



Meeting Minutes

Project Title: San Gabriel Valley Greenway Network Strategic Implementation Plan

Meeting Title: July 2022 Steering Committee Meeting

Purpose of Meeting: Present updates on schedule, community engagement, environmental documentation, and plan; proposed conceptual designs review; overview of design guidelines and standards; group discussion; and next steps.

Meeting Location: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Date: July 13, 2022

Time: 2:00 PM

Attendees:

Steering Committee Members

Martin Reyes, LAC B.O.S. SD1
Roberto Álvarez, LAC B.O.S. SD5
Ramy Gindi, LACFCD
Wesley Reutimann, Active SGV
Sally Gee, RMC

Project Team

Julian Juarez, LACPW
Jennifer Aborida, LACPW
Robert Gomez, LACPW
Soledad Tlamasico, LACPW
Laureen Abustan, Brown and Caldwell
Steve Hirai, Brown and Caldwell
Jeff Herr, Brown and Caldwell
Stephanie MacDurmon, Brown and Caldwell
Walter Okitsu, KOA
Jan Dyer, Studio-MLA
Kevin Johnson, Studio-MLA
Esmeralda García, MIG
Megan Schwartz, Catalyst Environmental
Emily Merickel, Catalyst Environmental
Andrew Ross, LACPW TPP
Sheela Mathai, LACDPR
Michelle O'Connor, LACDPR



Meeting Minutes

Summary

Meeting Format

The July 2022 Steering Committee Meeting was held over Microsoft Teams. The meeting focused on reviewing the Steering Committee PowerPoint presentation by looking at the most recent schedule for the project, followed by a review of recent and upcoming community engagement efforts, an update on the environmental documentation and plan, a reminder to provide review comments for the conceptual design projects, and an overview of the design guidelines and standards.

The meeting then moved into a group discussion in which attendees were able to discuss the design guidelines and standards, namely guidance on branding hierarchy and preference for lighting on the SGV greenways.

Please refer to the attached PDF of the Steering Committee Meeting PowerPoint presentation slides and the Microsoft Teams meeting recording.

1. Introduction

a. Welcome Remarks from LACPW

- Lauren Abustan welcomed the team to the call and introduced Jennifer Aborida to provide welcoming remarks on behalf of LACPW.

b. Roll Call

- Jennifer kicked off the presentation with a roll call and reviewed the agenda.
- Jennifer noted that the team wanted to provide an update of the recent community engagement efforts and the status of milestones for the plan. The team has been excited to approach the end of the development phase and soon would begin drafting the plan with the consultant team. The Project Team Meetings and Steering Committee Meetings will be winding down as well.

2. PowerPoint Presentation

a. Schedule Update

- Lauren walked the team through the SGVGN Schedule Update, including an overview of completed tasks and ongoing efforts, noting the following:
 - The GIS base maps and database, opportunities and constraints maps, bike path alternatives, and conceptual design projects were estimated to be completed this summer, with the design guidelines and standards anticipated to be completed this month.
 - The GIS base maps, opportunities and constraints maps, and conceptual design projects currently are under review.
 - The team finalized the environmental strategy and were developing the project description and alternatives for the Preliminary Draft Programmatic EIR.
 - The third and final round of community workshops were in person and completed in June 2022. More than half of the total 25 pop-up events were completed, with the

remaining events underway. The pop-up events were held throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

- The proposed conceptual design projects were presented during the last Project Team Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting in May 2022. The draft layouts were sent to the Project Team for review and shared with the Steering Committee for feedback. An overview of the design guidelines would be presented later during this Project Team Meeting and next week's Steering Committee Meeting.

b. Community Engagement Update

- Esmeralda García provided an update on the recent community engagement activities, including the in-person community workshops that were held last month and updates on the online survey, posting notices along the channels, and pop-up events, followed by the WCA engagement update.
- **Key Findings: Workshops, Surveys, and Pop-Up Events**
 - Esmeralda went over key findings that were received throughout the workshops, surveys, and pop-up events, with the first and foremost being safety and security being important for the community in terms of lighting and signage along the network, privacy for neighbors living in the area and in the adjacent spaces to the channels, as well as concerns about safety and security regarding people experiencing homelessness.
 - Amenities requested were shade, seating, water fountains, dog bags, and restrooms.
 - Several people shared environmental justice concerns, such as avoiding green gentrification, incorporating native plantings, and restoring the habitat.
 - Connectivity was important as well by utilizing existing bike lanes in many cities, connecting to local and regional parks, connecting to local schools, and ensuring that online resources exist to inform users about the network, how to navigate through the network, and for the network to be incorporated into applications like Google Maps.
 - People expressed interest to provide accessibility for all ages by being able to use the network for commuting to work or school, offering bike skills classes for bike riders, and considering older users and users with different abilities.
 - Lastly, multimodal uses were mentioned for walking, biking, running, rollerblading, skateboarding, and equestrian use. Ensure paths are safe for these different uses and provide safe road crossings.
- **In-Person Community Workshops: Round 3**
 - Esmeralda noted that the last round of community workshops was held in person, with Workshop 7 on the Thursday afternoon, June 16, 2022, at San Gabriel Library and Workshop 8 on Saturday morning, June 18, 2022, at Esther Snyder Community Center in Baldwin Park.
 - The workshops covered an overview of the plan, key findings from the community engagement, and proposed conceptual designs, followed by an interactive open house during which participants had the opportunity to look at the conceptual designs and ask questions to the project team.
- **Map-Based Survey**
 - Esmeralda provided an update on the map-based survey, which was launched on October 14, 2021, and garnered 915 responses. The survey is available in Spanish, Chinese, and English. It was advertised via flyers, the website, and social media posts. The residence locations of survey respondents were summarized on the map.

- Map points were presented with the following potential amenities and interests that people mentioned:
 - Home: 515
 - Uses: 827
 - Amenities: 441
 - Access: 470
 - Destination: 461
 - Equestrian: 62
 - Concerns: 159
- **Posting Notices Along the Channels**
 - Esmeralda shared a map and photos where the team posted informational notices about the SGV Greenway Network along the channels. Areas selected were there was foot traffic adjacent to parks, busy streets, and neighborhoods. Anyone walking by would be able to look, visit the website, or take the survey for more information.
- **Pop-Up Events**
 - Esmeralda shared photos and tables summarizing the pop-up events that were completed, confirmed, or pending at farmers markets, parks, or various community events to share information about the plan, hear what sort of amenities the community would be interested in or any concerns they might have.
 - She stated that 15 events were completed since December 2021, with more events planned through the summer. The team would aim to complete 25 pop-up events total.
- **Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) Engagement**
 - Jennifer provided a brief update on the progress of the workshops and events completed between March and June 2022.
 - The goal of these workshops was to maximize meaningful contacts with SGV entities to reach historically underserved communities.
 - WCA partnered with Active SGV, Amigos de los Rios, Nature for All, and Women's Clubs to host and facilitate the workshops.
 - During the workshops, attendees were encouraged to participate by taking the map-based survey.
 - During June and July 2022, final events and 3 more bike rides were scheduled around San Dimas, Big Dalton Wash, Alhambra Wash, and San Jose Creek.
- c. **Environmental Documentation Update**
 - Megan Schwartz provided a brief update of the environmental strategy for CEQA compliance.
 - The Final Environmental Strategy Technical Memorandum was completed in May 2022.
 - The team met to workshop about the project description and discuss the approach and analysis for the programmatic EIR (PEIR). Several action items resulted from the workshop to better define the scope of the projects that would be analyzed, the level of detail to which specific project components would be analyzed, and how best to organize them so that the PEIR would logically flow for public review. The action items were in progress.
 - The team would be meeting again to discuss the schedule of the development and scoping of the PEIR and how the timing also would coincide with the plan publication as well as the AB 52 letters and tribal consultation.

- The AB 52 tribal consultation letters had been drafted. The list of tribes also was developed with the tribal contacts to which the letters would be sent, but the release of those letters would be timed in accordance with the overall PEIR schedule and the scoping documents.
- The project description and alternatives for the Preliminary Draft PEIR were under development.
- The public scoping meetings would be scheduled.

d. SGVGN Plan Update

- Laureen provided a brief timeline update on the major upcoming milestones:
 - July 2022: completion of the design guidelines and standards
 - August 2022: completion of the opportunities and constraints maps, and conceptual design projects
 - October 2022: draft of the SGV Greenway Network Plan
 - May 2023: EIR/EIS and CEQA efforts
- **Proposed Conceptual Designs Review**
 - Laureen indicated that the conceptual design project layouts were provided to the project team for review, as well as to the Steering Committee for feedback. She asked if the project team had any questions or follow-up comments regarding their review. The project team had no further questions or follow-up comments.
 - Laureen mentioned that the team previously had sent an email requesting review comments from the project team and Steering Committee. Any comments would be greatly appreciated and would help to ensure the best layout options at these proposed project locations for the community.
- **Design Guidelines and Standards Overview**
 - Jeff Herr provided brief overview of the timeline of the design guidelines and standards development. The technical team previously submitted the draft design Those comments were addressed, and very soon the team would be submitting the final document after the Steering Committee had the opportunity to provide feedback.
 - Jeff presented the purpose of the design guidelines and standards:
 - The design guidelines and standards are the framework for good project development. They have the information needed to plan the elements of any greenway project.
 - The design guidelines and standards reflect the baseline of values of our communities and the smart design to provide consistent greenway along the SGV channels.
 - The LA River Master Plan was a primary document that was used to develop the design guidelines and standards, so the requirements and recommendations are consistent with or complement those of the LA River Master Plan for dedicated greenways, and in some sections additional information was added.
 - Jeff gave a brief overview of the content:
 - Introductory information was provided.
 - Potential users were discussed.
 - The main content was the four classes of bikeways. Class I bikeways and multi-use greenways were on-channel and dedicated greenways. Classes II, III and IV were

bikeways not feasible to be on channel and would be routed off-channel as protected or non-protected alignments.

- A tremendous amount of content was related to signage and markings for bikeway and intersection design.
 - Multiple types of architectural and safety elements and amenities were provided.
 - Stormwater management was addressed not only for impervious surface created as part of the SGV Greenway but also for opportunities to retrofit areas where existing pipes directly connected into drains. For larger areas, such as a gateway or an expansive capture area, the groundwater system could be recharged with the captured stormwater.
 - The last section addressed operations and maintenance.
- Jeff presented a summary table with community feedback (i.e., concerns or requests) and their respective solutions that were incorporated into specific sections in the design guidelines and standards. The main categories were safety, greenway amenities, bike amenities, connectivity to other sources of transportation, flora/fauna (native plants, habitat restoration, greenways as wildlife corridors), and access. With the table, the team was showing how the communities' feedback really was heard, considered, and incorporated into the design guidelines and standards. Safety was of paramount importance throughout the SGV Greenway and for the projects that were being developed.
 - Jeff shared photos of example amenities that could be included as part of a multi-use greenway development, such as bike and pedestrian paths, bike racks, wayfinding signage, educational signage, or native plants and trees.

e. Group Discussion

- Jeff Herr and Kevin Johnson went over the discussion items about the design guidelines and standards:
 - **Lighting on SGV greenways**
 - **Greenway branding hierarchy**
- The following comments were received:
 - **Lighting on SGV greenways**
 - Jeff: The project team had a discussion about lighting. We believe that it is important to have lighting even if these bike paths are not open beyond daylight hours. Currently, we are not planning to make lighting a requirement, but we are encouraging it and are certainly trying to provide a lot of types of lights that we would want to see that are not disrupting the adjacent neighbors, not having a negative impact on wildlife, etc.
 - Jeff: Any thoughts on making lighting a requirement versus optional? And, secondly, any thoughts about the types of lights people would like to see?
 - Julian: To give a little discussion about lighting, the way we are approaching it is that lighting is an option that will be considered and potentially allowed on the greenway, but it will not be a requirement for any project. Basically, we are leaving it to the project proponent and the community to decide and implement. As an example, we have several early implementation projects. Three of them on Puente Creek, Eaton Wash, and Vincent Lugo Park have communities that have been against lighting and do not want lighting, especially lighting that is above the fence line that would shine light over their back walls.

- Julian: The other aspect about lighting is safety. If these greenways will be open all through the night, some people feel like lighting might be a way of deterring negative activity along the bike paths. Therefore, we want to hear from the Steering Committee. The project team is recommending to include lighting as an option and have lighting options, such as low-level path lighting and brighter lighting. However, it also depends on how the community will feel about lighting and what they would like to see.
- Wes Reutimann: Lighting is one concern we hear about most. A lot of folks we talked to do not feel comfortable using the greenway paths after nightfall, but some do. Many of them will ride in small groups. On bike lighting has gotten better, so most folks bring their own high-powered lights. It probably really depends where on the network. There may be some areas where there is more of a community interest or demand for it.
- Julian: There are a lot of options now for bike lights that help.
- Wes: A lot of new electric bikes have lights included on them as a standard.
- Kevin: In the design guidelines and standards, the lighting section discusses specific kinds of lights and the option for solar-powered lighting. Where and when to include lighting is being left up to the different communities.
- Julian: It will be very site-specific and community specific. Also, what is the intent of the lighting is? Is it to light the path for pedestrians and bicyclists or more for safety?
- Julian: Lighting would also add costs to a project, such as lighting elements, wiring to connect to electrical power in the area, etc. It could be a significant cost, especially for bike paths that are two miles long, for example. It will be something that the project proponent will have to consider.
- Sally Gee: Perhaps it may be beneficial to consider lighting at road crossings and on river channels separately. Having higher visibility where the chances of vehicle, bike, or pedestrian collisions are increased would increase safety.
- Walter Okitsu: Most municipalities will require, especially at a new painted crosswalk, that street lighting be provided adjacent to it. It depends on the type of crossing. If it is a very low volume crossing, both with low motor vehicles and bicycles, then it might not have any lighting, whereas at a crossing on a busy street will have lighting, provided it is physically feasible. However, most likely there would be lighting at a street crossing.
- Kevin: Project will be site-specific, but the project team is incorporating wildlife and habitat concerns into the lighting section in the design guidelines and standards.
- Jeff: The design guidelines and standards currently has content and text about lighting that does not disrupt wildlife, neighbors, etc.
- **Greenway branding hierarchy**
 - Kevin: Another question that came up amongst our internal project team and something we wanted to pose to this group is about the branding hierarchy. The design guidelines and standards are about encouraging good projects but also creating an umbrella and consistency across the network without being too prescriptive, allowing each community to design and develop their own look and feel, but we did develop a branding hierarchy, a signage and marking section (Section 7). It includes recommendations for wayfinding, signage, and actual Pantone color sheet that would dictate what color scheme to use depending on which wash you are

developing and some information about the signage types and the interpretive signage that could be used along those greenways.

- Kevin: The question that specifically came up was what about those areas that have already undergone extensive kind branding, specifically areas of the San Jose Creek, the San Gabriel River, the Rio Hondo, including the Emerald Necklace. They have already developed their own sort of branding and signage. There may be folks on this call who were involved on those projects specifically. So, do we need to redo those areas, or do we need to let them be? Where we landed as a team is that we will not redo any of the work that has been done, but we are recommending that new projects, moving forward, do follow the branding hierarchy that is in the SGV design guidelines and standards. Does anyone have recommendations about that section or about the question regarding the Emerald Necklace or other areas that have been developed already?
 - Kevin: We would like to discuss how to brand the SGV greenways, how to create informational signage, directional signage, interpretive signage that is cohesive while still recognizing and keeping other existing efforts, probably most prominently with the Emerald Necklace.
 - Julian: The project team of County Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and TPP have already discussed these items, and we really want to hear from the greater Steering Committee about feedback from your community, agencies, NGOs, or groups and what they would like to see, especially regarding lighting and branding hierarchy.
 - Wes: It would be great to have consistent branding with both clear time and distance information across the network, so that folks know how long it approximately would take to bike as well as provide local destination highlights, so if you get off the path, for example, you can get to Downtown Covina or can connect with the local networks. Currently, there are not a lot of amenities along the SGV greenways, and it is often hard, unlike on the LA River path where you have some businesses directly abutting the path. There are not as many opportunities along the SGV greenways.
 - Julian: The good news is that the SGV Greenway Network should be able to connect to the Emerald Necklace and the San Gabriel River, and further down you can stay on the bike path to the San Gabriel River and connect to different communities and businesses along that path.
 - Wes: Absolutely. Also, I think there are opportunities to improve that as well because there is not any type of signage on the existing Emerald Necklace directing to downtown districts and such.
 - Kevin: There is a section in the design guidelines and standards about directional signage which shows a destination and how long it would take to get there. Giving people as much information as possible about where they are going and how far things are while they are on the greenways will be important.
- Refer to the Microsoft Teams meeting recording or transcript for additional details about the group discussion.
 - **Discussion Questions**
 - Laureen shared the general discussion questions and requested additional input or feedback from the Steering Committee:
 - What specific amenities or locations would you recommend for the community at each project site?

- **Safety:** What specific safety amenities or locations (e.g., lighting and signage or privacy features)?
- **Greenway Amenities:** What specific greenway amenities or locations (e.g., shade shelters, seating and benches, water foundations, educational or historical signage/kiosks, exercise stations, restrooms, etc.)?
- **Bike Amenities:** What specific bike amenities or locations (e.g., bike racks, parking, rental stations, etc.)?
- **Connectivity:** What specific connections or locations (e.g., connections to existing bikeways, parks, equestrian trails, transit, parking)?
- **Flora/Fauna:** What specific plants or habitat locations (e.g., native plants, habitat restoration)?
- **Access:** What specific access amenities or locations (e.g., gateway entrances, parking, street crossings)?
- Julian: The opportunity to provide comments on the planned development is winding down. The project team plans to shift into the report writing phase soon. If the Steering Committee has any more ideas or feedback, please let us know. The Steering Committee will also have the opportunity to review the Draft Plan before the public comment period.

f. Asks of the Steering Committee

- Jennifer presented the Asks of the Steering Committee:
 - Send list of potential groups (names and emails) that would benefit or would have interest in the SGV Greenway Network.
 - Aid in promotion of the SGV Greenway Network Map-Based Online Survey. Submit responses by Saturday, July 30, 2022.
 - Provide feedback for the Conceptual Design Projects and Design Guidelines and Standards.
- Jennifer mentioned that the project team sent an email to the Steering Committee to request feedback on the conceptual design projects and a follow-up email will be sent to request feedback for the design guidelines and standards.

g. Next Steps

- Jennifer reviewed the next steps.
- Meeting minutes summary to be sent after the meeting. The meeting was also recorded.
- Jennifer stated the project team would continue efforts with community engagement. A few pop-up events were planned. The online survey would be ending on Saturday, July 30.
- The team will continue to work on the environmental documentation for the plan and the PEIR and will continue to work on the conceptual design projects, and design guidelines and standards.

3. Next Meeting Date

- **Next Steering Committee Meeting** scheduled for **September 14, 2022**, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
- Updates on the community engagement, environmental documentation, and SGVGN Plan would be presented.
- Jennifer and Laureen closed out the meeting by thanking everyone for their time.