

LA JOLLA TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Regular Meeting: January 20, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, LJT&T meetings are being held temporarily as online Zoom video/voice teleconferences.

Members Present: Dave Abrams (Chairperson) LJCPA, Brian Earley (Vice Chairperson) LJSA, Tom Brady LJCPA, Donna Aprea LJTC, Nancy Warwick LJTC, Erik Gantzel BRCC, Patrick Ryan BRCC, Ross Rudolph LJSA

Members Absent: Natalie Aguirre LJVMA

Approve Minutes of: November 18, 2020: **Ryan, Second: Gantzel 8-0-0**

Public comments:

Tom- spoke of the DPR Meeting he attended last night concerning the La Jolla View Reservoir Project. LJT&T should be mindful of this project as it relates to traffic and transportation. The City always chooses the lowest bid on City projects and as a result some of the services are limited because of the low bid. The La Jolla View Reservoir is being demolished and replaced. The Reservoir is located off Encelia Drive by Country Club Drive. It is a huge project that DPR did not approve at their meeting. Large trucks will be travelling on small curvy roads continuously throughout the day for several years and our streets will be impacted. These contracts the City puts out need to be fine-tuned for traffic issues for the benefit of our residents, merchants, and tourists.

Diane Kane- followed up on Tom's comment about the La Jolla View Reservoir Project. She is working to put together a committee by invitation only and had requested Dave be sent an invitation to join on behalf of LJT&T. A Meeting was held Wednesday afternoon with the Neighborhood Group that has been working on this project for over two years and the general thinking is that the project needs a little more work on the EIR (*Environmental Impact Report*) to address some of the community identified impacts. A big impact will be the construction traffic in their neighborhoods generated by the trucks. The traffic study also mentioned service levels at the various major intersections on Torrey Pines Rd. between The Throat and the Village. There are major circulation issues, both neighborhood-wide and city-wide that would warrant traffic and transportations involvement.

She is going to check with the City if she can put together a quick committee to form some input before it goes to LJCPA on February 4 so we have a unified response from La Jolla. The other alternative that was presented at DPR is to ask for an extension on the comment period from 45 days to 60 days. She would like to get any changes to the project before the EIR comments close. For public comments on this project, it will be on the February 4 LJCPA Agenda for anyone wishing to speak to it. For comments on the project directed to the City they will take written comments only so you can email your comments to them at DSDEAS@sandiego.gov, *La Jolla View Reservoir Project # 331101 for DEIR.*

Agenda Item 1: Coastal Rail Trail- (Referral from LJCPA) City response to issues related to improvement project being planned for Gilman Drive from I-5 to UCSD campus (Alejandra Gonzalez) **Action Item**

At the November 18, 2020 LJT&T Meeting, Agenda Item 1, the Coastal Rail Trail project was heard as a Discussion Only Item. The Coastal Rail Trail is a regional multi-use trail that connects Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar, and San Diego. The Project is located along Gilman Drive

between University of California, San Diego (UCSD) and Rose Canyon Bikeway within both the La Jolla and University Community Planning Areas. It proposes a one-way cycle track (Class IV) along both sides of Gilman Drive with a continuous sidewalk along the west side that retains street parking and street lighting over a project distance of approximately 8,800 linear feet. The cycle track will be separated from vehicular traffic by a raised median, striping, flexible posts, on-street parking, or other physical barriers.

A number of safety issues and concerns were raised by members of the San Diego Bike Coalition and after the presentation to LJT&T the Coastal Rail Trail Project was heard as an Action Item at the LJCPA December 3, 2020 meeting where the same safety issues and concerns were raised. LJCPA Trustee's commented they lacked sufficient data to make a decision and Motioned to: (a) Ask the City to explore a full range of options for optimizing the automotive, pedestrian and bicycle utilization of the Gilman Dr. corridor in question, and (b) once the City has done so, follow standard procedure by discussing and requesting endorsement of its plans at PRC and T&T. Based on that, return to LJCPA for final review and action.

Alejandra Gonzalez, Project Manager for the Coastal Rail Trail, updated the Board to changes that were made after the safety concerns were raised. She listened to all of the feedback that was raised by the bike coalition from both LJT&T and LJCPA meetings and made some changes to the project to address their concerns.

Traffic Improvements at the I-5 S/B intersection include more traffic signal modifications: they will have their own 'bike directional arrow' included with the straight, left, and right turn directional arrows, 'No Turn on Red' signage for drivers turning right onto the s/b freeway, new modified traffic signal for bikes going across the s/b I-5 off ramp; a 3-way bike traffic signal light- red, orange, and green with the green light showing an image of a bike. Similar traffic signals will be placed at Gilman Drive intersections with Via Alicante and La Jolla Village Drive.

A raised barrier at the I-5 intersection would provide additional protection for bikes. Driveways on Gilman that interact with the bikeway there will be about 120 feet before parking ends where vehicles can begin to be alerted that there is a bike crossing and at the driveways there will be green striping further alerting of bikes crossing with included signage notifying drivers to yield to bikes. There will be no parking 50' beyond it to increase visibility.

On Gilman Dr before Via Alicante the proposal is for a new sidewalk on the west side of Gilman heading s/b and 8' of Class IV bikeway with raised medians on each side of the street. The center median will be removed to allow for configuring Gilman. The new medians will have a slight slope to them to allow for any impediment that may collide with them. There will be 8' of buffer between the bike lane and the vehicles on each side of the roadway. New street lights will be added.

Traffic Improvements on Via Alicante include more green striping for bike crossings, bike traffic signal modifications, as well as turning vehicles yield and no turn on red signage for drivers.

Traffic Improvements will be made on La Jolla Village Dr. There was no signalization in this area so traffic signals, bike crossing striping, and 'no turn on red' signage will be added.

A Declaration of Mitigated Impacts to the Environment will be completed by the end of this month or early February. The draft environmental document will be made available for public review and comment through the City website. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2022.

Public Comment

Serge Issakov, Board Member of the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, began public comment. He has data on sixteen thousand cyclists and thirteen thousand out of those sixteen thousand are cycling over 20 mph. Five hundred fifty are cycling over 30 mph. Those are the typical speeds for cyclists going downhill. There's nothing about this design that causes a cyclist to want to slow down. He noted the treatments at the signalized intersections are handled very well but he has concerns about the minor intersections as he referred to the driveways. A fatality happened in November in Leucadia when a truck made a right turn in front of a cyclist who was in a protected bike lane. There is nothing in this design that mitigates against that kind of crash and there is a lot more bike traffic on Gilman Dr than there is on Leucadia Blvd.

Cars on Gilman travel at 50mph making it feel unsafe to a cyclist so they will move over to the edge but now with the Class 4 bike lane being installed there is nowhere for them to go. They are up against that protected bike lane that he referred to as a cycle trap or they are in the roadway with the traffic. Currently there are bike lanes with just a stripe that a cyclist can easily move in and out of depending on traffic conditions. This protected bike lane reduces the options a cyclist has to remain safe.

Myles Pomeroy, Council Chair of Bicycle Clubs for the San Diego Bicycle Coalition. There are about 12 bicycle clubs that make up the coalition and they meet every other month. They discussed this project in November. He advised the Board that if we approve this project, we should recommend reducing the speed limit to 35 mph. This would allow sharrows on the roadway. Sharrows are the symbols of a bicycle with arrows and they indicate bicyclists have the right to use the roadway. Additionally, there should be signage on the roadway to complement the protected bike lane that 'Bikes May Use Full Lane'. Cyclists are not required to use a protected bike lane if one is available, they always have the right to use the road as well but many drivers think they should be in their own space.

Myles supported what Serge had said about bicyclists not feeling safe in a protected bike lane. He does not feel comfortable in a protected bike lane because of the intersections and driveways. He prefers to ride on the roadway because drivers see him in their line of sight whereas in a protected bike lane drivers may not see him. Myles advised that the protected bike lanes should not be using raised curbs because there is no way for a bicyclist to escape if they had to. Protected bike lanes may not be swept regularly and can accumulate dirt and debris. There should always be a way out of the bike lane and into the roadway if a bicyclist had to escape from it and a raised median does not allow it. He would prefer delineators in place of a raised curb. Torrey Pines Road at Genesee has delineators. The delineators are spaced 10-12' apart; they are flexible and a bicyclist could easily move in and out of them. These are the recommendations he hopes LJT&T will adopt if we move forward with a recommendation to approve the project.

Jim Baross, is speaking on behalf of the California Association of Bicycling Organizations. He noted that some of the features of a Class IV protected bike lane facility will add a degree of hazard that they would like to avoid. Safe bicycling on a Class IV facility especially at an intersection requires slower speeds for safety. There are many reasons why bicycle people are not required to use the Class IV protected bike lane and many experienced bicyclists will avoid using it. However, the ability to use the roadway is somewhat restricted if motorists and uninformed police officers look at that separate protected bike lane and don't understand why bicyclists are not using it; why they are not where they are supposed to be, not understanding the law that they always have the right to use the roadway. This is why he

strongly suggests that if the Board goes ahead and approves this project that we request the City to put sharrows on the adjacent thru traffic lanes so the free flow of bicyclists lawfully conducting themselves in the roadway is not subject to harassment and their choice of what facility to use can be preserved.

Paul Jamason, volunteer member of Bike San Diego, sent a letter of support for the project to LJCPA. He stressed several times that Council Member Joe LaCava supports this project and just wanted to check in on that. He wants to thank the City for incorporating the stake holders input into the revised proposal. He works at UCSD and knows how treacherous bike riding can be on Gilman. New and inexperienced riders will notice distracted drivers drifting towards them and vehicles speeding by them at 60mph and those inexperienced riders are not going to ride under those conditions. They are the very people the City is trying to convince to ride. Studies of protected bike lanes show they reduce fatalities and increase ridership. This is why Bike SD supports the project. He understands it is important to accommodate the faster riders and he supports the City's efforts with the additional signage, paintings, the 8' of space that will allow faster riders to pass slower riders, and the sloped curves. He also agreed with the other speakers that adding sharrows would be an improvement on the roadway. He noted the support the project has received by the Council Member's office, various bike groups, and the unanimous approval of the University City Planning group.

Daniela Boassa - *At the Sept 16, 2020 Meeting* Daniela made a public comment for consideration of a pedestrian crossing on Gilman Dr by Evening Way near the Marriott Residents Inn. Because of the speed on the road in that area her request had to go to the City for review. She is attending this meeting for an update to her request. Daniela shared a map of the area pinpointing where Evening Way was in relation to another pedestrian crossing about 20 minutes away and noting there are two bus stops by Evening Way but crossing Gilman where speeds can reach over 60 mph hour makes it too dangerous to cross. She asked if a pedestrian crossing at Evening Way on Gilman Drive can be a consideration.

Dan Nutter, Senior City Engineer, who worked on the project, explained the intent of the protected bike lane is to increase ridership in the cycle track itself. What they would like to do is not install the sharrows immediately. Sharrows can easily be installed at any time if they feel there is a need for them. Dave asked why they did not want to install the sharrows right away. Dan responded the biggest issue they have is a lot of speed on this roadway and there is no practical ability to lower the speed limit. They do not want to invite more users into the roadway than they need to. The intent of the protected bike lane is to increase ridership from the inexperienced riders; families who want to ride a bike with their children, adults who have not ridden a bike since they were children; that is their target group, not the experienced every day riders. If it's an absolute game stopper, they can have those discussions with the Transportation & Stormwater Department. If they feel there is a need for sharrows, they can very easily install them.

Board Comment

Tom- asked how many of the sharrows would be placed on s/b Gilman. Dan responded a sharrow is spaced every 150 ' apart so there would be a lot of them. Tom is asking because as a driver if he saw a bike in the lane he was driving in he would be angry unless there was some indication that it was permissible for the bike to be in that lane. It is only fair to the drivers to let them know from the get go that the bike has the right to be on the road.

Erik- there are two very different categories of bicyclists that this project is catering to and this is not a solution for both of them. There is a difference between the high-speed performance riders and the

regular casual commuter rider. The high-speed performance riders choose their routes and they choose how fast they want to go and they do not really want this lane so for them sharrows is a good idea. He would like to see this proposal go forward because he is not a high-speed performance cyclist, he is a casual commuter rider and he believes the protected bike lane is important for the casual riders and the people just getting into bicycling because they will have better control of their situation in a protected bike lane.

Patrick supports the project and understands the City's reluctance to place sharrows in the roadways. It gives the new users to bicycling the sense that they can use both the protected bike lane or the roadways. He is in favor of trying it without the sharrows but if the sharrows are installed then perhaps signage that says using the bike lane is encouraged for safety.

Diane Kane, President of the La Jolla Community Planning Assn. She did not hear the City staff presentation on the redesign but she heard the testimony. She agrees there are two different audiences that the City is trying to put together in one lane. It has proven successful in other locations. She drove the facility area this afternoon and it is a long straight downhill that will encourage speed so she understands why the more skilled riders do not want to be in the protected bike lane. Her sense would be to install the signs for the sharrows; it is only paint. The paint can be removed if it does not work out.

Motion to recommend approval of the City's Coastal Rail Trail improvement project for Gilman Drive between I-5 and La Jolla Village Drive with the addition of sharrows on the southbound side: Gantzel, Second: Ryan 8-0-0

Agenda Item 2: Mid-Coast Trolley Line- Report and Recommendation from Subcommittee on changed route of feeder bus line from the Village proposed by MTS (Dan Allen) **Action Item**

At the February 19, 2020 LJ&T Meeting Agenda Item 1: Report from Transit Subcommittee- Dan shared that the MTS finally acquiesced and proposed a new bus line #34 for La Jolla and Pacific Beach. It will leave from Balboa Station to Garnet, to La Jolla, UCSD and UTC every 15 minutes. Recently, he received information from MTS that they are changing their Mid-Coast feeder #34 bus proposal and it impacts La Jolla.

From MTS: As we analyzed the proposed bus changes further, we decided it was best to change the proposal to do a direct express route between Downtown La Jolla (Silverado & Herschel) and the Balboa Avenue Transit Center at the Balboa Avenue Trolley Station via Torrey Pines Rd. and La Jolla Pkwy. This is the concept that was proposed by the LJ&T committee. To be consistent with our route naming convention for express routes, we're calling the proposed new route, 'Route 140'. Per MTS Policy 42, if the proposed route is approved and implemented, it will be operated for one year as a pilot. The MTS Board of Directors will evaluate the performance of the route after one year and determine whether or not the route has performed up to MTS route performance standards and decide whether or not to make the route permanent.

The key feature of the previous proposal was for a Route #34 bus to and from the Trolley's Nobel station to the Balboa/P.B. station by way of L.J. Village Dr, L.J. Shores Dr, Torrey Pines Rd, central L.J., La Jolla Boulevard and Garnet. The subcommittee approved bus # 34, which followed the #30 except it was a local stopping bus, instead of going to UTC, it would go to the nearest trolley station. The new bus Route #140, with limited stops, will start in the Village on Silverado Street between Girard and Herschel Ave,

head towards Torrey Pines Rd to La Jolla Parkway and onto I-5S to the Garnet exit and then left on Balboa to the Balboa Trolley Station. At certain times of the day #140 will be faster but at other times of the day it may not.

Rodrigo Carrasco, Senior Transportation Planner for the MTS is the liaison between the LJT&T subcommittee and MTS. He advised that the #140 will cause some adjustments to the #30, which at the south end will terminate at the Old Town Transit center instead of going all the way Downtown. At the north end instead of taking La Jolla Village Drive, it will take Villa La Jolla to Nobel Drive stop adjacent to the Nobel Dr Trolley Station and proceed on Nobel Dr to the UTC Transit Center. #30 will still offer direct beach service to La Jolla Shores and is the recommended Route for people going to the Shores.

The #140 will service the Village but not La Jolla Shores nor does it go down to the Bird Rock area. It will pick up passengers in the Village and go to the Balboa station by s/b I-5; a more direct way to get to the Trolley Station from the Village. The previously proposed #34 had a much wider pick up of residential passengers than the #140 will have. Rodrigo advised that Bird Rock is not only tough to travel through with the roundabouts but very few people board there; maybe 0 to 10 passengers board a day, but 30 to 40 ride through there. The #34 was scrapped in favor of #140 to move more passengers through the area. Rodrigo noted that #140 is a much faster route and ties better with the trip generators. They looked at how to provide the most benefit with the most effective use of their resources to move the most people and the fastest way to do it and that is how they decided on the #140.

Dan noted that the subcommittee's recommendation to the Board was that the Route #140 proposal is favored, but weakly, and that the subcommittee is concerned with the effects of the traffic jams getting off I-5 at Balboa Avenue but the only way to find out if it will work is to try it. Rodrigo agrees it is one of the worst intersections in San Diego, it takes up to 3 minutes to cross, it feels much longer when you are sitting in it, but traffic engineering says it is up to 3 minutes travel time wise for the length of the trip it still is significant savings at peak hours.

Kathleen Neal -right now they plan on matching the #140 with the existing #30 bus stops and some of the discussion circles around the idea that now they have finished the Nail Wall on Torrey Pines Rd we do have sidewalks especially close to the pedestrian over cross and asked if it was possible, they could consider adding bus stops to the existing #30 for the new #140. Rodrigo responded that they would need an 8' by 5' boarding pad to comply with the ADA Act; that is 5' wide by 8' deep. The sidewalks he has seen there are significantly less deep. He can have a survey done and Kathleen strongly favored having one done on the Children's School sidewalk to check for ADA compliance. Rodrigo will ask for the survey but that is independent of this planning effort. That is more of a bus stop operation issue.

Patrick – the #140 looks like it gives a fairly express path from The Village to the Balboa station but the #34 gave a path from the Balboa station, not direct to the Village but through Bird Rock or at least in that direction by the Coast. There is no option to get from Bird Rock to Balboa. He was trying to find a circuit on the map for the #30 to pick up passengers from the Balboa station, possibly utilizing #27 if only the bus routes could be closer to each other. Rodrigo noted he would love to serve everyone directly from the Balboa station but it would not be budget neutral.

Tom- is the trial period for just one year; can that be changed? Rodrigo responded that every new Route has a trial period of one year. The Route is technically a pilot for its first year then it goes through a

performance evaluation. He and other Staffers will present its data on the Route to the Board and the Board will decide if that Route should become permanent using the performance standards as guidance.

Tom would make a Motion to approve but he wants electronic informational signage for Silverado between Girard and Herschel Ave where #30 and #140 will overlap so it is easily explained to the riders. Rodrigo said the MTS will need to find some funding for it.

**Motion to recommend approval of the MTS proposed Route #140 bus line connecting the Village to the new Mid-Coast Trolley's Balboa Station and requesting electronic informational signage be included at the Village terminus on Silverado Street between Girard Avenue and Herschel Avenue:
Brady, Second: Gantzel 8-0-0**

Agenda Item 3: Safety Concerns for La Mesa Dr/La Jolla Scenic Dr S. Intersection- Report of accident history and proposals for safety improvement (Robert Gish) Discussion Item

Dr. Robert Gish lives on La Jolla Mesa Dr. near the La Jolla Scenic South intersection and has asked that our Board be made aware of safety concerns at that intersection and discuss measures that might improve the current situation. The specific requests are to have painted crosswalks and flashing red lights at each of the corners and investigate having a flashing red light suspended over the three-way intersection at a central location at approximately 25 feet to address speeding, disregard for stop signs and other traffic safety issues to make this area safer.

Dr. Gish advised the Board of the traffic conditions on that 3-way intersection. The speed of traffic at times can reach anywhere between 70-100 mph on La Jolla Mesa Dr heading towards Pacific Beach. There is a Stop Sign at the intersection that is ignored by drivers blowing through it at high rates of speed. Around Thanksgiving a father and his 2-year-old son were hit by a driver blowing through the stop sign on La Jolla Mesa. Drivers demonstrate their acceleration levels by burning rubber, doing donuts, even drag racing. Two weeks ago, a driver blew through the stop sign drove up into his front yard and took out two Spectrum Cable boxes.

Michael Reidy lives on the corner of La Jolla Mesa and La Jolla Scenic Drive. He has lived there for over 11 years and noted the traffic has tripled and so did the traffic violations. He reiterated what Dr. Gish had said about the high speed of the traffic blowing through the stop sign. He witnessed two cars drag racing on La Jolla Scenic Dr with one car racing on the wrong side of the street. A Razor Polaris was going so fast on La Jolla Mesa it actually flipped over in front of his home. He assisted with helping to get the vehicle turned over and they just drove off. The high speed of the traffic, the disregard for the Stop Sign, and the accidents caused by both are continuing to escalate. Michael noted that one block over on La Jolla Rancho Road they got speed bumps which greatly reduced the speed of the traffic. He also mentioned that West Muirlands Drive also got two speed bumps within the last few years.

Dave asked them what safety measures did they have in mind for that intersection. Dr. Gish responded he would like to see crosswalks painted on all three sides with flashing red lights installed. The stop sign is nearly invisible because of the street angulation. He would like stop signs with flashing red lights and in an ideal world there would be a hanging set of 3-way lights that would be constructed over that intersection. He also requested a traffic study for the intersection to figure out how to slow traffic down going southbound.

Tom noted that the stop signs on the corner of La Jolla Mesa and La Jolla Scenic Dr is shaded and becomes somewhat invisible to drivers due to the overhanging tree growing over it. The problem may be resolved if the tree was trimmed to make the stop sign visible to drivers going north on La Jolla Mesa Dr.

Patrick noted if drivers feel safe to speed on the road they will go faster. The size of that intersection and the fact that there are no parked cars on it gives the illusion of safety to go fast. The concern about a crosswalk is that it would invite people to cross the intersection without really slowing traffic down. A conflict may arise when inviting pedestrians to cross a high-speed intersection. What is most needed is chicanes or bulb outs that will slow the speeds down. Patrick reminded the Board that we approved a roundabout for Cottontail Lane (*Agenda Item 3 March 15 2017*) further down the street on La Jolla Mesa Dr; the ultimate traffic measure in slowing down traffic, however the roundabout was never installed. A roundabout at the intersection of La Jolla Mesa and La Jolla Scenic Dr would really prevent drag racing. A less expensive measure would be bulb outs with delineators similar to Hidden Valley.

Dr. Gish noted the approval of the Cottontail Roundabout and asked Dave if it was not installed due to funding issues. Dave believes funding may be a factor, but it was primarily opposition from the City Fire Dept. He advised Dr. Gish that he is going to forward their concerns about the intersection to Gary Pence, Senior Traffic Engineer. Gary has extensive studies in that area and he will know what is possible and what is not possible for the intersection. Funding will be a key issue.

Dave will follow up with Dr. Gish and Michael on any recommendations Gary has for the intersection and anything requiring Board action will be placed on a future Agenda.

Adjournment: 5:41p

Next Meeting: February 17, 2021

Respectfully Submitted: Donna Aprea, Secretary