



Higuera Complete Streets Community Outreach Summary

Overview: Over the last two years, staff has held a series of community outreach activities for the Higuera Complete Streets project. The purpose of the outreach was to gain community input on (a) barriers to walking and bicycling along the Higuera corridor and its connection to other parts of the city, and (b) the types of improvements that are desired by the community. Participants provided recommendations on topics such as the types of walking and bicycling improvements they would like to see more, desired locations for pedestrian crossing improvements and curb ramps, as well as measures to calm traffic in the Meadow Park neighborhood.



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 project consisted of a combination of both formal, and less-formal outreach activities (from weekend afternoons to week nights) to maximize opportunities for feedback and to ensure that input reflects the diverse voices of the full San Luis Obispo community. For those who were not able or willing to attend in-person events, staff also collected

input via email and phone.

Activities:

1. Neighborhood Pop-ups: Consisted of two afternoon pop-up events over a weekend along the project corridor



Locations:

- Food4Less/Trader Joe's Shopping Center on Higuera Street (Saturday, April 23, 2022)
- Meadow Park for a Safe Routes to School bike safety event for the students and parents of Hawthorne Elementary School (Sunday, April 24, 2022)



2. Open House Workshop: This event was held at the City/County library in the early evening of Thursday, June 8, 2023 featuring stations where stakeholders could learn about the project, provide input on a set of conceptual design plans, and ask questions. Activities included boards to provide input through post-it ideas or dots and a kids coloring book station. The workshop was well attended with approximately 100 persons in attendance



3. Meadow Park Pop-up Workshop: An additional workshop was held on Thursday, September 16, 2023 to invite input from residents of the Meadow Park neighborhood on the improvements proposed for the Meadow Park neighborhood as well as the larger project overall. The workshop was well attended with over 50 persons in attendance.

4. Resident Forum at the Chumash Village: The residents of Chumash Village invited city staff to a resident forum on Wednesday, June 19, 2024 to provide information on the Higuera Complete Streets project and answered questions.

5. Active Transportation Committee Meetings: Preliminary concept designs were first shared with the Active Transportation Committee (ATC) on February 16, 2022. Updated project plans were then shared with the ATC on May 16, 2024, where their formal recommendation included:

- a) Pursue developing a two-way bikeway on the Madonna overpass
- b) Pursue developing the intersection of Higuera / Los Osos Valley Road with a southbound bike lane on Higuera Road next to the curb face with a bike signal



Project Webpage:

A [project webpage](#) describing the project with access to documents and opportunities for input has been provided at [Higuera Complete Streets Project](#).

Community Input

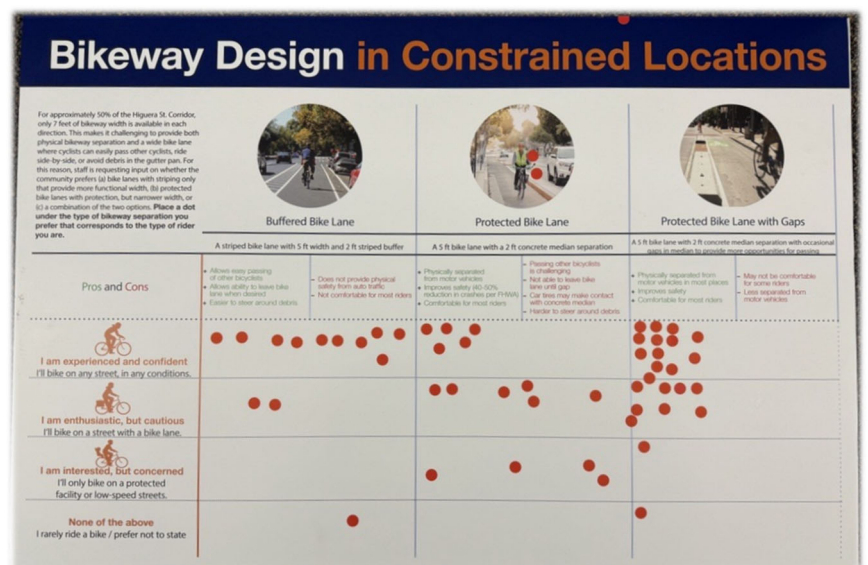
The following is a summary of major points expressed through community input and the response from staff:

- **Automobile Traffic, Speeding, and Distracted Driving:** Among a number of barriers expressed, top concerns among respondents related to interaction with automobile traffic or concerns about motorist speeding or distracted driving.
 - **Response:** Several elements to reduce illegal speeding are incorporated into the design including a road diet on Higuera Street between Margarita and Bridge Streets, reducing lane widths where possible, and adding hi-vis cross walks and other striping elements.
- **Gaps or stress Points in the Network:** Other significant barriers included gaps or stress points in the bicycle and pedestrian network especially around the intersection of Higuera/Madonna/South streets, South / King streets, and the lower Higuera area between Tank Farm Rd and Los Osos Valley Road
 - **Response:** Elements to reduce stress points in the bicycle and pedestrian network including hi-vis crosswalks, protected bike lanes, and intersection improvements including new signals.
- **Improved Connections to Other Parts of the City:** Several comments mentioned the need for improved connections to Higuera Street from the Broad Street area to the western part of the City via Madonna Road especially the route to Laguna Middle School as well as to the east and Hawthorne Elementary School.
 - **Response:** New connections have been added to the study area including Madonna Road from Higuera to the Madonna Inn and a crossing of South and King Streets
- **Upgrading Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Many comments expressed the need to upgrade curb ramps, complete a sidewalk gap on Higuera near Chumash Village as well as add more cross walks along Higuera.

- Response:** Over 70 curb ramp upgrades have been added. A project to complete a sidewalk gap on Higuera near Chumash Village is also envisioned as part of the project.
 - Preference “Gentle Touch” with traffic calming Along Neighborhood Greenway:** Many residents of the Meadow Park neighborhood displayed a preference for a minimal approach to traffic calming along the neighborhood greenway segment.
 - Response:** All traffic circles as well as speed humps where speeds are lower than 25 mph have been removed from plans but included where they exceed 25 mph.
 - Desire for Stop Sign at Woodbridge/Meadow Streets:** A number of residents also expressed a desire for a stop sign at Woodbridge/Meadow along the Neighborhood Greenway to help improve crossing comfort and promote safety in the neighborhood.
 - Response:** An all-way stop with high-visibility crosswalks has been added to the plans at Woodbridge/Meadow
 - Crosswalk Connecting Meadow Park to Bridge Street Shared Use Path:** Given the connectivity between the path and Meadow Park, many residents requested a cross walk at this location across Exposition Rd.
 - Response:** Crosswalk is in proposed plans
 - Protected Bike Lanes on Higuera with Gaps:** Input from a dot exercise showed a preference by many attendees for protected bike lanes on Higuera Street as the preferred style of bikeway. Many residents also expressed a need to have sufficient gaps in the bikeway to facilitate left turns to destinations and cross streets. Many expressed a desire to improve the transition
- Bikeway Design in Constrained Location**

For approximately 50% of the Higuera St. Corridor, only 7 feet of bikeway width is available in each direction. This makes it challenging to provide both physical bikeway separation and a wide bike lane where cyclists can easily pass other cyclists, ride side-by-side, or avoid debris in the gutter gap. For this reason, staff is requesting input on whether the community prefers (a) bike lanes with striping only that provide more functional width, (b) protected bike lanes with protection, but narrower width, or (c) a combination of the two options. Place a dot under the type of bikeway separation you prefer that corresponds to the type of rider you prefer.

	Buffered Bike Lane A striped bike lane with 5 ft width and 2 ft striped buffer	Protected Bike Lane A 5 ft bike lane with a 2 ft concrete median separation	Protected Bike Lane with Gaps A 5 ft bike lane with 2 ft concrete median separation with gaps to provide more opportunities for passing
Pros and Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows easy passing of other bicyclists Allows ability to leave bike lane when desired Easier to steer around debris Does not provide physical safety from auto traffic Not comfortable for most riders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically separated from motor vehicles Improves safety (80-92% reduction in crashes per FHWA) Comfortable for most riders Placing other facilities is challenging Not easy to leave bike lane (e.g. gap) Can best only make contact with concrete median Harder to steer around debris 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically separated from motor vehicles in most places Improves safety Comfortable for most riders May not be con for some riders Less separated motor vehicles
I am experienced and confident I'll bike on any street, in any conditions.	1 dot	1 dot	1 dot
I am enthusiastic, but cautious I'll bike on a street with a bike lane.	2 dots	3 dots	4 dots
I am interested, but concerned I'll only bike on a protected facility or low-speed streets.	1 dot	2 dots	3 dots
None of the above I rarely ride a bike / prefer not to state	1 dot	1 dot	1 dot





points where cars must make right turns into driveways and streets.

- **Response:** Protected bike lanes with gaps at select locations where left turns are anticipated are included in the plans.
- **Upgrade to the Higuera / Madonna and Higuera / South Intersections:** A significant number of comments expressed the challenge of riding a bike through these two intersections especially the eastbound Madonna approach to Higuera and the southbound Higuera approach to the Madonna intersection and desired for bikeway separation as much as possible.
 - **Response:** New design concepts are proposed for the Higuera / Madonna intersection that improves bicycle access to the intersection. Staff is continuing to study the Higuera / South intersection for opportunities to improve bicycle access along the NB Higuera approach.
- **Ingress/Egress at Chumash Village:** Many residents expressed concern for turning into and out of the driveway at Chumash Village with the proposed addition of a road diet.
 - **Response:** The traffic analysis concluded that the driveway would operate within the city's adopted thresholds for vehicle delay with addition of the road diet. Based on national data and local experience with previous projects, the proposed road diet is anticipated to reduce illegal speeding on Higuera Street, which can have a positive benefit for drivers attempting to judge gaps in traffic when exiting driveways, such as Chumash. In addition, the proposed project will increase the width of the center two-way left-turn lane at this location, improving use of this lane for two-stage left turns. With all this said, staff is still exploring other possible enhancements during final design to improve the experience for drivers at this location, such as additional warning signage, striping refinements and other speed reduction measures.



- [illegible]

- **Response:** Staff studied the possibility of adding a signal at the location but it did not meet required signal warrants. The project does include hi-visual crosswalks to improve visibility at Tank Farm and Suburban Roads.

- 6



- **Response:** Given policy 6.8 in the Active Transportation Plan Design Guidelines that two-way facilities should be avoided along higher speed facilities, staff is not recommending this option.
- **Improve Access to Silver City Mobile Home Lodge:** Residences of the Silver City development expressed concern for left turns in to the driveway.
 - **Response:** Project plans will replace worn off pavement markers and restrict left turns
- **Lighting on Higuera near the Chumash Village:** residents of the Chumash Village requested additional lighting at this location
 - **Response:** The City has filed a request to PG&E to add lighting to this location