Active Transportation Plan “Roll and Stroll” Community Outreach Summary

Overview: In October 2019 City staff held a series of community outreach activities for the “Roll and Stroll” Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The purpose of the outreach was to gain community input on (a) barriers to walking and bicycling for transportation in the city, and (b) the types of active transportation infrastructure and policies that could provide the greatest support to the City’s mode share goals. Participants provided recommendations on topics such as the types of bicycle facilities they would like to see more of citywide, desired locations for pedestrian crossing improvements and curb ramps, and desired routes to prioritize first for investment in walking and bicycling improvements.

While some community members are frequent attendees at formal weeknight public meetings and events, many residents are often unable to attend these activities due to work or family commitments or do not feel comfortable participating in standard “town hall style” meeting formats. The public engagement strategy for the ATP consisted of a combination of both online, formal, and less-formal outreach activities to maximize opportunities for feedback and to ensure that input reflects the diverse voices of the full San Luis Obispo community.

Face-to-face Activities:

1. Neighborhood Pop-ups: Consisted of a series of lunch time pop-up events on weekends at local coffee shops, eating or shopping locations distributed throughout the city to provide an opportunity for informal participation.

   Locations: Lucy’s Coffee Co. (Saturday 10/12), Lincoln Deli (Sunday 10/13), Nautical Bean-Los Osos Valley Road (Saturday 10/19), Vons (Sunday 10/20)

2. Event Booths: City staff hosted a booth at the Downtown Farmers Market and during the lunch time at the Cal Poly University Union on Thursday, October 17th
3. **Open House Workshop:** This event was held at the City/County library in the early evening of Thursday, October 24th featuring stations where stakeholders could learn about the ATP, provide input and ask questions. Activities included boards to provide input through post-it ideas or dots, a selfie station for photos, a kids coloring book station, as well as an opportunity to take an online survey in real time at provided laptops (see more info below regarding the survey).

**Online Activities:**

1. A project webpage and online forum providing updates on the ATP, access to documents and opportunities for input has been provided at [www.slobikewalk.org](http://www.slobikewalk.org)

2. An **Online Active Transportation Survey** was provided on existing travel behavior, active transportation barriers (including pictures), in parallel with other public outreach activities. Postcards were distributed to a randomly generated list of city residents inviting participation in the survey to provide a statistically valid sample. In addition, a separate version of the survey was made available for citywide participation. Participants who could not access the online survey were offered the opportunity to participate in the survey via telephone interview or hard copy.

3. An **Interactive Online Mapping Tool** provided participants an opportunity to mark locations of desired intersection crossing priorities as well as bikeway and pedestrian facility improvements.

**Community Input**

**Barriers to Bicycling**
• Among a number of barriers expressed, top concerns among respondents related to interaction with automobile traffic or concerns about **motorist speeding or distracted driving**. Online survey data showed that nearly 77% of respondents were concerned about **bicycling in heavy vehicular traffic** while 63% were concerned that “**drivers are speeding or too aggressive**”.

• Other significant barriers included gaps in the bicycle network and the need for more bikeway infrastructure especially protected bike lanes (60%). In addition, survey respondents, feedback at neighborhood pop-ups and the open house workshop indicated concern for bicycling with children and riding at night.

**Barriers to Walking**

• Top barriers to walking were similar to many barriers listed for bicycling. 52% of survey respondents were concerned about drivers not seeing or paying attention when people are walking. Similarly, many expressed concerns for gaps in sidewalks especially in neighborhoods as well as the need for wider sidewalks and better maintained sidewalks.

• A top concern reflected at both the open house workshop as well as the online survey was the concern that destinations are too far to reach on foot.

• Lack of adequate crossings on major streets was frequently indicated as a top concern especially Broad Street, S. Higuera, and major streets around schools.

• Lack of street lighting was a common theme for many in neighborhoods as well as around Cal Poly University.
Types of Infrastructure and Policies

- **Protected Bike Lanes on Major Arterials as a High Priority**: Attendees at the neighborhood pop-ups and open house workshop were asked to describe their bicycling behavior. Categories ranged from being confident biking on any street regardless of conditions to only desiring to ride on a street with a protected facility or low-speed street. Among all types of respondents, a desire for protected bike lanes was the most desired type of bicycle infrastructure indicated with a preference for having them along major arterial streets including Broad, South Higuera, Tank Farm Road, Madonna, Foothill, Santa Rosa, and Los Osos Valley Road.

- **Crossings of major streets**: For both pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure, feedback indicated a strong desire to connect neighborhoods across large arterial streets to other land uses such as employment, school, and education. These large arterial streets included S. Higuera, Broad Street, Tank Farm, Los Osos Valley Road, Madonna, Santa Rosa, and Foothill Blvd.
- **Curb ramps and completing sidewalk gaps**: For pedestrian circulation, the outreach indicated that curb ramps in neighborhoods leading to schools (especially around the Sinsheimer Elementary School) and in neighborhoods leading to the downtown were much desired.

- **Streetlights**: Outreach indicated a desire for streetlights especially in the area of Cal Poly University but also in neighborhoods leading to the downtown area.

- **Quick build policy**: A key theme was the desire to implement protected bike lane projects and other safety improvements more quickly starting with temporary materials and pilot installations.

- **Enforcement and Lowering Speeds**: To facilitate a more comfortable bicycling as well as walking experience, outreach indicated a desire to increase enforcement of distracted driving and speeding as well as finding ways to lower vehicular speeds.

- **Motorist, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Education**: Feedback at all events reflected a desire for more education for all road users on safety and applicable traffic laws.
Online Mapping Tool featuring desired locations for bicycle/pedestrian improvements

**Next Steps:** Staff will continue to analyze the community input received, which will be displayed more comprehensively in the draft of the Active Transportation Plan expected in the spring of 2020. Meanwhile, presentations on the goals for the plan as well as project prioritization will take place with the Active Transportation Committee through the winter of 2019/2020.

Other project documents as well as the boards and presentation materials for outreach activities can be accessed at the project website at [www.slobikewalk.org](http://www.slobikewalk.org) or via the links below.

**Attachments:**
- Attachment 1 – Open House Workshop Boards
- Attachment 2 – Pop-Ups Boards
- Attachment 3 – Selfie Board and Outreach Photos
- Attachment 4 – Survey Results as of 11/15/19
- Attachment 5 – Website Comments as of 11/20/19