

March 14, 2015
Public Open House
Meeting Summary

WESTERN AVENUE CORRIDOR

DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES





This is a project for the **City of Rancho Palos Verdes** and the **City of Los Angeles** with funding provided by the **Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Compass Blueprint Program**. Compass Blueprint assists Southern California cities and other organizations in evaluating planning options and stimulating development consistent with the region's goals. Compass Blueprint tools support visioning efforts, infill analyses, economic and policy analyses, and marketing and communication programs. The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant(s) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) in accordance with the provisions under the Metropolitan Planning Program as set forth in Section 104(f) of Title 23 of the U.S. Code.

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1. Meeting Overview, Noticing, and Format

The Public Open House Meeting was the first public meeting to present the Western Avenue Corridor Design Implementation Guidelines (project). Western Avenue is the primary north-south corridor of the South Bay, Peninsula, and San Pedro communities. In 2013, the City of Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV), together with SCAG, developed the Western Avenue Vision Plan, a community-led effort to improve the corridor for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. In 2014, the Cities of Rancho Palos Verdes and Los Angeles (LA), together with SCAG, began developing the Western Avenue Design Implementation Guidelines, to move forward with the next step of implementing the Vision Plan.

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes posted notice of the meeting on their website and mailed approximately 3,000 invitations. The City of Los Angeles Council District 15 advertised the Open House in three newsletters. Additionally, both digital and hard copies of the flyer were provided to Steering Committee members for them to personally invite participants to attend.

The Public Open House Meeting was organized as an Open House style format, with public viewing of materials between 10 am to 2 pm, and scheduled formal presentations at 10:30 am and 1 pm. There were presentation boards summarizing the effort, and three stations to review copies of the Draft Design Guidelines document, talk with City and Consultant staff, and provide comments. Community input was obtained by asking attendees to fill out comment cards, providing post-it notes for attendees to make notes and stick directly to boards and maps, and City and consultant staff received verbal comments in small break out discussions at the stations.

The following questions were asked on the comment cards:

1. Do you have any comments on the presented Draft Design Guidelines materials?
2. Which streetscape option do you prefer?
 - a. With bike lanes
 - b. Without bike lanes
 - c. Hybrid approach
3. What do you think would make the Draft Design Guidelines better?

Additionally, contact information for both RPV and LA representatives, was provided on the comment cards, so that participants could provide additional comments at a later date.

2. Meeting Materials and Records

According to the sign-in sheets, approximately 78 people attended the Public Open House. Participants included local residents and other stakeholders from Rancho Palos Verdes and San Pedro, including representatives from home owner associations, social/community groups, business owners, representatives from local government departments, and others.

Meeting materials and records can be found in Appendices following the meeting summary:

- Appendix A: Meeting Invitation
- Appendix B: Meeting Photos
- Appendix C: Comment card, comments submitted by participants, and photographs of post-it note comments on graphics and maps

- Appendix D: Copies of email comments received in the 1 week after the meeting
- Appendix E: Meeting Presentation
- Appendix F: Meeting Boards
- Appendix G: Sign-in sheets

3. Summary of Input Received

In general, feedback on the Draft Design Guidelines, and the alternative streetscape options was mixed and participants had very diverse comments, design goals, vision, and preferences on how Western Avenue should be improved. No clear preference for one specific streetscape option emerged from the feedback.

Some common themes in the comments received were related to parking along Western Avenue (both in favor and opposed), the concern for landscaping impeding views, having medians and associated landscaping, and the desire to use drought tolerant landscaping. Although not in the scope of the project, there were some similar comments that emerged primarily regarding existing traffic conditions which included the existing traffic congestion, requests for dedicated turn pockets to help maintain the flow of traffic, having dedicated turning arrows on traffic signals, and maintaining existing travel lane widths.

The comments received at the Open House are summarized and grouped below. To help classify the number of comments received on each topic the term “some” was used if two or more comments were received on a topic; and “several” was used if three or more comments were received. For a record of the specific comments received, see Appendices C and D.

4. Input Received, organized by Topic

A. General Comments

- A recommendation was made to require traditional or classical designs; not a modern style that could go out of style in 10 years.
- Due to the limited input from younger constituents and the long-term nature of the project, one participant requested more input from younger community members.
- It was stated that people will not walk more than one block and that Western Avenue should not be turned into a destination; it is a place that provides services and goods for locals.
- Comment indicated the additional homes in the Ponte Vista development and the additional traffic the project will produce.
- A suggestion to secure a second access for the Ponte Vista development (not on Western Avenue) was made.
- Commenter stated that the existing stores and shopping centers are not outdated.
- Comment stated that private traffic control officers should not impede traffic flow.
- A comment was made requesting design features that hinder skateboards from entering shopping centers.
- Question was asked about the type of multi-family units that would be developed in the Terraces project.
- Comment recommended creating and reinforcing temporary sign standards.
- Comment requested placing median improvements and smaller projects on a “fast

track” processing schedule.

- A request was made to rebuild the existing sound wall in the Middle Segment.
- Comment requested to continue to inform public when improvements are made with notices, lights, signs, etc.

B. Comments related to Bike Lanes

- Several participants preferred bike lanes instead of parking along Western Avenue.
- Some participants were supportive of bike lanes, provided that the width and number of travel lanes were not affected.
- Several participants were not supportive of incorporating bike lanes.
- Summary of several comments include: if bike lanes are included, they should be separated from the travel lane; designed with wider than standard widths; protected by a greenbelt; properly maintained; and riders should be “required” to ride in the bike lane.
- Several participants stated that they support the cycle track option.
- Support of a dedicated bike lane was indicated, but noted that it would be challenging and dangerous along the southern and middle segments of the project.
- A comment indicated a preference for a Class III bike way.

C. Comments related to Traffic

- Several participants indicated they did not want the width of the travel lanes to be reduced and the traffic gets back-up due to turning vehicles.
- Several participants stated that the movement of vehicles is the primary goal and aesthetic are secondary.
- A request for three lanes of traffic in each direction was provided.
- A request was to have Western Avenue designed to have similar form and function as Crenshaw Boulevard—to accommodate heavy traffic traveling northerly and southerly.
- A comment requested prohibiting street parking at the intersection of Trudie Drive and Crestwood Street to allow through traffic was made.
- Some participants requested installation of bus bays to allow the flow of traffic and to strategically place bus stops.
- Some participants requested designated turn pockets (especially at shopping areas) to allow traffic to continue to flow when vehicles are turning.
- A request for a dedicated left turn signal at Crestwood Street and Western Avenue was made.
- Some attendees requested revised synchronization of existing traffic lights.
- A request was made for east/west signals to be longer to address queueing issues.
- The request was made to add green turn arrows to some existing traffic lights in certain segments along Western Avenue to better facilitate turning movements and reduce delays.
- Some comments requested straight travel lanes with no bump outs or curb cuts.
- Some attendees indicated the need to provide U-turn opportunities that wouldn’t affect schools or businesses (i.e. at Caddington Drive and Western Avenue).
- A commenter requested that U-turns not be allowed at Caddington Drive and Western Avenue.
- A comment requested the speed limit on Western Avenue in the middle segment be

reduced.

- Some participants suggested having “major” traffic on Western Avenue use private road(s) for through traffic traveling to Rancho Palos Verdes.
- A suggestion was made to rename Western Avenue to “Go Green Highway.”
- A comment requested keeping the road into Peck Park from the Sprouts shopping center.
- A comment recommended transit along Western Avenue; not adding more travel lanes.
- A recommendation to have a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane was provided.
- A recommendation for P74 connections to public transit was provided.

D. Comments related to Design

- Several participants stated parking should not be allowed along Western Avenue as the existing parking is used for advertising, car sales and is unsafe; whereas some comments supported parking along Western Avenue.
- A recommendation to remove all existing parking along Western Avenue was made.
- Several participants support the draft plan; a recommendation was provided to ensure the community fully understands the goal of the project: To make Western Avenue accessible to all modes of travel including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.
- Several participants prefer the hybrid alternative; acknowledging the heavy traffic on Western Avenue; some participants support the alternative without bike lanes.
- A request was made to prioritize attractive design over function.
- A recommendation was made to not use art sculptures, LAX style lights or murals; whereas another recommendation was to consider using art and iron décor along the streetscape.
- Some participants do not support locating businesses next to the street and sidewalk indicating it appears to make businesses less accessible and uninviting, crowded; creates a tunnel effect.
- Several participants support businesses facing the street and want to see a focus on pedestrian friendly areas and sidewalks—with streets being accessible to all users.
- Several comments requested making sidewalks safe for pedestrians, including widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian crossings, adding more landscaping along the street, and having fewer driveways/curb cuts.
- A recommendation was made to replace parking lot asphalt with filtration materials (i.e. “grasscrete”, or permeable concrete) or ground cover, so ponding does not occur in rain events.
- A suggestion was made to add planting, seating areas, and bike lanes in the rear of businesses (away from Western Avenue) if there is rear building access.
- A recommendation was made to underground electrical lines, and eliminate poles which have been involved in traffic accidents; if electrical lines were removed, trees and sidewalk could be removed and a bike lane could be added.
- Some attendees requested that fan palms not be used and to limit trees to a 20 foot maximum height; another comment recommended using New Zealand Christmas trees.
- Some attendees commented that existing median trees need maintenance; therefore additional trees should not be incorporated if they are not properly maintained.
- Several participants suggested removing median trees, and a commenter noted

- concerns about adding additional medians.
- A request was made to consider design options that did not include plants and to consider xeriscape alternatives such as rock gardens or other forms of design.
- Several participants recommend using drought tolerant landscaping and not using “generic” landscaping design as their communities are not “generic”.
- Some participants requested using a local nursery (within close proximity to the project) as the nursery currently grows plants for Rancho Palos Verdes and other jurisdictions.
- A commenter requested that improvements need to ensure proper filtration and percolation to eliminate nesting areas for mosquitos and bugs.
- A recommendation was made to implement landscaping from the sidewalk to private property lines immediately.
- Several participants requested funds be set aside to maintain the improvements that are implemented.
- A request to replace benches with seating opportunities and instead consider seats with high arm rests.

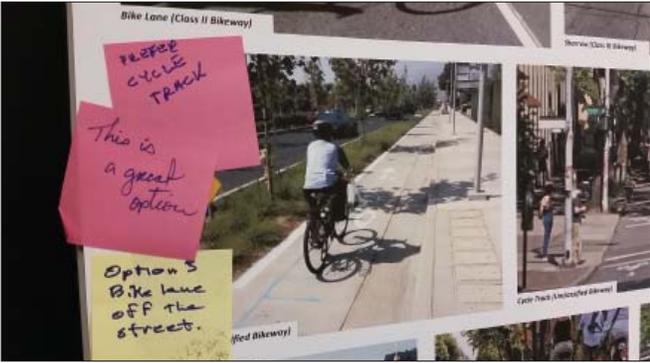
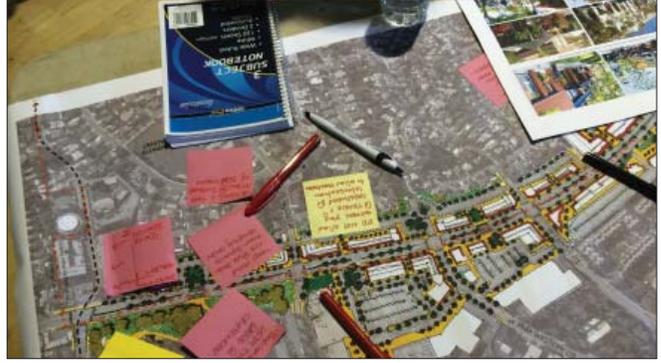
Appendix B

Meeting Photos

WESTERN AVENUE DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

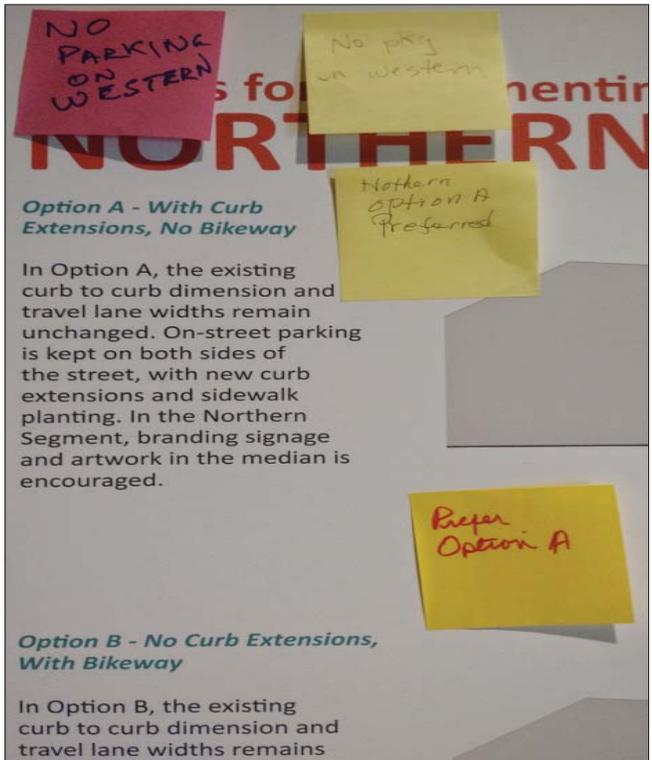
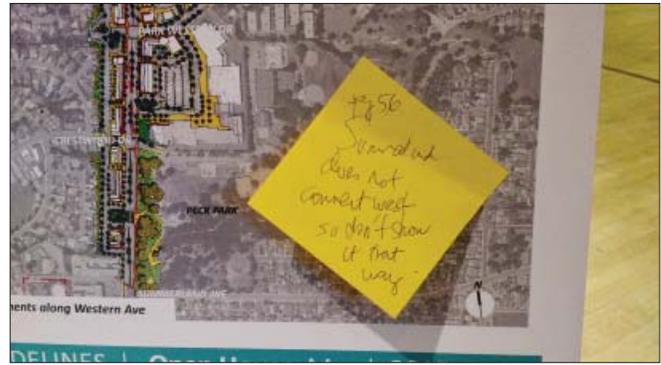
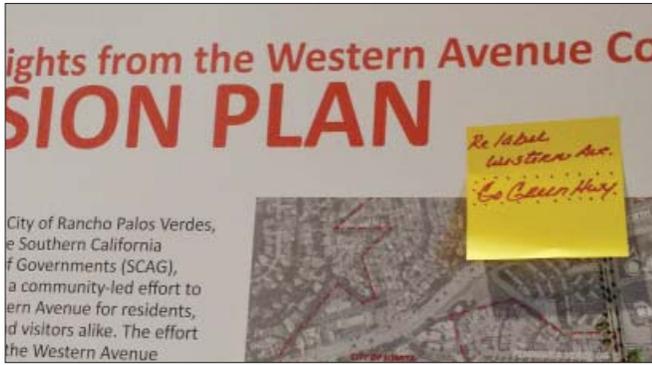


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