

North Park Community Plan Update

CPUAC Meeting #3, 2/17/10
Meeting Summary (DRAFT)

Overview

On Wednesday, February 17, 2010, the Community Plan Update Advisory Committee (CPUAC) held its third meeting. The following information summarizes the:

1. Meeting process
2. Meeting agenda
3. Meeting comments

1. Meeting Process

Per the Brown Act (open meetings), the meeting was publicly noticed and open to public attendance and comment. 12 CPUAC members attended; in total, the CPUAC has 23 members. 5 members of the community at-large attended. The room was arranged so that the CPUAC members were seated at rows of tables. The community at-large was seated at rows of chairs. The room arrangement recognized the formal role of the CPUAC to sustain the public discussion throughout the community plan update process.

City Staff began the meeting with a review of the agenda and a recap of the CPUAC Meeting #2. A staff member of the KTU+A urban design team facilitated the debrief of the self-guided tour using a Powerpoint presentation. Throughout the meeting, comments were charted on large sheets of paper that were displayed on easels. These charted comments summarized the ideas that were shared during the meeting and are summarized in this document.

2. Meeting Agenda

The meeting was organized into these parts:

- Welcome and Introduction
- Review of agenda
- General Announcements
- Recap of CPUAC Meeting #2
- A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour

The majority of the meeting was dedicated to the debrief of the self-guided tour. A supplemental slideshow presentation showed issues and summarized comments into likes, dislikes, and neutral along each self-guided tour route. Mike Singleton from KTU+A first reviewed what the survey respondents listed as the best and worst features of each of the four routes, then presented images in the categories of Parking and Roadways, Land Use, and Mobility.

3. Meeting Comments:

Throughout the meeting, participants were able to comment on the meeting's agenda topics. Their comments were charted by 1 outreach team member. The following pages provide a summary of the comments received as well as the requests or action items that City Staff will track and add throughout the CPUAC process. These comments are summarized in the following order:

- a. General Announcements
- b.1. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour (Summary)
- b.2. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour (Detail)
- c. Additional Public Comment

3.a. General Announcements

- Exhibit by the New School of Architecture up until March 7.
- Date for Cluster Meeting #1 is March 20.
- New event "Open Mic" is March 24 to have organizations present themselves to the community.
- Revised schedule of future meetings will be available on City webpage.

3.b.1. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour – Summary

ROUTE 1 (5 surveys)

1. Best Features

- Historic mural at University Heights Library
- Historic, moderne style building on Robinson

2. Worst Features

- Demolished church on Park Blvd. sitting for three years
- Grace Tower

3. Parking and Roads

- Too much or too little parking can be a problem; how to find balance
- North Park Towers has interesting way of handling parking

ROUTE 2 (9 surveys)

1. Best

- Apartment complex on Adams Ave. just west of Arizona St.
- Our Lady of Peace

2. Worst

- Walls blocking Our Lady of Peace
- No park, playground, or public meeting facility anywhere on route

ROUTE 3 (5 surveys)

1. Best

- Ray Street

2. Worst

- El Cajon Blvd. traffic, commercialization

ROUTE 4 (3 surveys)

1. Best

- Retail in South Park

2. Worst

- Auto repair at 30th and Upas, and second-hand store on same block
- No parks, public spaces

PARKING AND ROADWAYS

1. Places parking hasn't been used well

- "Gateway" to University Heights
- Alleyway off of University and Georgia
- North Park Towers

2. Multi-family

3. Higher density

4. Adams Ave., Route 2

5. Single-family

6. Adams Ave., Route 1

7. Retail on 30th

8. Condo conversion on Route 1

9. Commercial parking: 30th and El Cajon

MOBILITY

1. University Ave. and El Cajon Blvd.

- Worst streets for pedestrians

2. Intersection of El Cajon, University and Park

- Used to have a tunnel
- Curbs not ADA compliant

3. Bikeways

- Three types

4. Business Districts

- Ray Street
- Renaissance building – dangerous at night?

5. Route 3, D8 on Ohio St.

- Good walking environment

6. Park Blvd.

- Dangerous at uncontrolled intersections
- Intersection of Park and Upas, fast drivers

7. Georgia Street Bridge

- Narrow sidewalks due to lane widening
- Ideas for improving

8. 30th St. across Switzer Canyon

- Very noisy
- Friend of public had serious bike accident

LAND USE

1. Adams Ave.

- Combination of residential and commercial

2. Light Industrial

- Auto repair and body shops
- Okay if 1 or 2, but 5 in one stretch is too many
- Okay if they are kept up

3. Commercial areas within residential areas

- Small grocery stores, coffee shops
- Want to have things within walking distance

4. Residential on Juniper, Route 4

- Craftsman house has been maintained
- Important to respect architecture

5. Switzer Canyon

- Opportunity to turn liquor store into park
- Need for entry into canyon

6. Gateway Opportunities

- Georgia St. Bridge
- University Heights
- El Cajon Blvd.

3.b. 2. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour – Detail

General Comments by Mike Singleton, KTU+A

- We have a lot of different reasons for doing the self-guided tour.
 - One is to help get the consultants and city staff even more familiar with the community. It's surprising when you go out and look at some things in more detail.
 - You know your own community very well, so we wanted to start getting that input from you. Maybe you also discovered some new areas.
 - It's important for us as planners to collaborate our ideas about urban planning with what the community wants. The self-guided tour helps us make sure that we're not imposing something contrary to what you're expecting out of the plan.
 - Group discussion brings synergy.
 - Allows us to build a photo library that we can keep using throughout the plan.

Best and Worst

- 19 surveys were received in total before this meeting. On Route 1, we had 5 surveys. The photos are not in the order of the routes; they are grouped by category of land use, parking issues and things like that. Some of the names are on here. Besides the specific questions, we asked "what was your favorite element" and "what was your least favorite element" along the route.
- On this one, Catherine, you really liked the historic mural on the University Heights Library. You said that the church demolished on Park Blvd., especially since it's been sitting there after three years, so that was her choice for what was worst and best on the route.
- Mary talked about a particular historic style Moderne-type building that she thought was really great on Robinson St. And she said that the worst thing along that route was the Grace Towers.
- On Route 2, we had 9 surveys. Q. Williams mentioned that he loved an old apartment building on Adams Ave. just west of Arizona. He was saying, why can't we build more of these. You get some real density but it doesn't feel dense, with that open courtyard. That was what he thought was the best element. Catherine thought that Our Lady of Peace had a beautiful architecture style, but then as the worst, they put up walls so that you can't see the architecture. Ed felt that the area lacks a coordinated vision, therefore it would be unfair to point out anything that was the worst. Q mentioned that there's not a single park or playground, public notice board or public meeting facility of any sort along the route. Again the issue of not having enough of the public facilities.
- Then on Route 3, there were 5 surveys. Lynn and Earl Breveman said the best thing on that route was Ray Street itself, and that the worst one was

El Cajon Blvd., because of the traffic, and the overall perception of a commercial feeling, not at the same level of commercial quality of streetscape like University and 30th.

- Then on the last one we only had 3 (surveys). I know a lot of people live down toward that end, and I think they know their neighborhood so well they probably wanted to go discover some other neighborhoods. Susan mentioned that the retail in South Park was the best thing along that particular route, and the worst thing was the auto repair at 30th and Upas. Ed mentioned that the route lacked the same quality as the previous route.

Parking and Roadways

- Mike: These are grouped by category. There may be photos in there that are not.
- The reason parking is important, parking can really set the form of the community.
 - Often it's 40% of the land area dedicated to roads and parking area. If you have too much parking, that can have a negative effect on people's willingness to walk and take transit. Even on traffic, because if you're not encouraging people to switch from driving everywhere that can have an effect.
 - To balance the other side, if you don't provide enough parking you can have impacts on the neighborhood, on street parking. The point of this is how do you find balance? To not let parking dominate an overall project, maybe not taking up too much of a development's overall cost.
 - With affordable housing, costs can go up if there's a lot of parking. A service parking lot can get by with about \$1,000-2,000 per space. Once you start getting into a structure, it's up to like \$25,000 a space. When you get into an underground structure those can be up to \$35k per space. So it's one of those things that can dictate whether a project is feasible or not.
- If we start looking at some images of parking, these are some images where parking hasn't been used well. To some extent this is a gateway to University Heights. North Park has so many of these examples. I think this one is an exceptionally bad example. There's no real design of the building as it relates to parking. There's no thought to the interface with the street, there's just this long continuous driveway. I found this building, I think it's called North Park Towers, very interesting. There's parking on 3 sides of this. The one good aspect is they tucked a little of it under. But the whole thing is so dominated with parking. It's one of those extreme cases. If you're not handling parking properly, that's what you end up getting. All these little tuck-away spaces occur if you haven't provided enough parking.
- I like this one, down an alleyway just off University and Georgia. This is a 2-foot drop off and this guy backs his car down these planks every day, just to squeeze into a little tiny parking spot back in there. Those are

garages that maybe were supposed to be for parking, but they're putting their cars in front of it. You get a lot of examples that are very squished like that.

- This is Route 3, parking 7 example. Out of the people who commented, everyone agreed that they disliked that type of parking, squeezed into an area.
- When you get to single family residential, there's a couple of different techniques. For example, in this one all of the parking is out front. 5 of the people liked this one and 1 disliked it. Did anyone comment on this one?
- Public: I disliked it because it's the "tall and skinnys" that we're seeing in urban infill, like in Coronado and the beach areas and in LA.
- Mike: On a lot of these things, it's hard to see, but I assume that most people like parking that's off the alleyway, but an alleyway doesn't exist.
- The traditional driveways in our neighborhoods, we have plenty examples like this where there's a garage in back and a long driveway down the side. People said they like that arrangement. You can get 2 or 3 cars in there. It's a great parking solution. It fits the cars in there without dominating the overall look of the site. In this one, they have the parking off to the side flared off the alley, and has the garages off to the side.
- Public: They had a larger lot. They could do that without sacrificing the yard space. In some of the smaller lots, you couldn't do that.
- Mike: This is nice in that it has two-car parking in one driveway apron. You see that in a lot of the townhomes now. You end up preserving a little more of the onstreet parking.
- Now as we get into a little more multi-family, you have a lot of examples where they tandem park, and those are not great solutions.
- You have a lot of these types of solutions where everything in the front of the lot is all concrete. There were 4 people who dislike this solution. I have a feeling that maybe they disliked the architecture or the fact that it doesn't fit into the character of the area. At least half the lot was landscaped on the front, then basically had a 2-car garage. So for those who didn't like that one is that what you were pointing at?
- Public: That's exactly right. I disliked it facing the street.
- Mike: There's no shortage of suburban garage configurations throughout the rest of the San Diego region. I would think a lot of people don't relate North Park to that kind of suburban setting, so maybe that's why there's negativity. Sometimes you have side garages, but older homes will often have the garage sitting up off to the side. Any comments on any of those?
- Public: I have a comment on the slide in the upper left hand corner. That property - behind it, there's a multi-unit condo. That parking space on the left was to accommodate parking for the multi-unit, and if that space on the left is occupied, that garage is not accessible. It's a compromise at best.
 - So, that was an add-on?
 - Yes.

- As we keep getting up higher in density, you have some with a certain amount of landscaping.
- Still some on-street parking spaces with the 2 in front.
- You force the offstreet parking to the point where you eliminate all the onstreet parking. On this, 1 said “like,” 1 said “dislike” and 1 said “neutral”. Is there any other opinion on how that was handled?
- Public: My group talked about how it’s just not deep enough.
- Mike: You either have to make it real deep or really short. If it’s deep enough people will try to park in there and then overhang the sidewalk. That is a ticketable offense.
- This one is off the alley. It’s 2 units with a garage underneath. From a street perspective, this one was handled well. You don’t get a sense of all this that’s back behind the unit. This is a solution where the driveway comes down the side and accesses the garages there. We had 2 dislikes and 2 likes.
- Public: Looking at the picture from here, one of the things I think about is the amount of impervious surfaces. This could create a storm water problem. I haven’t heard that addressed very much.
- If you have more than 5,000 feet of impervious space, you have a runoff problem. But you’re right. If you concrete the entire backyard, you’re going to get a lot more runoff.
- Four people like this one. This is right off of Adams Ave. on Route 2, with parking off of an alley. People seemed to like it. 1 person disliked it. Any comments? It seems like where you do have an alleyway, this may not be a bad solution.
- This was on Route 2 as well, heading out toward our Lady of Peace on the corner. They had 1 driveway that serves 2 garages. Still a lot of concrete on the side. Three people disliked it. It may have been because of the extensiveness of the concrete.
- Public: I have a lot of problems with that driveway, because it sits over a canyon.
 - Mike: It’s cantilevered out over the canyon.
 - Public: You can use that driveway to park, if you park there you can’t use. It’s not an optional solution like the parking off an alleyway.
 - I wrote “bad” – I hated the architecture.
 - Mike: Was it also just the dominance, that on both sides of the house there’s driveway?
 - Public: Yeah.
- As we get into a little more density, here is the example of an over-the-garage unit, and next to it some surface parking. Instead of having the whole thing solid garages, it was interesting the way it interspersed the parking; instead of having solid garages. Four people disliked it, two liked it. This project has a number of open space areas. The units have a fair amount of area between them because they’ve concentrated the parking

- toward the back. There's a fair amount of landscaping and yard space around these units.
- Public: Our group liked it, because it broke up the visual environment. So you didn't have a solid wall of garages. We liked that overhang. We liked that you had garage, open, garage, open, so there's turn around space for neighboring properties, if you have too many garages you can never turn around.
 - To clarify, that's an alleyway?
 - That's an alleyway.
 - Is there a problem with a telephone pole in the middle of the alley?
 - I imagine a few cars have hit that.
 - Mike: Another technique is a little bit of "tuck under" parking. This works when you have an alleyway, but not so great when it's on the street. 2 people liked this. I think what they liked probably was not the architecture, but the idea that instead of having all of that being surface space, that you let the building come over a portion.
 - This one had 4 people liking it. This space here is access space to the driveway so you can't really park in it. When you take the parking too far back, you're already using up some of the site to access the parking, so you end up getting a bit more pavement. But, these would be bad if they were facing the street. At least they're tucked around and hidden behind the building. I assume that's why people might have liked it because it's pulling the cars around back.
 - Public: One of the things that the side parking does is it creates a set-back and a corridor that has less of an impact on the neighboring property. When you've got a historic property or a single-family property next to it, you get a little bit of space.
 - All this space up here is to access the spaces that are off to the side. It allows you to have some green space up toward the front, but again it comes to that point where if you set it too far back you're using a lot of that space as access. Four disliked that.
 - Now we keep going up a little bit more in density. This one is on Adams Ave on Route 1. This one had parking hidden behind some landscaping plus a driveway. Two liked this, one disliked and one was neutral. Did anyone have any particular insight on that? There are a number of apartment buildings like this in row. They handle about the same in terms of having parking up front and down the row.
 - This is one where the architecture is really interesting. The architecture may be more why people liked it. I think the dislike on this was just the continuous row of garage spaces. But in general, on this whole block I think most people liked the architecture.
 - Public: The open ones are too short. When I drive along here I really like it, but walking past it is horrible – looking under there and seeing shovels or whatever people have in there. They might have a car in there, but it's sticking half way out. I realized this is a terrible parking solution.

- Mike: I thought part of the problem was that these are short garages, but you're saying none of them have doors?
 - Public: That's right.
- This one down here is a townhome arrangement, walkup flats. The garages are slightly recessed underneath some balconies. One thing that works here is that 1 driveway is accessing 2 garages. There are several parking spaces on the street. Probably in the future there could be more of these walk-up flats with a few driveways instead of a whole mess of driveways.
- This one has a driveway here, another driveway off here, but it does have a fairly large landscaped area in the front, and it does screen some of the area behind it. This is just off of University at the end of Route 3. Do you feel that this is successful in terms of screening? Cars are still out here so it doesn't take much to see them. I see a couple of people shaking heads.
- Public: I think it's better than concrete, obviously, but you still have the issue of frontage being used as a driveway, so it's a tradeoff.
 - Mike: When you compare it to some other solutions it's okay.
- This one on Route 1, you had to go down an alleyway to see this one. The front of this is fairly dense. There's no parking coming off the main street. I believe that's on Georgia. The backs of units look out on the alleyway, the windows themselves. It's a steeper site. You can't overpark it. You don't even have access to an underground garage from the street. There were 3 people who liked that solution, at least those who could find it. It's kind of hidden.
 - Public: Where is it?
 - Mike: It's Route 1, parking solution 2.
 - Public: Off Florida Street?
 - A block down from Adams.
 - It's on Mission.
 - Mike: So a few blocks down from Adams.
- This next one people seemed to like. Three people liked it. With the retail, parking is recessed behind the building. People thought it was an interesting solution. That's right on 30th. People probably drive by that one all the time. Did you notice that the parking was tucked way back? Where you have the little retail shops ground floor on the street.
 - Public: The entire lot seems like an urban space.
 - Mike: Yes, I don't think there is any landscape treatments or green space around this one.
 - Public: Does anyone think to use pervious pavement at all?
 - Mike: Newer projects you'll see them on. In a case like this, you still have to do something with that water after it goes through the pervious concrete. We have one at our office with a strip of pervious concrete. They do work.
 - I'm not saying concrete, I'm saying something that isn't solid. I've seen places where there's grass in between.

- That becomes a beneficial use of water runoff because it's used to water grass, so that's good.
- If you put permeable material, what about the runoff from cars? Is there any data about how much of that goes down into the ground? Maybe you don't want it to go into the ground.
- The problem is once it gets into the storm drain it's more of a problem. It's better to handle some of those silts like brake liner dust and metals by catching them in the concrete. So there's 2 ways of looking at it.
- Would you be better off to be able to collect materials along the route and get them out if we decided we wanted to do that as a culture?
- The best way is, like Catherine mentioned with the plant life, to have that material to be taken up by the plant itself and sequestered there.
- Mike: This may have been a condo conversion. Maybe it didn't look like this at one time. This is Route 1 probably on Florida or Georgia. It looks like maybe they enhanced the front of it. There's a lot of cars up front, but lots of landscape up front. Maybe it's a Band-Aid. The cars are tucked a little bit further back. The gap between here and here means you have onstreet parking that still remains, so that's not a bad solution.
- When we get into higher density residential we have all types of solutions that are tried. A lot of the time, it's structured parking. Keep in mind that parking structures typically have to have a minimum dimension to even work. If you've got small lots, parking structures are really hard to get to function. Sometimes you have to tear down a whole mess of stuff to make the geometry big enough for a parking structure.
- Example: Surface parking next to the parking structure at 30th and El Cajon. Not too many people in those units right now, so it's hard to see what it would look like with a lot of cars. There's a lot of this courtyard-type parking. Some of them are handled a little better with permeable pavement and landscaping, some of them are a little more solid. Do people like that kind of solution where you don't see it from the street? I see a few shaking heads. Were there any of these that you saw that were more successful than others?
- Public: On B7, that one was really nice. We looked at that one and the La Valencia one. Some of the parking is a little bit close together. It's going to be a little bit tough getting in and out of those garages. That one creates sort of a lovely visual corridor between the buildings. They landscaped it so attractively that it became garden-like. So we thought that was just a really awesome concept.
 - Mike: And because it's a little wider, a little sunnier. On this one with the overhangs, it's a lot darker. This one you can only see if you go in the alleyway. It's actually blocked off on one end.
 - Public: That was our ultimate favorite of all.

- Mike: This one had 8 dislikes. Contiguous parking with tandem parking, people disliked this. People liked the underground parking here. It seems like it's still part of the streetscape and it doesn't dominate the overall look. Public: Where you have asphalt and you combine it with a big, white garage door, just changing the color of the garage door can make a difference.
- Mike: Commercial Parking. On street parking is one solution for a commercial district. There some angled parking. Some of the streets are pretty wide in North Park, but some aren't wide enough to handle. What are people feeling about angled parking? Some places have been converted, there's other places where it could occur.
- Public: We all thought that the angled parking worked well in a commercial zone or outside a church or school. Everyone was anti-angled parking in a single-family neighborhood, because the impacts to those homes from the headlights, the extra cars, all sorts of things.
 - Mike: Typically you don't yield much parking where there's a lot of driveways.
 - Public: Some of my neighbors were pretty adamant about "don't let them do that on my street."
 - The difficulty I see with angled parking is sometimes it cuts off your visibility. You have to pull way into the roadway to see if someone's coming, and then you're blocking traffic from the other direction.
 - Mike: The way that that's sometimes handled better is the wrapped corners allow cars to pull further out.
 - Public: I see it more in commercial areas, than residential. I've seen in some residential in the South Park area with angled parking and that's where the cross-traffic is really difficult. But I understand what you mean.
 - In most residential areas, because of the driveway factor, people are conditioned to park in smaller spaces that what the actual parking standard is along the street. We actually get more spaces by parking parallel rather than at an angle.
- Mike: This one is on El Cajon and 30th with parking behind the commercial structure. Is that by the check-cashing place?
- Public: There's a T-Mobile and a bail bonds place.
- It's an abomination.
- Mike: Is the abomination the architecture?
- Public: The check cashing.
- The way parking not visible from El Cajon but it's visible from 30th.
- We hate it. You're not going to get anything good about it.
- Mike: Larger parking lots, if they're screened well, people didn't seem to have a problem.
- Parking at hospital at Florida and El Cajon, which dominates the entire block. They have this giant landscaped corner that's blocked off.

- Mike: If you're going to spend the money on the parking structure, there's no reason not to put it behind a building or underground. It's not something that can be screened very easily. It's too dominant.
- Public: How do we prevent that situation in the future?
- Mike: There's not one solution to parking. It depends on the site, type of development, density, use, it can affect the community. When it's handled right you don't even think about it. This is an area we'll want to work with you on.
- Public: Sometimes open parking lots can provide a view area. A little bit of landscaping, a little bit of fencing. I hate to just totally reject the ordinary surface parking lot.
- Mike: This lot used to look a lot better before they took out all the trees.

Mobility

- Mike: Mobility refers to how people get around especially as they relate to a walkable, a bikeable environment. When you look at the roadway network, it's not bad. North Park is a grid network. Some exceptions where you get congestion, but in general mobility is pretty high. University and El Cajon are both like that. How you design those elements can be important. The goal is to get cars through the area, but not at the expense of the business, the access, and the pedestrian environment. Now there's state legislation called "complete streets" legislation. You have to look at level of service for vehicles as well as for transit, walking, and biking. We'll be taking that perspective.
- University Ave: Based on the volume and speed, it's not the easiest street to cross as a pedestrian. Many blocks are offset. There are very few traffic signals. El Cajon Blvd: Same thing. That's a formidable amount of cars. It works as a divider street instead of a street that pulls the community together.
- We've got some wide intersections. The widest, which we share with Uptown, is El Cajon, Normal St. and Park, where they all come together.
 - There used to be a tunnel underground. The big problem is the width and ability to get across that street. These days would you want to go that width in a tunnel? The big problem here is just the width. There's certain directions you can't go as a pedestrian. So these are some of the streets that we do have some problems with.
- Public: On University, the areas where they have the cross walks? Can't you cross there?
- Mike: You can try to cross, but you're taking you're life in your hands.
- Public: Why can't you cross?
- Mike: There are 24-hour-a-day flashing lights saying that it's a crosswalk. That's what's called a multi-lane, multi-threat. (Laughter) You get one car to stop and the car in the other lane doesn't even pay attention. A lot of people get hit in that situation. That particular solution is not a good one.
- Public: On the previous slide our group had some comments.

- It would be a good place for a traffic roundabout because so there are many intersections, and even for the drivers, it's hard to see where you're going to go.
- Plan for a transit station there, we didn't think it was a good idea.
- If you are in a wheelchair, you can forget about getting up and down those curbs.
- Mike: They're probably not up to ADA standards.
- Public: There's one place, at 29th and University, between Clare de Lune and the theater, you take your life in your hands. The next light is Utah or 30th, so far away, you just think you'll make that dodge.
- Palm Springs has those little signals. Why can't we do that?
- Mike: There are a lot of tools used throughout the country, we're starting to get those. We're finally getting countdown timers. You have to allow more time for pedestrians. New state law. It might be easier to start getting ahead these wider streets. It has an effect on traffic, so you have to try and balance some of those things. There are certain areas that should be walkable, but can't be and unless you make some of those changes, it will never be.
- Mike: The same thing occurs with Bikeways. There are what's called a Class 1, Class 2 or a Class 3 bikeway.
 - Class 1 is a separate trail, Class 2 has separate striping, and Class 3 can just be a sign, but there's not striping in the road. There may be shoulder striping, but it's mainly for parking or to identify the edge of the road.
 - There are opportunities to up to Class 2 in North Park. This intersection at El Cajon and Washington is a nightmare for pedestrians and not much better for cyclists. A lot of the other streets are great for cycling. There's a good grid system gives you choices.
- Then we start looking at walking environments. Usually our residential areas are pretty good. There's generally something away from edge of the street with shade. Three people on this one really liked it, three were neutral. Maybe there was a concern about the tall wall.
- Public: Some of us were concerned with the really high landscaping. It's a problem for drivers getting in and out.
- Mike: This one doesn't have that. Everyone seemed to agree this was a good walking environment. The width is fine, but it's probably pretty bright with the light bouncing off the pavement and the garages. What do you think about when there are fences against the property? Three were kind of neutral on this, one disliked it.
- In business districts, you have a lot of horizontal and vertical planes without much interest. I know this lot's eventually going to get developed. Obstructions that can occur, either from bus stops or just the kinds of

- things. Six disliked this one. There were garbage bins, utilities. Things that seem more like they should be in an alleyway, but it ends up being in a public street.
- Public: I did the walk on trash day. Some of the alleyways were just packed with (trash) cans. Seems like alleyways are a collection point.
 - A new project would never allow that to occur. There's design guidelines for how to do that right.
 - In other business districts, like this one on Ray Street, I think it works pretty well. People liked that setting. If you have shade and some interesting things to look at, people seemed to like that.
 - This one is called the Renaissance. I took this photo because I was a little concerned in terms of the business interface. There's a ramp with a railing along the edge. But more so, this has a lot of hidden spots that people can hide behind. For safety purposes, if it's later at night, you probably wouldn't feel comfortable walking down there. We might want to think about that. Two people said they liked it, 2 people said they disliked it. With the streetscape, they did a pretty good job with the trees. Is that what was liked about it? It's Route 3, D5.
 - Public: I didn't get close enough. I didn't walk all the way down. I liked the overall look.
 - Mike: It is a protected environment from a shade standpoint. We were trying not to persuade a certain response by saying "is this dangerous?" I think a couple of people were looking at the overall design.
 - This in terms of a pedestrian environment is pretty wide. This is Route 3, D8. This is on Ohio.
 - It seems like the walking environment is pretty good. One of the tricks to have a retail area work is to have lots of textures, lots of different things to look at. Some of the vertical walls aren't all at the same level, but if you're walking it seems to work.
 - Looking at how you cross, there's one on Park Blvd. where it's not a controlled intersection. But it's just 1 lane each direction, which is generally safer than 2 lanes each direction.
 - Public: The only problem with that section is there are no stop signs. It bottlenecks to 1 lane. People go really fast. Although it's only 2 lanes, it's a pretty wide segment to cross. You've got to move pretty quick to get across Park.
 - Mike: This is Pershing and Upas. It is a controlled intersection with stop signs. If those stop signs were not there, this would be a pretty hazardous place.
 - Public: Drivers are all really aggressive there.
 - There are so many directions, and everyone's competing to get through first.
 - Mike: If you came to Pershing from downtown, maybe you get people with that affect. The behavior of the speed of cars is still

thinking you're on a freeway when you're actually on a surface street.

- Public: There's 6 blocks there where they continue that behavior. That's in front of my house.
- Mike: It looked like there was a crosswalk that got moved.
- Public: There's been traffic studies. The neighborhood has been trying to get something stop sign, roundabouts whatever. They've looked at everything. Part of the problem is it's a main thoroughfare for Fire Department.
- Mike: If you continue down on the other side of 30th, it gets supper skinny.
- Public: There's also a playground right there, and there's a crosswalk that's at the crest of a hill. I bring my toddlers there, and it's very dangerous to cross the street in that area. The playground issue is a much more dangerous issue.
- Mike: These kind of mobility issues will come up when the mobility consultant gets hired. We are a sub-consultant to them, so we can provide some info on that.
- This picture here is down on 29th Street. Sidewalk stops at Redwood by Park. I don't know if anyone considered this; should that walkway go the rest of the way through?
- In this one, we're on Georgia looking down, near Lincoln.
 - Mike: It's too steep to get a road through there, but you could do a pathway going back and forth. It is an opportunity as a small pocket park if that was every desired. Lincoln could be a great way of coming through there, but you're stopped at that point.
 - Public: We were so ecstatic to see a park opportunity anywhere in North Park. I've seen parks down in Baja, where they have a meandering pathway, with steps, then flat, steps, then flat. Where you can walk a bicycle up. There's some really creative ways you could use even those little spaces.
 - Mike: It may be a Parks and Recreation issue. There are other ways of getting park space besides a standard neighborhood park. We had one like this in Mission Hills, and it's not as easy as it sounds. It's not as easy as it seems when it is a paper street. It's publicly controlled, but not publically owned. People don't realize that about right of way. In front of your house, you own to the center of the street. You just can't do anything where there's a right-of-way.
 - I did not know that. Thank you.
- Mike: Under Georgia Street Bridge, there's a pedestrian crossing issue. There's a sidewalk here. It was an issue with lane configurations. It needs to be addressed again. Pedestrians don't go out of the way on things like this. Maybe there's a chance to tighten those lanes slightly or just take the sidewalk out on that one side.

- Public: The up and overs, that's Mt. Everest. But, on University Avenue is the only place in the city, I'm a little unnerved there. You get a bus coming through and they make one wrong move and you could be done with. There's only 2 inches from the asphalt to the curb.
 - Mike: There's a bridge height pyramid problem on outer edges. Could be an advantage though because you need to be able to control the traffic at the centerline, but not at the curb line. Maybe can scoot over a bit more.
 - Public: We had a sort of brainstorm of what you could do. We wondered if you could widen it. Not try to have a sidewalk on both sides, but have an actual turn lane so you could slow traffic and create a much safer situation.
 - Why was the sidewalk kept to its full width, but down here it disappeared? It might have been related to bus turning width. I'm not sure why it can't be resolved. It needs to be looked at.
 - What could you do?
 - Could you create a decent sidewalk on one side?
- A non-controlled intersection is where you don't have a light or stop sign. As a pedestrian, you do have the right of way.
 - I use that frequently and always hold my breath
 - The city just changed one down on Mission Bay, where the Bayside Trail meets Mission Bay Drive. They put in a flashing crossing. Pedestrians can actually click something and traffic will stop. We definitely have that issue on University. Adams Avenue has the right way to do it. I think people feel safer crossing in this situation. Even if there's a left turn pocket. This one over here is on Park south of University. This is 2 lanes in each direction. This is not a great solution either.
 - Public: I use that one and people stop for me. I don't know why. If I walk into the intersection, people always stop.
 - Mike: It helps with a median. It also helps having what they call edge friction. People get a sense they shouldn't be blasting through.
 - A lot of people don't have a chance to get up their speed.
 - When they are going fast, they don't want to stop for pedestrians.
- Public: There's one you didn't show. I really think something needs to be done on 30th across Switzer Canyon. I think that is such a great resource for the community. And, it is so noisy and unpleasant to walk across. There's an opportunity to do a really nice landscape buffer, because it's super loud there.
- My friend was in a bicycle accident on that same segment because he was forced off the road by a car going by. I don't know that there's any designated bike lane.
 - Mike: There's no striped lane there. A striped lane does work to control traffic too.

- He crashed into the side and was pretty badly injured.

Land Use

- Mike: The basic philosophy on land use is that similar issues next to each other are considered to be compatible. Offices should be here and residential here and commercial here and industrial here. There was good reason for that in the past. Now, when you think of mixed-use, if those things are too far separated your driving time or your ability to walk there becomes a lot less doable. Looking at compatibilities, often it's an urban design issue. What should be next to each other?
- I grouped these in some categories. There are a number of residential areas where everything around it has been converted into something else. This one's on Adams Ave. next to the bike shop, and even here on North Park you have a couple blocks off of 30th that are surrounded by multi-use, but there's still some single family there. Some work better than others.
- On this one, I was surprised that 6 people liked this when it was described as a small little residential area that's been left in a commercial district. The rest of the area's already gone commercial. What was your thought on that one?
- Public: It's not always about the question about mixed use. For many of us the historical courtyards, bungalows, these are our connections to the past. On Adams there are little bungalows that have been turned into little boutiques.
- We want to keep that. You can add to charm of an area by doing adaptive reuse of bungalows becoming boutiques, etc.
- Public: I wrote, "It was here first."
- Here we have light industrial examples: Auto body, auto paint, repair. This one's on 30th. This one's up on Park Blvd. towards Adams. There's 2 philosophies on this. One is, what is an auto business doing in a walkable zone. The other is: Do we really want to chase out every auto use so that every time we need an auto repair, we have to go all the way to Kearny Mesa? Can you allow some of these things to occur and make sure they're buffered right?
- Public: It can be done. That one on the top has a great mural.
 - The gas station was there first. What that picture doesn't show is there's usually 10-15 cars on the spot all the way on Upas, and there's only a sidewalk on one side, and it ruins the ambiance. Right across from that that is a liquor store, and right beyond that there's another auto shop that you're not seeing. It's completely out of context with the area. But what are you going to do because it was there first.
 - Mike: There are different designs for the use, some more interesting than others. It's just something you're going to have to grapple with. How do you handle something where everything around it has changed?

- The gas station part is fine, but the body shop has a chain link fence, to the east. It really affects the pedestrian experience when you're subject to the emissions and everything. Its effect goes past the property line.
- On our tour, most of us agreed that we want to have those services available without having to go to North County or East County. What we found along Adams is that there are so many. It's okay to have 1 or 2, but once you have 5 in a corridor that's too many. Code enforcement seems to be the biggest issue. Many of them could be much more attractive with a minimal amount of effort. They could use some encouragement from the business improvement district.
- Mike: They interrupt the flow of business as you're walking along. There's nothing else to go look at so you don't go any further. That can be handled by design.
- They all seem to be in need of encouragement; it's something about that particular type of business.
- People brought up being able to drop off car and walk home.
- The auto shop on Park Blvd. from previous group of slides, we stopped in front of that and talked about it. There are 4 auto shops within a few blocks. We were thinking, "at least this one is clean. It's not a noise problem. It's not an odor problem." If we keep a few things like this around, it won't become so nice here to cause developers to come in and tear down to become Rancho Bernardo (laughter). So it's okay.
- There's some commercial areas in residential neighborhoods, with small shops. It used to be that you could walk to the grocery store. We used to have integrated, mixed land use all over the place, within walkable distances, and now it's harder to find those. Everything gets so centralized with big box stores. Every time they build something, it gets bigger and bigger. Something like a coffee shop in a neighborhood seems to get people out. I would think it would be an asset.
- This one's not handled as well. Is it a small grocery store or sandwich shop in there? Route 2, number 3.
 - Public: It's a produce store.
 - I just thought it was poorly done. The concept was good.
 - Mike: It hasn't been invested in for quite some time.
 - There's different levels of development. On one corner there's a coffee shop that's gorgeous, well-maintained. The market has improved dramatically in the last year. It no longer has junk outside. Then there's the awful eyesore across the street, Holiday Market.
 - People are talking about trying to get some redevelopment money, but they are deathly afraid that we would end up with high-profile developments. We're

so afraid to make a little improvement that something really dense is going to go in.

- For those little pockets of commercial, the use and the impact on the surrounding neighborhood is key. There were some on Route 1, where there's a pet shop and a coffee shop and that's fabulous. But if you put a bar there, that's going to impact parking and late night activity.
- Mike: From a design standpoint, you don't always have control over who the tenant is.
- Public: We were talking about, how do you set that guideline?
- Residential infill units Juniper on Route 4.
 - The units in the back are not kept up the best, but at least you don't get the dominance on the street level. One person liked it, one person didn't.
 - This one, 6 people liked it. It can be done poorly, units in the back. We all like to think of these courtyard garden apartments, they used to handle them very well.
 - Public: That's right next to 30th and Juniper where the transit corridor is. The good thing about that is that they didn't tear down the Craftsman in front. Once you get further down Juniper, those go away. They are all close to 30th and Juniper. They retained the house in the front and they're closer to the bus lines. As soon as you get away from there you really don't see that.
 - The architecture for that type of building has to be done with respect. Further down they didn't care about anything, they just wanted to make money.
 - None of these are great examples of the architecture in the back. They could have been handled a lot better.
 - There's one Craftsman style project in Hillcrest where they built around the existing structures.
 - When you look at the fronts of those, there are no driveways, it's handled well on the street.
 - Yes, none of the great examples of architecture but site planning it provides examples to consider.
 - Public: Just walking on 30th, if you walk into the bungalow courts, it's amazing. You're in a completely different environment. It's quiet, it's calm, even in the busy street. These courts are really good. Maybe that's some kind of a guideline.
- We need to talk about open space interfaces. On Route 4, there are a lot of opportunities for better access to Switzer Canyon. When you talk about buying land for city park purposes, it's going to be expensive. That's the

head of Switzer Canyon, right behind this. It could be an opportunity for providing access.

- Public: Is there really a possibility for City to buy liquor store and turn it into a park?
- Mike: Well, developer impact fees get collected. Part of the plan can identify park shortages. Where are you going to find park land that isn't built on? You're going to have to acquire some land. When you've got a small lot that everything around it is open, it might be feasible. I'm not saying it's going to be easy.
- Could it be handled with eminent domain?
- Mike: Yes, but the City would want to look for a willing partner first. You have to realize property right issues come up.
- Public: Any spot is going to be expensive to buy. To collect developer fees, you have to have development to create the fees.
- There's a spot just east of that liquor store where there's a locked fence on this property that could provide access to the canyon. It seems that, in terms of allocating resources, we could focus on that. We need to take more care of the access that's already there. It's an issue of safety.
- Mike: As a committee, that's something you're going to have to grapple with.
- Public: The top two options promoted for possible trailheads, those are residential and may not have parking for people. It's going to impact the residential area. The liquor store, on the other hand, is a high traffic corridor, and I see a lot of people using that market. So I don't know that there is a good place.
- The one on Nutmeg, is a very small area to create access.
- The liquor store needs to be cleaned up, but people really use that store. But in terms of the trailheads, you should provide as much access to the public, appropriately, as possible, being sensitive to the environment. This isn't going to be a destination trail, it's going to be people in the community using it who don't have much access to green space.
- Mike: In these, we're looking at different massing issues. Does a building fit into a neighborhood appropriately.
 - Off of Georgia, on Route 1, this is a pretty big building but a pretty good example of how it relates to the adjacent structure. Here on 30th it looks like a big development, kind of the redevelopment of the future.
 - This is looking at the backside of that Park Blvd./Egyptian two blocks. There's a lot of mass in that area, but it does kind of step down.
- Those are issues to deal with in terms of massing. After massing, you talk about character. You have a certain look and feel to residential character. Some of the newer forms may be different than past.

- Gateway opportunities. This one, even though it says “entering Hillcrest,” that side of the street is North Park. You want to celebrate that entrance from Balboa Park. University Heights has done a good job of that.
 - Georgia St. Bridge is a gateway into North Park. The way that was handled at Upas was done really well.
- These are some of the dominant elements of the University Heights area - nice detailing on buildings, really interesting to walk next to.
 - When you get into the 2-block of the Egyptian/Balboa Park District, you have some massive scale but they have kept a certain Art Deco and Egyptian theme. A lot of massing occurs further down Park Blvd. as well.
- Down 30th Street: Nice scale. It’s improved a lot from when I lived there a long time ago.
- Adams Ave. There’s not the character of building of University and 30th. A lot of things that were built in the 50s and 60s. There are some older ones that have some character, but the architecture doesn’t quite hold as well.
- North Park core area has some iconic buildings.
- El Cajon Blvd. doesn’t do quite as well. The dominance of the roadway itself and some of the building haven’t given the same sense of scale.
- Finally, we talk about historic character. This is going to be a whole topic to address as well as how you handle additions onto the buildings. How you infill and renovate those areas is going to be a big topic.

3.b. Additional Public Comment

Final Comments

- Mike: I hope that we took four routes that were an accurate representation of what North Park is all about. If you have not taken the tour there’s still time. All of this will be put into our summary notes. You can fax them, email them, drop them off at our office. The main point was to get the discussion going, get you thinking about experiencing the community. My email address is mike@ktua.com.
- Public: I just wanted to do a debrief on the process of this. We love the large size of this map.
- Mike: But you don’t have a printer that size?
- Public: Correct.
- Also I wanted to do things in an electronic format. I made an Excel spreadsheet for half my neighborhood because I got frustrated with this system.
- Mike: Our hope was that you would mark those up in the field, but I noticed everyone likes to work in electronic format. In hindsight, we could have used Acrobat.
- Public: If you created a database, we could enter that at our computers and fill in the information. We want to be able to print out the thing that we

walk around with. We could all go back to our computers and enter the data. I've done other things like that. It would make public access to it easier.

- I appreciated having the enlarged ones.
 - Mike: There are blank ones printed out back here if anyone wants them.
- Thank you everyone for your participation.

Follow-up Items List

Due to the decision to eliminate the CPUAC debrief in order to allow time for more discussion on the self-guided walking tour, there were no follow-up items or comments made.

Summary of Public Comment received Post-Meeting:

Topics received by email: N/A.

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