Valley Center Community Planning Group

Approved Minutes for a regular meeting held on **February 12, 2024** at 7:00 p.m. in the Valley Center Community Hall, 28246 Lilac Road, Valley Center, California 92082. Delores Chavez Harmes, **Chair** | Dori Rattray, **Vice-Chair**; James Garritson, **Secretary**

A=Absent; **Ab=**Abstention; **DRB=**Valley Center Design Review Board; **N=**Nay; **P=**Present; **R=**Recused; **VCCPG=**Valley Center Community Planning Group; **VCPRD=**Valley Center Parks & Recreation District; **Y=**Yea

A. Roll Call

- Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87644912317?pwd=b2ZMaEw1ak9TM29oTG9ZQkhxMnl5QT
- The Meeting was called to order at **7:00 p.m.** and a Quorum was established with **14 members present**. Mr. Barber arrived at 7:03 p.m. Mr. Ciupitu* and Mr. Schmidt* both attended via Zoom. Ms. Fajardo arrived at 7:08 p.m. Mr. Ciupitu* arrived and attended the meeting physically at 7:35 p.m.
- Lisa Adams P
- Chris Barber P*
- Michelle Bothof P
- Delores ChavezHarmes-P
- Vlad Ciupitu P*

- Susan Fajardo P*
- Michael Farrier P
- Iulia Feliciano P
- James Garritson P
- Steve Hutchison P
- Matt Matthews P
- LaVonne Norwood P
- Dori Rattray P
- Larry Schmidt P*
- Kevin Smith P

B. Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Harmes

C. Approval of Minutes: January 8, 2024

- Motion: To approve the January 8, 2024 Minutes.
- Maker/Second: Smith/Norwood
- Motion Carries 13-0-1 (Y-N-Ab). Dr. Matthews abstained.

D. Public Comments: Members of the public may address the Planning Group on any topic not on the agenda.

- County officials introduced themselves to the community. Kevin Johnston shared a corridor plan presentation. He shared community concerns related to the corridor and provided information about the project phases. Options for consideration were developed in collaboration with public safety officials.
- Option A and Option B both include traffic signals and roundabouts. These plans also include bicycle lanes.
- Option A proposes a Roundabout at Miller. Cole Grade remains a signal. CHP prefers a 25' mountable median for public safety.
- Option B proposes a Roundabout at Cole Grade and Miller remains a signal. This option would have a left turn median turn pocket at Canyon Road.
- Option C would have traffic signals and no roundabouts.

- Stewart Gary, a retired fire chief, compiled a Citygate report. The report compared travel time comparisons for VCFPD. Recommended components to facilitate use by fire trucks and other large vehicles would include 15'-16' lanes within roundabouts. County Fire Protection District (CFPD) supports Option A or B, but does not support Option C.
- Ms. Norwood asked a question if the Valley Center Fire Protection District favored Option A or B. The plan was only favored by the County Fire Protection District. Ms. Rattray asked a question related to the Cole Grade Road roundabout becoming a single lane. Mr. Barber asked a question about the overall safety of these plans. Ms. Bothof asked a question related to making turns on a roundabout. Ms. Feliciano asked a question related to making a turn at Woods Valley Road.
- Mr. Smith shared that cooperation is necessary, whether roundabouts or traffic signals are placed on the corridor. Mr. Schmidt shared comments that roundabouts are an engineering nightmare in numerous areas, including Clearwater, Florida.
- The County does not have a set implementation budget for any proposed plan at this time.
- Mr. Ciupitu asked a question related to how long one roundabout would take to construct. A roundabout would take over a year to construct and would require a lot of planning.
- Murali Pasumarthi, Public Works manager for the County shared information about his background related to traveling along Valley Center Road. He believes that tools are necessary to put in place along the road. He shared that bringing money to a project is always difficult. There are 32 potential accident options on a regular traffic signal. There are 8 potential accident options on a roundabout. He also shared comments about priorities. Ms. Norwood asked for further information about Option C.
- Ms. Bothof commented that the County is suggesting that we need to choose an option if we want to have our hat in the ring for future County funding. Mr. Schmidt asked a question related to fatalities when using roundabouts. Different studies show a variety of results.
- Mike Puyst (audience) asked if the County can share more information about the Arizona roundabouts. Mike favors Option A. He favors any option that includes roundabouts.
- Robert Littlejohn (audience) shared that it is the job of the group to put the safety of the community first. He favors either Option A or B.
- Mary Hodson (audience) asked a question related to the safety of roundabouts. She favors Option A. Kevin Johnston shared that injury accidents decrease 67% after roundabout conversions.
- Patrick Maloy (audience) shared that roundabouts are not difficult to use for large trucks.
 He asked the County to explain how large trucks can navigate roundabouts. The County would provide two signs warning drivers about upcoming roundabouts. He supports Option A.
- Zee Ryken (audience) shared that everyone wants safety in the community. She proposed an Option D that would provide immediate safety enhancements. The community would like immediate lights at Ranch Road and Mira De Valle. She would like pedestrian crosswalks at Park Circle and Sunday Drive. She would like an expansion of the existing roads. She favors Option D, which is not a current proposal.

- Larry Galvanic (audience) would like to divert traffic through Valley Center Road.
- Lisa Stehly (audience) supports Option A or B. She believes that the County can find the resources to pay for the roundabouts.
- Jon Vick, Karen Lieber and Ken Lieber (audience) support the construction of roundabouts.
 Miriam Puyot gave her time to this group. There was discussion about statements made in the Road Runner. Jon passed out a handout that showed that some of the community favored either Option A or B.
- Michelle Overton (audience) would like more enforcement of the speed limit. She favors Option D.
- Al Stehly (audience) asked a question about whether there is enough room to construct roundabouts. The County believes there is enough room to construct roundabouts. He favors Option A or B.
- Lee Schwarz (audience) favors Option A.
- Abraham Chambers (audience) would like the County to break up the plans. He does not support additional sidewalks and bike lanes. He favors Option B.
- Dorothy Kennedy (audience) made comments about 4-foot bicycle lanes. She favors Option C.
- Andrew Knoll (audience) requested information about how much these projects would cost. The County did not give a specific project cost.
- Amy Chambers (audience) supports Option C.
- Paul Kelly (audience) supports Option A, as it requires less investment because Cole Grade Road and Valley Center Road will remain traffic lights. He favors Option A or B.
- Llyn Willis (audience) favors Option A or B.
- Caitlyn Simons (audience) is against roundabouts, concrete centers and class 4 bike lanes. She likes Option D.
- John Aganon-Riedling (audience) favors Option A or B. He believes that roundabouts work very well.
- Aaron Chambers (audience) shared information that a number of countries have banned roundabouts because they do not function as intended. He supports Option D.
- Laury Flora (audience) shared that he once did not like roundabouts, but he now favors them. He would like the Planning Group to vote for roundabouts.
- Bethann Chambers (audience) is against the Corridor Concept Plan. She has lived in Valley Center since the 1990s. She does not understand why the County wants to focus its attention only on 2.5 miles of Valley Center Road. The County has not given attention to other places within Valley Center Road. She does not support Options A, B. or C.
- Lisa Roberts (audience) shared that she drives 100,000 miles a year as a trucker. There are a lot of businesses that depend on the center lane of Valley Center Road. She does not support roundabouts.
- Donna Hein (audience) would like more connection roads leading to freeways. She would like the 76 to become a four lane road.
- Anita Noone (audience) supports roundabouts.

- Kevin Lemon (audience) supports marked crosswalks and warning lights.
- James Chambers (audience) is against all road changes, except adding lights. Our roads are designed to act as highways. Two lane roundabouts are banned in a lot of countries.
- Boris Dobrotin (audience) favors roundabouts. He made comments related to the number of vehicles that travel to the desert through Valley Center Road.
- Jim Nielsen (audience) favors roundabouts. He shared his experiences of walking along Heritage Trail. He observed numerous accidents. He favors Option A or B.
- Judy Simons (audience) is against roundabouts and cement center divides.
- Robert Simons (audience) is against roundabouts.
- Patrik Aganon Riedling (audience) supports roundabouts, as it slows traffic, but keeps traffic moving. The County shared that the plan would take the minimum of five years. It is a long term project. Any capital improvement project would take time.
- Mark Wesley (audience) favors roundabouts. He explained that he was nearly t-boned years ago. He thinks that roundabouts are a strong step in favor of our children.

1. Valley Center Corridor Concept Plan: Adams/Ciupitu – Review recommendations from joint CPU & Mobility subcommittee meetings for consideration of the VCCPG. (Vote)

- Motion: To extend the meeting until midnight.
- Maker/Second: Smith/Norwood
- Motion Carries 13–2-0 (Y-N-Ab) Ms. Adams and Ms. Fajardo voted nay.
- Ms. Rattray shared that fires and traffic collisions are major concerns for Valley Center residents. Fire is the number one concern. Traffic collisions are the number two safety concern. A large majority (77%) of Valley Center residents prefer traffic signals. Only 23% of the community favor roundabouts. Highway Patrol is now enforcing the speed limit along Valley Center Road. An exit route to I15 should be prioritized. Ms. Rattray would like to see the County build additional roads. Arizona has 80 roundabouts.
- The County is unsure about how the 12 million dollars provided by the Rincon tribe was spent.
- Mr. Schmidt shared comments about high traffic and emergency situations. Roundabouts
 provide few benefits with large amounts of traffic. Large trucks, emergency vehicles, and
 large trailers are difficult to get through roundabouts.
- Mr. Ciupitu shared his concerns about how emergency vehicles can quickly and safely get through roundabouts.
- Ms. Norwood shared comments made by Chief Napier. Drivers of large vehicles are against roundabouts.
- Dr. Matthews shared that it is hard to vote on Option A or B.
- Mr. Farrier would like the Planning Group to make a decision tonight.
- Mr. Hutchison shared that his biggest priority concerns safety. He supports roundabouts.

- Ms. Fajardo shared that a roundabout at Woods Valley Road is very dangerous. People can see traffic signals clearly at this intersection. She had a difficult experience driving through a roundabout in Utah.
- Mr. Smith shared that Valley Center residents were in favor of the consideration of roundabouts back in 2009. He would like the Planning Group to consider the voice of the community.
- Mr. Barber shared three issues that he has about roundabouts.
- Ms. Feliciano wanted to support roundabouts. She is against decreasing the width of the lanes. A lot of people are not courteous drivers. She is not completely against roundabouts.
- Mr. Garritson is against roundabouts. A large portion of the community is against roundabouts. He would like the County to add additional lanes to Valley Center Road from Cole Grade to Lake Wohlford. Add additional lanes to Lake Wohlford. Connect Mirar De Valle to Deer Springs Road.
- Ms. Bothof shared that she cannot vote on something this big without seeing a model. She is curious to see the results of the new traffic signals.
- Ms. Adams shared that the Planning Group represents the community and not our personal opinions. More of the responses from speakers at the meeting are in favor of roundabouts.
- Chair Harmes shared that public safety is a primary concern. There will probably not be an
 increase in traffic along our roads. It is difficult to say that a majority of people favor
 roundabouts when public polls show more than two-thirds participating in the poll do not
 support roundabouts.
- CityGate conducted the traffic study and gave the info to Baker for analysis. Baker is a
 national builder of roundabouts and its analysis appears to favor the construction of
 roundabouts.
- Traffic is already slowed due to the enforcement of the 45 MPH speed limit in other parts of Valley Center. Lights are regulated by the state. Additional evacuation routes are necessary.
- Chair Harmes shared that Option A does not get the job done. The community needed a hybrid of option A with option C, which would be a concept of a roundabout at Miller Rd., with an option of signals. The corridor plan is a concept and the Planning Group has not seen actual models of any of these plans, other than on paper. The Planning Group needs to consider public safety.
- Motion: To approve Option C.
- Maker/Second: Barber/Garritson
- Motion Fails 4-11-0 (Y-N-Ab)
- Lisa Adams N
- Chris Barber Y
- Michelle Bothof Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-N
- Vlad Ciupitu Y

- Susan Fajardo N
- Michael Farrier N
- Iulia Feliciano N
- James Garritson Y
- Steve Hutchison N
- Matt Matthews N
- LaVonne Norwood N
- Dori Rattray N
- Larry Schmidt N
- Kevin Smith N

- Motion: To approve Option C with amendments. Reevaluate curb extensions and raised medians. Mirar De Valle.
- Maker/Second: Rattray/Garritson
- Motion Fails 5-10-0 (Y-N-Ab)
- Lisa Adams N
- Chris Barber N
- Michelle Bothof Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-N
- Vlad Ciupitu Y

- Susan Fajardo N
- Michael Farrier N
- Julia Feliciano N
- James Garritson -Y
- Steve Hutchison N
- Matt Matthews N
- LaVonne Norwood N
- Dori Rattray Y
- Larry Schmidt Y
- Kevin Smith N
- Motion: To approve Option A prime with no roundabout at Woods Valley Road.
- Maker/Second: Smith/Adams
- Motion Carries 9-6-0 (Y-N-Ab)
- Lisa Adams Y
- Chris Barber Y
- Michelle Bothof Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-N
- Vlad Ciupitu N

- Susan Fajardo Y
- Michael Farrier Y
- Julia Feliciano N
- James Garritson -N
- Steve Hutchison Y
- Matt Matthews Y
- LaVonne Norwood Y
- Dori Rattray N
- Larry Schmidt N
- Kevin Smith Y
- 2. VCFPD Station 3 ADA Parking: Harmes Project was approved February 2023. Variance needed for ADA parking space. (Vote)
 - Motion: To approve the variance needed for ADA parking space.
 - Maker/Second: Barber/Norwood
 - Motion Carries 15-0-0 (Y-N-Ab)
- 3. Tree Clearing Old Castle Road: Pine tree located at 10365 Old Castle Rd. Four Pine trees in a row, one is to be removed. (Vote)
 - Motion: To approve the removal of four pine trees.
 - Maker/Second: Barber/Norwood
 - Motion Carries 15-0-0 (Y-N-Ab)
- 4. Bike & Pedestrian Crossings: Norwood Bike lanes on both sides of Old Castle Road between Costalota Rd. & Cedar Trail Rd. connecting to existing bike facilities. Traffic safety improvement by replacing and upgrading the existing pedestrian countdown signal heads and push button crosswalks on Cole Grade Rd. and Pauma Heights Rd & Cole Grade Rd. and Valley Center School Rd. (Vote)
 - Rescheduled for March meeting.
- 5. MacTan & Valley Center Roads Illegal Events: Barber (Informational)
 - Rescheduled for March meeting.

- 6. Aziz MPA PDS2023-MPA-23-014 APN 189-094-21-01: Hutchison 27251 Valley Center Rd commercial store (7,250sf) with alcohol sales, car wash, gas station, quick service drive-thru restaurant. Open 24/7.Zone general commercial (C36).
 - Rescheduled for March meeting.
- 7. Subcommittee Roster: Harmes Subcommittee members were nominated and voted on at the January 8th, 2024 meeting. A vote from the group does not need to be confirmed via approved minutes before its effective. (Informational)
 - Rescheduled for March meeting

F. Subcommittee Reports:

• Rescheduled for March meeting.

G. Adjournment

- Next regular meeting of VCCPG: March 11, 2024 at 7 p.m.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.
- Minutes were approved on May 13, 2024.

James Garritson, Secretary