

## Focus Group

### Mobility

July 17, 2013

#### Overview

On Wednesday, July 17, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning convened a group of Marina del Rey community members interested in discussing issues and opportunities related to mobility in the Marina. More than 30 individuals participated in breakout group discussions to share their ideas pertaining to the promenade, wayfinding, and circulation in the Marina. Attendees were divided into four smaller groups facilitated by County and outreach staff. Facilitators captured comments on flip charts and encouraged participants to fill out comment sheets and illustrate their visions and suggestions on the provided aerial maps at each table. At the conclusion of the group discussions, these maps were posted on the wall for full group viewing.

The purpose of this Focus Group meeting was to provide participants an overview of the Marina del Rey Visioning process and to discuss mobility needs and concerns with the Marina del Rey community. The following is a recap of discussions for each of the four breakout groups.

#### Group 1

- The Promenade
  - Safety considerations:
    - Hours of operation
    - Lighting
    - Security cameras
    - Vagrants from the beach
  - Water taxi should be year-round
  - Residential privacy conflicts with public access
  - There are pedestrian/bicycle conflicts – separate bikes and pedestrians
  - Needs to be more accessible for the disabled
  - Multimodal but separated lanes
  - Need better access to:
    - Gateway entrance park
    - Existing programs/events
  - Need access:
    - From the end of Peninsula Aubrey Austin Park to the promenade
    - To Ballona Creek at the end of peninsula
  - Fix non-contiguous promenade connectivity

- Wayfinding
  - People have their smart phones
  - Consider map directory/brochures like at the mall
  - Current signage is inadequate
  - Use light pole banners for signage
  - Need County-sponsored free transit
  - Key areas to direct people:
    - Fisherman's Village (needs renovation)
    - How to get out of Marina via Highway 90
  - Wayfinding signage needs to be for all modes of transportation
  - Other destinations to note (in need of signage):
    - Mother's Beach
    - Grand Canal
    - Aubrey Austin Park
    - Waterside shopping center
    - New Trader Joe's
    - Restaurants
  - Consider pets and dogs on the promenade
- Circulation
  - Need a free shuttle from all parking lots
  - New development needs adequate parking
  - Behind boat ramp the parking lot is too costly, makes it less accessible
  - Parking is underutilized throughout the entire Marina
  - Parking lots are in correct locations, they need to be linked together with shuttles
  - Need emergency escape routes
  - Bike path needs to be obvious and easy to find and identify
  - With respect to Admiralty Way:
    - Consider bike path along Admiralty Way instead of the waterfront
    - Improved water taxi is needed to decrease congestion on Admiralty Way
    - Remove center median and make Admiralty Way wider
      - This would provide six lanes
    - Needs traffic sensors
    - Traffic bottlenecks at Fiji/Admiralty Way
    - Consider making two right turn lanes from Mindanao onto Admiralty
  - Make two turn lanes for streets going in and out of the Marina
  - Need more coordination between City/County regarding streets and traffic
  - Bring back emergency sirens
  - Sheriff's Department has a bad location – they need a substation with better access
  - Utilize LAX for parking and shuttle people in
  - Make water lane for the paddle boards
  - Need more guest docks and dining
  - Ways to enliven promenade:
    - Kiosks

- Restaurants
  - Make it feel more European/Mediterranean
  - Promenade is underutilized
- County needs to focus on residential community
- Have a change lane for peak hours
- Have a person directing traffic during special events

## Group 2

- The Promenade
  - “Fast” walkers
  - “Gaps” in promenade
  - Square pavers are unpleasant
    - Prefer natural and softer surface
    - Variation in design
  - Landscaping “softening” with nature
  - Via Dolce – family with bikes
  - Need more:
    - Benches/public spaces
    - Need adequate lighting
    - Small cafes/vendors (in some spots)
  - Be careful with promenade space
  - Width of promenade
  - Bikes may conflict with pedestrians and other users of the promenade
  - There are two kinds of bicyclists:
    - In-town
    - Out-of-town from the north
  - Some cyclists go too fast
- Wayfinding
  - Follow-up signs needed beyond entry point signage
  - Sign needed at Fiji Way
  - More welcome/wayfinding signs and visual cues
  - Consider arrows, possibly with distances
  - Signs near parking lots would be helpful
  - Need bulletin board with map of MdR
  - Signs needed for cars and pedestrians
  - International signs for tourists
  - Place maps at water bus
  - Foliage blocks signs
  - Directional signs are needed
  - Need large wayfinding at Via Marina/Washington
  - Better wayfinding for boats
  - More landscaping in medians
  - Better landscaping around signs
    - Better than a metal pole
    - Identity
- Circulation

- Connectors between inland points of peninsulas (across mole roads to provide a shorter walk, if desired)
- Promenade design should lead you to a destination
- No pathway on promenade
  - Should be more clear
- Apartment buildings should mark where the promenade is and incorporate it
- Sidewalks needed in addition to promenade
- No digital signs
- Different paving to guide walkers
- Pedestrian safety with new intersection design
- Bikes are not staying in bike lanes
- Put bus stops in the right places
- Shuttle should be year-round and offer frequent service
- Key destinations
- With regard to parking:
  - Information map at parking lot showing main points
  - Parking should not be clustered
  - More short-term parking – not everyone wants to park for the day
  - Parking is not in the right places – parking near the beach is critical
- Boaters should:
  - Check in with Harbor Master
  - Plan ahead

### **Group 3**

- The Promenade
  - Not all promenades are at the same elevation
  - Accessibility is key for portions of the promenade fronting commercial uses
  - Is there really a desire for more tourists?
    - More people will bring more traffic
  - Fisherman's Village promenade needs work
  - Separation of wheels and feet
    - Bike lane needed
  - Unlock yacht club access, access near Aubrey Austin Park
  - No more drug deals
  - Add signs for local wildlife viewing
- Wayfinding
  - Have an app for getting to specific spots in the Marina
  - Visitor's Bureau should be more visible to the community and coordinate with surrounding tenants and agencies to distribute literature and informational materials
  - Need better signage at Mindanao and other gateways
  - Not enough information kiosks around the Marina
  - Residents need more information about the local events in the Marina, like the farmer's market
  - Add signage for incoming boats/vessels

- Circulation
  - Parking:
    - Public parking at Mother's Beach is inadequate
    - Other beach cities have creative parking solutions
    - Free parking at Fisherman's Village would create inviting environment
  - Remedy the pedestrian vs. parking lot feel
    - Parking lots are not suitable walkways
  - Lighting is very important and much needed
    - Tahiti is too dark and all the Marina streets feel too dark
  - Biking:
    - Cyclists tend to ignore biking rules
    - The Marina is a hard place to bike in general
    - Bike lanes would be nice but many of the streets are too narrow already
    - Need a bike lane on Via Marina
  - Access:
    - Mariner's Village needs to get rid of the gate so pedestrians can walk unimpeded
    - Create access through Emerald City (tall City apartments opposite Burke Park) to Maxella Avenue
    - Lincoln/Admiralty Way is a choke point
    - The traffic light from Admiralty to Mindanao takes too long
  - Boating
    - Consider marking the buoys
    - Water taxis should take you to more retail opportunities
    - More drive-up boat slips
      - More places for boats to pull up could be helpful to encourage retail uses
    - Boaters should have access to facilities (i.e., restrooms)
    - \$10 fee to launch is too high

#### **Group 4**

- The Promenade
  - Should be continuous with 28 feet minimum width
  - Larger areas – priority promenade space
  - Would like to be able to bike along Fisherman's Village
  - How do we limit the area for outdoor dining as an experience?
    - Implement a fee payable to the County and the money will stay in the marina
  - Consider tables and chairs within the promenade, along with second-floor decks
  - Need places to enjoy the view
  - Visitor destination: near Marina City Club extend access from the destination spots
  - Parking near promenades

- Promenades in residential areas
- Develop major promenades within major commercial areas
- Wayfinding
  - Year-round docks for dinghies near restaurants
  - Directional signage for water taxi
  - Look at Newport Beach Boater's Guide
  - Walking tour
  - Signage
    - Sea life/wildlife = ecotourism and docent available occasionally (vacation experience)
    - Consider signs that have mile indicators: "you are now on mile \_\_\_ coming from \_\_\_ city"
  - Consider Manhattan Beach promenades
  - Separate walking/bike paths/cars
  - Mariner's Village
    - Make promenade along Mariner's Village for walking only
    - Make Mariner's Village into a park
- Circulation
  - Via Marina/Admiralty Way is a problematic intersection
    - Commuter cut-through traffic and pedestrians
  - Trader Joe's on the other side of Lincoln
  - Metered parking scalable
  - Positive: expansion of Burton Chace
    - Need more parking nearby
  - More shuttles
  - Consider shared dinghies
  - Open trolleys with a route around the entire Marina
    - Be able to park once and take the trolley with regularly timed stops
  - Privately-owned electric golf carts
  - Eco-center along the wetlands
  - Free trolley
  - Concern about the trolley causing more traffic
    - Solution: staging area off the main road
  - Bali Way as alternative to Mindanao
  - Boaters could use a repair facility on the west side of the harbor
  - No long gangways
  - Event space along the west side and park

Staff received two comment sheets with responses to the following questions:

- What do you think the promenade should look like (i.e. width, design, amenities)?
  - At the MCC area on the promenade, areas are closed to the public and the Mariner's Village. Bike and runner lanes should be marked for safety, and security is needed.

- Aside from pedestrians, should other transportation modes be encouraged on the promenade (e.g. bicycles, other)?
  - Expand water taxi service to year-round; provide free public transportation for visitors; and provide signage.
  
- What is most needed in the Marina: better wayfinding for cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, or boats (or are all of the above needed)?
  - Better signage and information at kiosks; better access to Ballona Creek; and provide transportation to waterside.
  
- Are the right types of parking in the appropriate places in the Marina to serve your needs?
  - Truck parking on Palawan Way is not adequate for large, crew cab/dually trucks, like the F-350 4x4, for example