



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

GREEN CORRIDOR PROJECT

Prepared for San Diego State University,
Center for Regional Sustainability



MAY 2025

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- About the ULI..... 3
- The Client..... 6
- Executive Summary..... 7

CONTEXT

- Background..... 8
- Who We Spoke With..... 12
- What We Heard..... 13
- What We Saw..... 14

PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Timeline..... 16
- Short-term (1-5 Years)..... 16
- Mid-term (5-10 Years)..... 19
- Long-term (10+ Years)..... 21
- Schedule Overview..... 23
- Case Studies: Short-term..... 24
- Case Studies: Mid-term..... 28
- Case Studies: Long-term..... 31



The material presented in this document was prepared by members of the Urban Land Institute’s San Diego-Tijuana chapter from March to May 2025. 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 the area 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 panel toured the area to conduct a site and context analysis.

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 CHAIR



Michael Tactay

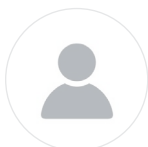
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THE CLIENT



About San Diego State University

"Since its founding in 1897, San Diego State University (SDSU) has grown to become a leading public research university, a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

Each year, SDSU provides more than 39,000 students with the opportunity to participate in an academic curriculum distinguished by direct contact with faculty and an international emphasis that prepares them for a global future.

In 2024, the university celebrated the milestone of reaching 500,000 alumni with the spring graduating class and, in 2025, was officially classified as an R1 research institution, the highest distinction given to doctoral universities in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

SDSU is the oldest higher education institution in San Diego, uniquely situated only 30 minutes north of the U.S.-Mexico border on Kumeyaay land. Its community is fully committed to excellent teaching, meaningful research and service to our regional community and others it serves throughout the state, across the nation and internationally."

[About SDSU. \(n.d.\). San Diego State University.](#)

About SDSU's Center for Regional Sustainability

"The primary mission of the Center for Regional Sustainability is to advance sustainability and environmental justice through regional collaborations in community-based participatory research, stewardship, and outreach to support our region in becoming a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable place to live, work, and play."

[Home. \(n.d.\). SDSU.](#)

About the Sage Project

"The Sage Project is a program within the Center for Regional Sustainability at San Diego State University with a simple goal: improving quality of life in our region through community-based projects, in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals."

[The Sage project. \(n.d.\). SDSU.](#)



About National City

National City is located along the bayfront in San Diego's South Bay, approximately 14 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border. In 2020, the population was 56,173. National City encompasses a total of 9.2 square miles. It is San Diego's second-oldest city and was incorporated in 1887. To the west of the city is San Diego Bay. To the north and northeast is San Diego. National City shares its southeast border with Bonita, and the City of Chula Vista lies to the south, across the Sweetwater River. The city is served by the San Diego trolley's blue line, with stations at 8th Street and 24th Street. The diverse city includes those of Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Native American, White, African American, and other heritage.

This 140-year-old city on San Diego Bay embodies a proud and rich tradition of commerce, urban agriculture, production, and transportation. National City is emerging regionally as a vibrant urban, cosmopolitan experience for residents and businesses. The expansion of Southwestern College, Brick Row and Kimball Park, as well the new library, expansion, The National City Aquatic Center, and many new development projects underway, or on the boards, are a clear sign that National City has entered a "new era."

Special thanks to our client representatives for this project:

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Parcel of land under Interstate 805 at the northeast corner of Palm Avenue and Division Street.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Assignment

The San Diego State University (SDSU) Brownfields Project is partnering with the San Diego-Tijuana Chapter of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to conduct a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) for the National City Green Corridor Project.

In 2023, ULI San Diego-Tijuana created another TAP report to reimagine four other National City sites that were identified within the SDSU Brownfields Project work. That report and this one were funded through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control for the SDSU Brownfields Project.

For this second TAP report, ULI studied two sites that make up the Green Corridor Project*:

- ▶ Joe's Pocket Farm, an unused parcel of land owned by National City that Mundo Gardens had transformed into a community garden. The city subsequently closed down the garden due to soil contamination concerns.
- ▶ Mat Mata'yuum (indigenous Kumeyaay word for 'bringing people together'), a parcel of land under Interstate 805 at the northeast corner of Palm Avenue and Division Street that is vacant, except for a temporary construction staging site operated by CalTrans.

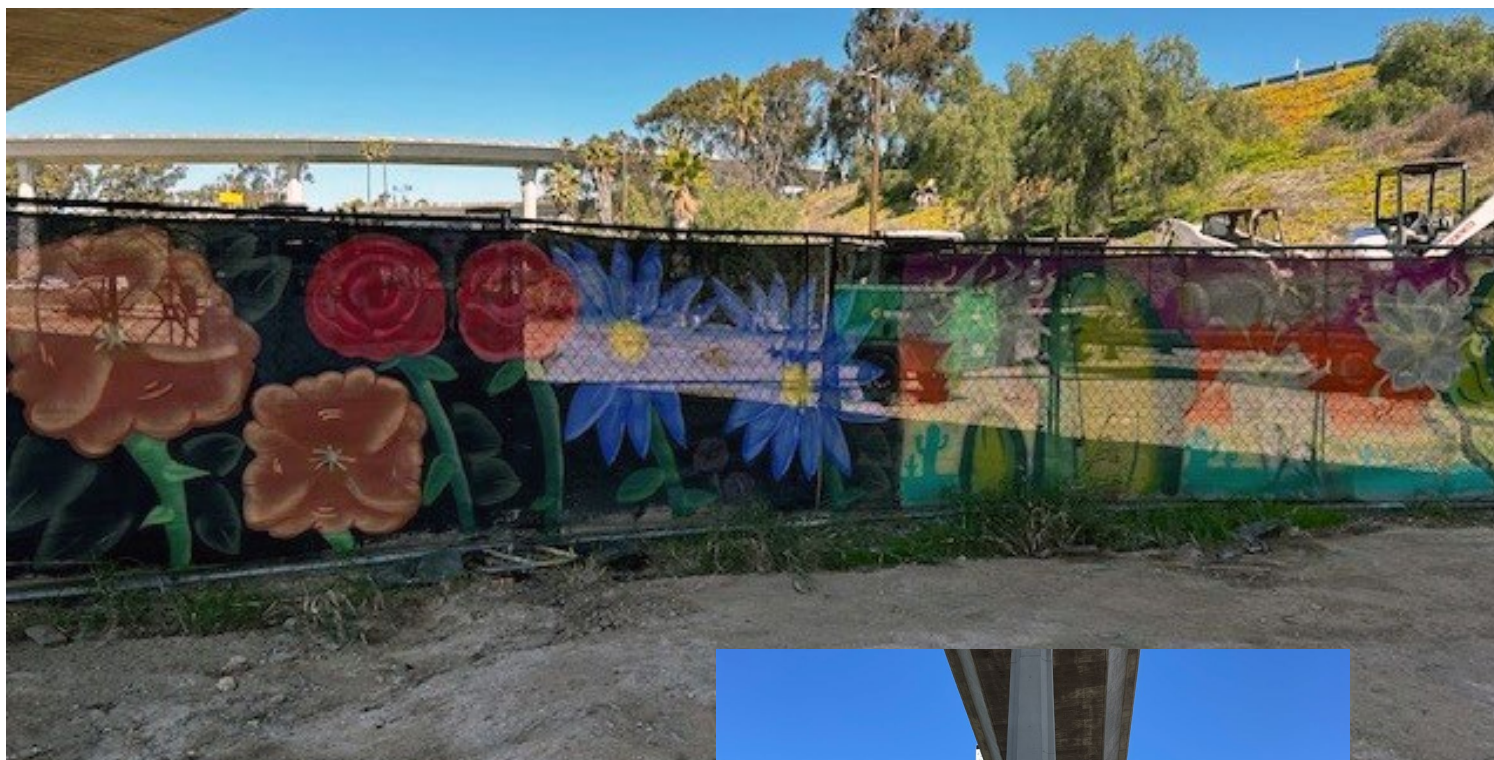
This TAP is aimed at identifying placemaking, mobility, and development strategies that have been implemented in comparable areas of study that will help advance the overall vision for the Green Corridor project. ULI TAP panelists, composed of planning, architecture, community, and economic development experts, convened for two days (March 20-21, 2025) to meet with project stakeholders and develop a set of best practices relevant to ongoing community efforts associated with the Green Corridor Project. TAP members considered the following principles in their analysis and recommendations:

- ▶ Promoting sustainable growth and mitigating the impacts of gentrification and displacement.
- ▶ Addressing the influence of climate change and its environmental events.
- ▶ Prioritizing broader community opportunities that could increase the impact of the Green Corridor Project.

Recommendations from this TAP aim to support longstanding and ongoing community-based efforts at the project site in concert with other local efforts.

*Green Corridor Project is the name assigned by community stakeholder [Mundo Gardens](#).

CONTEXT



A mural adorns the fencing of a temporary CalTrans vehicle storage space.

The Green Corridor is already utilizing culturally inclusive art, identity strategies, and hosting informal community events, including:

- ▶ Murals & Public Art: Commissioning murals that reflect the diverse cultural identities that align with the Chicano Park concept while incorporating a broader cultural narrative.
- ▶ Indigenous Partnerships: Engaging with Indigenous leaders to honor their connection to the land.
- ▶ Partnerships with Schools & Community Groups: Engaging with the Fleet Science Center to integrate STEM educational activities.
- ▶ Gatherings & Events: Events including music, dancing, and food, working with an array of community leaders and organizations.

Why This TAP?

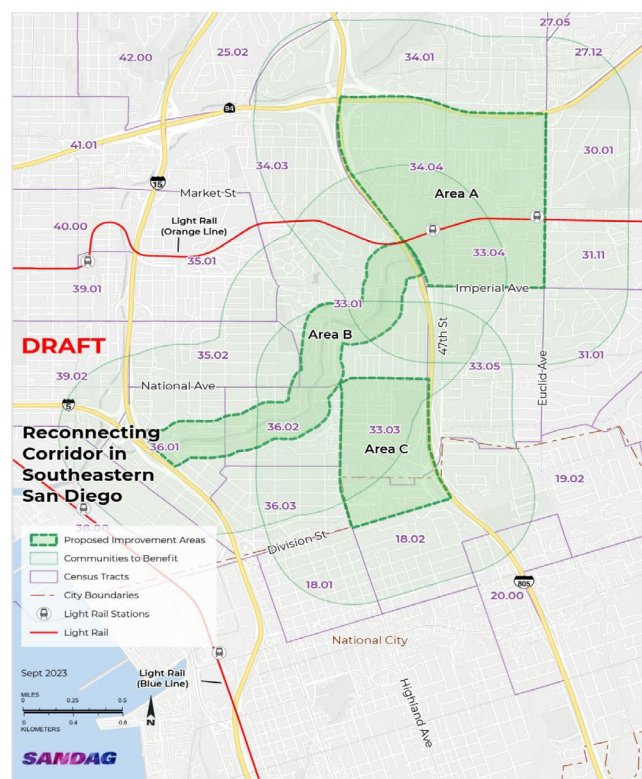
This study is part of a greater effort to address the historical harm caused by transportation barriers that



A ramp that would have been the eastern end of SR 252.

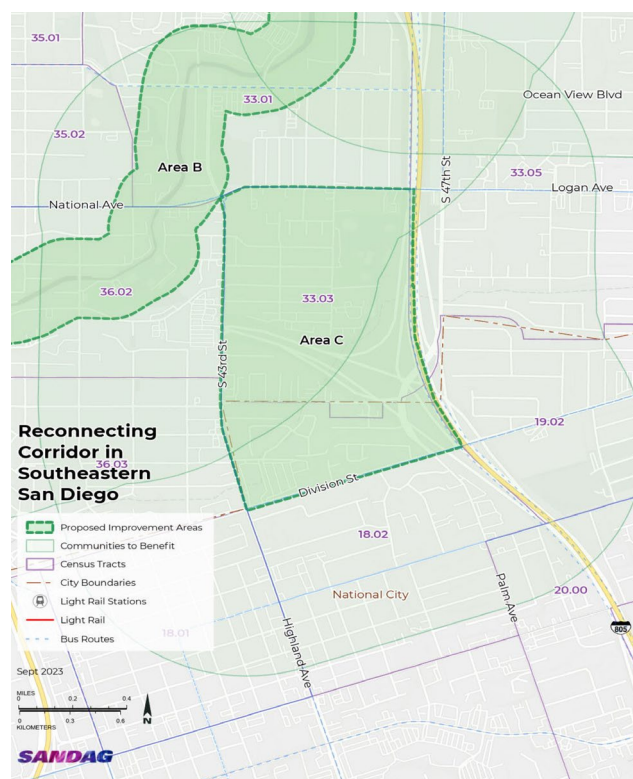
have long separated National City and limited mobility, access, and economic opportunity. This community was systematically carved up by Interstate 5 (I-5), Interstate 805 (I-805), Interstate 15 (I-15), and State Route 54 (SR-54). In the 1970's and 1980's the community organized to reject the development of State Route 252 (SR-252), which was proposed to run between I-805 and I-15. Two hundred and eighty homes were already seized and demolished to make way for the highway by the time the community was successful in its efforts to shut down the SR 252 project.

The TAP study site sits below the intersection of I-805 and the two ramps that would have been the eastern end of SR-252. The ramps, which extend west from I-805 at this site, are operational today as ramps to and from I-805. However, they are vestigial pieces of what was meant to be SR-252.



Map source: SANDAG

The ULI TAP participants identified strategies for creating a green corridor (using this site and the Joe's Pocket Farm site around the corner on the east side of I-805) that connects community members by restoring opportunities that were discouraged or lost because of divisive transportation infrastructure, redlining, and other historical harms.



Funding available for The National City/Southeast San Diego Green Corridor Project (which includes the Joe's Pocket Farm and Mat Mata'yuum sites studied in this report):

FUNDING	SOURCE	RECIPIENT
\$130K Capacity Building Grant - awarded	Smart Growth America & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	Community Organizations
\$2M Community Planning Grant - awarded	USDOT Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Program	Community Organizations
\$25M State Planning & Implementation Funds - awarded	Caltrans Reconnecting Communities: Highways 2 Boulevards	Local Agency (SANDAG)
FY2024 Federal Planning Grant Application Submitted - pending	USDOT Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP)	Local Agency (SANDAG)

Corridor Timeline

1960s

California Highway Commission (CHC) adopted 1.8-mile freeway alignment for State Route 252, connecting I-805 and SR-15 through San Diego's Southcrest neighborhood to the north end of National City. National City entered into agreement with state for construction. San Diego City Council unanimously approved support.

1970s

208 homes seized and demolished, 66 acres cleared in preparation for SR-252 construction. Black Federation founded, SR-252 opposition a priority campaign. San Diego City Council voted 6-3 to continue support of SR-252; Caltrans constructed 805/252 connectors at 43rd Street (now Exit 11A: 805/43rd St. off and on ramps).

1990s

Operation Samahan and Southeast San Diego community leaders advocated for land use: Southcrest area redevelopment project infills vacant 66 acres. CA SR-252 legislatively deleted from State Highway System. CA Senate Bill 160 (Ducheny 1999) authorized Caltrans to low-cost lease the parcel under I-805/43rd connector at Palm Ave. and Division St. to City of National City for community benefit.

2010s

National City Resident Leadership Academy identified 805/Palm/Division parcel as priority, presented to National City Council. Southeastern San Diego Community Plan published, including conceptual land use and zoning like Alpha St. realignment, medium density, population-based park space, and I-805 ramp redesign. Mundo Gardens contacted Caltrans regarding Palm/Division site under I-805/43rd for potential park space, worked with Circulate San Diego for community charettes of park space.

2020s

Mundo Gardens' partnership includes UCSD Growth Initiative, SDSU/EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant Program; campaign for park named "Mat Mata'yuum." Coalition formed around I-805 corridor with National City, Mundo Gardens, Urban Collaborative Project CDC, SANDAG, City of San Diego, and Groundworks San Diego. Caltrans selected the "Reconnecting Southeast San Diego/National City" Coalition as one of three statewide awards for the "Reconnecting Communities H2B Pilot Grant Program."



Major Conclusions

The two sites studied, Joe's Pocket Farm (and the nearby pedestrian trail) and the vacant parcel of land under I-805 at the northeast corner of Palm Avenue and Division Street, present excellent opportunities to reconnect historic divisions created in the neighborhood by transportation infrastructure.

Enthusiasm from the community provides a strong case for restoring the community garden in some form at Joe's Pocket Farm after soil remediation is performed and risk of other possible air particulate contamination is established. The ULI TAP panelists also brainstormed interim uses, including using raised beds with barrier material and new soil, offering a seedling nursery, and conducting gardening workshops.

The nearby pedestrian path can be formalized and made safer to provide connections between the two sites studied and into the surrounding neighborhoods. Lighting that won't disturb nearby neighbors and community-sourced art to mark and beautify the path would greatly improve the pedestrian experience.

The undeveloped parcel under the freeway ramps is an ideal place for a community park. Ambient noise from the freeway could provide an opportunity for loud park uses,

including ball courts, skate parks, and more. Developing a full park will be recommended, although many park activities can be organized on an interim basis.

Within the first five years, landscaping, lighting, murals and other public art, simple site improvements, and adjacent traffic calming measures could be implemented. Pop-up markets and cultural events are also recommended. Funding is available for these projects through the grant programs mentioned above, but some additional funding should come from the city. Other funding sources may include state and/or federal grants, public-private partnerships, nonprofit partnerships (to pursue grants), and corporate sponsors.

National City has a commendable history of community activism, and careful attention should be paid throughout this revitalization process to respect and recognize the history of the land, of National City, and of its residents. Artists and other makers should be paid for their contributions and community outreach should remain a strong priority.

Briefing Materials

- ▶ Green Corridor Briefing Packet
- ▶ Stakeholder Bios

WHO WE SPOKE WITH

Stakeholder Interviews



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Councilmember
CITY OF NATIONAL CITY



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Director of Public Works/City Engineer
CITY OF NATIONAL CITY



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Senior Regional Planner, Sustainable Communities
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Councilmember
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FLEET SCIENCE CENTER

WHAT WE HEARD

Challenges

Social

- ▶ Safety, cleanliness, vandalism
- ▶ Homeless encampment
- ▶ Area that people pass through, not visit or stay
- ▶ Food desert

Physical

- ▶ Freeway underpass
- ▶ Flooding
- ▶ Air quality, soil pollution and sound pollution
- ▶ Pedestrian and bicyclist accessibility/safety – vehicles speeding when coming off freeway, need for improved crosswalks and traffic calming

Jurisdictional

- ▶ Overlapping jurisdictions (City of National City, City of San Diego, Caltrans, SANDAG)
- ▶ Land quality/contamination
- ▶ Caltrans and SDSU approach and access for environmental site assessment and soil testing.
- ▶ [Pocket Farm](#) – site use and remediation progress depend on elected officials. Finalize County DEH cleanup case and obtain no further action letter
- ▶ Differences in opinions and priorities among city officials
- ▶ Funding

Opportunities

Structural

- ▶ Playground for kids/families
- ▶ Raised plant beds, neighborhood composting
- ▶ Vegetation/green space beautification, reduce urban heat island effect and mitigate climate impacts
- ▶ Walking paths/physical activity
- ▶ Connecting communities on east-west sides of I-805 Freeway
- ▶ Removing or reusing freeway off ramps
- ▶ Water resources: Integrate flood control (and mitigate climate impacts); implement Settling basins, swales, facilities to improve storm water quality, wildlife habitat
- ▶ Integrate Free Ride Around National City (FRANC)
- ▶ Comparable sites: Mission Hills Community Garden, City Heights New Roots Community Garden, Paradise Creek Park, Chicano Park

Programmatic

- ▶ Community resource/venue for families; allow community members to take ownership of the space
- ▶ Add educational programs for local students (e.g. testing environmental air quality, understanding/measuring rainwater, plant growth, composting), job training
- ▶ Integrate the site's cultural history (e.g. Kumeyaay, Black Federation, Chicano/Mexican, Asian and Pacific Islander), further define National City's identity
- ▶ Murals and other art, including possible activation of freeway columns and underside and potential replacement for [Writerz Blok](#) as artist gathering space
- ▶ Cultural symbols
- ▶ Local maker fairs/food truck events/produce donation program

Fiscal

- ▶ Brownfield assessment and cleanup grant funding (both sites)
- ▶ City revenue from event users, to support operational expenses
- ▶ Identify funding opportunities (State, Federal, Local)

WHAT WE SAW



Joe's Pocket Farm

Challenges

- ▶ Small acreage
- ▶ Contaminated soil
- ▶ No community access
- ▶ Community concern for trash/encampments
- ▶ Sloping and runoff to trail

Opportunities

- ▶ Community support to activate land
- ▶ Recently cleared land besides rain catchment system structure
- ▶ Trail connection





Mat Mata'yuum

Challenges

- ▶ Overgrown plants/grass
- ▶ Trash
- ▶ Soil/debris/concrete piles
- ▶ Loud highway noise

Opportunities

- ▶ Larger acreage for multiple uses
- ▶ Community activation through artwork on construction fence
- ▶ Formalize paths
- ▶ Neighboring flower truck – longtime local business

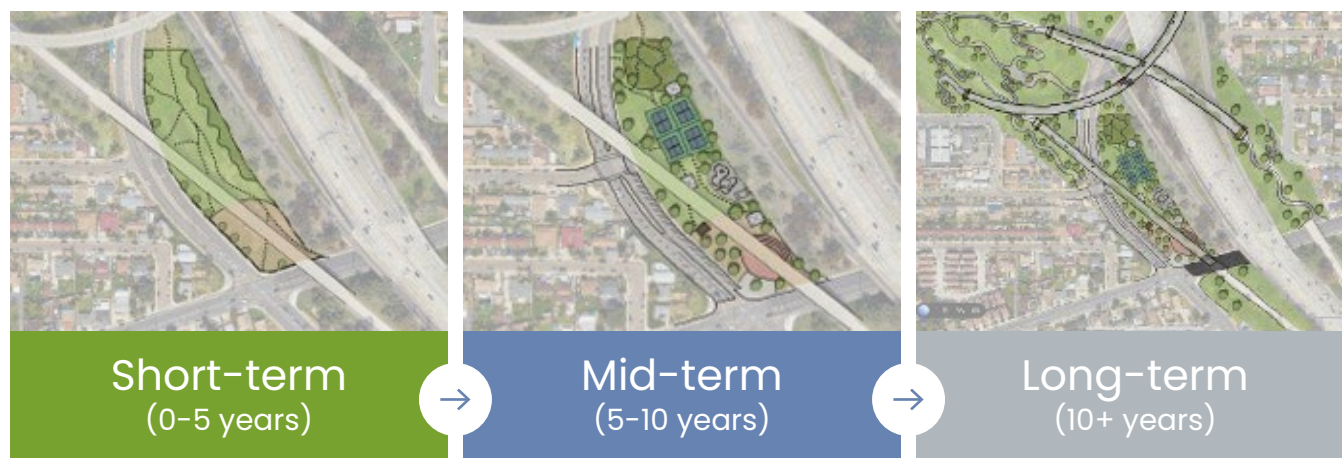


Mobility

- ▶ Existing bus stops create an east to west connection (*Route: 967 24th Street Trolley – Munda/Ridgewood*)
- ▶ Existing bike facilities (Buffered Class II bike lanes)
- ▶ Division Street and Palm Avenue Intersection-- potential for improvements (high-visibility crosswalks)
- ▶ Lack of pedestrian crossings to and from the site

PANEL FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Timeline



Short-term (1-5 Years)

Joe's Pocket Farm

Joe's Pocket Farm has tremendous community support and a strong champion. Food farming may be an option after soil remediation, though ongoing particulate matter spread from the overhead freeway should be considered. Fruit with a peel may be safer to plant and eat. Site operator could also use protective tree species to catch the pollutants, including moringa and eucalyptus trees. The further the fruit trees are planted from the freeway, the better. Consider testing nearby fruit trees in neighboring home gardens for contaminant levels to inform the strategy.

Soil remediation and grading can happen simultaneously. The site can be activated more immediately by incorporating other uses (detailed in the matrix below). Note, however, that the soil contamination is a concern for any return to using the property, even without food production. Additional study to determine the level of freeway pollutants is also recommended.

Creative idea: Flower garden

- ▶ Plant flowers at Joe's Pocket Farm and sell them wholesale to the nearby mobile flower vendor.



- ▶ Create an Instagram-able floral photo space at the garden – also great for engagement and quinceañera photos!

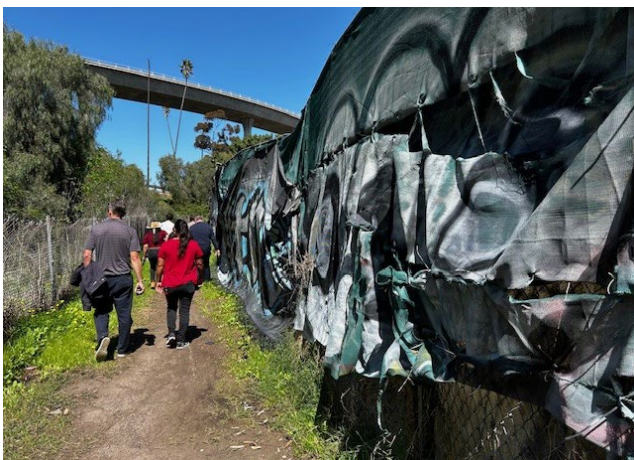


Path alongside Joe's Pocket Farm

The pedestrian path that runs up to and beyond the garden should also be improved to address blight, safety, and flooding concerns. The path needs to be graded. Low-intensity, ground-level lighting should be installed. Border fences and walls should be activated/ beautified with public art (with owners' permission where

appropriate). Trash should be cleared (after adequate notice for it to be claimed and moved).

Many of the panel's recommendations for Mat Mata'yuum are applicable strategies for this pedestrian path, too.



Action Plan

PLACEMAKING

Educational Green Spaces: Develop an interactive community garden with raised beds (to address soil contamination concerns) and incorporate signage with information on urban gardening, environmental justice, and local ecology.

Incubator for at-home gardening: Work with a partner organization to run a seedling nursery, gardening workshops, and composting workshops/pick-up for residents' at-home gardening.

Sustainable Landscaping: Implement native and drought-resistant plants, urban forests, and flowering plants to beautify the area while addressing flooding and air quality concerns.

MOBILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE

Soil Remediation: Identify funding to remediate soil and grade the land to allow for proper drainage and meet environmental safety requirements.

County Voluntary Assistance Program: Finalize County Department of Environmental Health cleanup case and obtain no further action letter.

Management, Programming, Maintenance: Partner with an organization to manage, program, and maintain the site. (Competitive process may be employed).

Community Healing and Climate Resilience: Start with short-term installations (e.g., pop-up gardens, art pieces) leading to long-term infrastructure (e.g., permanent green spaces, educational hubs).

FUNDING

Grant Research: Research applicable grants (e.g. EPA Brownfields grants, State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control, CDBG for remediation).

P3s: Identify opportunities for public-private (non-profit/community organizations) partnerships.

Non-Profits: Partner with non-profits to apply for grants.

Funding Study: Conduct a study to identify potential funding opportunities within the city budget to improve the site.

SHORT-TERM (0-5 YEARS)



Mid-term (5-10 Years)

Mat Mata'yuum

Within five to ten years, the panelists envision a more formal park space emerging and a stronger connection to Joe's Pocket Farm taking form. Landscaping will require water. While this utility is not available on site currently, the hillsides beneath the freeway (owned by CalTrans) are irrigated.

The community spaces within the park should be programmed based upon community outreach to establish preferences. Examples in the matrix below focus on commonly popular amenities that produce a lot of noise and therefore may be appropriate for a site already experiencing noise.

Action Plan

PLACEMAKING

Improving Walkability & Accessibility:

Introduce shaded pathways, clear signage, and ADA-compliant features to ensure equitable access.

Sustainable Landscaping: Implement native and drought-resistant plants, urban forests, and flowering plants to beautify the area while addressing flooding and air quality concerns.

Community Spaces: Provide a space for community and recreation (e.g., skate parks, ball courts, outdoor workout equipment, amphitheater, restrooms, flower fields/native garden, picnic or party pavilions).

MOBILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE

Traffic Studies and Road

Improvements: Conduct traffic study to determine appropriate road infrastructure improvements and traffic calming measures (e.g., road diet, bulb-outs, on-street parking, etc.).

Bike Facilities and Connectivity:

Upgrade existing bike facilities and explore connection from Mat Mata'yuum to Joe's Pocket Farm.

FUNDING

Grant Funding Utilization: Utilize grant funding to implement placemaking and mobility/infrastructure goals.

Corporate Sponsorships: Identify opportunities for corporate sponsorships for existing elements (e.g., benches, pathways, events). Reliable corporate sponsors/partners include sports organizations (e.g., U.S. Soccer Foundation), and familiar businesses (e.g., Northgate Market).

City Funding: Based on the funding opportunities study, designate specific City funding to the site.

MID-TERM (5-10 YEARS)



Mobility

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Safe pedestrian crossings, signalized crosswalks, and pathways leading into and through the green space.

Bicycle Facilities

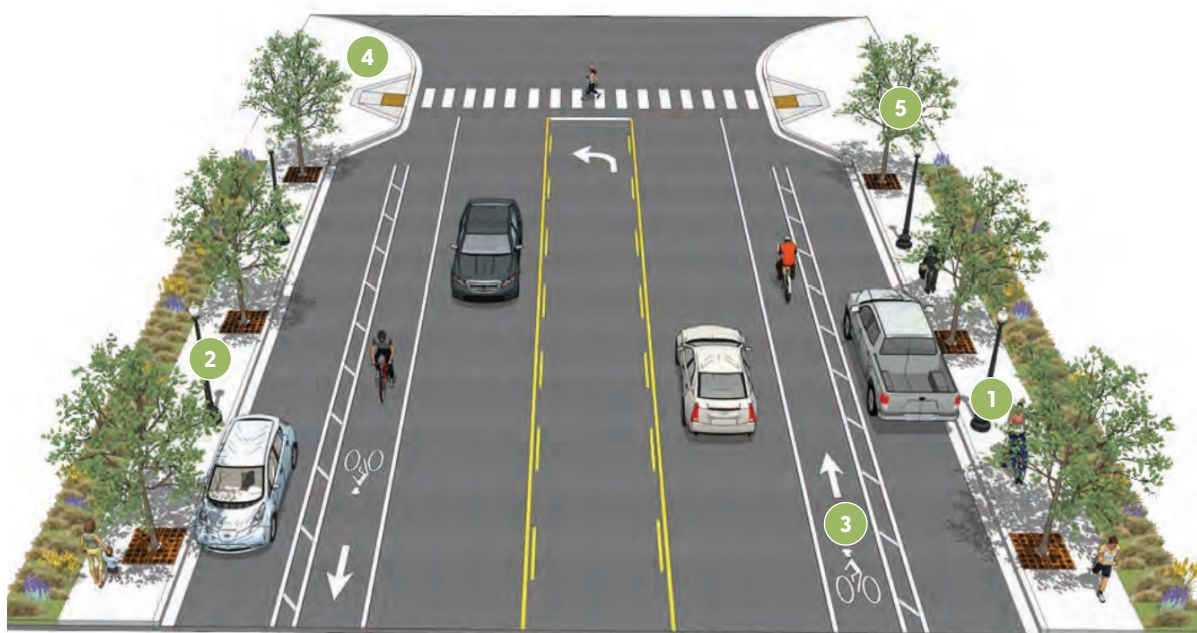
Protected bike lanes to connect with existing bike network.

Transit Access

Coordination with San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) to enhance the existing bus stop on Division Street. Micro-mobility options like on-demand shuttles.

ADA Compliance

Wheelchair-accessible pathways and ramps with adequate wayfinding.



- 1 Widened sidewalks
- 2 Lighting
- 3 Buffered bike lanes on each side

- 4 Bulb-outs
- 5 Street trees for pedestrian safety and comfort

Source: City of National City Mobility Element (2024).

Long-term (10+ Years)

Mat Mata'yuum

The long-term plan envisions a fully functional public park. The panel recommends creating a board to manage the site and to coordinate with the City for ongoing maintenance.

For the 43rd Street ramps, the panel workshoped two scenarios:

- ▶ A: Close and repurpose the ramps.
- ▶ B: Close and demolish the ramps, thereby freeing up land that could be used.

If option A:

- ▶ Use the ramps to strengthen connections to different neighborhoods and take advantage of dramatic views.
- ▶ Let nature reclaim the ramps with plantings/cutouts/etc.

If option B:

- ▶ Since development opportunities will open up, consider creating a community land trust to ensure the space remains the domain of the community and to discourage gentrification that could displace current residents. According to Investopedia, a community land trust is a nonprofit organization that:
 - Owns land on behalf of a community.
 - Promotes housing affordability and sustainable development.
 - Mitigates historical inequities in homeownership and wealth building.
 - Provides affordable homes, community gardens, civic buildings, and other community assets.

[Economy/Government & Policy Investopedia.](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/community-land-trust.asp)

LONG-TERM (10+ YEARS)



Action Plan

PLACEMAKING

Public Park: Fully functional public park with public restrooms and art.

Neighborhood Amenities: Addition of neighborhood retail and community/event venues opportunities.

Cultural District: Available to the community as a gathering space for festivals, performances, art exhibitions.

Management: Creation of a community board to manage events.

Sustainability: Addition of features such as rain gardens and solar lighting.

Climate-Resilient Features: Prioritize flood mitigation through permeable surfaces, bioswales, and tree canopy expansion. Use public art to educate the community about climate resilience.

MOBILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE

Mobility Solutions: Fully integrated mobility solutions (e.g., Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, Coordinated Signals, buildout of bike and pedestrian network, etc.).

Transportation Demand Management: shuttle services, FRANC, ride sharing opportunities.

Maintenance Plan: Draft maintenance plan for park operations and infrastructure.

Sustainable Initiatives: Adoption of sustainable initiatives (e.g., waste reduction, renewable energy, educational outreach).

Mix of Uses: Creation of a mix of uses (e.g., public, housing, educational, retail) that serve the surrounding community.



Adaptive Reuse - 43rd Street Ramps: Construct new freeway entrances/exits and decommission current ramps.

FUNDING

Sustainable Revenue Generation: Create environment for revenue-generating uses (e.g., flower shop, community/party venue rental).

Maintenance: Continue to utilize City funding for ongoing maintenance and improvements to the site.

Implementation Schedule Overview

 Joe's Pocket Farm
  Joe's Pocket Farm and Mat Mata'yuum
  Short-term
  Mid-term
  Long-term

Site Surveys										
Design Phase										
Approvals										
Environmental Documentation / Technical Studies										
Site Preparation/Remediation										
Grass Field/Landscaping										
Educational Green Spaces										
Murals										
Traffic Calming Measures										
Simple Site Improvements										
Utility Facilities										
Park Improvements										
Major Roadway Improvements										
Climate Resilience Features										

CASE STUDIES: SHORT-TERM



Master Composter Training Course. © 2019 by Living Coast Discovery Center



Composting Workshops & Course

Living Coast Discovery Center, City of Chula Vista, San Diego County

[Master Composter Training Course – The Living Coast Discovery Center](#)

Project Description

- ▶ Free 1-hour bilingual workshops
- ▶ Free 7-week Master Course
- ▶ Benefits for Chula Vista residents (discounted compost bins, free admission days)

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Limited capital needs

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ The Living Coast Discovery Center is a 501(c)(3)
- ▶ Support mainly comes from admission and membership, as well as fundraising, donations, and grants; educational program services. Support also comes from rentals and investments.
- ▶ Support from the City of Chula Vista Office of Sustainability

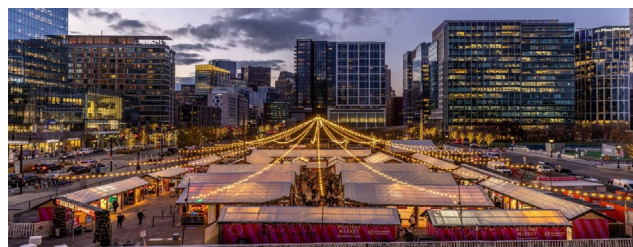
Temporary Retail Spaces

Seaport Market, Boston, MA

[Snowport 2024: A guide to Boston Seaport's winter holiday market | Boston.com](#)

[Shop at the Seaport Summer Market this season | Boston.com](#)

- ▶ A temporary retail market, utilizing shipping containers, is active year-round with local vendors selling goods, coffee, and food. Seasonal themes turn the space into holiday markets.



Boston Seaport by WS, Photographer Lindsay Ahern

Telefonica Gastro Park, Tijuana, MX

[Telefonica Gastro Park](#)

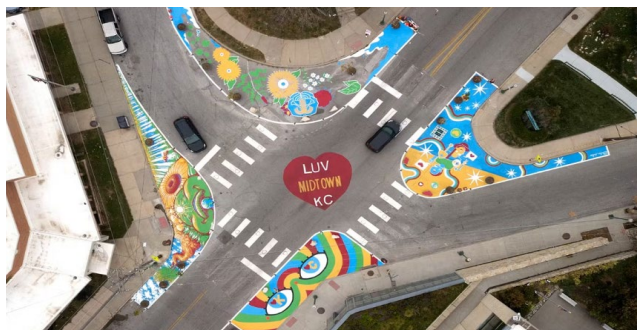
- ▶ A collective of food trucks, small eateries, and breweries. Some of the vendors have built brick-and-mortar spaces; others use food trucks and picnic tables.

Mobility & Art Connections

Kansas City, MO

[Asphalt Art Can Save Lives - Better Bike Share](#)

- ▶ A street mural in Kansas City, MO, helped cut driver speeds by 45% and inspired the “Asphalt Art Safety Study”



The Asphalt Art Initiative at the intersection of Westport Road and Wyandotte Street in Kansas City, Missouri. © 2020 by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Santa Monica and San Francisco, CA

[Santa Monica Creative Crosswalks – Here LA](#)

[Castro Streetscape Project Groundbreaking Celebration - Crosswalk design unveiled for historic corridor](#) | Public Works

- ▶ In 2016, the City of Santa Monica introduced pilot artful crosswalks in the heart of Downtown. It was part of a larger effort to design safer, more comfortable streets, which also included adopting a pedestrian action plan to reduce the number of traffic-related deaths and serious injuries to zero.
- ▶ San Francisco unveiled its first creative crosswalks in 2014. Installation of the four rainbow crosswalks at Castro and 18th Streets cost approximately \$37,500, which was funded by the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefits District.



Santa Monica Creative Crosswalks. © 2017 by William Short

Public Underpass Spaces

Waterways Public Art Pilot Project, Moonee Valley, Australia

[Under the Bridge Murals, Moonee Ponds Creek, Flemington](#) | Tom Civil

- ▶ Waterways Public Art Pilot Project as a City of Moonee Valley Arts Recovery initiative. Murals have been painted on four pillars beneath the Tullamarine Freeway which celebrates the environmental and cultural benefits of healthy waterways, along with hardscaping. (2021)



Murals by artist Tom Civil. Photo of the Waterways Public Art Pilot Project © 2021 by Shannyn Higgins

Underground at Ink Block, Interstate 93, Boston, MA

[Underground Ink Block](#)

- ▶ Underground at Ink Block is under the I-93 overpass. It stretches eight acres—from Albany Street to the Fort Point Channel—featuring public art, food and drink pop-ups, a bike storage facility, a dog park, and events like fitness classes and artisan markets. (2017) “Underground at Ink Block opened after five years of planning, permitting, design, construction and leasing led by MassDOT in cooperation with the community, City of Boston, Boston Planning & Development Agency and the Federal Highway Administration.”



Photo of Ink Block © 2017 by Landing Studio

Public Art: Urban Underpass

Boston, MA

[Urban Underpass – Studio HHH](#)

Project Description

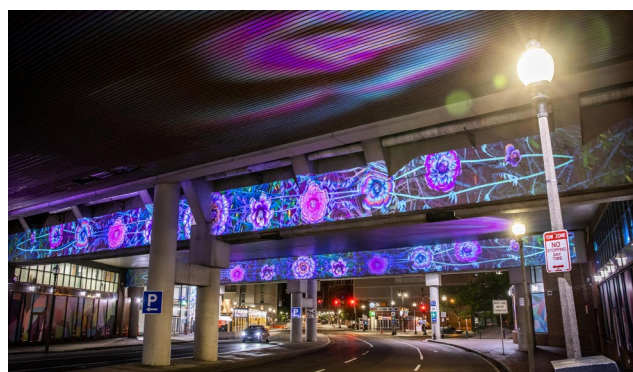
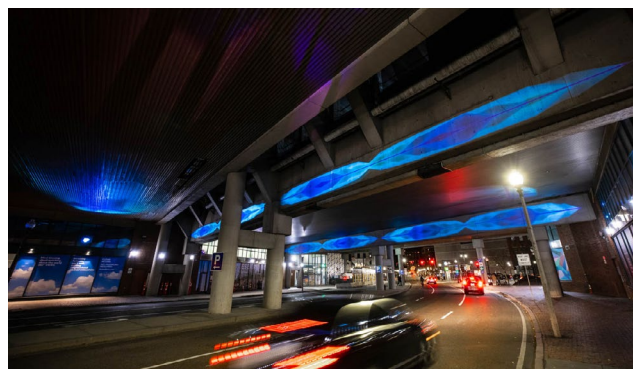
- ▶ The public art installation utilized a standard underpass as a canvas for projection-mapped immersive artwork. The installation is visible nightly from dusk to dawn.
- ▶ On display May 2020 – Feb 2021

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Could employ a public art plan, with heavy input from local stakeholders

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Partners: Bulfinch Crossing Developers, National Real Estate Advisors, the HYM Investment Group
- ▶ Creative Agency: Isenberg Projects



*The Bulfinch Crossing Underpass Project.
© 2020 by Isenberg Projects*

Bridge Girder (Underpass) Art

Ballroom Luminoso, Interstate 35, San Antonio, TX

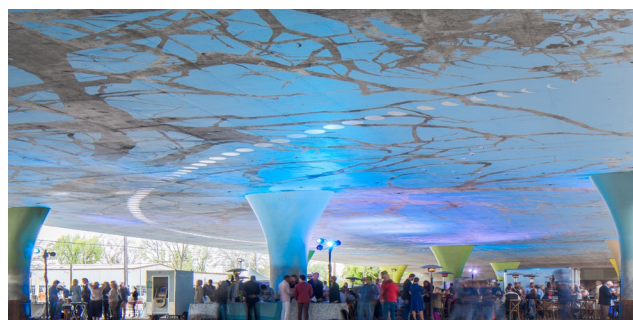
[Ballroom Luminoso | Creative Machines](#)

- ▶ The Ballroom Luminoso installation features six brilliantly lit, color-changing chandeliers made from recycled bicycle parts and sprockets to enhance a typically dark, forgotten space under the freeway between Theo and Malone Avenues (2021)

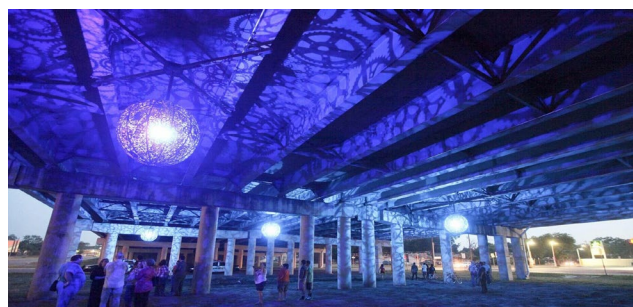
Bright Underbelly Project, W/X Freeway (I-5/SR-99) Sacramento, CA

[Bright Underbelly | Facebook](#)

- ▶ Completed in spring of 2016, the Bright Underbelly Project is a \$150k mural created with CA Endowment and private funding over two years. [L/C Studio Tutto](#) and [Tre Borden/Co](#) worked with the neighborhood and business district, and with Caltrans for permission.



*Bright Underbelly project by Tré Borden and mural by Studio Tutto.
© 2020 by Chad Davies*



Ballroom Luminoso. Photography by Fred Gonzales, City of San Antonio Photographer All images are © 2013 Joe O'Connell & Blessing Hancock Public Art

Passive Recreation Facilities

Passive Recreation typically refers to low-impact activities that may not require organized sporting, large facilities, minimal infrastructure, and limited oversight or staffing. It might incorporate the natural environment, individual exercise, drop-in activities, and social spaces.

Passive Recreation Examples

Pathways:

- ▶ Walking/Jogging Paths
- ▶ Reflexology Paths [Olympus Park - Parks in San Diego](#)

Plantings:

- ▶ Native Landscaping, with Interpretive Signage [The Kumeyaay Garden - Kumeyaay Garden - University of San Diego](#)
- ▶ Pollinator Gardens / Medicinal Gardens, with interpretive signage
- ▶ Nature-based exercise spaces, e.g., for tai chi



Olympus Park. © 2023 by Parks in San Diego

Social Spaces

Intentional spaces for social gatherings are important for building social cohesion, strengthening community ties, and promoting equity and inclusion. Social spaces can be intended for casual drop in (e.g., picnic tables), or more formal reservations (e.g., group picnic shelters). These spaces may also allow for paid use, bringing needed revenue to the City/concessionaire for maintenance and management of the site.

Social Space Examples

- ▶ Picnic tables / group picnic tables, with or without shade structures
- ▶ Outdoor amphitheaters for educational gatherings, performances, karaoke nights, etc. [Karaoke in the Park | Bronx Council On The Arts](#)
- ▶ Flexible open spaces for group events, dancing, movies in the park, etc.



Olympus Park. © 2023 by Parks in San Diego

CASE STUDIES: MID-TERM



Progress Park. © 2025 by Green Benefit District

Progress Park

San Francisco, CA

[Progress Park – Green Benefit District](#)

Project Description

- ▶ The park is located under the northbound 280 off ramp and it is the largest and most used park in the south Dogpatch neighborhood
- ▶ Caltrans Ownership
- ▶ Amenities included: Ornamental community garden, fitness trail, strolling/hiking, lawn games, and pets off/ on leash

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Repaired and expanded irrigation system
- ▶ Improved pathways for better through-block connections



CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Funding: Community Challenge Grant and donation from Power Station development within proximity of the park
- ▶ [Completed in two years for \\$100,000](#)

Active Recreation Facilities

Active recreation facilities tend to be higher-impact sports or fitness activities. They may require more capital costs, maintenance for safety, and oversight or staffing.

Active Recreation Examples

- ▶ Basketball courts
- ▶ Climbing wall / zipline [Olympus Park – Parks in San Diego](#)
- ▶ Playground (*environmental noise limits to be considered)
- ▶ Fitness stations
- ▶ Handball
- ▶ Open areas for flexible programming
- ▶ Skatepark
- ▶ Pickleball courts



Olympus Park. © 2023 by Parks in San Diego

Active Recreation: Coleman Skatepark

Lower East Side, New York City, NY

<https://skatethestates.com/les-skatepark/>

Project Description

- ▶ This skatepark is located underneath the Manhattan Bridge. It is gated, with open hours from 7am – 6pm. It is operated by the NYC Dept of Parks and Rec, but functions via a public-private partnership.

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Previous use was a Department of Transportation staging area. The City authorized the purchase of some prefab skatepark features which began the skatepark in 2000.
- ▶ Some flooding-prone areas needed improved sealing. Otherwise, the cement structure is relatively low maintenance.
- ▶ Local skaters secured a grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation for further improvements, which were completed in 2012



LES Coleman Skatepark © 2019 by GoSkate

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Community advocacy (i.e., local skaters), corporate connections (e.g., Nike), foundation grants (e.g., Tony Hawk Foundation) via the city's Adopt-A-Park Program, and nonprofit consultant groups (e.g., Architecture For Humanity)

Active Recreation: Pickleball Courts

The HUB Pickleball Club, Spring Valley, San Diego County

[The HUB Pickleball](#)

Project Description

- ▶ The HUB is a membership-based sports club focused on pickleball. It has locations across the U.S. While run by a private entity, with play fees, it fills a gap for a sport that is in high demand. It opened in 2023.
- ▶ The HUB has 26 courts, pro shop, and San Diego-themed murals

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Construction/Infrastructure needs unknown. However, pickleball has noise considerations that make it



© 2025 by The HUB Pickleball

challenging to site. Freeway adjacencies can prove to be a good option.

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Private business

Urban Orchard

City of South Gate, L.A. County, CA

[Urban Orchard Project City of South Gate](#)

Project Description

- ▶ Thirty-acre passive park adjacent to L.A. River with a grove of 200 fruit trees, native landscaping, walking paths, an education garden, and a nature-based playground. Public art highlights Tongva history.
- ▶ One-acre artificial wetland to capture and filter stormwater
- ▶ Local job opportunities via Long Beach Conservation Corps
- ▶ Timeline: planning and design occurred in 2024, with construction starting late that year and expected to last 18 months

Major Project Needs & Features

- ▶ Methane testing, construction of stormwater runoff capture system (artificial wetland), drop inlet, rough grading, bioswale, prefab education building, restrooms, multiuse paths, fitness stations, pathway lighting, amenities

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Phase 1 (7-acres): \$25 Million



Graphic © 2023 by Studio-MLA.



CASE STUDIES: LONG-TERM

Bloomington Trail (the “606”)

Chicago, IL

[Home - The 606](#)

Project Description

- ▶ An underused rail embankment was converted by the City into a 2.7-mile elevated trail that links a series of grade-level parks. It is permitted for bikers, runners, and walkers.
- ▶ [Official plans date back to the 1990s](#), with the formal design and engineering process starting in 2011. The park opened in 2015.

- ▶ The site is programmed throughout the year.
- ▶ The trail park was designed with anti-displacement in mind, with learned insight from NYC's Highline
- ▶ An [extension of the trail](#) is planned, with construction expected to start in 2025

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ The trail is a public-private partnership between the City of Chicago, the Chicago Park District, the Trust for Public Land, and Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail

The Rail Park

Philadelphia, PA

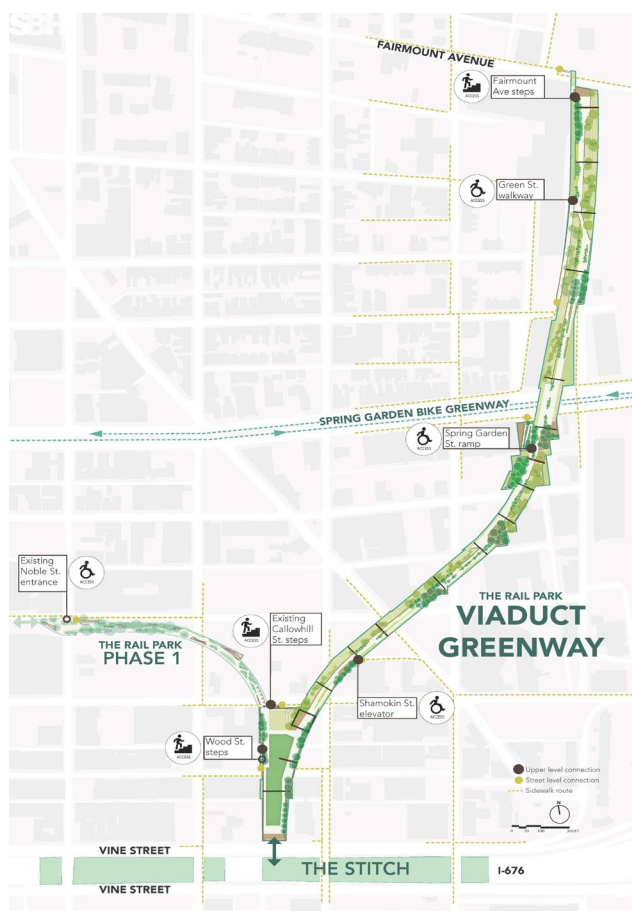
[The Rail Park](#)

Project Description

- ▶ The full vision for the Rail Park is to create a three-mile greenway with three sections: The Viaduct, The Cut, and The Tunnel. It will reach from Northern Liberties to Fairmount Park, with pathways and gathering spaces that will serve pedestrians, bicyclists, neighbors, and visitors alike.
- ▶ Phase 1 of Rail Park was [completed in 2018 after being put out to bid and breaking ground in 2016](#)
- ▶ The next phase, titled "Viaduct Greenway" will convert an abandoned railroad viaduct (6.8 acres of brownfields) into an elevated park that links diverse neighborhoods together. [Construction bid documents](#) will be completed in spring 2025.

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Phase 1 was [funded](#) with a \$3.5 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant from the state to the CCD, as well as \$75,000 from the William Penn Foundation and \$25,000 from Poor Richard's Charitable Trust
- ▶ City Center District Foundation (CCD) was awarded a \$2 million capital redevelopment grant from the USDOT for phase 2



Urban Engineers/Studio Bryan Hanes for Center City District.

Casa Familiar, Community Land Trust

San Diego County, CA

[Our Projects – Casa Familiar](#)

Project Description

- ▶ Casa Familiar's work includes development of affordable housing ranging from small- to mid-size acquisition rehab, and mid-sized new construction
- ▶ Casa Familiar also undertakes community infrastructure projects like small parks and green spaces, as well as rehab projects to improve community quality of life
- ▶ Casa Familiar started working on its community land trust in late 2017

CIP / Funding / Partners

- ▶ Casa Familiar is a managing partner of seven LITC properties and a sole-owner and developer of a New Markets Tax Credit project



BIRD VIEW
CYPRESS LOT



+



Casa
Familiar

Cypress Dr. Site of ASY-CLT Project © 2024, Casa Familiar



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