



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

# “THE STITCH” EL CAJON BLVD MID-CITY

Prepared for El Cajon Boulevard  
Business Improvement Association



AUGUST 2024

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The material presented in this document was prepared by members of the Urban Land Institute’s San Diego-Tijuana chapter from May to July 2024. The report seeks to provide an informed outlook on local real estate and planning topics and as understood by ULI San Diego–Tijuana and our contributing members. The analysis, views and opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and not necessarily their employers, the Urban Land Institute, or the ULI San Diego–Tijuana chapter. The material that follows was developed from a number of sources: interviews, research by individual contributing authors, surveys, and forecasting. While the information contained in this report represents informed analysis of issues in the San Diego–Tijuana region, it should not be used to make business decisions in lieu of professional consultation.

# ABOUT THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

The Urban Land Institute (ULI), is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization supported by its global network of members. The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

Founded in 1936, the Institute now has nearly 50,000 members across 81 nations worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. A multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates an open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.



## About ULI San Diego – Tijuana

ULI San Diego – Tijuana is a community of more than 800 people from diverse professional and personal backgrounds in the binational region. As a nonpartisan organization, we have long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development. Our local program of work includes more than 50 educational forums,



*ULI San Diego – Tijuana TAP panel toured El Cajon Boulevard between the I-805 and I-15 overpasses to conduct a site and context analysis.*

mentorship programs, and technical assistance interventions annually.

ULI San Diego–Tijuana's education and outreach is focused on four core areas including: housing affordability, transit, community engagement, and fostering leadership. ULI San Diego – Tijuana is the only binational District Council in the global ULI network.





ULI San Diego – Tijuana TAP panelists.

## About The Terwilliger Center for Housing

The mission of the Terwilliger Center for Housing is to ensure that everyone has a home that meets their needs at a price they can afford. Established in 2007 with a gift from longtime member and former ULI chairman J. Ronald Terwilliger, the Center's activities include technical assistance engagements, forums and convenings, research and publications, and an awards program. The goal is to catalyze the production and preservation of a full spectrum of housing options.

The ULI's Terwilliger Center for Housing through its Attainable Housing for All Initiative leverages TAPs and other forums to directly engage with local communities, bringing expertise to solve unique affordability challenges and expand the production and preservation of attainable housing. This initiative is possible due to the generous support of Thomas Toomey.

## About Technical Assistance Panels

In keeping with the ULI mission, Technical Assistance Panels convene ULI members who volunteer their time to aid public agencies and non-profit organizations that have requested expert insight to address their land use challenges.

During this process, a group of diverse professionals representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate disciplines typically spend one to two days visiting and analyzing site-specific conditions in the built environment, identifying pertinent planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a fashion consistent with the applicant's goals and objectives.

### The TAP Process

- 1 Define the problem
- 2 Assemble the team
- 3 Build the briefing book
- 4 Stakeholder interviews
- 5 Site tour
- 6 Panel deliberations
- 7 Presentation and final report

## PANEL CHAIRS



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## The Client

Formed in 1988, The El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association (the Association) is an organization dedicated to enhancing the economic vitality and overall quality of life along El Cajon Boulevard in San Diego, California. Established to support and advocate for the diverse array of businesses that line this historic corridor, the Association works to create a thriving and vibrant community that attracts both locals and visitors. Membership includes more than 1,000 small businesses.

According to the Association, its goals for this TAP report are:

1. To understand and advocate for the small business needs of the membership.
2. To ensure the Boulevard's future as a safe and pleasant place to live, work, and do business.
3. To continue bringing public improvement activity onto and adjacent to the Boulevard.
4. To promote reasonable infill development along the Boulevard, including a business mix complementary to its neighborhood and regional customer base.

Through these efforts, the Association plays a crucial role in transforming the boulevard into a bustling, attractive, and economically prosperous area, contributing significantly to the overall vibrancy of San Diego.

Special thanks to our client representative for this project:

**Tootie Thomas**

Executive Director

EL CAJON BLVD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

**John O'Connor**

Co-Founder, Naturally Affordable Housing | President

EL CAJON BLVD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



El Cajon Boulevard

## The Assignment

In September of 2023, the San Diego-Tijuana district council was approached by a previous TAP partner – the *El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association (ECBBIA)*. Since the completion of the previous TAP project in 2016, the district represented by the ECBBIA has changed dramatically and the client was interested in revisiting the 2016 report with updates based on current site conditions – notably, the significant increase of completed and in-process residential development.

The TAP work and recommendations focus on the following key questions:

1. How can the Association establish a unique and compelling brand identity for El Cajon Boulevard that is distinct from the neighboring commercial districts in Normal Heights and North Park?
2. How can the Association support new housing and economic development while balancing the interests of its current diverse resident and business population?
3. What are potential redevelopment opportunity sites in this area and how best can the Association promote them to interested investors and developers for positive community outcomes?

# CONTEXT



## About “The Stitch”

El Cajon Boulevard’s span through much of the City of San Diego is characterized as having three parts: West End, Central, and East End.

The West End has experienced significant gentrification, infill development and redevelopment. It is associated primarily with the neighborhoods of North Park and University Heights, which have undergone similar gentrification.

The East End, between Highland and Euclid Avenue, is developing a community-driven identity as “Little Saigon,” which is reflected in its restaurants, shops, architecture, art and a dedicated website. It is in-between the upscale neighborhood of Kensington to the north and the less-affluent City Heights to the south.

The Central portion, which the ULI TAP panel nicknamed “The Stitch” due to its location connecting multiple distinct neighborhoods, spans the Interstate 805 overpass to the Interstate 15 overpass. It is primarily populated by car lots and car services, low-rise commercial buildings, grocery stores, and Woodrow Wilson Middle School. The Normal Heights neighborhood along Adams Avenue has developed a strong walkability identity. It has developed a live, work, and play identity. South of The Stitch, the neighborhood has developed to a lesser degree and is more residential in character with the exception of University Avenue. This area, while walkable and well populated is not as affluent or well-maintained as the

Adams Avenue area to the north but still has a strong community presence. The Stitch is included in the Metropolitan Transit System’s (MTS) dedicated bus lane, which spans from Park Boulevard to the west to Fairmont Avenue to the east. This dedicated right of way is part of MTS’s rapid bus line providing service between SDSU and downtown San Diego. The Stitch portion of El Cajon Boulevard is a transit priority area, which allows for additional density and development incentives.

## About El Cajon Boulevard

El Cajon Boulevard was formerly the terminus of Highway 80, which stretched from coast to coast and was a primary connector locally between East County and San Diego. According to the Association’s website, “Drag races, malt shops, drive-in movie theaters, classic car dealerships, sock hops and other neighborhood amenities shaped the character along El Cajon Boulevard and Highway 80 where car culture was born.”

Eventually, Interstate 8 was built for quicker east-west travel. Highway 80 ceased to exist as Highway 80, but the Association has installed “historic Highway 80 road signs and banners on El Cajon Boulevard to encourage drivers to ‘Cruise Historic Highway 80.’”

El Cajon Boulevard continues to be one of the most traveled thoroughfares in San Diego. According to the





Association’s website, 20% of San Diego’s population lives within a five-mile radius of the El Cajon Boulevard corridor. The area’s dense population and the high-frequency transit that runs along El Cajon Boulevard makes transit-oriented development an obvious choice.

## Major Conclusions

### Branding

Similar to Little Saigon, this stretch of El Cajon Boulevard would benefit from having its own name. Our panel came up with “BLVD Central,” “The Core,” and “MidZone,” but the panel’s favorite is “The Stitch.”

The benefits of creating an identity through a name include:

- ▶ The potential for rapid implementation
- ▶ It doesn’t pigeonhole the area into a specific theme (while the name doesn’t convey a sense of place like Little Saigon, it does allow for the diverse spread of cultures represented in the area)
- ▶ It can make the area feel more established quickly
- ▶ The Association and the City of San Diego can utilize the branding in planning documents, which elevates the area

Leverage existing businesses, culture and infrastructure when planning and implementing brand-affirming strategies detailed in this report.

### Housing & Economic Development

The panel heard that members of the Association within The Stitch feel neglected compared to their counterparts

in the West and East Ends. Designating a representative at the Association for The Stitch is important to show commitment by engaging with members and keeping priority items for The Stitch at the forefront of the Association’s work.

That person should also ensure that City of San Diego representatives are aware of priority items for The Stitch. Participation in the Mid-City Community Plan Update process is key to advocate for policies that encourage redevelopment and housing development without pushing existing residents and business owners out of the areas.

### Redevelopment

While the choice to acquire or sell a property is not the Association’s to make, it can provide tools and information to developers and/or property owners interested in redevelopment along The Stitch.

The panel identified large parcels with development potential and suggestions and provided guidance about how to share the information with relevant parties. The panel also suggested that ECBBIA compile and share information about incentives and other compelling reasons to invest in The Stitch.

## Briefing Materials

- ▶ ECB Briefing Book
- ▶ El Cajon Boulevard BID Housing Units
- ▶ Previous TAP report prepared by ULI San Diego-Tijuana for the BIA re: City-Heights
- ▶ Mid-City CPU Fact Sheet

# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

## Who We Spoke To



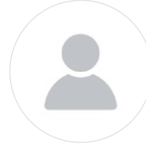
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**Edwin Lohr**  
Resident  
CORRIDOR NEIGHBORHOOD



**Nichole Rocero**  
CEO  
YOU BELONG HERE



**Will Moore**  
Policy Director  
CIRCULATE SAN DIEGO



**Stephen Russell**  
President & CEO  
SAN DIEGO HOUSING FEDERATION

## What We Heard

### Sense of place

- ▶ There's no "there" there: people don't walk the sidewalks because there is nowhere to walk to
- ▶ Combat air pollution and improve the walking experience: Street tree species should be more consistent and more numerous, particularly of the shade variety
- ▶ The area could benefit from its own gateway/arch sign
- ▶ Need more restaurants and coffee shops
- ▶ Central Corridor has several creative/artist tenants and uses
- ▶ Many businesses lack noticeable signage
- ▶ The businesses and organizations with storefronts that could encourage pedestrian activity/engagement often cover or paint over their windows, reducing the sense of a welcoming atmosphere and 'eyes on the street' safety
- ▶ Patrons do a lot of waiting at many of the businesses (auto shops, laundry)

### Auto dominant area

- ▶ Cars' speed described as "raceway" through this area
- ▶ The walking experience is unpleasant and sometimes dangerous
- ▶ Traffic lights favor cars over pedestrians
- ▶ Crossing the bridge over the I-805 as a pedestrian is a terrible experience
- ▶ Auto-oriented businesses detract from the aesthetics and walking experience
- ▶ Limited locations for pedestrians to cross the Boulevard safely

### Diverse population is an asset

- ▶ Cultures/languages: Hispanic, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Somali, Cambodian, Arabic, Laotian, Korean, English
- ▶ Multi-generational living is common in the surrounding area

### Safety and maintenance needs

- ▶ No one seems eager to take ownership of this stretch of the Boulevard
- ▶ Vandalism is a problem
- ▶ Alleys can be problematic, you can see tagging/undesirable activity
- ▶ Teralta Park attracts undesirable uses
- ▶ Central doesn't get as much maintenance attention

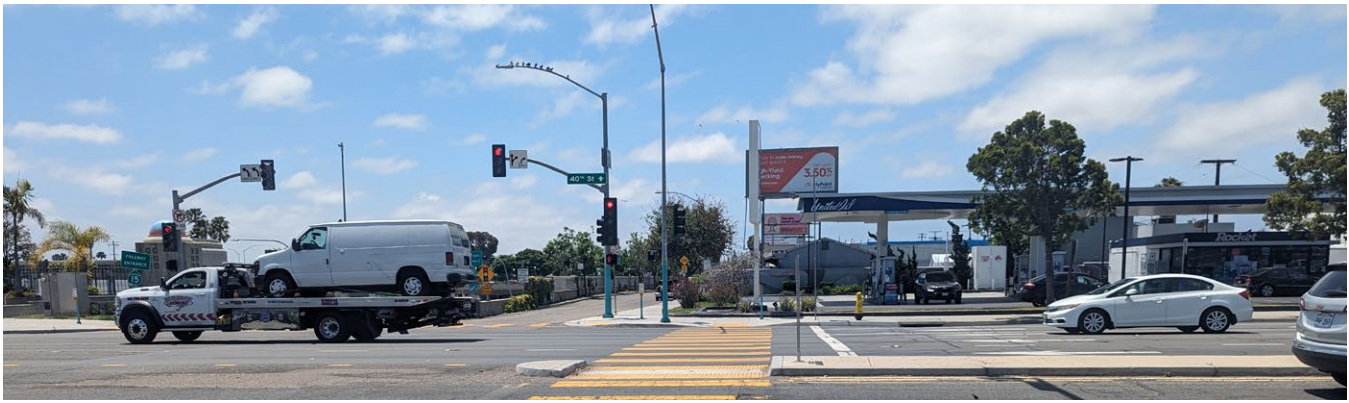
from the Association as North Park and Little Saigon and doesn't feel as "seen"

- ▶ Need more greenery, trash cans, community gardens, library/bookstore
- ▶ City council and bureaucratic representation splits the districts; nobody is a central voice
- ▶ Streetlights are out or inconsistent in color/intensity

### Many opportunities and good timing for this work

- ▶ Area residents mostly work elsewhere but many El Cajon Boulevard businesses are owned by locals
- ▶ Mid-City Community Plan Update is underway - complete in 2026
- ▶ Bike plan seems geared for recreational users, not necessity users
- ▶ Good transit ridership in this area





## Site Tour: What We Saw

### Existing Strengths

- ▶ Presence of diverse residents and businesses
- ▶ Public transit (bus stops, rapid)
- ▶ Art influence (murals)
- ▶ Food trucks
- ▶ Services (auto, barbershops, and nail shops)

### Opportunities to Improve

- ▶ Uninviting storefronts
- ▶ Limited signage
- ▶ Severely limited dining options
- ▶ Pavement/sidewalk disrepair
- ▶ Minimal multimodal use
- ▶ Vehicle priority at signals
- ▶ Inadequate crossings at intersections
- ▶ Accessibility deficiencies
- ▶ Broken/inconsistent lighting
- ▶ Lack of shade for pedestrians
- ▶ No distinct brand identity
- ▶ No “there” there



# PANEL FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## Addressing Key Questions

### 1. How can the Association establish a unique and compelling brand identity for El Cajon Boulevard that is distinct from the neighboring commercial districts in Normal Heights and North Park?

*Similar to Little Saigon, this stretch of El Cajon Boulevard would benefit from having its own name. Our panel came up with “BLVD Central,” “The Core,” and “MidZone,” but the panel’s favorite is “The Stitch.” This moniker was also well received by the Association’s board members who attended the TAP presentation.*

*The benefits of creating an identity through a name include:*

- ▶ *The potential for immediate implementation*
- ▶ *It doesn’t pigeonhole the area into a specific theme (while the name doesn’t convey a sense of place like Little Saigon, it does allow for the diverse spread of cultures represented in the area)*
- ▶ *It can make the area feel more established quickly*
- ▶ *The Association and the City of San Diego can utilize the branding in planning documents, which elevates the area*

#### Tactical implementations:

- ▶ Solidify the district name, create a logo, create brand expression/look and feel (colors, fonts, brand guide)
  - a. Signage: Entry monument and wayfinding should all be consistently branded to indicate you’ve arrived at a distinct part of the Boulevard, thereby creating more of a sense of place
  - b. Consider contacting the historical entity that could approve repainting the aqua streetlights in this section to a different color (consistent with the new branding), i.e. Little Saigon’s red and yellow streetlights
  - c. Update the website map so it highlights all that this stretch of the boulevard and the surrounding area has to offer. Show the different sections/zones.
  - d. Install branded window vinyls when a space is open or vacant. The designs should also speak to a project’s

desired tenants and include contact info. This strategy is good for marketing and adds art to the street.

- ▶ Build off something existing to create a longer-term vision for the district’s identity
  - a. Highlight Soda Bar & You Belong Here as art leaders (music/arts)
  - b. Create an Art Zone/Art District, similar to Ray Street in North Park
  - c. Promote and implement a canvas corridor project (an expansion and focusing of the Association’s current mural program)
    1. The Association does outreach to businesses/building owners in The Stitch to ask if they would be open to having their walls painted
    2. The Association indicates public art is allowed on those walls and creates a campaign to invite artists to fill the canvases
    3. Eventually create a festival, i.e. [Wide Open Walls](#)
    4. Explore and incorporate established programs such as [ARTS 4 Justice](#) and [Vanguard Culture](#)
  - d. Global Food Corridor - Build on Little Saigon’s culinary offering to the east. Ethiopian food is already established in The Stitch. Congregate food trucks to start and use as an incubator space for brick and mortar. i.e. Telefonica Gastro Park in Tijuana, B.C., Mexico.



*Telefonica Gastro Park is a collection of permanent food trucks, food shops, a large selection of local craft beers, and a bar.*





The popular, family friendly La Mesa Vintage Car Show happens every Thursday evening in the summer and features live music.

e. Car Shops/History/Culture

1. Vintage Car Show on the Boulevard akin to the one in La Mesa or [Cruisin Grand in Escondido](#).
2. Utilize existing food trucks

## 2. How can the Association support new housing and economic development while balancing the interests of its current diverse resident and business population?

The panel heard that members of the Association within The Stitch feel neglected compared to their counterparts in the West and East Ends. Designating a representative at the Association for The Stitch is important to show commitment by engaging with members and keeping priority items for The Stitch at the forefront of the Association's work. That person should also ensure that City of San Diego representatives are aware of priority items for The Stitch. This person can lead community engagement and outreach efforts detailed below.

- ▶ Engagement by the Association
  - a. Designate representative(s) or a subcommittee for The Stitch
  - b. Engage with a City representative to discuss infrastructure improvements

c. Develop an identity for the Central section

d. Market benefits of developing in the transit priority area

- e. Identify properties/property owners for demonstration projects, i.e. parklets and other green spaces
- f. Help organize and pool resources that benefit all businesses, residents, i.e. a security patrol

▶ Outreach events

- a. Participate with local schools for arts programs, cultural education, cleanup, after-school activities, etc.
- b. Community workshops – business topics, partner with Momentum Learning's community garden for gardening lessons, etc.
- c. Designated local cultural markets, pop-ups
- d. Rely on existing uses – car-centric events, car show with food trucks, etc. (see above section)

▶ Future Development Vision - Participate in the Mid-City Community Plan Update process to:

- a. Establish a minimum-base FAR (floor-to-area ratio) for The Stitch
  1. Panel recommends a 2.0 minimum FAR to encourage dense mixed-use development that incorporates live/work/play
  - b. Create FAR incentives for including public open space (pocket/ linear parks) in a development plan



- c. Update zoning to prohibit self-storage on the Boulevard and/or require more activated frontage and better design
- d. Encourage affordable housing developments with three bedrooms for families
- e. Encourage mixed-use developments with ground floor retail
- f. Enhance landscaping
- g. Provide more pedestrian-scale amenities – signage, interactive displays, artwork, lighting, bike parking, seating, etc.
- h. Create wider and more frequent multi-modal infrastructure – sidewalks, planned bike lanes (see appendix), plazas, mid-block crossings, intersection bulb-outs, etc.

### 3. What are potential redevelopment opportunity sites in this area and how best can the Association promote them to interested investors and developers for positive community outcomes?

*While the choice to acquire or sell a property is not the Association's to make, it can provide tools and information to developers and/or property owners interested in redevelopment along The Stitch.*

- ▶ The panel identified some large parcels with development potential. 14 potential development sites, representing 26 parcels, are owned by 14 different entities or individuals. The sites range from 0.15 acres to 2.26 acres. (See next page.)
  - a. Keep this information on hand to share with interested parties
  - b. Organize a developer tour and supply this information
- ▶ Articulate benefits for developers. Consider adding this information to the “property and space available along the Boulevard” section of the Association website.
  - a. Transit rich area with multiple bus routes and stops
  - b. Connections to rapid bus lines
  - c. Transit priority area—allows for additional density and development incentives
    - [Transit Priority Area Multifamily Residential Parking Standards | City of San Diego Official Website](#)
    - [Complete Communities Housing Solutions | City of San Diego Official Website](#)
    - [Complete Communities: Housing Solutions Areas \(sandiego.gov\)](#)
  - d. The Central Urbanized Planned District (CUPD) CU 2-3 zoning is flexible and provides for dense residential and commercial uses

Potential Downtown Chula Vista Development Sites



Opportunity	Map #	Address	APN	Owner Name	Acreage	SF
1	1	3239-45 El Cajon Blvd	447-563-01-00	610 R & T Lucky Stores Inc / El Cajon Boulevard Associates LLC	1.62	70,567
	2	33rd St	447-563-02-00		0.64	27,878
					<b>Total</b>	<b>2.26</b>
2	3	3300 El Cajon Blvd	447-551-30-00	Williamson Susan Special Needs Trust	0.3	13,108
3	4	3340 El Cajon Blvd	447-551-31-00	Meyer, David V	0.44	19,234
4	5	3380 El Cajon Blvd	447-552-33-00	Huynh, Tony	0.3	13,105
	6	34th St	447-552-20-00		0.07	3,063
	7	3400 El Cajon Blvd	447-161-10-00		0.72	31,363
	8	3424 El Cajon Blvd	447-161-11-00		0.13	5,794
					<b>Total</b>	<b>1.22</b>
5	9	3401 El Cajon Blvd	447-231-01-00	T R Hale LLC (Hg Fenton)	0.31	13,429
	10	3441 El Cajon Blvd	447-231-25-00		0.31	13,431
	11	4280 Swift Ave	447-231-24-00		0.14	6,273
	12	Swift Ave	447-231-23-00		0.14	6,271
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0.9</b>
6	13	3470 El Cajon Blvd	447-162-17-00	Sorkhpoosh, Amir Hossein	0.15	6,549
7	14	36th St	447-242-28-00	Le, Ryan	0.11	4,687
	15	3595 El Cajon Blvd	447-242-30-00		0.1	4,343
	16	3575 El Cajon Blvd	447-242-29-00		0.1	4,343
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0.31</b>
8	17	3650 El Cajon Blvd	447-182-28-00	Thrifty Oil Co	0.36	15,593
9	18	El Cajon Blvd	447-182-13-00	Garmo, Salah	0.08	3,559
	19	El Cajon Blvd	447-182-14-00		0.08	3,551
	20	3686 El Cajon Blvd	447-182-15-00		0.21	8,954
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0.37</b>
10	21	3651 El Cajon Blvd	447-252-01-00	Collins 2005 Family Trust	0.31	13,606
11	22	3675-77 El Cajon Blvd	447-252-30-00	Viamsio LLC	0.3	13,230
12	23	3701-5 El Cajon Blvd	447-260-02-00	Sobhani Real Estate Group LLC	0.32	13,732
13	24	3851 El Cajon Blvd	447-260-12-00	Marnani, Ebrahim Barati	0.15	6,408
	25	3851 El Cajon Blvd	447-260-17-00		0.2	8,556
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0.35</b>
14	26	3850 El Cajon Blvd	447-201-33-00	Kieu, Binh T	0.27	11,776

## Action Items for the Association

### Short-term (< 1 Year)

- ▶ Participate in and encourage engagement for the Mid-City Community Plan Update from member businesses and consider hosting a workshop
- ▶ Update listings of available space & permitted uses page to include development incentives
- ▶ Create an outreach and business curation program. Track available spaces and communicate with potential new tenants
- ▶ Encourage storefront owners to not cover their windows
- ▶ Update the El Cajon Boulevard district map to highlight current and new businesses
- ▶ Create a branding identity and leverage signage
  - Create a neighborhood large overhead street sign
  - Utilize turquoise colored lamp posts and transform to the color of the new branding - example, Little Saigon red posts
  - Increase use of banners to brand the area
  - Create branded wayfinding
- ▶ Wrap windows with proposed activation use for vacant storefronts
- ▶ Direct members to funding sources for facade improvements
  - [Storefront Improvement Program | City of San Diego Official Website](#)
  - [Backing Small Businesses presented by American Express | Main Street America](#)
- ▶ Conduct ongoing developer outreach to showcase development potential
- ▶ Pursue/research/develop grant programs to attract desired businesses and improve existing storefronts
- ▶ Develop a street art mural program. Partner with private property owners. Get nearby schools involved.
  - [Art Reach](#)
  - [A Reason To Survive](#)
  - [Vanguard Culture](#)
- ▶ Create a Central Corridor/The Stitch Association rep and committee to focus on area projects and businesses
- ▶ Promote local culture
  - Markets/Pop-ups/Food cart pods
    - [Gastropark](#)
    - [Food carts](#)
    - [OB City Tacos playground](#)
- ▶ Contact the City to get the streets cleaned up and lights fixed
- ▶ Host a community cleanup day and engage local students
- ▶ Create an event unique to the area (eg. music-based street fair with Soda Bar)



Cities such as London (above), Portland, OR, Alexandria, VA, and Edmonton, Alberta, Canada have designed and implemented successful pedestrian wayfinding programs





*Café Terracotta, Denver, CO, a historic home converted into a restaurant*

**Medium-term (< 5 Years)**

- ▶ Implement a Clean & Safe Program - example Downtown San Diego
  - [Clean & Safe – Downtown San Diego Partnership](#)
- ▶ Assess feasibility/launch a resource for all businesses (eg. classes, incubator, etc.)
- ▶ Incorporate history
  - Review history of the area
  - Find small ways to acknowledge it
- ▶ Create a streetscape plan
- ▶ Revitalize the historic home (Emma’s House) and its property
  - Pocket park



*Parkville, MO, a pocket park created in a historic, downtown businesses district*

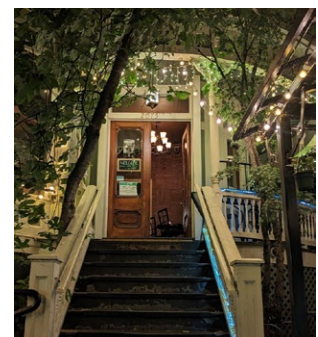
- Restaurant/bar/coffeehouse



*A pocket park at the historic Davis Horton House Museum in San Diego, CA*



*The historic Pope House in Portland, OR was converted into a bourbon lounge*



*A historic home in Portland Oregon is now Vivace Coffee House*





Activate side streets with lighting, landscaping, and wrap-around outdoor seating

- ▶ Use alleys for activation
  - Encourage restaurant/café windows and outdoor seating to wrap around to face the alley
- ▶ Foster community services like Bikes del Pueblo
  - Help Bikes del Pueblo move into a brick and mortar/permanent space once development starts on the lot it occupies



## Policy Recommendations

The Association should work closely with the City of San Diego to advance the following goals.

### Short-term (< 1 Year)

- ▶ The City of San Diego should unify representation for The Stitch
  - One District 9 representative appointed to include both North and South Blocks
  - Normal Heights Community Planning Group area to be expanded to Orange Ave
- ▶ Allow temporary permitted uses and expedited permits for activation of underutilized parking lots. Examples- food truck, shipping containers, parks, dog parks and community gardens.
- ▶ Share resources for businesses
  - Access to capital - Grants and lending capital
  - Simplify [storefront improvements](#) process
- ▶ Encourage policies to prevent possible displacement that could occur through new development

### Medium-term (< 5 Years)

- ▶ Create zoning code update one block north and south of El Cajon Boulevard
- ▶ Implement by right ministerial processing
- ▶ Implement mixed-use FAR-based zoning
- ▶ Require minimum FAR of 2.0
- ▶ Remove the following uses from the allowed zoning
  - Auto repair
  - Auto sales
  - Drive-thru
  - Self-storage
- ▶ Remove any ability for non-conforming uses to be reinstated if stopped for a month or longer
- ▶ Perform historic resources survey to identify potential historic resources and clear others from historic review
- ▶ Promote FAR incentives for under-utilized sites (parking lots, auto repair, auto sales and drive-thru), public open space and linear parks
- ▶ Install parking meters and create a parking benefits district to discourage auto lots from expanding their business into the street and taking up a large portion of the street parking
- ▶ Allow/encourage retail outdoor seating to turn the corners and exist also on the side streets and/or alleys. These areas have slower traffic, creating a more pleasant experience for people dining and spending time along *The Stitch*.

## Infrastructure Recommendations

The Association will need to work closely with the City of San Diego and other authorities having jurisdiction to advance any of the following goals that it can't tackle independently.

### Short-term (< 1 Year)

- ▶ Implement sidewalk enhancements, street and pothole repair, improve crosswalks
- ▶ Improve parkways, install additional (shade!) trees and landscaping, add branded trash cans and make ADA improvements (pedestrian ramps)
- ▶ Implement pavement repair/overlay
- ▶ Start alley reconstruction/resurfacing
- ▶ Fix broken streetlights, switch to warm lighting
- ▶ Install traffic calming lights (like at Hoover High School)
- ▶ Advocate for tree planting in vacant tree wells as part of City AQMD settlement
- ▶ Create a menu of funding sources (i.e., New Markets Tax Credit [NMTC]; assessment/parking districts; I-Bank; Capital Improvement Program [CIP]; Development Impact Fees [DIFs]; Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts [EIFDs]; Exactions; and Local, State, and Federal Grants)

### Medium-term (< 5 Years)

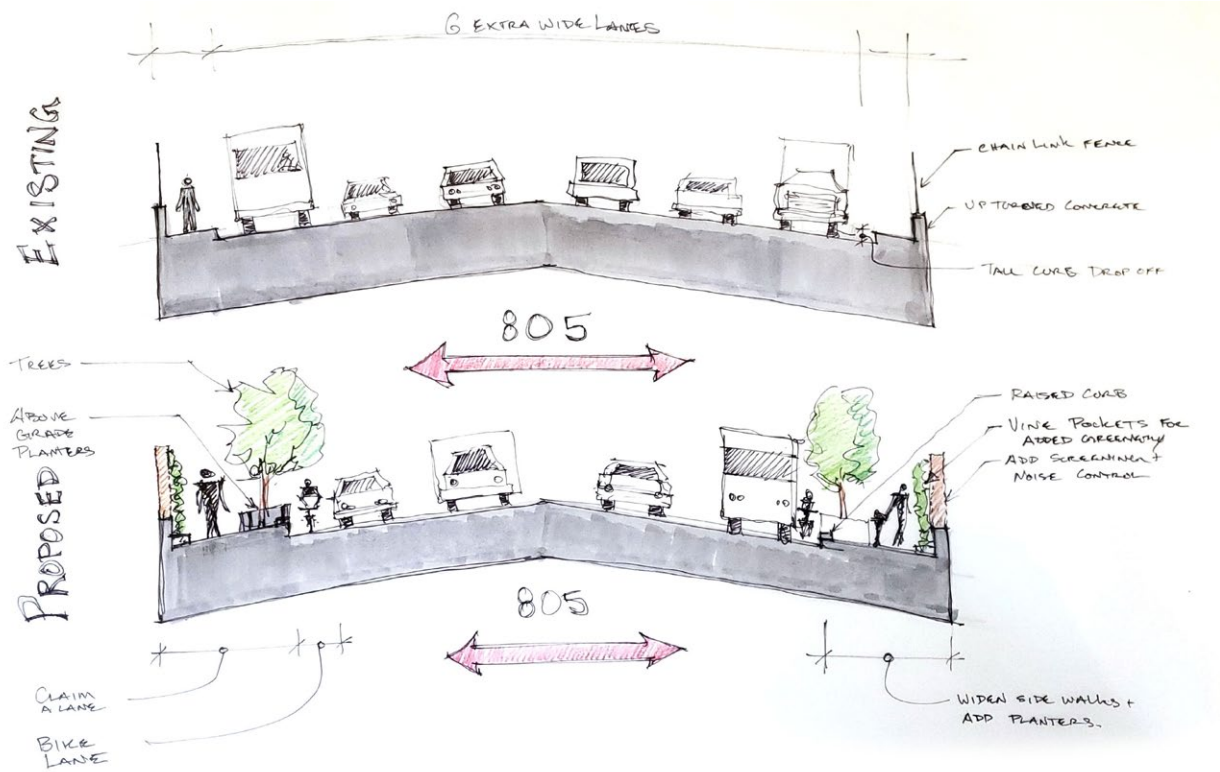
- ▶ Prioritize "tactical urbanism" through the [City of San Diego Safe and Sustainable Transportation for All Ages and Abilities Team \(STAT\)](#)
  - See additional links in Appendix
- ▶ Change the duration of traffic signals to slow vehicles and update them to use a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) at key intersections
- ▶ Plan/implement parklet demonstration project
- ▶ Look into Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants for remediation/site contamination studies
- ▶ Bike lockers - replace unused racks with secure lockers at key locations/hubs
- ▶ Create an open space plan
- ▶ Expand use of MTS shade structures for better seating at more bus stops

### Long-term (> 5 Years)

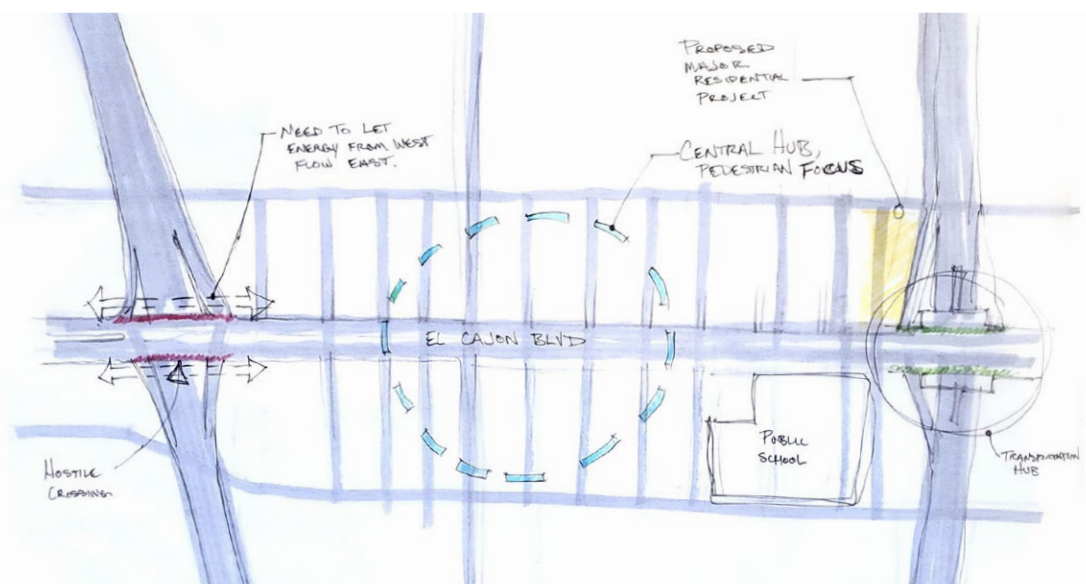
- ▶ Road diet: remove parking (one side) and create wider sidewalks or parklets; align sidewalk with bus rapid transit stops



- ▶ Improve the I-805 overpass for pedestrians and bicycles: wide sidewalks, trees, remove a lane (requires Caltrans involvement). This long-term goal should be started early because multi-agency approvals can be complex and difficult.
- ▶ Create/improve mid-block crossings
- ▶ Place Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)
- ▶ Create and maintain striped crosswalks
- ▶ Intersections to consider: 34th, Wilson, Cherokee
- ▶ Identify location for one park/open space property in central City Heights/El Cajon Boulevard and get it added to the City Capital Improvement Program



Modify the I-805 overpass to be more pedestrian friendly, encouraging connections with the western corridor of El Cajon Boulevard



Articulated and activated gateways can help enliven The Stitch

# APPENDIX

- ▶ Safe and Sustainable Transportation for All Ages and Abilities Team (STAT) [support from Circulate SD](#)
- ▶ Safe and Sustainable Transportation for All Ages and Abilities Team (STAT) [support from SD Bike Coalition](#)


## Landis bikeway fact sheet

Several bikeways are established or planned in The Stitch, just off of busy El Cajon Boulevard. Consider these bikeways when creating multi-modal connections.

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### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

#### Healthier Lifestyles



- Up to 32% of people who bike use fewer sick days.
- Up to 55% have lower health costs.
- Up to 52% show an increase in productivity.<sup>1</sup>

#### Job Creation




- On average, every \$1M spent on bicycle infrastructure helped create 11.4 jobs compared to 7.8 jobs for road-only infrastructure.<sup>2</sup>

#### For More Information

Visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/LandisBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/LandisBikeway) or contact Project Manager, Danny Veeh, at (619) 699-7317 or [danny.veeh@sandag.org](mailto:danny.veeh@sandag.org) to be added to the project mailing list.

### LANDIS BIKEWAY

North Park | Mid-City Bikeways



#### Schedule

- Preliminary Engineering 2014 – 2016
- Final Design 2016 – 2019
- Construction 2019 – 2022

#### Funding

- Construction of the Landis Bikeway is estimated to be \$7 million
- The project is fully funded through construction as part of the \$200 million Regional Bike Early Action Program funded by TransNet, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation approved by voters countywide

#### Overview

The Landis Bikeway is one of seven segments planned as part of the North Park | Mid-City Bikeways, which will add approximately 13 miles of bike boulevards and protected bikeways and connect the North Park and Mid-City neighborhoods. The Landis Bikeway also will provide an important connection to Hillcrest via the future Robinson Bikeway and Uptown Bikeways.

The 3.1-mile Landis Bikeway will run along Landis Street between Alabama Street and Chamouné Avenue. The project will include buffered bike lanes, raised crosswalks, reverse angle parking, and traffic calming features designed to make Landis Street more pleasant for everyone – people who walk, bike, work, and live there.

#### Background

The project will help fulfill the vision laid out in the San Diego Regional Bike Plan to make riding a bike a safer and more convenient choice for everyday travel. It is a vital part of the regional bike network, GO by BIKE, and a high-priority project funded through the Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program. The project also is identified as a high priority project in the City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan. Since the North Park | Mid-City Bikeways planning process began in 2013, ten community workshops were held and more than 100 presentations were made to existing community groups to discuss project details and gather community input for the project in order to create more opportunities to walk and bike in a low-stress environment. Additional opportunities to help shape the design of the Landis Bikeway are ongoing. To get involved or to learn more about the project, visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/LandisBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/LandisBikeway).

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TransNet

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#### Design

The proposed improvements were strategically selected and designed to maximize safety for people riding bikes and walking. Each block and intersection has been analyzed based on existing conditions. The proposed improvements collectively achieve the goals of the project.

#### Construction

Construction on the Landis Bikeway is anticipated to begin in fall 2019. To subscribe to project updates, visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/SubscribeGObyBIKE](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/SubscribeGObyBIKE).



Sources:

- <sup>1</sup> Page 26, "Promoted Bike Lanes Mean Business," [bikeandbicycle.org](http://bikeandbicycle.org)
- <sup>2</sup> Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure: A National Study of Employment Impacts

October 2019

Landis bikeway fact sheet

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PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS AND SAFETY BENEFITS



Mini-Roundabouts

- Slow traffic and improve the safety and comfort of streets for everyone who uses them
- Increase safety for people biking by reducing conflict points and by providing an option to travel through the intersection in an area shared with people walking that is physically separated from travel lanes
- Reduce the likelihood and severity of vehicle collisions
- Allow continuous movement for people biking and driving
- Curb extensions and raised areas in the center of crosswalks increase safety for people walking by reducing crossing distances and exposure, by improving visibility to people driving



Buffered Bike Lanes

- Increase the comfort of people riding bikes by separating them from people driving cars with a painted buffer
- Increase comfort of people walking by creating more distance between the sidewalk and people driving cars
- Calm traffic by narrowing roadways



Neighborhood Traffic Circles

- Slow traffic and improve the safety and comfort of streets for everyone who uses them
- Provide an opportunity for public art or decorative hardscape in the center island



Reverse Angle Parking

- Enhances safety for people riding bikes by improving visibility of people pulling out of parking spaces
- Situates vehicle doors, when opened, to guide people to the sidewalk for improved safety
- Increases comfort of loading cargo into vehicle's trunk/bed

KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/LandisBikeway





Central avenue bikeway fact sheet

Page 1 of 3

# CENTRAL AVENUE BIKEWAY



bikeways (North Park | Mid-City Bikeways) that will connect the communities of North Park, Mid-City, and La Mesa.

The bikeway will make it safer and easier for people of all ages and abilities to bike and walk to destinations within and between Kensington and City Heights. Project improvements include neighborhood traffic circles, bike and pedestrian friendly intersections, curb extensions, crosswalks, and signage.

### Background

The project will help fulfill the vision laid out in the San Diego Regional Bike Plan, which aims to make riding a bike a safer and more convenient choice for everyday travel. The Central Avenue Bikeway is a vital part of the regional bike network, GO by BIKE, and a high-priority project funded through the Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program.

Extensive community outreach was initiated at the inception of the project. Public comment surrounding the alignment, aesthetic, and features of the Central Avenue Bikeway helped guide the design process to ensure all community members benefit from the project. Five community presentations were held for community members to learn about the project and provide input on route options and features between 2017 and 2019. A pop-up session in Kensington, an open house, and an aesthetics questionnaire were also used to gather input from community members. To get involved or to learn more about the project, visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway).

### Construction

Construction of the Central Avenue Bikeway is anticipated to begin in 2021. To sign up for project updates, visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/SubscribeGObyBIKE](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/SubscribeGObyBIKE).



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### Overview

The Central Avenue Bikeway is a 1.2-mile bikeway that begins in Kensington at Adams Avenue and continues south, parallel to SR 15, along Terrace Drive and Central Avenue to Landis Street. Central Avenue Bikeway will provide a safe connection to many destinations within the San Diego communities of Kensington and City Heights, including three major business corridors, two parks, a skate plaza, a community center, and three schools.

This project will extend southward from the SR 15 Commuter Bikeway and substantially improve the connectivity between Mission Valley and the Mid-City communities. It also intersects with three east-west regional



Central avenue bikeway fact sheet

Page 2 of 3

PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS AND SAFETY BENEFITS



**Bike Friendly Intersections**



- Reduce conflicts and increase safety for people biking, walking, and driving
- Indicate clear paths of travel and staging areas for people biking, walking, and driving
- Improve visibility and intersection operations by allowing bikes to queue in front of vehicles (bike box) and by signaling bikes to cross (bike signal head)

**Mini-Roundabout**



- Slow traffic and improve the safety and comfort of streets for everyone who uses them
- Increase safety for people biking by reducing conflict points and by providing an option to travel through the intersection in an area shared with people walking that is physically separated from travel lanes
- Reduce the likelihood and severity of vehicle collisions
- Allow continuous movement for people biking and driving
- Curb extensions and raised areas in the center of crosswalks increase safety for people walking by reducing crossing distances and exposure, by improving visibility to people driving



**Neighborhood Traffic Circle**



- Improve the safety and comfort of everyone who uses the streets
- Calm traffic and improve traffic flow through intersections
- Reduce noise, exhaust emissions, and particulates by eliminating the need to stop



**Cul-de-Sac**



- Eliminates cut-through vehicle traffic and calms traffic while maintaining direct access for people walking and biking
- Connects with a bike friendly intersection, increasing safety for those crossing



**Pedestrian Refuge Islands**



- Reduce crossing distances and exposure to vehicles when walking
- Improve visibility of people walking for those driving
- Allow people crossing the street to cross one lane at a time, creating a more comfortable walking and biking experience, especially for those with mobility challenges

[KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway)

SANDAG TransNet

## Central avenue bikeway fact sheet

Page 3 of 3

## ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

### Healthier Lifestyles



Up to 32% of people who bike use fewer sick days.

Up to 55% have lower health costs.

Up to 52% show an increase in productivity.<sup>1</sup>

### Job Creation



On average, every \$1M spent on bicycle infrastructure helped create 11.4 jobs compared to 7.8 jobs for road-only infrastructure.<sup>2</sup>

### Safety



Separated bikeways and improved conditions at intersections will enhance safety for people who bike, walk, and drive.

Implementing traffic calming measures and reducing cut-through traffic will help decrease vehicle speeds and create a more comfortable and inviting environment for people biking and walking.

### For More Information

Visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CentralAvenueBikeway) or contact Project Manager, Chris Carterette, at (619) 699-7319 or [chris.carterette@sandag.org](mailto:chris.carterette@sandag.org) to be added to the project mailing list.

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Page 25, "Protected Bike Lanes Mean Business," [bikewalkalliance.org](http://bikewalkalliance.org)

<sup>2</sup> Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure: A National Study of Employment Impacts

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), this document is available in alternate formats by contacting the SANDAG ADA Coordinator, the Director of Diversity and Equity, at (619) 699-1900 or (619) 699-1904 (TTY).*

March 2020

### Schedule

- **Preliminary Engineering**  
2014 – 2016
- **Final Design**  
2016 – 2021
- **Construction**  
2021 – 2022

### Funding

- The total cost of the project is estimated to be approximately \$1.4 million and is funded by *TransNet*, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation administered by SANDAG

Orange bikeway fact sheet

Page 1 of 2

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Healthier Lifestyles



Up to 32% of people who bike use fewer sick days.  
Up to 56% have lower health costs.  
Up to 52% show an increase in productivity.<sup>1</sup>

Job Creation



On average, every \$1M spent on bike infrastructure helped create 11.4 jobs compared to 7.8 jobs for road-only infrastructure.<sup>2</sup>

For More Information

Visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway) or contact the SANDAG GO by BIKE Public Outreach Team at (833) 899-BIKE (2453) or [GObyBIKE@sandag.org](mailto:GObyBIKE@sandag.org) to be added to the project mailing list.

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> page 29, "Protected Bike Lanes Mean Business", [bikewisealliance.org](http://bikewisealliance.org)  
<sup>2</sup> Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure: A National Study of Employment Impacts

June 2019

Schedule

- Preliminary Engineering 2014 – 2019
- Final Design TBD
- Construction TBD

Funding

- The project is fully funded through construction as a part of the \$200 million Regional Bike Early Action Program funded by TransNet, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation approved by voters countywide

ORANGE BIKEWAY  
North Park | Mid-City Bikeways



Overview

The Orange Bikeway is one of seven segments planned as part of the North Park | Mid-City Bikeways, which will add approximately 13 miles of bike boulevards and protected bikeways and connect the North Park and Mid-City neighborhoods. The proposed Orange Bikeway will provide a vital connection for residents to walk and bike between vibrant communities within San Diego's urban core – North Park and City Heights.

The Orange Bikeway will be 2.1 miles and will run along Orange Avenue between 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and Estrella Avenue. The proposed bikeway also will provide important connections to several regional bikeways including Howard Bikeway to the west, University Bikeway to the east, and Central Avenue Bikeway in the center.

Proposed features include buffered bike lanes, median island traffic diverters, neighborhood traffic circles, curb extensions, and traffic calming measures designed to make the streets more pleasant for everyone – people who walk, bike, work, and live there.

Background

The project will help fulfill the vision laid out in the San Diego Regional Bike Plan to make riding a bike a safer and more convenient choice for everyday travel. The Orange

Bikeway is a vital part of the regional bike network, GO by BIKE, and a high-priority project funded through the Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program. The project also is identified as a high-priority project in the City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan and the Mid-Cities Community Plan. Since the North Park | Mid-City Bikeways planning process began in 2013, nine open houses were held and more than 100 presentations were made to existing community groups to discuss project details and gather community input for the project in order to create more opportunities to walk and bike in a low-stress environment. To get involved or to learn more about the project, visit [KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway).

Design

The proposed improvements were strategically selected and designed to maximize safety for people riding bikes and walking. Each block and intersection has been analyzed based on existing conditions. The proposed improvements collectively achieve the goals of the project.



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Orange bikeway fact sheet

Page 2 of 2

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS AND SAFETY BENEFITS



- Speed Cushions**
- Reduce traffic volumes and speeds on Bike Boulevards by slowing traffic
  - Allow larger vehicles like emergency vehicles and small vehicles like bicycles to pass through easily by including wheel cutouts



- Median Island Traffic Diverters**
- Require drivers to turn left or right rather than driving through an intersection while allowing people walking and biking to travel through the intersection
  - Reduce cut-through traffic by redirecting people driving on Orange Avenue
  - Create a safer and more comfortable experience for people biking and walking by lowering traffic volumes and speeds



- Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings**
- Alert people driving of crossings through use of high-visibility paint, signage and, in some cases, flashing lights
  - Increase separation between people waiting to cross the street and people driving with medians or bollards
  - In some cases, provide a new crossing for people walking and biking between intersections
  - Can include raised crosswalks, which slow traffic and improve the safety and comfort of streets for people walking



- Neighborhood Traffic Circles**
- Slow traffic and improve the safety and comfort of streets for everyone who uses them
  - Provide an opportunity for public art or decorative hardscapes in the center island



- Buffered Bike Lanes**
- Increase the comfort of people riding bikes by separating them from people driving cars with a painted buffer
  - Increase comfort of people walking by creating more distance between the sidewalk and people driving cars
  - Calm traffic by narrowing roadways



- Bike Friendly Intersections**
- Reduce conflicts and increase safety for people biking, walking, and driving
  - Indicate clear paths of travel and staging areas for people biking, walking, and driving
  - Improve visibility and intersection operations by allowing bikes to queue in front of vehicles (bike boot) and by signaling bikes to cross (bike signal head)

[KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway](http://KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/OrangeBikeway)







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