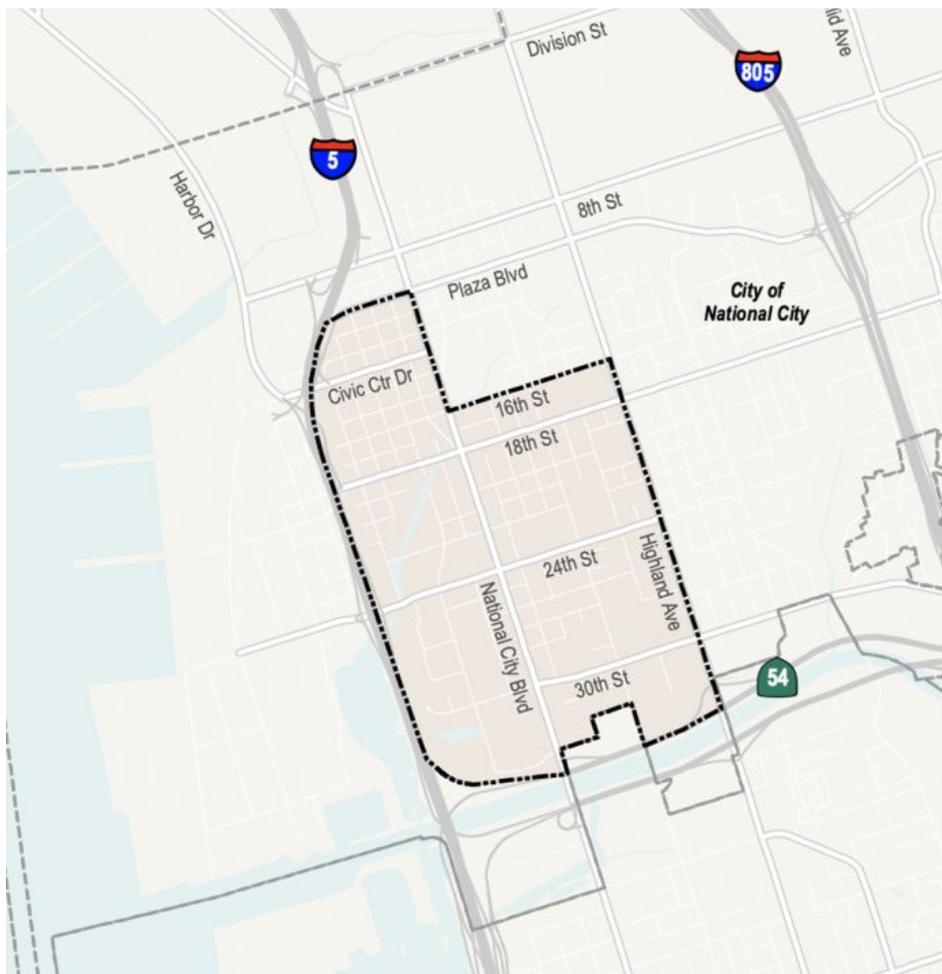


Meeting offers glimpse of possibilities in National City



Area discussed for zoning and land use considerations in National City.



The Transit Oriented Development Overlay project focuses on increased mobility in the area surrounding National City's 24th street transit center, roughly stretching from Plaza Boulevard to State Route 54 and from I-5 to Highland Avenue.

At the second public feedback meeting, held Tuesday on Zoom and aired on Facebook Live, City-thinkers Principal Diego Velasco discussed updating the area to reflect current affordable housing

needs and zoning development and Chen Ryan Transportation Planner Andrew Prescott proposed changes that could potentially better mobility and land use for pedestrians, bikers and commuters.

Velasco said some overall concepts to connect the westside include encouraging single-family homes, improving environmental health conditions for residents in the area, and ensuring Paradise Creek is restored for passive recreation and open space.

“The vision that the westside specific plan puts forward is compelling: a vibrant, residential community with supporting retail, services and employment and where children can walk to school and parks,” Velasco said.

Enhanced pedestrian access for all ages is an important consideration, he said, as is preserving neighborhood character such as maintaining multi-generational homes and circumventing potential negative effects of gentrification while simultaneously answering the call for affordable housing.

Velasco also said he would like to see Hoover Avenue redeveloped for mixed use and create a transition space for the blocks nearest the Mile of Cars.

“So, what does this all mean as we start thinking of zoning and land use of this area? There’s an ability here to provide a lens or a focus on how land use supports connections to transit. As you really zoom out and look at the area, it can start with the 24th street transit station,” Velasco said.

Prescott suggested supplementing bus and trolley routes so they connect at destinations like Pepper Park, the 24th street trolley station, downtown and Kimball Park, as well as adding neighborhood electric vehicle routes as shuttle routes.

He also suggested improving designations for pedestrian sidewalks and extending bike lanes on 18th street to Highland Avenue, on 22nd Street to National City Boulevard, and along D Avenue.

At signalized intersections, Prescott would like to see curb ramps that fall within the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act and pedestrian countdown signal heads at higher visibility crosswalks.

“A common comment is how I-5 is an impediment to pedestrians... We’d like to consider a potential pedestrian bridge over I-5,” Prescott said.

Consulting Project Manager Monique Chen said there have been several stakeholder discussions with Metropolitan Transit System, UCSD, area property owners, local children’s learning center Olivewood Gardens, Paradise Creek Educational Center and others.

“We talked with UCSD and there is a very strong desire to increase educational opportunities. With Olivewood Gardens, some of the things we heard about are a desire to improve the walking and

biking experience, improve access to Pepper park, maybe establish community kitchens,” Chen said.

She also said several local stakeholders asked for a slower process in the interest of gathering feedback from those who live and work in the area, a statement echoed by meeting attendee Danny Serrano.

Serrano serves as Toxic-Free Neighborhoods Campaign Director for the Environmental Health Coalition and in a July 26 letter to City Manager Brad Raulston, said National City’s westside is a disadvantaged community.

“Residents are often harder to access and need ample time to learn about public events in order to be able to plan for and participate effectively... After receiving public input on the outreach plan, the city should post a final version online along with an email eblast, mailer and other communication strategies at least two weeks prior to the next public participation opportunity,” Serrano wrote.

Reeder said a bilingual survey will be available on the project website at 24thstreettodo.com and a paper version of the survey is scheduled for an August release.

Comments and feedback can be sent to National City Principal Planner Martin Reeder at mreeder@nationalcityca.gov or by calling at (619) 336-4313.

