concepts and key policies related to:
 - Sustainable and regenerative design, local food system, preserving and expanding affordable homes, minimizing displacement, reconnecting communities and transportation justice, urban forestry and blue and green infrastructure.
- The Land Use and Economic Prosperity chapter highlights the draft goals, policies, place-types, building types, and five high-level land use concepts:
 - Concept 1: Transit Villages, Corridors and Neighborhoods
 - Concept 2: Transit Villages, Corridors and Neighborhoods + Fair Housing
 - Concept 3: Back to the 1984 Community Plan
 - Concept 4: Distributed Growth
 - Concept 5: Transit Centers and Corridors
- The Urban Design chapter highlights the draft goal, policies, a preliminary urban design framework, and design principles and thematic concepts, such as enhancing and expanding cultural hubs. High-level concepts for eight study areas are also provided for:
 - Mid-City Center
 - Marketplace at the Grove
 - Federal Boulevard and Euclid Avenue
 - El Cajon Boulevard and 54th Street
 - El Cajon Boulevard and College Avenue
 - El Cajon Boulevard (Motezuma Road to 73rd Street)
 - University Avenue (54th Street and 69th Street)
 - Adams Avenue
- The Mobility chapter highlights the draft goals, policies, currently planned pedestrian facilities and bicycle networks, planned transit and regional vehicular networks from the 2025 Regional Plan, and other mobility concepts.

- The Parks, Public Facilities and Open Space chapter highlights draft goals, policies, framework, and proposed projects related to parks, open space, trails and habitat restoration, green corridors and public facilities.

During the summer and fall of 2025, City staff presented the *Draft Ideas Report* at the two Working Group Meetings convened in Normal Heights and City Heights, and at four planning group meetings in City Heights, Eastern Area, Kensington-Talmadge, and Normal Heights. The City Planning Department received 887 comments on the *Draft Ideas Report*. These comments will inform the refinement of concepts, study areas and policies that will help shape the first draft of the Mid-City Communities Plan.

Draft Planned Pedestrian Network, Planned Bicycle Network and Corridor Concept Analysis

The City released the planned pedestrian and bicycle networks (Attachment 8) and corridor concept analysis in February 2026 (Attachment 9):

- Planned pedestrian network highlights pedestrian routes throughout Mid-City and identifies district sidewalks, corridor sidewalks, connector sidewalks, neighborhood sidewalks, and ancillary pedestrian facilities.
- Planned bicycle network highlights bicycle facilities throughout Mid-City to show where multi-use paths, bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, and separated bikeways are located and how they are connected.
- Corridor concept analysis highlights aerial drawings and 3-dimensional renderings of the existing conditions along the ten priority corridors, including curb-to-curb widths, median type, sidewalk details, parking type, transit information, and traffic volumes.

What type of community comments have been received after the release of the *Draft Ideas Report* and other planning documents?

History and Place

- Historic Context Statement & Reconnaissance Survey: Some community members expressed concerns about the fragmentation of historic districts. Some asked for consistency, alignment, and corrections between the *Historic Context Statement*, *Reconnaissance Survey*, and *Draft Ideas Report*. Some community members showed support for preservation-driven placemaking and policies, and a request to include new requirements for developments in historically designated areas, such as incorporating traditional vernacular architectural styles. Both the *Historic Context Statement* and *Reconnaissance Survey* were updated in November 2025 to reflect community feedback. The City is also updating its Heritage Preservation Program through *Preservation & Progress*, which is exploring objective design standards for historic properties and districts.
- Cultural Districts: Some community members expressed support for creating the Somali Town cultural district along University Avenue. The proposed Somali Town Cultural District is recognized in the *Draft Ideas Report* as an area characterized by existing Somali-owned businesses, community gathering spaces, and public art that reflects the East African identity. The City will work with community members to further define the extent and goals of the proposed cultural district, as well as opportunities for future placemaking.

Sustainability, Equity and Climate Resilience

- Air Quality & Noise adjacent to Freeways: Some community members supported expanding urban greening efforts, including trees, shrubs, shaded sidewalks, and soundwalls to mitigate air and noise adjacent to freeways and next to homes. The City is evaluating policies to partner

with Caltrans to add landscaping along freeways on streets such as Terrace Drive, 40th Street, and Central Avenue.

- Urban Forestry and Shade: Some community members encouraged expanding the Urban Forestry Program, using public land where appropriate, while raising concerns about long-term tree maintenance costs. The Urban Forestry Diagram in the *Draft Ideas Report* identifies suitable corridors for street trees. The City will continue to develop urban forestry concepts and explore policies that support enhanced tree canopy coverage and other opportunities for shade coverage in public spaces.
- Reconnecting Communities: Some community members supported expanding Teralta Park over the freeway and urban greening alongside freeways, while also questioning the feasibility of visionary, large-scale projects. There were requests for further discussion of significant displacement from past freeway construction. The draft community plan will expand and refine recommendations to reconnect neighborhoods across Interstate 805 and State Route 15 by expanding the existing freeway lid, identifying new locations, improving pedestrian, scooter and bicycle amenities and facilities, and placemaking activations.
- Affordability and Anti-Displacement: Some community members expressed the need for new development to provide additional affordable homes and to prioritize long-term and displaced tenants for housing and ownership opportunities. The City is looking to update its inclusionary housing regulations to help balance the need for affordable housing and overall affordable housing production in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing, while minimizing displacement through enforcement of tenant protection, condominium conversion, and dwelling unit protection ordinances. It is critical that any requirements related to affordable housing will not adversely affect the overall production of housing.
- Urban Agriculture: Some community members requested clarification on the potential community garden sites and supported exploring additional suitable locations, including public land where appropriate. The City is exploring policies to support the use of public land for urban agriculture and is considering community garden locations in the draft community plan.
- Emergency Preparedness / Resilience / Public Safety: Some community members wanted to strengthen neighborhood resilience by improving fire and flood preparedness and response, and risk reduction strategies. The City is exploring draft policies that support emergency preparedness, community resilience, and public safety, and will explore additional opportunities for green space, including potential floodable parks in the draft community plan. The City will expand and update concepts highlighted in the *Draft Ideas Report* based on these community recommendations through additional policies and discussion in the draft community plan.

Land Use and Economic Prosperity

- Top Three Land Use Concepts: Five high-level land use concepts were identified in the *Draft Ideas Report*. During October 2025, the Mid-City Communities Plan Update Working Group members ranked their top three concepts, with Concept 2 - Transit Villages, Corridors and Neighborhoods + Fair Housing receiving the highest ranking, followed by a tie between Concepts 4 - Distributed Growth and Concept 5 - Transit Centers and Corridors.
- Competing Views for Land Use Concepts: Community members expressed general support for corridor-focused growth and investing in housing near rapid transit, while emphasizing the need to balance increased density with preservation of neighborhood character. There was

mixed feedback on land use changes within single-family neighborhoods. The City received more than 220 unsolicited postcards in support of Land Use Concept 5, which would focus all planned growth only near transit centers and along corridors. A more detailed land use map with additional analysis will be released with the draft community plan that will consider community feedback along with other considerations, such as climate, fire safety, fair housing, and overall housing goals.

- Site-Specific Land Use Recommendations: Some community members recommended updating land use designations on specified residential parcels. There were also suggestions to provide flexibility on small homes/parcels to make it easier for people to renovate their homes (infeasible setbacks, etc.). Some community members provided policy recommendations to encourage the construction of more homes on vacant lots. The City is considering these recommendations and their potential feasibility through a more detailed land use and policy analysis for the draft community plan.
- Promote Economic Opportunity & Equity: Some participants supported promoting equitable investment in underserved communities like City Heights. They also called for protections to prevent the displacement of small and legacy businesses. Some participants encouraged more intentional commercial development in Mid-City to create vibrant destination areas. Feedback gathered also emphasized the need for more local jobs. A more detailed land use analysis is being conducted to increase employment uses and encourage more employment opportunities in Mid-City. The City is also exploring draft policies that protect small businesses.
- Undesirable Uses: Some community members recommended prioritizing active ground-floor uses to discourage auto-oriented uses. Some community members raised concerns about the concentration of recycling centers, storage facilities, and auto-oriented uses along major corridors. The City is assessing these recommendations and their potential feasibility through a more detailed land use and policy analysis to evaluate potential land use designations that discourage auto-centric uses and policies that support more pedestrian-friendly uses that will be released with the draft community plan.

Urban Design

- Urban Design Study Area Concepts: Community members shared mixed feedback about how density should transition outward from major corridors. They also expressed interest in expanding the urban design study areas, including along El Cajon Boulevard between Interstate 805 and State Route 15. The City will consider additional study areas and refine preliminary urban design concepts as part of the draft community plan.
- Placemaking: Some community members emphasized the need for additional paseos through large development sites to improve walkability. They suggested exploring pedestrian plazas similar to Piazza della Famiglia in Little Italy. They also suggested exploring 44th Street between University Avenue and Wightman Street as a potential location. Participants also supported activating freeway overpasses to create safer, more vibrant connections across neighborhoods. The City is actively exploring policy frameworks and implementation strategies that can support placemaking in appropriate locations, including near transit centers, commercial corridors, and neighborhood-serving areas and will look at additional opportunities for more paseos and walkways, and improved bicycle connectivity.
- Chollas Triangle Vision: Some community members expressed concerns over the Lea Street extension identified in the adopted *Mid-City Communities Plan*, given a recent pedestrian fatality and a potential increase in vehicle traffic. Removing the Lea Street extension to help realize the vision of Partnership for Advancement of New Americans' proposed mixed-use

Global Village development was discussed. They also expressed the need to integrate Chollas Triangle with green corridors. The City is evaluating the Chollas Triangle area as part of the Mid-City Communities Plan Update, based on the proposed design concepts for Chollas Triangle Park and the Refugee and Immigrant Cultural Hub, as well as other urban design features.

- New Building Types and Ownership Opportunities: Some community members expressed support for single stairway reform as part of the building code. They expressed a desire to see more new homes for sale, such as condos, casitas, rowhomes, townhomes, and single-family homes. The City is exploring opportunities for small-scale neighborhood homes to meet the needs of San Diego families, including expanding home ownership opportunities as part of *Homes for All of Us*. The Building Code changes are not addressed through the community plan update process, since there is a separate Building Code process.

Mobility

- Street Design & Safety: Some community members called for safer and more connected mobility options, including additional north-south bicycle facilities and protected or sidewalk-level bike lanes to better separate vulnerable users from vehicles. There were requests to address speeding and implement traffic calming, particularly along major corridors like Fairmount Avenue, Adams Avenue, and Aldine Drive; as well as to remove slip lanes. Some community members supported widening sidewalks in commercial areas and improving pedestrian crossings throughout neighborhoods. Participants also emphasized enhancing safety at freeway on- and off-ramps and identifying potential pedestrian bridge locations to strengthen connectivity. The City is exploring policies and routes that will improve and expand walking and bicycling within, to and from the community, as well as considering improvements to enhance the biking and walking environment as part of the draft community plan.
- Parking: Some community members called for parking structures or residential permit programs to accommodate future growth, along with concerns about how potential street-parking losses could affect small businesses. The *Draft Ideas Report* lists various curb management and parking strategies to balance the demand and availability of on-street parking, including angled parking, variable parking rates, and curb space management. The City is exploring policies that support public-private partnerships with shared parking arrangements to maximize available supply, while also focusing on encouraging other ways to get around Mid-City.
- Transit: Some community members expressed support for transit expansion, including the proposed trolley Purple Line, while raising concerns about feasibility and funding constraints. Feedback also addressed bus planning, routing, stop placement, and frequency. The City is exploring policies and routes that will improve and expand walking and bicycling within, to and from the community, connections to transit, and strategies related to curb management, parking and bike or scooter share programs. The City will continue to work with SANDAG on the planning for the Purple Line and future Bus Rapid routes identified in the Regional Transportation Plan, as well as the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System to coordinate transit operations, service levels, stop locations, and capital improvements.
- Bicycle and Scooter: Some community members highlighted the importance of first- and last-mile infrastructure, such as protected bike facilities, secure bike storage, shaded walkways, lighting, and bike or scooter share programs, to better support transit users. The City is exploring policies to support bicycle and scooter infrastructure and programs in Mid-City and to strengthen first/last-mile connectivity.

- Freeways: Some community members addressed the need to enhance bike and pedestrian safety at freeway on and off-ramps, as well as the need to identify pedestrian bridges over freeways. The City will coordinate with Caltrans on bicycle and pedestrian enhancements at freeway on and off-ramps and bridges. The draft community plan will explore policies to encourage placemaking at or near overpasses, underpasses and pedestrian bridges.

Parks, Public Facilities and Open Space

- Proposed Parks, Trails & Public Facilities: Community members expressed strong support for a new, larger library in the Normal Heights and Kensington-Talmadge communities. They also expressed strong support for ensuring that every resident has access to a park within walking distance. Feedback on proposed aquatic centers at Sunshine Berardini Field and South Chollas Landfill was mixed, with concerns about location, site constraints, and the feasibility of the South Chollas Recreation Center; some suggested considering Azalea Park or North Chollas Community Park as alternative locations. Residents also voiced mixed opinions about joint-use parks, citing concerns about public health and frequent closures. While there was broad support for additional parks, some community members raised concerns about maintenance capacity, infrastructure limitations, and public safety issues. The City is continuing to evaluate opportunities for potential parks, recreation centers, aquatic complexes, trails, public facilities, and habitat restorations to develop more refined concepts in the draft community plan. For more detailed information, refer to the *Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary* and its Attachments.
- Green Connections: Participants called for more north-south green corridors and stronger connections between parks and open space areas such as Chollas Creek, including new corridors in Normal Heights and between Kensington and City Heights. This included support for increased trail access in Kensington-Talmadge along Aldine Drive. The City is evaluating park access through green corridors and reassessing the whole network to better expand throughout Mid-City.
- Joint-Use Parks: Some community members express mixed support for the flexibility of joint-use parks, while raising concerns about public health issues and frequent closures. There are sites identified as future joint-use parks, and the City is evaluating the feasibility of these sites with the San Diego Unified School District.

How are the awarded grant funds being used to support the Community Plan Update?

The City was awarded two grants from SANDAG and one grant from Caltrans to support the completion of the Mid-City Communities Plan Update:

- Smart Growth Incentive Program Grant from SANDAG supported the phase 1 public engagement, existing conditions analyses, and development of preliminary concepts.
- Regional Early Action Program 2.0 Housing Acceleration Grant from SANDAG supports the *Draft Ideas Report*, urban design concepts, technical studies and the draft community plan.
- Sustainable Transportation Program Grant from Caltrans supports the development of technical studies, proposed mobility networks and multi-modal concepts, and associated public engagement activities.

What are the next steps for the Mid-City Communities Plan Update?

The community plan update process is now in the third phase of community engagement (Attachment 10) with a focus on collecting feedback on the refined proposals and concepts, as well as the draft

community plan, scheduled for release in spring 2026. City staff provided an update to the Mobility Board on March 4, 2026, and will present to the Parks & Recreation Board on March 19, 2026. There will be additional focus groups and pop-ups, and three open houses – highlighting the proposed mobility networks and concepts - are scheduled at:

- City Heights Library – Mar. 23, 2026 – 5 to 7 p.m.
- Normal Heights Community Center – Mar. 24, 2026 – 5 to 7 p.m.
- Teen Challenge – Mar. 25, 2026 – 5 to 7 p.m.

The next Working Group meeting is tentatively scheduled for May/June 2026 to discuss the planned land uses and the draft community plan. Staff will return to the Planning Commission to present and discuss the first draft at a future workshop.

CONCLUSION

The City Planning Department is presenting this second workshop for the Mid-City Communities Plan Update to seek early input from the Planning Commission. Staff will continue to conduct public engagement to obtain community input through the Working Group, Community Planning Groups, and community members to develop the community plan. The City welcomes and values ongoing community feedback. All community plan update documents are available on the plan update website: www.planmidcity.org.

Respectfully submitted,



Alex Frost
Principal Planner
City Planning Department



Coby Tomlins
Program Manager
City Planning Department



Tait Galloway
Deputy Director
City Planning Department

Attachments:

1. Mid-City Planning Area and Neighborhoods
2. Village Climate Goal Propensity Map
3. Draft Mid-City Ideas Report link
4. Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary and Attachments link
5. Final Mid-City Atlas: Existing Conditions Report link
6. Final Historic Context Statement link
7. Final Focused Historic Reconnaissance Survey link
8. Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks link
9. Corridor Concept Analysis link

10. Community Plan Update Phases