

LA COUNTY PARKING + HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PROJECT
CORE COMMUNITY VOICES SESSION—SUPERVISOR DISTRICT 1 FOCUS—MINUTES

JANUARY 31, 2022—9:00 TO 10:30 AM

Meeting Attendees

Dorothy Wong (she/her) – resident, active transportation professional, City Council member, and Traffic, Safety and Mobility Committee – Altadena,

Amy J Wong (she/her) – Active San Gabriel Valley, Planning Commissioner - El Monte

Ester Song (she/her) – resident of Altadena, business owner in Downtown Los Angeles, avid cyclist and public transit user

John Davis – Avalon Gardens Community Association

Meeting Hosts

Alyson Stewart (she/her) – LA County Department of Regional Planning

Bruce Durbin (he/him) – LA County Department of Regional Planning

Mallory Baker (she/her) – Walker Consultants

Steffen Turoff (he/him) – Walker Consultants

Tania Schleck (she/her) – Walker Consultants

1. Participant Introductions
2. Mallory Baker reviewed the power point presentation with the project overview, which included a review of:
 - a. Project context
 - b. Project scope and schedule
 - c. Project objectives
 - d. Core Community Voices role
 - e. Parking and Housing Questionnaire
 - f. On-the-ground data collection
 - g. Upcoming next steps
3. Question and Answer
 - a. Dorothy Wong asked if there will be more Zoom meetings.
 - i. Mallory Baker responded that the study will include one Zoom session per Supervisorial District, and in the summer there will be a more robust outreach effort with the public (not invitation-only).
 - ii. Bruce Durbin stated that this is the launch of the project, and LA County wants to make sure community voices are heard. The project schedule dictates how fast the project can go, and there likely will be more community outreach sessions going forward, but not at this junction. Bruce stated that he is also a bike advocate as well as an advocate of bike safety and sharing the road.
 - iii. Steffen Turoff stated that he is a long-time bicycle commuter. The study will be looking at transportation demand management (TDM). The project team has heard about issues

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of housing production and gentrification. The study will look at solutions that will help remedy gentrification. The project team is thinking about bicycle requirements. The study is about producing housing and facilitating transportation without parking spaces being built.

- b. Ester Song had the following comments:
 - i. She thanked Steffen for looking at bicycle parking. She has seen a lot of push back for bike lanes as they will create more traffic. She is thrilled to hear the project is considering mobility access, especially in underserved communities.
 - ii. Steffen responded that the ordinance is focused on building housing.
 - iii. Ester stated that the idea of having a more cohesive pedestrian and cycling plan is to promote mobility access for those in underserved communities.
 - iv. Bruce stated that the study will provide the data to inform the Title 22 Planning and Zoning ordinance. Title 22 ordinance only regulates private property, from the curb back. Sidewalks are on private property. Bike lanes are enforced in Title 16. The study will encompass alternatives such as TDM. LA County realizes that the data from the study may inform other policies. Other ideas that stem from the study will be shared with the Department of Public Works and other relevant departments at the County.
4. Mural Board Activity
 - a. Mallory Baker provided an overview of the activity and instructions on how to use the Mural platform, a digital engagement tool where respondents provide written comments that can be seen by others in the group. She stated that comments could be provided in the Mural platform, verbally, or in the Zoom chat.
 - b. Feedback was requested related to four topics:
 - i. "To me, success for new residential parking requirements looks like..."
 - ii. "It might surprise you, but success does not look like..."
 - iii. "A concern I have about creating new requirements is..."
 - iv. "Something that would help address my concern might be..."
 - c. Mallory stated that we are defining multi-family as a residential development with five or more units.
 - d. Dorothy asked whether the comments should be related specifically to Altadena.
 - i. Mallory responded that it is up to her on how to best respond.
 - e. Dorothy had the following comments:
 - i. She stated that she has done a lot of education in underserved communities other than Altadena. Parking is all about cars. What is missing in many communities is safe bicycle parking. When she was working on the US Census, bicycles were parked in the hallways because residents had no room in their units. If residents put bicycles on the street, they would likely get stolen. Bicycle parking is often put to the side. She expressed concern that if Public Works is going to implement bike policies, it may not get completed. She mentioned that the community often fights against itself related to implementing policies.
 - ii. She has seen that within multi-generational families, younger generations have to leave Altadena due to housing affordability.

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- iii. Transit is not utilized in Altadena, and buses are often empty, especially in areas where people can afford alternatives to public transit.
 - iv. As it relates to parking, a lot of people have work trucks. She asked where the work trucks are going to park in multi-family housing developments? If there is limited parking, there needs to be a place to park work trucks.
 - v. Bruce responded that LA County does not want to have tunnel vision. He heard Dorothy say that a lot of ideas and data are going to come up as part of the study and that ideas not part of ordinance will be left behind- and ensures they won't be. The Advance Planning division entails all types of policy. Staff supervisor come to the table once per week to discuss how various projects will fit together. While the Planning Department may not build and monitor bike lanes, they work closely with Public Works on those aspects through policy documents like the Mobility Element of the General Plan. LA County wants to ensure that comments and data related to the parking study will be fully vetted. Bruce stated that the thinking for so long has been that parking is vehicle parking. However, he has seen a huge paradigm shift. This project is limited to exploring new parking standards related to multi-family residential development. The Healthy Design Ordinance codified bike parking in the Zoning Code for the first time. Bike parking is important to complement vehicle parking. There is a need to come up with substantive alternatives to vehicle ownership. Transit and bike parking, and TDM programs (e.g. providing bus passes) are all potential alternatives. The study will also explore if parking included or excluded with housing leases.
- f. Amy Wong had the following comments:
- i. Amy stated that she agrees with Dorothy's points. She stated that there are so many things to think about related to how we get around our community. Biking and walking gets less attention. The coordination between departments in LA County is critical. There is a need to think about how bikes get parked in multi-family housing developments.
 - ii. She sees success as elimination of parking minimums. Developers build more parking because the ordinance requires it (based on parking minimums). There is a need to flip the narrative.
 - iii. One thing she is scared of is NIMBYs, as NIMBYs will state that streets are already overcrowded, and people need a place to park. She stated that there are more parking spaces in the County than housing. She predicts there will be a group of people who will oppose a bolder more aggressive agenda.
 - iv. She stated that as a millennial that lives with her parents, she may be priced out of community. She is not sure if can afford living here as a working millennial. A lot of people get priced out, even when they have jobs and a college education. She stated that young people should be part of the conversation, and there is a need to listen to young people as part of building and planning for the future.
 - v. Mallory responded that Amy's comments touched on how complex of an issue this is. Access to homes and housing is important. In terms of parking management, people are

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worried about cars overrunning the neighborhood. There are fears about younger people being unable to afford housing.

- g. Ester Wong had the following comments:
 - i. She agrees with Amy and Dorothy on all the concerns that they brought up.
 - ii. She stated that public parking and residential parking always create blind spots when people pulling out of an intersection. It is important to not just think about how cars being stored. A lot of times street parking enters into bike lanes. In Altadena, there are minimal sidewalks. With construction of parking, there are a lot of considerations to be made.
- h. John Davis made the following comments:
 - i. John stated that developers often plan the building before deciding on parking. He stated that developer should already have mindset of parking and housing, together.
 - ii. If developers are going to build affordable housing, they need to know where cars are going to park. Developers also need to consider bikes and transit.
 - iii. John asked: when we talk about affordable housing, what are we talking about? What is affordable?
 - iv. He stated that he wants parking to be accessible to everyone and wants people to park near their home.
 - v. He stated that he wants to be realistic - when plans come to fruition, parking should also be included.
- i. Amy Wong shared the following comment on the Zoom chat function:
 - i. I wanted to share this helpful website I've personally referenced regarding LA County parking and housing: <https://noparkinghere.com/>
 - ii. The website includes the following statistic: "Turning less than 1% of all LA County parking spaces into homes would house the annual LA County homeless population."
- j. Amy said it is important to think holistically about issues related to housing and parking in relation to environmental justice movement. Parking and driving contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and public health. There are often Prop 65 warnings at public parking facilities. It is important to determine how parking affects housing, health, how parking creates role in greater vision of LA County.
- k. Amy asked about inclusionary housing ordinance.
 - i. Bruce responded that the Housing Section works on the housing ordinance, inclusionary housing, and affordable housing preservation ordinance. The housing element looked at rezoning and capacity issues. The Planning Department does not build housing, but makes sure there is capacity to do so. The Department looks at what will make housing more affordable.
 - ii. Amy said that all ordinances should work concurrently, as there is bigger picture question about how they improve quality of life.
- l. Mallory Baker typed the verbal comments provided onto the Mural platform. At the end of the session, the following comments were provided on the Mural platform for each topic area:
 - i. To me, success for new residential parking requirements looks like...
 - 1. "Think holistically about entry/exit to parking locations, overall access."

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2. “More obligation on developers to have an idea/understanding of how they will handle parking and access.”
3. “Success to me is seeing a balance that housing diversity can bring to communities and improve quality of life for everyone.”
4. “Look at options beyond just parking for cars.”
5. “Potential elimination of parking minimums.”
6. “Holistic/comprehensive look that includes other modes.”
7. “Coordination between multi-disciplinary County departments.”
- ii. A concern I have about creating new requirements is...
 1. “Will ignore needs for work/commercial vehicles.”
 2. “Fears about the ability of younger people--e.g., millennials--being able to afford living in this community. can we help them? can we include them?”
 3. “Concerns about people concerned about parking already--people who say that parking is already a challenge in their neighborhoods.”
- iii. Something that would help address my concern might be...
 1. “We need to think of "parking" as more than just cars--also includes safe vehicle parking.”
 2. “Design of bike parking needs to be thoughtful and reflect real needs.”
 3. “We need to know what "affordable" means.”
 4. “Need to think about access more broadly, including transit.”
 5. “Focus on equity--give voice to those who frequently get excluded in processes like this.”
 6. “Be realistic about what needs actually are.”
5. Mallory thanked everyone for their time and comments.