

City of San Diego – Environmental Justice Element

Roundtable Meeting #6: “Review and Discussion of Existing Policies – Civic Engagement | Physical Activity | Programs and Improvements to Address the Needs of Disadvantaged Communities.”

Meeting Summary Report

Dec. 6, 2023

Prepared by:

City Planning Department



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Roundtable Meeting #6

Meeting Objectives and Agenda

- Discuss environmental justice challenges related to civic engagement, physical activity, and programs.
- Identify opportunities to improve and address the needs of Environmental Justice Communities.
- Create space to raise awareness, share information, identify barriers and solutions, inform equitable policies, promote inclusivity, and encourage collaborative networking.

Agenda	
Time	Section
2:00 – 2:05 PM	Updates
2:05 – 2:25 PM	Engagement Check-In
2:25 – 3:25 PM	Review and Discussion of Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civic Engagement• Physical Activity• Programs and Improvements to Address the Needs of Disadvantaged Communities
3:25 – 3:30 PM	Closing and Next Steps

Project Team Present at the Meeting

Facilitator: Christian Rodriguez, Senior Community Associate (Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI))
Consultant Project Team: KDI

- Jorge Cañes, Planning Coordinator | Martin Gil, Community Coordinator

City Planning Department Project Team

- Sameera Rao, Assistant Deputy Director | Paola Boylan, Senior Planner | Christopher Carrillo, Associate Planner | America Aceves, Assistant Planner | Audrey Rains, Management Intern

Community-Based Organizations

- Kim Heinle, Bayside Community Center
- Matthew Pendergraft, Bikes del Pueblo
- Manny Rodriguez, City Heights CDC
- Juan Ochoa, Casa Familiar
- Christopher Olfato, Urban Collaborative
- Alejandro Amador, Casa Familiar
- Carmina Paz, Urban Collaborative Project

Summary

Updates

City staff shared that the December Event Calendar was posted on the project webpage.

Engagement Check-In

Activity 1 - Participants shared brief summaries of the community engagement events. A total of 19 events were held by CBO's since the last roundtable meeting: Bayside (3), Bikes del Pueblo (5), Casa Familiar (5), City Heights CDC (3), Urban Collaborative Project (3).

Review and Discussion of Policies

Activity 2, 3, & 4 - Information gathered from previous outreach and engagement activities related to civic engagement, physical activity, and programs and improvements to address the needs of disadvantaged communities were shared with the group to serve as a launching point to the discussion. In addition, existing strategies that can be built upon to strengthen policies around these topics were also shared with the group. Participants were asked discussion questions to gain insight about each topic. Key themes that emerged from the discussion are summarized below.

Civic Engagement

Discussion Questions:

1. Are the specific challenges or barriers that you or others in the community have faced when trying to get involved, and how can we address them?
2. Are there certain groups or voices that may be underrepresented in our current feedback mechanisms, and how can we reach out to them more effectively?
3. How can we create more diverse and appealing opportunities for community members to engage, ensuring that it's not limited to traditional methods?

Participants expressed opportunities to improve civic engagement included limiting language barriers, holding meetings on weekday evenings and weekends, and providing easy to understand materials. It was also expressed that renters are underrepresented in planning groups, and community members who have not attended planning group meetings in the past feel intimidated by the planning group process. Some of the methods to reach the community more effectively include layering existing community events, meeting people where they already are, providing incentives to participate, engaging the unhoused community, and having city representatives attend events.

Physical Activity

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we guarantee safe and seamless access for pedestrians and cyclists to recreational areas, facilitation their enjoyment of physical activities?
2. How can we design inclusive recreational facilities for physical activity for all genders and socioeconomic backgrounds?

Participants shared that investing in cultural activities can make community members feel more welcomed into existing spaces and promote physical activity. Suggestions to further promote physical activity encourage improvements in the public right-of-way, including:

- separated pedestrian and bicycle lanes,
- walking paths to parks,
- weed abatement,

- pedestrian level lighting,
- litter removal,
- street cleaning/sweeping,
- speed reduction measures at freeway on/off ramps,
- shelters and trash cans at transit stops.
- more trees,
- focus on people-centered design rather than vehicle-centered,
- open and accessible public restrooms,
- dignified spaces.

Programs and improvements to address the needs of Environmental Justice Communities.

Discussion Question:

What initiatives or programs would you propose to start, stop, or continue to better address the specific needs of disadvantaged communities, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable approach to community development and well-being?

The final activity was designed for participants to share what City programs they would like to see start, continue, and stop. The table below summarizes the outcomes of the discussion.

Start	Continue	Stop
Hiring safety personnel who are not officers.	Micro Transit Neighborhood Watch Urban greening in schools Community gardens Parks After Dark program SANDAG Flexible Fleets Youth opportunity passes for transit SDAccess4All	Requiring a maintenance assessment district plan for tree planting in the right-of-way is a barrier. Community members can find it difficult to attend meetings during the day. Delaying the start of projects until plans are completed is frustrating. Explore what CBOs are working on and identify opportunities to uplift those projects in plans.

Closing and Next steps:

- The final roundtable meeting will be held early 2024 and focus on lessons learned.

activity 1

**Engagement
Check-in**

19 events since last meeting

- Bayside (3)
- Bikes del Pueblo (5)
- Casa Familiar (5)
- CHCDC (3)
- UCP (3)

Share your engagement activity updates.

- How did they go?
- Was the turnout good?
- Any valuable comments from the community?
- Lessons learned or tips for others?

City
Heights
CDC

3 engagements. First was not as successful. Will make up for it in Jan. Nov - was good. Comm. shared thoughts about policy change. Dec- Eduardo from city - people in transit feedback, more mobility will address air pollution.

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

Bayside Community Center

six have been hosted of 8.
3 in Nov - obelisk during
community clean up. Walk
audits (nov) part of
standing meetings so good
turnout. Core group but
also had other participants.
Bilingual participation.

council rep
showed up
to one of
the events.

heard: mobility
challenges like
broken down
sidewalks, food
and pollution.

walking tour library (2):
mostly positive feedback,
affordability of housing and
heard from displaced
community member that
moved outside of county .

Casa Familiar

in person meetings work
great. Zoom - participation
in chat , easier once the
ball gets rolling.
Engagement, didn't get the
turnout expected but had
good participation. People
feeling connected.

Bikes del Pueblo

low turnout for walk audit
but in the process talked to
people on the street so
were able to get more info
not just from event
participants. Good for
spatial target info (i.e local
business owner)

food access (how
long does it take
to get to the food
store) intersection
of transportation,

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

Urban Collaborative Project

engagement has been good, tree planting with youth that served as mobile engagement for feedback. Pop-up Lincoln high. Outside library - using the obelisk were able to collect feedback and did an engagement right after that addressed the feedback (addressing air quality so planted trees), also did a walk audit in their community. Love that the city is present and suggest more officials involved. Top priorities - Displacement, housing, safety and healthy food access (top priority) from both adults and youth.

walk audit was rescheduled to accommodate participation of youth. Broke into two groups, talked about safety, length of travel. Down the street of LH is unsafe because of unkept landscaping forcing people to walk on the road instead of sidewalk. As follow up will be arranging a community clean up with kids.

people exercising at night wearing safety vest - indicative of people wanting active programs but safety does not allow it. Time change allowed for after dark activity.

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

activity 2

Civic Engagement

Overview

- **Reduce barriers** to participation faced by under-represented populations.
- **Feedback collected** is representative of **community demographics**.
- **Provide** improved **tools** and **guidance** to support community education, **advocacy**, and **transparency** through the **design**, planning, and implementation of **programs**.
- Expand **opportunities** for community members to **engage** and **participate** by identifying **best practices** to make **information accessible** and **user-friendly**.

Engagement Questions

- Are there specific challenges or barriers that you or others in the community have faced when trying to get involved, and how can we address them?
- Are there certain groups or voices that may be underrepresented in our current feedback mechanisms, and how can we reach out to them more effectively?
- How can we create more diverse and appealing opportunities for community members to engage, ensuring that it's not limited to traditional methods?

City
Heights
CDC

language x2, access to
information - technology as
a barrier people might not
have access to email and
dont find out when
meetings are happening
suggestion - mailers

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

Bayside Community Center	civic engagement can be intimidating and overwhelming when talking about planning and LU, folk from neighborhood need easier to understand.	Language barrier and time of meetings	renters are not being represented. Planning groups are made up of home owners and need to hear more from renters/
Casa Familiar	layering with existing community events. Example: exercise group was engaged after class. Using food and providing information will lead to furthering participation.	letting residents know that their voice is unique and valued.	Meeting people where they already meet is vital
Bikes del Pueblo	the term civic engagement is ambiguous. Question were wordy.	different events have diff dynamics - leave the door open for people to provide their own thoughts even if they were not part of the question series.	feedback: having city reps present at events to cut the need to access tech to communicate with their reps
Urban Collaborative Project	meeting people where they are is important. LHS set up during kids walking back home. Obelisk was good for smaller crowds, but also had a second option to include more participants (board with questions). Having two activities worked well.	language is also important, monolingual students were engaged and fortunately project team knew the language but better prep	The unhoused were not engaged

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

activity 3

Physical Activity

Overview

- Create **adaptable recreational spaces** to accommodate evolving needs, including spontaneous activities and those fostering **social connection, health, and well-being**.
- Improve **safety for people walking/rolling and on bicycles**.
- Support programs that **activate public spaces**.

Engagement Questions

- How can we guarantee safe and seamless access for pedestrians and cyclists to recreational areas, facilitating their enjoyment of physical activities?
- How can we design inclusive recreational facilities for physical activity for all genders and socioeconomic backgrounds?

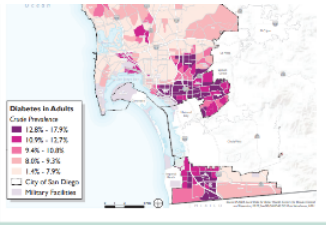
Example Policies

- RE-A.9. Identify opportunities to increase recreational value and population-based parks within the community consistent with the Parks Master Plan by **planning for upgrades and new investments within existing parks**. Allow for flexibility and innovation to provide parks and **recreational opportunities**.
- RE-E.7. **Design public facilities, such as municipal water storage facilities, public parking structures and libraries**, to incorporate recreational elements such as children's play areas, rooftop parks, courts and arenas, plazas, mini-parks, and community gardens.
- RE-D.1. Provide new and upgraded park and recreation facilities that **employ universal design principles** that make them accessible to San Diegans regardless of age or physical ability, giving priority to economically disadvantaged communities.
- RE-D.6. Provide **safe and convenient bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility linkages to, and within, park and recreation facilities** and open space areas.

City Heights CDC

policies outlined are good - separated walking paths (narrow sidewalks) and bike lanes - repurpose alley to pedestrian access

inclusive of people who cant drive i.e children. Dignified transportation options (adequate shelter for public transit).



citizens are not being represented. Planning process did not take up the voices of those who are most impacted.

Meeting people where they already meet is vital.

Feedback during the development is essential to ensure the final design is comprehensive and user-friendly.

The unhoused were not engaged.

language change: council rep showed up to one of the events.

People-center design

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

Bayside
Community
Center

Linda vista comm
park all residents
say that park is
inaccessible
because there is
no walking path

Casa
Familiar

invest in cultural
activities - comm
feels welcomed,
sense of belonging.
Investment in Active
programs will lead
to social capital.

Bikes
del
Pueblo

black Fridays bike ride -
ended at cesar chavez pier
and no costal access for
some but not all coastal
communities. Looked
across the bay and there
was water access but on
this side was industrial

traffic speed, bike
should be safe on all
roads and not just
those designated with
"green" paint although
cars will still speed past
those.

freeway on ramps and off
ramps - group discussed
speedbumps well ahead
before the cars enter the
community. Speed
reduction before coming
up to off ramp.

bathrooms - there
are bathrooms at
the El cajon Blvd
I-15 transit plaza
and they are
closed/locked

Urban
Collaborative
Project

feedback was received that
the strategy should be
"dignified" spaces - clutter,
accessibility to all abilities.
Sidewalks are being
overtaken by weeds. In diff
communities these are
issues that are not
experienced.

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

City should help providing resources, community clean ups should not be the norm to address trash. Other comm. have street sweeping.

human scale lighting

small businesses should be engaged and encourage healthier business models (too many liquor stores)

Bus shelters, trees, protection form elements

universal design principals are not always cost effective or best, this might make it easier for the city instead do people centered design. Stay away from car culture.

activity 4

Programs and improvements to address the needs of disadvantaged communities

Overview

- Planning for **environmental justice (EJ)** involves prioritizing investments that benefit **environmental justice communities**. Neglect in **public investments** and **amenities** leads to prolonged inequalities, and to achieve an **EJ-oriented General Plan**, it is crucial to prioritize investments for these communities. **Specific actions** are necessary to **improve existing conditions** without worsening problems. Effective prioritization ensures prompt benefits and programs, and facilitates access to **public funding**. This approach also prepares governments for potential **funding applications**.

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities

Engagement Questions

What **initiatives** or **programs** would you propose to **start, stop, or continue** in order to better address the specific needs of disadvantaged communities, **ensuring** a more **inclusive** and **equitable** approach to **community development** and well-being?

City Heights CDC
Bayside Community Center
Casa Familiar
Bikes del Pueblo
Urban Collaborative Project

START

micro transit in linda vista

Ej focus "neighborhood watch" - investing in programs around safety, food access etc

Start urban greening programs in schools. I know Groundworks is trying to engage SDUSD to do this, but the school district is being difficult...

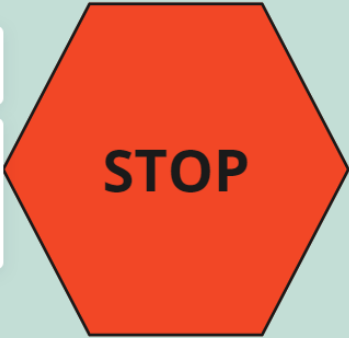
more participation from representatives

more community gardens

share wins with the community often, do follow ups

feedback received : safety - requesting that there be safety personnel that are not cops because it deters people. People also reported incidents where intermediate level safety personnel instead of police

Appendix A: Interactive Digital Whiteboard Activities




STOP

requirement for militance assessment district - planting trees in the right of way.

Stop hosting meetings during the day - instead evenings with food

stop waiting for plans to start doing intervention -

YES - see what CBOs are working on already and uplift those projects in your plan!



CONTINUE

parks after dark

Check out SANDAG Flexible Fleets

needs transpiration assessment led to funding for the micro transit 2025.

ridership increased - youth opportunity pass

Continue Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP)

Continue Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP)

Continue and expand SDAccess4All - to address digital divide