

Valley Center Road Corridor Concept Plan



Community Kickoff Workshop Summary



Workshop Date:
March 12, 2019

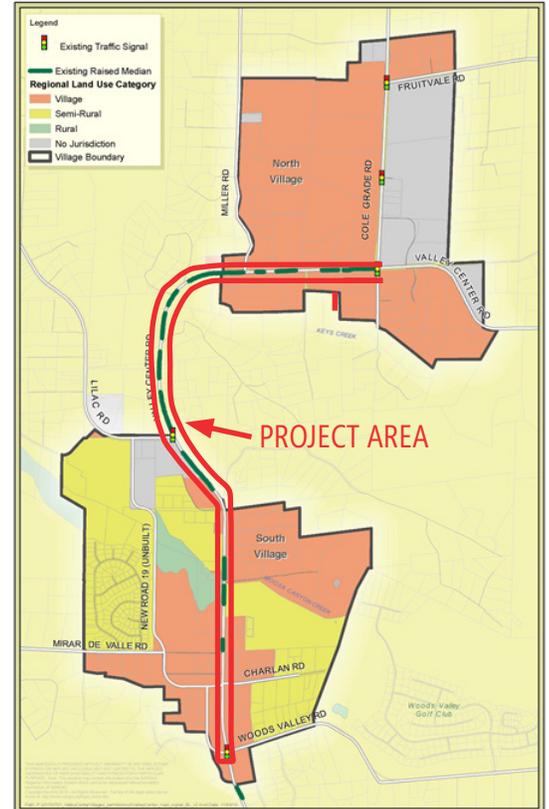


Executive Summary

The County of San Diego is currently developing the Valley Center Road Corridor Concept Plan (Corridor Concept Plan) to enhance the safety and accessibility of Valley Center Road approximately from Cole Grade Road in the North Village to Woods Valley Road in the South Village. The plan will identify a range of recommendations to address the needs of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, transit riders, and drivers.

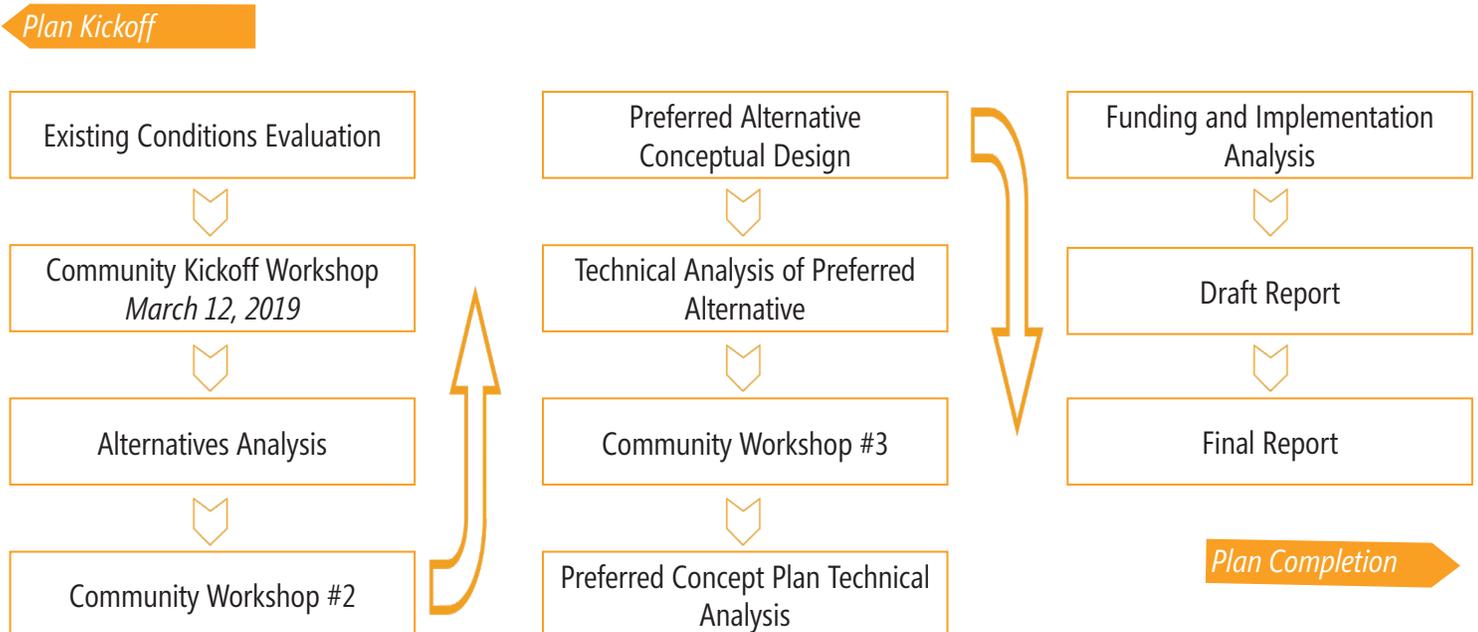
The project kicked-off in December 2018 and is anticipated to run through February 2021. This project will coordinate with the Valley Center Community Plan Update, which is also underway and will be informed by the results of the Corridor Concept Plan.

The first of the three workshops was the Community Kickoff Workshop and was held on March 12, 2019 from 6:00 – 8:30 pm at Valley Center Middle School and was attended by approximately 80 people. This document summarizes the engagement process and key findings of the Community Kickoff Workshop.



Valley Center Road & Community Villages
Access Management Study Area

Timeline



Workshop Process

The Community Kickoff Workshop consisted of a combination of presentations and interactive exercises organized around four major components:

- Welcome, polling exercise, and project overview
- Existing conditions analysis and input
- Design treatment best practices and priorities
- Questions and answers, next steps, and concluding remarks

The goals of the Community Kickoff Workshop were to:



UNDERSTAND your ideas and concerns by identifying challenges and opportunities.



SHARE existing conditions analysis findings about Valley Center Road.



DISCUSS the study area boundaries.



ESTABLISH community priorities.

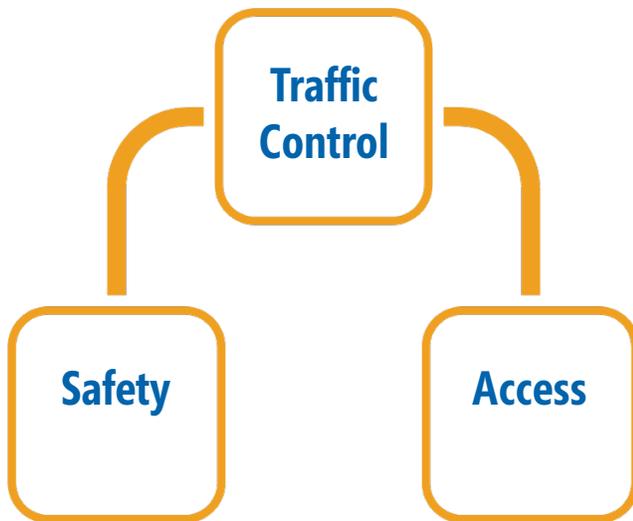


EXPLORE design treatments for increased safety.



PRESENT trade-offs and best practices for different design treatments.

During the workshop, participants shared their mobility concerns and priorities using comment cards and by participating in the two interactive exercises. Most comments were associated with the following three themes:



Workshop participants listening to the Existing Conditions Presentation



Workshop participants looking over display boards showing the number of collisions and the goals and outcomes



Workshop participants during the first interactive exercise and sharing their experiences on Valley Center Road

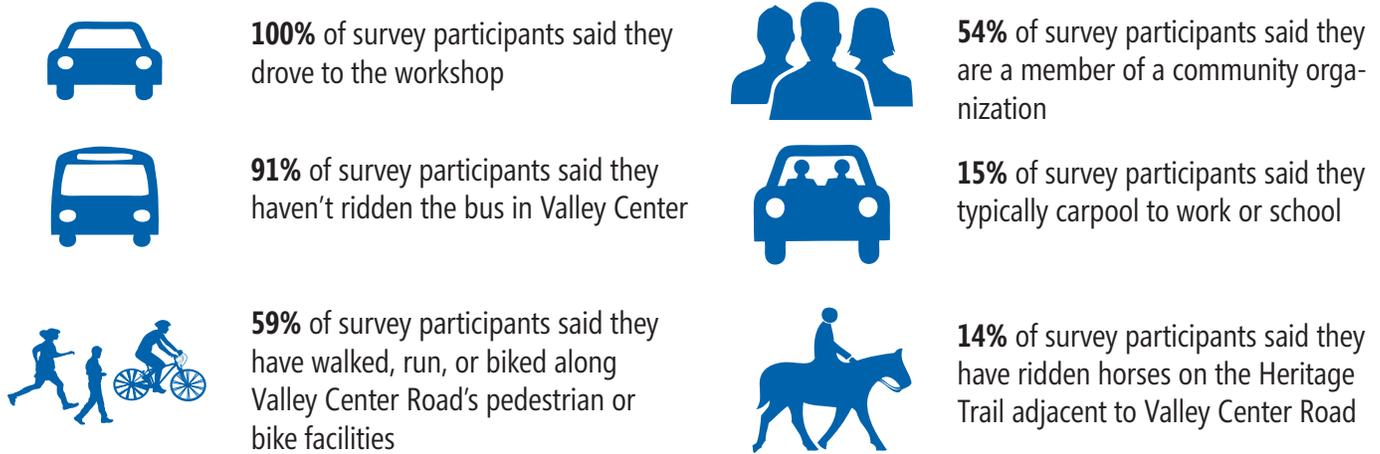
Workshop Activities & Input Received

The workshop began in an open house format, allowing participants to view and discuss several exhibits displayed around the room. These exhibits presented the goals and intended outcomes of the workshop and summarized key findings from the existing conditions analysis. After this short viewing period, participants sat at one of eight tables where they remained for the rest of the workshop. Discussions at each table were lead by one to two facilitators. Each portion of the workshop included a presentation by the project team and an interactive exercise.

Quick Questions - Polling Exercise

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked five questions in a live polling exercise. Using a cell phone or wifi-enabled device, participants answered questions about how they experience and use the corridor. The polling results were displayed in real time so that the group understood the various perspectives represented. Workshop participants were able to complete the poll on paper, if preferred.

Out of the 48 local residents who participated in the polling exercise, the following results showed:



Existing Conditions: Where are the Issues?

The project team provided a summary of existing conditions, including analyses of intersection operations, roadway segments, crash data, speeds, as well as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit conditions.

After the presentation, each group engaged in an interactive exercise to share their thoughts on the locations with the most pressing challenges and greatest opportunities. Led by a facilitator, each group was equipped with a table-sized map, markers, pens, and post-it notes: red post-its to note negative characteristics, and green post-its to note positive characteristics. Participants were asked to write down their thoughts on the post-it notes or write on the map and discuss with the group.

Workshop participants noted the Heritage Trail as a positive characteristic and ultimately would like to see more trails and walking paths along Valley Center Road. Most participants noted challenges throughout the study area. A map is provided on the following page displaying the common themes participants noted on each map. The map is then broken into four segments displaying the positive characteristics and corridor challenges along with common comments participants noted on each map.



What Did We Hear?



Comment Types

- 48 Vehicle access comments
- 47 Overall safety comments
- 35 Streetscaping comments
- 22 Pedestrian access comments
- 6 Land use and surrounding development comments
- 5 Bicycle access comments
- 4 Equestrian use comments

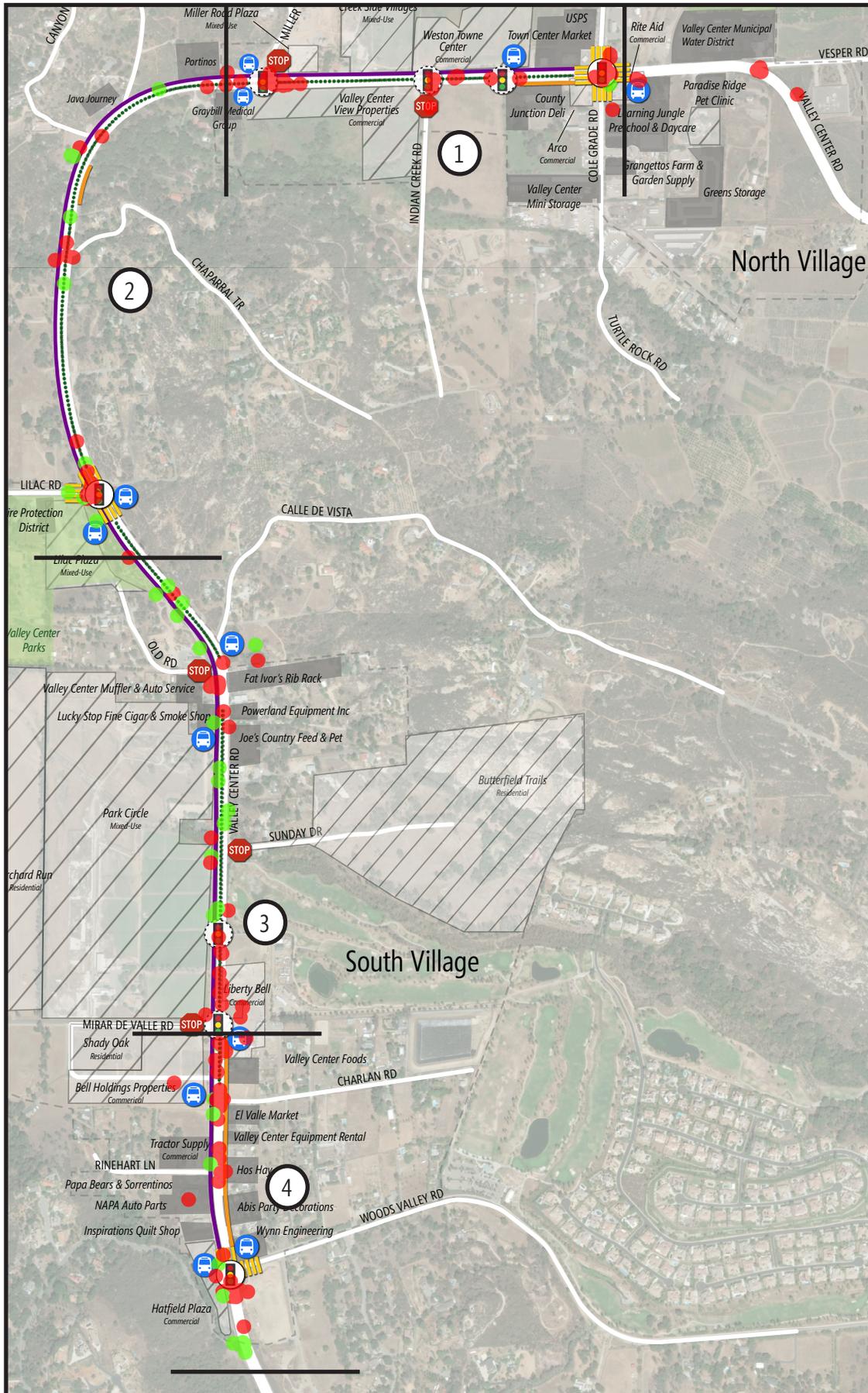
EXISTING STREET FEATURES

- Bus Stop
- Stop Sign
- Traffic Signal
- Crosswalk
- Median
- Heritage Trail
- Sidewalk

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

- Potential Traffic Signal
- Planned Development

What Did We Hear?



Comment Types

- Positive Characteristics
- Corridor Challenges

EXISTING STREET FEATURES

- Bus Stop
- Stop Sign
- Traffic Signal
- Crosswalk
- Median
- Heritage Trail
- Sidewalk

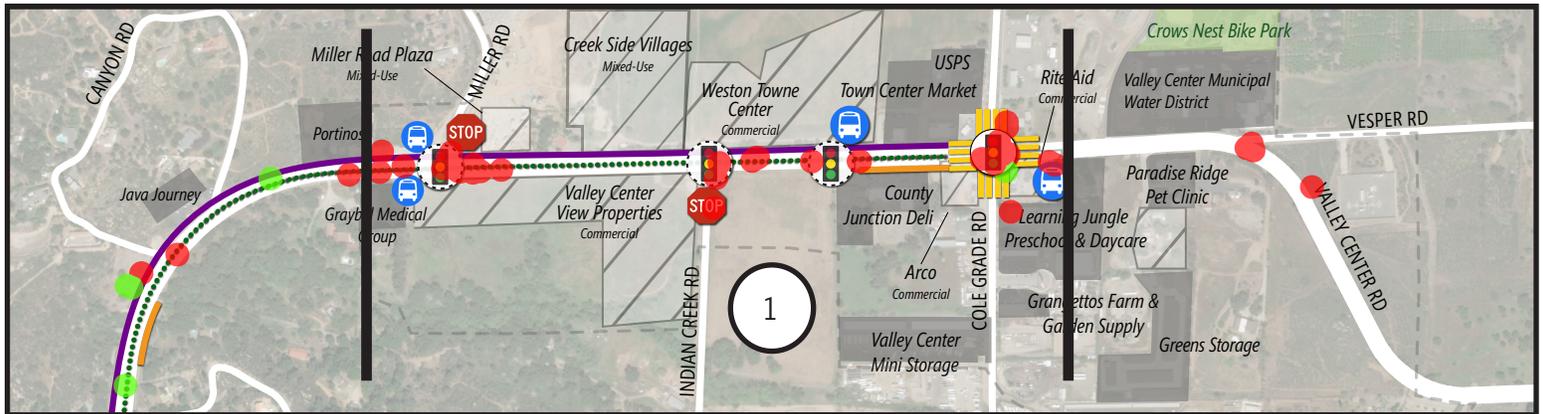
- Village Boundaries
- Commercial Areas
- Parks

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

- Potential Traffic Signal
- Planned Development

What Did We Hear?

A sampling of comments received during this first interactive exercise is provided below, grouped by corridor segments. To access all of the comments received during this exercise and the other interactive exercises for this workshop, see the project web page at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/CommunityGroups/vcroadstudy/>



Positive Characteristics:

Equestrian use comments:

- Heritage Trail and equestrian crossing button are very nice for people with horses

Streetscaping comments:

- Landscaped median
- Heritage Trail is a delightful addition to the community

Corridor Challenges:

Vehicle access comments:

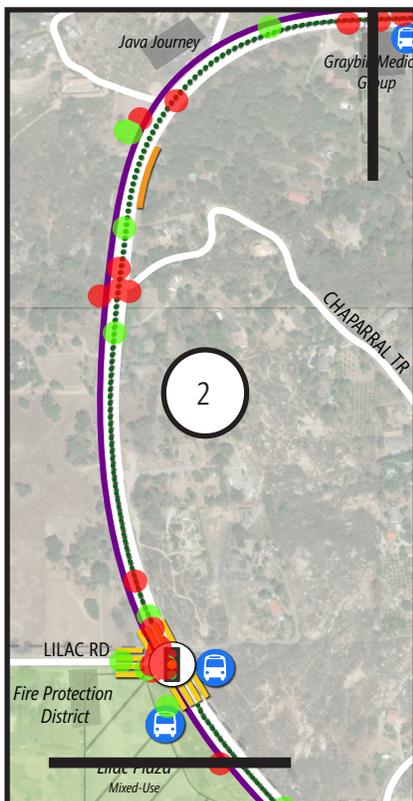
- Planned signals are too close together, there are too many signals
- The curve at Vesper Road and Valley Center Road is very dangerous
- Exiting and entering the gas station is very dangerous
- People drive too fast along this road
- U-turns by the Church, Pala Vista Market, County Junction Deli, and the medical center are very challenging
- The intersection at Valley Center Road and Cole Grade Road is very confusing, too many lanes

Pedestrian access comments:

- This area is not pedestrian friendly

Streetscaping comments:

- Maintain vegetation



Positive Characteristics:

Vehicle access comments:

- The signal at Lilac Road and Valley Center Road

Streetscaping comments:

- Heritage Trail is really nice, especially when it departs from the road
- The trees and native plants along the Heritage Trail and the median

Corridor Challenges:

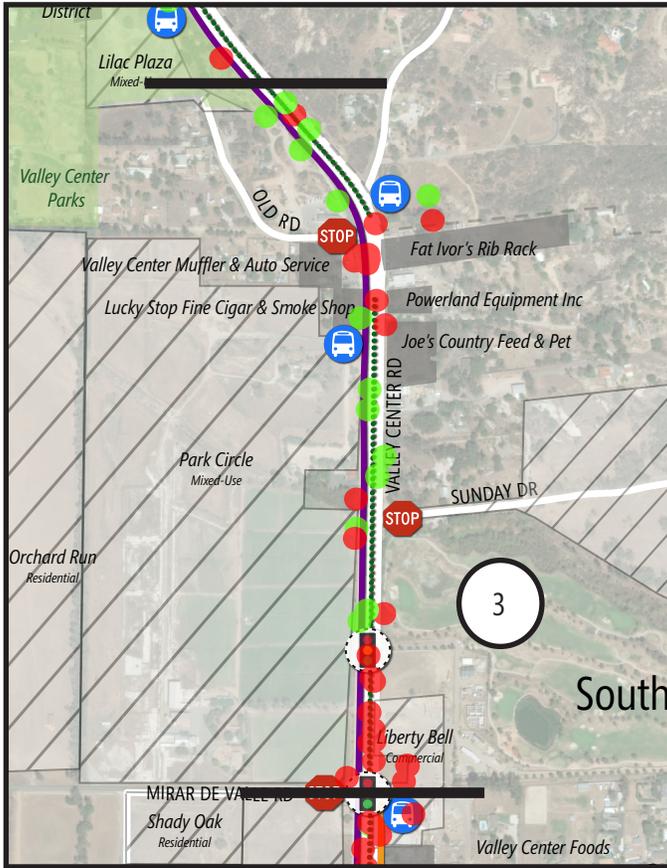
Vehicle access comments:

- Poor line of sight turning left on Valley Center Road from Old Road
- There is too much stop and go traffic
- Vehicles go way too fast along Valley Center Road
- Very unsafe turning onto Valley Center Road, hard to see speeding cars
- Need more dedicated right turn lanes to help flow of traffic
- More crosswalks
- Very unsafe turning from Chaparral Terrace to Valley Center Road

Streetscaping comments:

- Erosion on the Heritage Trail and dead vegetation

What Did We Hear?



Positive Characteristics:

Streetscaping comments:

- Heritage Trail is great for the community, would love to see it expand
- Vegetation along the median

Land use/development comments:

- We love Park Circle

Corridor Challenges:

Vehicle access comments:

- Mixed traffic along the Heritage Trail can be difficult
- Poor line of sight trying to get on Valley Center Road
- No more signals along Valley Center Road
- Speed is too high along Valley Center Road, can't turn into businesses

Bicycle access comments:

- More bicycle facilities are needed
- Need wider bike lanes along Valley Center Road

Pedestrian access comments:

- More pedestrian facilities are needed
- Pedestrians have been killed trying to cross Valley Center Road

Equestrian use comments:

- Equestrian trails should have some separation from roadway like a rail fence

Streetscaping comments:

- Dead vegetation along Heritage Trail
- Noise makes the Heritage Trail not as peaceful

Positive Characteristics:

Streetscaping comments:

- Heritage Trail, would like to see it connect to other trails
- Future Valley Center Gateway would be a great addition

Corridor Challenges:

Vehicle access comments:

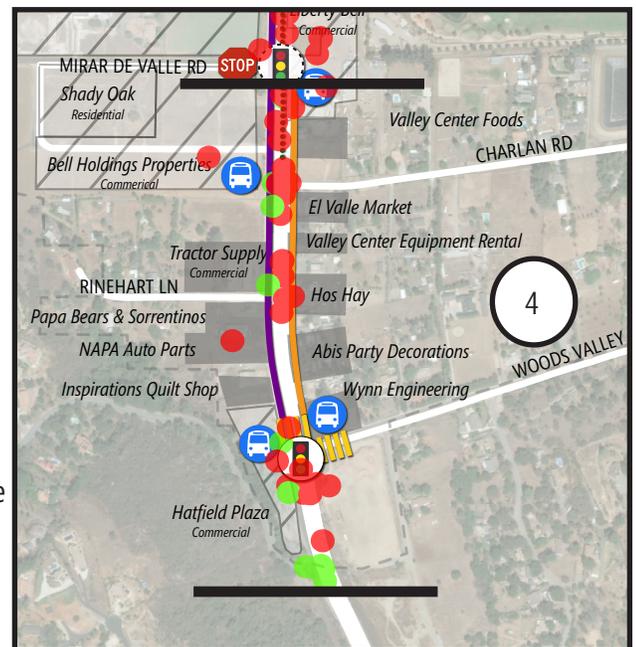
- Accidents at Woods Valley Road and Valley Center Road
- There is a lot of traffic, have to wait a long time to get through Valley Center Road
- No more planned signals at intersections
- High speeds make Valley Center Road very dangerous
- Very dangerous turning left onto Valley Center Road from Mirar de Valle Road and Banbury Drive
- Would love to see more roundabouts instead of signals

Bicycle access comments:

- Bicycling is dangerous, there is no separation for bike riders
- Bus stop and bike lane conflicts

Streetscaping comments:

- No median in the South Village
- Vegetation along Heritage Trail needs to be maintained



Workshop Activities & Input Received

A sampling of comments received during this second interactive exercise is provided below. To access all of the comments received during this exercise and the other interactive exercises for this workshop, see the project web page at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/CommunityGroups/vcroadstudy/>

CORRIDOR PRIORITIES

Participants were asked to identify their top three priorities they would like to see on Valley Center Road during the corridor priorities interactive exercise. Participants were given numbered stickers that were placed on two large boards displaying various roadway treatments. Below, are the top three preferred treatments workshop participants would like to see within the study area.

TOP 3 PREFERRED TREATMENTS

Out of 139 numbered stickers placed, the top three preferred treatments are:



OTHER REFERENCED TREATMENTS RECEIVING VOTES



ROUNDBABOUTS VS. SIGNALS

The project team presented on the tradeoffs and best practices associated with potential design solutions for the corridor. After the presentation, participants were asked to fill out a worksheet listing the pros and cons associated with roundabouts and signalized intersections. Below, are the common themes participants noted for roundabouts and signalized intersections.

ROUNDBABOUTS

PROS 45

- Slows traffic speeds, reducing collision frequency and severity
- Improves traffic flow
- Provides landscaping opportunities
- Aesthetically appealing
- Lower maintenance costs

CONS 46

- Unfamiliar to many drivers
- Large footprint required, especially to accommodate larger vehicles
- Expensive construction
- Slower speeds may impact mass evacuation
- May be more difficult for pedestrians to cross

SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

PROS 41

- Familiar to drivers (especially non-locals)
- Smaller footprint
- May be less expensive to construct
- May enable faster evacuation in an emergency
- Potentially easier/safer for pedestrians to cross

CONS 36

- Congestion and long wait times - more emissions
- Seem prone to collisions; greater collision severity
- Not aesthetically appealing
- Ongoing maintenance costs
- Operations are impacted during power outages

Overall Takeaways & Next Steps

Below is a list of key takeaways from the workshop:

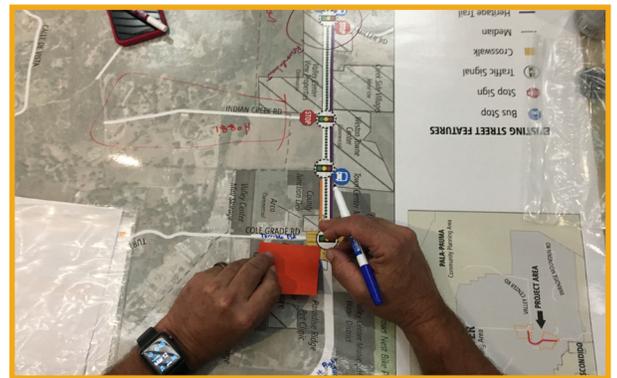
- Many attendees expressed safety concerns related to the high speeds drivers are traveling along the corridor.
- Some attendees brought up concerns about difficult turning movements along the corridor, in particular:
 - U-turns from Valley Center Road westbound, into the Old Town Center parking lot just west of Cole Grade Road
 - Right turns onto Lilac Road from southbound Valley Center Road and the need for a turn lane
 - Ingress/egress turns to and from the small commercial center at Canyon Road and Valley Center Road, near the curve in Valley Center Road
 - Additional comments noting safety issues with ingress/egress at other businesses along the corridor
 - Left turns onto Valley Center Road northbound from Old Road, with high speeds and low visibility
- Some attendees were concerned about the potential for signalized intersections being too close together, which excessively disrupts the flow of traffic and travel times.
- Some attendees noted the difficulties in riding a bike along Valley Center Road, due to the high speeds and not enough separation from cars.
- Some attendees felt that Valley Center Road and the additional road network in the Villages would not be able to handle additional future traffic volumes coming from planned development along the corridor.
- Some attendees highlighted the aesthetic improvements associated with landscaped medians.
- Some attendees pointed out the improved pedestrian atmosphere associated with the Heritage Trail along portions of Valley Center Road, while also pointing out the need to fill in the gaps along the corridor where there is currently no trail or sidewalk.
- Some attendees expressed support for a community gateway feature near Woods Valley Road.

To access all of the input received for the interactive exercises, see the project web page at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/CommunityGroups/vcroadstudy/>

The next steps of this project is the development of roadway concept alternatives and supporting information to inform the development of preferred alternatives.



Workshop participants introducing each other before the workshop



A workshop participant writing down a challenge during the first interactive exercise



Workshop participants discussing the project area being shown on the display boards