

MOBILITY

3.1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

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Introduction

This community plan envisions a high-quality, reliable, and robust multi-modal transportation network of “complete streets” that strengthens the land use vision, promotes travel choice, and fosters a clean and sustainable environment. Complete streets are streets for everyone, designed and operated to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. All forms of transportation have an important role in the community. However, the policies of this element intend to foster “active” and public travel choices so that a good proportion of trips can be made without a car. Walking, cycling, and transit modes should not be modes of last resort; rather they should be convenient, pleasant, safe and desirable modes of travel. The vision also provides for needed vehicular access in the community.

Key to achieving a multi-modal balance is creating and maintaining a comprehensive integrated transportation network that serves all categories of users, makes more efficient use of roadway space, and provides efficient connections to key destinations such as schools, parks, shopping, and nearby employment. A guiding strategy for mobility planning in Golden Hill is to provide a balanced multi-modal network (accommodating all modes and users) that would limit transportation improvements to modifications within the existing rights-of-way, avoid extensive road widening in a built-out community, and promote walking, bicycling, and use of public transit. .

Golden Hill's mobility network is comprised of multiple elements, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, public transit and roadway and freeway systems. The community is bounded on the west by Interstate 5, on the east by State Route 15, partially to the north by Balboa Park, and to the south by State Route 94. The surrounding freeways create physical barriers for pedestrians, bicyclists, buses and vehicles moving into and out of the Golden Hill community. The pattern of streets and freeways has not changed appreciably in the twenty years since the previous community plan update, and traffic patterns are well established.

Internally, the community has characteristics that contribute to an inviting community for pedestrians such as a basic gridded street network and generally flat topography in the business districts, but is challenged by the steep terrain within portions of the community and the steep roadway approach from the downtown area. This geography poses similar challenges to cyclists due to its hills and canyons. A majority of retail use along 25th Street, 28th Street, Beech Street, and 30th/Fern Streets is

oriented to the street front, which encourages pedestrian activity, but parking in commercial districts is often limited.

In terms of transit, the community is served primarily by Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus Route 2, which operates at frequent intervals between Downtown and North Park. With the exception of the eastern portion of the community, most areas are within reasonable walking distance to transit service.

MOBILITY ELEMENT GOALS

- A complete and balanced multi-modal transportation network that provides safe, convenient and attractive travel choices.
- A well-integrated system of transit, auto, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (including trails) that connects neighborhoods, commercial districts and destinations such as Balboa Park.
- Walkable neighborhoods that utilize pedestrian connections and improved sidewalks to create a safe, comfortable pedestrian environment.
- A wayfinding program to support efficient trips and enhance use of all transportation modes.
- A complete bicycle network that connects community destinations safely and efficiently and provides links to Balboa Park, surrounding communities and the regional bicycle network.
- High-quality public transit service as a primary travel mode for community residents, visitors and employees.
- Adequate capacity and improved regional access for vehicular traffic.
- Interagency coordination and cooperation to identify and implement additional comprehensive mobility strategies, project opportunities, and funding resources.
- Efficient use of parking resources through parking management strategies in commercial areas and transit corridors to reduce costs to provide parking and reduce parking impacts, thereby supporting local businesses.

General Plan Cross-reference Table

The City of San Diego General Plan establishes citywide policies to be cited in conjunction with community plan policies. General Plan policies may also be further referenced, emphasized or detailed in a community plan to provide community-specific direction. General Plan mobility-related policies particularly significant to the Golden Hill community are listed by their identifiers in cross-reference Table 3-1 below.

TABLE 3-1: GENERAL PLAN RELATED MOBILITY TOPICS AND POLICIES

Community Plan Topic	General Plan Policy
Safety and Accessibility	ME-A.1 through ME-A.5
Connectivity	ME-A.6

Walkability	ME-A.7 through ME-A.9
Regional Agency Collaboration	ME-B.1 through ME-B.8
Transit Supportive City Land Use Planning	ME-B.9 and ME-B.10
Transportation System Planning	ME-C.1 and ME-C.2
Street Layout, Design and Operations	ME-C.3 through ME-C.7
Project Review Consideration	ME-C.8 through ME-C.10
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	ME-D.1 through ME-D.6
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	ME-E.1 through ME-E.8
Bicycling	ME-F.1 through ME-F.6
Parking	ME-G.1 through ME-G.5
Street Parking and Structured Parking	UD-A.11 and UD-A.12

3.1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation refers to non-motorized forms of transportation such as walking and bicycling. Creating communities that foster active transportation will assist in creating a more sustainable community by reducing traffic congestion, enhancing public health and creating safer roadways. Walking and bicycling are viable transportation options within Golden Hill that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a vibrant community. Improving the ability for residents to utilize these modes of transportation as an alternative to automobiles is key to achieving the overall goals of this community plan.

Walkability

Pedestrian movement is improved when portions of the public right-of-way are effectively allocated and prioritized to maximize pedestrian activities through facilities such as pedestrian-friendly paths and sidewalks. Walking is a basic human activity that cannot be overlooked in the quest to build sophisticated transportation systems.

The community's grid pattern of streets aids mobility by providing multiple access points to destinations throughout the community. This pattern provides better connectivity and disperses traffic to create comparatively more walkable commercial and residential neighborhoods. The community is also served by relatively convenient transit access along Broadway, C Street, and 30th Street with 15 stops along this route. These characteristics are conducive to walkability and also provide mobility options for those who cannot drive, do not own a motor vehicle, or prefer to reduce their dependence on the automobile. However, portions of the community are less walkable due to sloping topography or separation by canyons, such as areas east of the 34th Street and 32nd Street Canyons.

Ensuring sidewalk mobility for pedestrians with and without mobility devices, such as wheelchairs and motorized scooters, is important to creating a walkable community. It is therefore important to provide adequate, unobstructed travel width for mobility devices as well as accessible curbs. In areas of high pedestrian activity, it is desirable to provide sidewalk widths sufficient for two people to pass a third person comfortably, although availability of adequate right-of-way poses a constraint in many

areas. Sidewalk pedestrian obstructions should be avoided and important and accessible pedestrian crossings should be clearly identified.

The recommended improvements in the Mobility Element were developed with the goal of implementing complete streets on the community's existing roadways. Areas of emphasis for pedestrian mobility are provided in Figure 3-1. General Plan policies ME-A.1 through ME-A.9, the Pedestrian Improvement Toolbox, as well as the following community-based policies should be consulted for guidance.

Box 3-1: PEDESTRIAN ROUTE TYPES

- **District Sidewalks** support heavy pedestrian levels in mixed-use urban areas. Corridor Sidewalks support moderate pedestrian levels in moderate density business and shopping districts.
- **Connector Sidewalks** support low pedestrian levels along roads with institutional or business complexes.
- **Neighborhood Sidewalks** support moderate pedestrian levels in low to moderate density housing areas.
- **Ancillary Pedestrian Facilities** are crossings over or between streets such as plazas, paseos, promenades, courtyards, or pedestrian bridges and stairways.
- **Paths** are walkways and paved paths used for recreational and transportation purposes that are not adjacent to a roads.
- **Trails** are unpaved walkways not adjacent to a roadway that are used for recreational purposes.

Policies

- ME-1.1** Implement pedestrian enhancements within identified pedestrian focus areas developed as part of the City's pedestrian master planning effort. These enhancements include, but are not limited to, bulb-outs/curb extensions, enhanced crossing treatments, and traffic calming, leading pedestrian intervals, pedestrian scramble phases and pedestrian recall phases to provide safety and operational improvements for all transportation modes.
- ME-1.2** Consider mid-block crossings, where appropriate, to provide pedestrians additional opportunities to cross along streets with infrequent intersections, or where a direct route is needed to a popular destination.
- ME-1.3** Consider raised median islands/pedestrian crossing islands, where appropriate, to reduce traffic conflicts, provide pedestrians a crossing refuge, and reduce the scale of the street.
- ME-1.4** Improve the pedestrian environment adjacent to and along routes to transit stops through the installation and maintenance of wayfinding signs, crosswalks, and other appropriate measures.
- ME-1.5** Provide shade-producing street trees, pedestrian-oriented street lighting, and street furnishings with an emphasis along routes to schools and transit.
- ME-1.6** Install missing sidewalk and curb ramps and remove accessibility barriers.

Pedestrian Improvement Glossary

- **Lead Pedestrian Interval at Traffic Signals:** Gives the walk signal for 3 to 5 seconds prior to the concurrent green interval. Enable pedestrians to establish themselves (get a head start) in the crosswalk before the concurrent traffic movements get a green indication. Helps to reduce conflicts between crossing pedestrians and right-turning vehicles by making turning drivers more aware.
- **Pedestrian Scramble Phasing:** An exclusive pedestrian phase that stops traffic on all legs of an intersection to allow pedestrians to cross in all directions at the same time. This enables pedestrians to cross diagonally through the intersection. This phasing is best used where pedestrian volumes are high and crossing distances are short.
- **Pedestrian Recall Phasing:** Pedestrians receive a walk signal during every cycle. This requires no detection. This phasing is best used in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity. **Bike Path (Class I):** Paved right-of-way physically separated from vehicular traffic for exclusive use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and those using non-motorized modes of travel. They can either be constructed in roadway right-of-way or exclusive right-of-way. Bike paths provide critical connections in the city where roadways are absent or are not conducive to bicycle travel.

Bicycling

Most bicycle activity in Golden Hill consists of recreational trips and light errands, with some work trips. The goals of the General Plan and Bicycle Master Plan include creating a safe and comprehensive local and regional bikeway network and a city where bicycling is a viable travel choice, particularly for trips of less than five miles. This goal is particularly important to the Golden Hill community. While downtown San Diego is outside of a comfortable walk to work trip for most residents, it is well within biking distances, presuming safe routes are provided. The development of a well-connected, effective bicycle network, including separated facilities where feasible, will facilitate cycling and help meet community travel needs. Separated bicycle facilities are known to be safer, contribute to lower levels of rider stress, and promote increased cycling rates among the general population. A complete bicycle network can help users overcome the challenges presented by the hilly topography and provide access throughout the community. Existing and proposed bicycle facilities are presented in Figure 3-2. Existing bicycle facilities include limited bicycle lane (Class II) and bicycle route (Class III) facilities at the following locations:

- Bicycle lane located along B Street between 25th Street and 30th Street
- Bicycle route located along 30th Street/Fern Street between Juniper Street and the SR-94
- A bicycle route segment along 28th Street between Broadway and SR-94.

Proposed bicycle facility improvements aim to connect existing bicycle routes along major roadways to existing and proposed bicycle facility improvements. A Class I Multi-Use Path is proposed along the west side of the community adjacent to Balboa Park and two segments of a Class II bicycle facility are proposed along 25th street, B Street, C Street, Dale Street and Broadway. Bicycle improvements along existing streets could include the incorporation of bicycle-oriented wayfinding signage and bicycle

parking that are consistent with the community's character. A brief description of each facility is presented alongside a diagram in Figure 3-3.

The recommendations in this Plan not only take into consideration the mobility needs for better circulation, but also the positive impact of social and physical improvements on individual and community health. Bicycle policies are numbered below with specific locations addressed under each policy, where applicable.

Policies

- ME-1.7** Provide and support a continuous network of safe, convenient and attractive bicycle facilities within the community. Of particular interest are the following locations:
- B Street
 - C Street
 - 30th Street
 - Broadway
- ME-1.8** Increase safety, comfort, and accessibility for everyday bicyclists with improvements such as convenient parking for bicycles, buffered bike lanes and cycle tracks that provide a physical separation between cars and automobiles where feasible.
- ME-1.9** Support new multi-use paths that connect Golden Hill to Balboa Park and the North Park community along 26th Street, Golf Course Drive, 28th Street, Russ Boulevard, and between Boundary Street and C Street.
- ME-1.10** Implement wayfinding signage to complement the bikeway system.
- ME-1.11** Provide adequate bicycle parking facilities within commercial districts and other activity centers. Of particular interest are the following locations:
- Juniper Street and 30th Street
 - Grape Street and Fern Street
 - Beech Street and 30th Street
 - 25th Street and B Street
 - 25th Street south of Broadway

Bicycle Facility Types

- **Bike Lane (Class II):** Striping and signage used to allocate a portion of a roadway for exclusive or preferential bicycle travel. Bike lanes are one-way facilities on either side of a roadway. Whenever possible, Bike Lanes should be enhanced with treatments that improve safety and connectivity by addressing site-specific issues, such as additional warning or wayfinding signage. Enhanced buffered bike lanes add additional striping and lateral clearance between bicyclists and vehicles, leading to lowered LOS for the rider. Bike lanes enable bicyclists to ride at their preferred speed without interference from prevailing traffic conditions. Bike lanes also facilitate predictable behavior and movements between bicyclists and motorists.

- **Bike Route (Class III):** Shared use with motor vehicle traffic within the same travel lane. Designated by signs, Bike Routes provide continuity to other bike facilities or designate preferred routes through corridors with high demand. Whenever possible, Bike Routes should be enhanced with treatments that improve safety and connectivity.
- **Cycle Track (Class IV):** A hybrid type of bicycle facility that combines the experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional Bike Lane. Cycle tracks are bikeways located in roadway right-of-way but separated from vehicle lanes by physical barriers or buffers. Cycle tracks provide for one-way bicycle travel in each direction adjacent to vehicular travel lanes and are exclusively for bicycle use.

3.2 TRANSIT

Public transit should be an attractive and convenient choice, well-integrated into the community and its variety of land uses. Transit improves community livability by increasing access to civic, commercial and employment destinations, particularly those outside the community, and reducing dependence on the automobile. Golden Hill is currently served by two bus routes on its roadways, and the expansion of existing transit services is an essential component of this community plan. Transit and land use should be closely linked, and transit stations should be integrated into walkable, transit-oriented corridors and neighborhood centers.

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies future Rapid Transit and Streetcar service within Golden Hill. Transit routes identified in the 2050 RTP will improve overall connectivity of the Golden Hill community to nearby communities. Additionally, the 2050 RTP will improve the type of service, frequency of service and destination range outside of the community. The following are planned transit service enhancements for Golden Hill, contingent upon future funding:

- MTS Bus Route 2 will be converted into a Rapid service bus along its current route. Route 2 currently provides local bus service from Downtown San Diego to North Park. Route 2 travels along Broadway, C Street, and 30th Street in the Golden Hill community. The expected year for implementation is 2030.
- A new bus route will provide service from North Park to 32nd Street Trolley station in Barrio Logan. The expected year for implementation is 2035.
- A streetcar route, currently designated as route 555, will provide streetcar service from 30th Street to Downtown San Diego. The expected year for implementation is 2035.

Figure 3-5 illustrates the transit network with the buildout of the 2050 RTP. The proposed alignment of the streetcar is shown for illustrative purpose only and subject to change pending further feasibility analysis studies.

Transit policies developed for Golden Hill are numbered below as Policy ME-2.1 through ME-2.8. Additional guidance and information regarding transit policies may be found in General Plan policies ME-B.1 through ME-B.10.

Policies

- ME-2.1** Support and promote MTS/SANDAG efforts to improve public transit by extending hours of operation into the evening hours and increasing frequency of service during peak travel times.
- ME-2.2** Coordinate with SANDAG to promote infrastructure that enhances accessibility and improves the transit user's experience at transit stops.
- ME-2.3** Work with MTS to place benches, shade structures and timetables at bus stops, where sidewalk depth is sufficient.
- ME-2.4** Coordinate with MTS and SANDAG to install electronic arrival schedules where appropriate and implement real time transit schedule updates to provide timely and efficient loading.
- ME-2.5** Coordinate with SANDAG to implement the transit infrastructure and service enhancements identified in the Regional Transportation Plan.
- ME-2.6** Work with MTS and SANDAG to implement transit priority measures to improve transit travel times. Transit priority measures include, but are not limited to, transit signal priority for buses, queue jumpers, exclusive transit lanes, transit ways, use of freeway shoulders, and direct access ramps to freeway High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) facilities.
- ME-2.7** Coordinate the implementation of balanced multi-modal concepts, as appropriate, with ongoing transportation and congestion relief programs such as the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program, Street Smarts Traffic Safety program, Residential Traffic Calming Program, Safe Routes to School Program, and TRAFFIX Program.
- ME-2.8** Coordinate with MTS on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements to avoid adverse impacts to existing and planned bus services to the area.

Transit Improvement and Transportation Program Glossary

- **Queue Jumper:** Short transit-only lanes at intersections that allow transit vehicles to bypass waiting traffic. Often used in combination with transit-priority signals.
- **Transit Ways:** Road lanes or separate roadways that are for transit-only use or shared use by transit and high occupancy vehicles.
- **Transportation Demand Management:** Programs that help manage the demand for various forms of transportation, including ridesharing initiatives such as carpooling, vanpooling and buspooling; promoting alternative work schedules and teleworking; and promoting bicycling, walking, and the use of public transit.

3.3 STREETS AND FREEWAY SYSTEM

This community plan envisions enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle environment along the community's streets in accordance with complete streets principles while maintaining the community's existing grid network of streets. Golden Hill's grid-patterned street network plays a major role in the urban form of the community. It allows both east-west and north-south traffic movements, with limitations in the eastern portion of the community due to canyon topography.

There, two north-south canyons result in dead-end streets and a significant amount of out-of-direction travel. Existing roadways within the community and their classifications are shown in Figure 3-5. Golden Hill is also bounded on three sides by freeways: Interstate 5 on the west, State Route 15 (SR-15) on the east and State Route 94 (SR-94) on the south.

With most public rights-of-way fully constructed with streets and sidewalks and with adjacent property built out, the street system planning avoids widening roadways due to potential effects on community character. To accommodate the need for improved mobility, a balanced multi-modal approach that focuses on repurposing existing roadways to incorporate other modes of travel is preferable. Future street classifications are presented in Figure 3-6.

Street and freeway policies are numbered below as Policy ME-3.1 through ME-3.7, with specific locations addressed under each policy, where applicable. Additional related guidance for street, freeway, and intersection improvements may be found in the General Plan's Mobility Element Policies ME-C.1 through MC-C.7 and Table ME-2, the Traffic Calming Toolbox.

Policies

- ME-3.1** Provide a complete streets network throughout the community, safely accommodating all modes and users of the right-of-way.
- ME-3.2** Repurpose right-of-way to provide high-quality bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities while maintaining vehicular access.
- ME-3.3** Implement focused intersection improvements to improve safety and operations for all modes.
- ME-3.4** Improve the street and freeway environment and trip efficiency through the installation and maintenance of street signs, including wayfinding signs, and other appropriate measures.
- ME-3.5** Incorporate balanced multi-modal concepts into planning, design, retrofit and maintenance of streets.
- ME-3.6** Ensure efficient movement and delivery of goods to retail uses while minimizing impacts on residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.
- ME-3.7** Coordinate with Caltrans and SANDAG to implement needed freeway and interchange improvements along SR-94 and SR-15 to improve accessibility to regional facilities and enhance active transportation modes along freeway interchanges.

3.4 PARKING MANAGEMENT

On-street parking has the ability to calm traffic and protect pedestrians, and the relative availability of parking can influence transit ridership. On-street parking supply should be maintained in commercial areas to serve short-term visits by patrons of area businesses. Adequate parking is key to a vibrant community, and on-street parking should be maintained and managed to adequately serve both commercial and residential uses.

Parking Management policies are numbered below as Policy ME-4.1 through ME-4.16. Additional policies and guidance related to this topic may be found in the General Plan's Mobility Element Policies

ME-G.1 through ME-G.5 as well as Table ME-3, the Parking Strategy Toolbox. These policies should be considered when evaluating new parking facilities.

Policies

- ME-4.1** Locate off-street parking in the rear of buildings and encourage access from rear alleys when available.
- ME-4.2** Consider parallel on-street parking on high-volume arterial and collector streets and angled parking on lower-speed and lower-volume streets.
- ME-4.3** Add angled parking on side-streets adjacent to commercial districts and within multi-family neighborhoods to increase parking supply where feasible.
- ME-4.4** Break-up large surface parking areas with landscaped islands and apply landscaped borders to screen parking from view. This can be accomplished through the use of trees, shrubs, mounding or walls appropriate to the character of the area.
- ME-4.5** Screen on-site parking by locating it in areas not highly visible from the street corridor.
- ME-4.6** As alternatives to surface parking lots, provide parking designs that conceal parking such as below-grade parking or above-grade parking that is screened by building components. Access to parking access should be from alleys or side streets where available.
- ME-4.7** Provide on-street parking on all streets to support adjacent uses and to provide separation from vehicular lanes that enhances pedestrian safety and comfort.
- ME-4.8** Limit driveway curb cuts to the extent possible to maximize the curb length available for on-street parking. Driveway access should be provided through alleys or shared driveways.
- ME-4.9** Explore opportunities to incorporate reverse angle (i.e. back-in), angled parking, or other on-street parking designs to improve safety for bicyclists, calm traffic and reduce conflicts with on-coming traffic. This is particularly appropriate in locations with generous street widths (50' or greater) where a narrower travel lane can accompany this configuration.
- ME-4.10** Avoid conflicts between front-in angled parking and marked bicycle lanes. In locations where front-in angled parking is adjacent to marked bicycle lanes, a six-foot buffer shall be provided between the parking area and the marked bicycle lanes. Bicycle lanes may abut the parking area when back-in angled parking is used.
- ME-4.11** Use metered parking and short-term parking space marking and signage in commercial areas to provide reasonable short-term parking for retail customers and visitors while discouraging long-term resident and employee parking. Restrict use of time limits of 30 minutes or less to areas reserved for special, short-term, high-turnover parking such as passenger loading, convenience stores, dry cleaners, etc. Maximum time limits should not exceed 2 hours where turnover of parking spaces is important to support nearby retail business.
- ME-4.12** Design parking space widths depending on the land use context and thoroughfare type and the anticipated frequency of parking turnover. The preferred width of a parallel on-street parking lane is 7 feet.

- ME-4.13** Incorporate plantings into on-street parking areas to contribute to the visual character, provide additional space for street trees and to reduce the apparent width of the street and vehicular travel speeds, through elements including:
- a.** “Tree islands” included within the parking lane at regular intervals along the block to reduce uninterrupted lengths of on-street parking.
 - b.** Landscaped curb extensions at ends of a block.
- ME-4.14** Provide on-street motorcycle parking in prominent, well-lit locations. Motorcycle parking bays should be striped perpendicular to the sidewalk in the on-street parking lane.
- ME-4.15** Consider installing on-street bicycle corrals in retail areas where pedestrian activity is heavy and sidewalk space limited. Bicycle corrals should be delimited with bollards to protect bicycles and cyclists.
- ME-4.16** Consider resident parking permits for neighborhoods impacted by high parking demand.