

# Meeting Notes – Workshop 1: Walk Audit Summary



Project Name: Chollas Triangle Master Plan  
Project No.: H105033  
Meeting Date: Saturday May 7, 10 am  
Location: Teen Challenge Center  
5450 Lea Street, San Diego, CA 92105

- > Urban Designers
- > Planners
- > Landscape Architects

## Attendees:

Virginia Angeles	Proyecto de Casas Saludables
Carl Luster	El Cerrito Community Council
Jim Westheimer	El Cerrito Community Council
Ed Snyder	n/a
Norali Martinez	PCS
Jorge Nova R	New Roots
Angelica Nova	New Roots
Maria Angeles Hernandez ?	Proyecto de Casas Saludables
Antonio Fierros	New Roots
Maria Ingrassi	New Roots
Pam Swan	EACPC / Compact
Laura Dublin	EACPC
Denise Armijo	n/a
Cathy Handzel	EACPC
Rich Macgurn	Resident City Heights
Michael Sena	Resident
Daniele Leman	Teen Challenge
Chris Pearson	EACP
Bob Ou	San Diego
Amy Lint	New Root Farmer IRC
Jim Simon	IRC
Anchi Mei	RCC
Gabriera Romo	IRC
Chris Castleman	CCI (interpreter)
Anna Orzel-Arnita	Los Archos HOA
Michael Prinz	Redwood Village Community Council
Christine Rothman	CPCI
Tracy Reed	CPCI
Chris Parezo	Redevelopment Agency
Mark Johnson	Civitas Urban Planning/Design
David Bergman	Civitas Urban Planning/Design
Miguel Nunez	MR+E Economist
	Fehr and Peers Traffic Planning

The walk audit and subsequent existing conditions analysis presentation was well attended by the community (+/- 25 community participants) including representatives from several neighborhood organizations. The diverse mix of cultures and age groups allowed the consultant group to garner valuable insight into opportunities and constraints that exist from the resident's perspective. It is apparent that the community is thinking critically about this site for some time. The participants' enthusiasm, local knowledge and vision are extremely

encouraging. The following pages represent a summary of what we heard during the walk audit discussions as well as during the existing conditions presentation.

**Notes:**

Opportunities

- Hillside and creek provide an opportunity for passive or active park space; desire to improve connections to University Avenue.
- Chollas Parkway City-owned land reuse can help trigger other phases and development, desire to possibly close or limit use and replace with community amenities such as green space, urban agriculture, park land(basketball courts, soccer fields, skate parks, community center, and educational activities specifically mentioned).
- Improve sidewalk and pedestrian connections to community gardens to the west.
- Potential to realign Chollas Parkway to utilize signal at Lea Street rather than installing new stop-controlled intersection at 54<sup>th</sup> Street and existing Chollas Parkway intersection.
- Screen substation with native plants or fences. Is there an opportunity to modernize/reduce visible impact?
- Improve service for other modes (bike, bus) of transportation.
- Potential for residential uses along creek can activate creek and provide “eyes on the street”.
- While Chollas Parkway provides a convenient shortcut for community members, many expressed a desire to make it smaller and safer for pedestrian and bike users.
- Ample surface parking at the northern portion of the site provides space for redevelopment (retail along University Avenue) that can interact with University Avenue.
- Encourage LEED Buildings and LEED ND.
- Future development should exemplify best practices in green design.
- Improve connections to high school and Colina del Sol Park.
- Lucky Star is a community landmark with a loyal customer base. One of few establishments to offer ball room dancing.
- Mid-City is a very diverse community, over 37 languages spoken. Celebrate diversity! Chollas site could have an identity as multicultural activity/retail destination.
- Proximity to existing bus service and future rapid bus service, the project should be envisioned as a multi-modal hub.
- Consider selling wetland rights to developers.
- Plan for park space along College Avenue (*verify*).
- Trail connections through canyons may be possible as ‘multi-use trails’ with crusher fine base (*verify*).
- Coordinate Chollas Triangle study with University, access to Colina Park and sidewalk/landscaping maintenance plans.
- 54<sup>th</sup> and University is a gateway to Eastern Area and City Heights.
- Chollas Creek restoration, clean-up and removal of invasive species. Consultant team should research and coordinate with Chollas Creek Improvement Plan.

- Explore possibility of removing channelized portion of Chollas Creek and restoring to natural conditions.
- Future bike connections along Chollas Parkway should be separated from the street, connect to trail system planned for open space south of community garden.
- Suggested land uses: urban agriculture, green space, farmer’s market, active lifestyles.
- Capitalize on topographic features as part of open space system.
- Community food gardens, bike connections to other exiting community gardens.
- Consider Norman Heights, College Area and Kensington/-Talamadge residents as potential patrons for retail uses.
- Be mindful of surrounding income levels as far as development needs.

#### Constraints | Concerns

- Hillside limits development potential near creek.
- Substation expensive to relocate will most likely remain.
- Surrounding streets and topography isolate the Chollas triangle.
- 54<sup>th</sup> Street & Chollas Parkway intersection can be a challenge to maneuver and has no bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- Lea Street only street connection to eastern neighborhood.
- Topography a challenge.
- Need to coordinate with multiple land owners.
- Existing industrial zoning may not be compatible with community desires.
- Existing service station may be around for quite some time.
- No pedestrian connections along University Avenue between 54<sup>th</sup> Street and 60<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Assembly of existing buildings on-site.
- Homeless encampment along Chollas Creek.
- Concern that completely closing Chollas Parkway will increase cut-through traffic in neighborhoods.
- Mosquito hatching ground at Chollas Creek due to lack of moving water.

#### Desires

- Recreation opportunities for children.
- Multi-cultural community center with kitchen (under utilized facility currently exists at Colina del Sol Park).
- Create more community garden space.
- Space to host farmer’s market/arts market/public gatherings.
- Improved lighting and pedestrian connections along Chollas Parkway.
- Improve bicycle connections along University and Chollas Parkway.
- Improve pedestrian conditions on west side of 54<sup>th</sup> (large wall, poor sidewalks, overgrown plants).
- Any park space along Chollas should connect to College Avenue.
- Maintain opportunity for office space / employment.
- Encourage landmark architecture.
- Explore better pedestrian connections to neighborhoods that will allow for more direct access to bus stops.
- Connect to Colina del Sol.

Next Steps:

Existing Conditions Analysis:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Finalize Intersection Study Area         | City / F+P                |
| 2. Permits and Sales Data                   | City / Bergman            |
| 3. Prepare Draft Existing Conditions Report | Civitas / Consultant Team |

Master Plan Concepts:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Prepare Visual Preference Survey           | Civitas        |
| 2. Work Group 2 Agenda                        | Civitas        |
| 3. Draft Vision Statement / Design Principles | Civitas / City |
| ▪ <i>Framework to lead discussion at WG2</i>  |                |