

# SAN DIEGO

C-STREET CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

**SUMMARY: PUBLIC WORKSHOP 1**  
HELD 2006.04.20

CENTRE CITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM

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**INTRODUCTION**

The San Diego Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) hosted the first Public Workshop for the C-Street Master Plan on Thursday, April 20, 2006. The purpose of the first public workshop was to introduce the project to the community, present preliminary analysis undertaken by the consultant team, and to solicit input on issues and priorities that should be addressed as part of the C-Street Master Plan. Public input and participation is a key element of this project and additional public events will be undertaken at specific times during the project process.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the Public Workshop process and outcomes. Input and feedback received during Public Workshop #1 will be used by the consultant team as it develops master plan alternatives and design concepts.

**BACKGROUND**

San Diego's C Street is a major pedestrian and transit corridor of local and regional significance. The condition of the street has declined and is in need of significant improvement. In August 2004, the C Street Task Force was created to address the problems of C Street and it was determined that the extent of transportation, infrastructure, and public realm improvements required comprehensive planning and a thorough implementation strategy.

The Centre City Development Corporation commissioned a multidisciplinary design team led by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill LLP to develop a Master Plan and 30 percent schematic design drawings for the revitalization of the C Street corridor, including improvements to landscaping, architecture, engineering and transit services. The project is a partnership between CCDC, MTS, SANDAG, and the Downtown Partnership.

The purpose of the C Street Master Plan is to create an overall vision for the revitalization of the C Street corridor from India Street to Park Boulevard; and to define specific improvements including trolley, transit and infrastructure investments, streetscape enhancements, vehicular and pedestrian circulation and public art opportunities.

Community participation is an integral part of the project. This public participation process aims to achieve widespread public input to help shape the vision and design of the C-Street Corridor. CCDC will host a total of four community workshops during the project process.

**OVERVIEW**

On Thursday April 20, 2006, the San Diego City Centre Development Corporation hosted a Public Workshop for the C-Street Master Plan. The meeting was held from 5.30 to 7.30pm at the Westgate Hotel in downtown San Diego.

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The meeting was advertised through a variety of methods, including:

- CCDC Website posting ([www.ccdc.com](http://www.ccdc.com));
- Mailed letter to approximately 2,000 individuals and organizations;
- Email notice to approximately 2,250 distributed to individuals and organizations;
- Hand distribution of informational fliers to residents and merchants on C Street; and,
- Paid advertisement in The San Diego Union-Tribune.

Approximately 80 people attended the workshop, including approximately 50 citizens and representatives from CCDC, the City of San Diego, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), and the consultant team - Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, LLP (SOM), DMJM Harris, KTU+A, Katz Okitsu & Associates, Nasland Engineering, and Wade Communications, Inc.

Presentation materials, including information boards, handouts, and a PowerPoint presentation was prepared by the consultant team.

**MEETING FORMAT**

The Public Workshop was preceded by a series of display board that provided an overview of the study area, existing conditions, and design opportunities that could be considered as part of the Master Plan process, and a list of priorities that were identified during earlier stakeholder interviews. Workshop attendees were provided an opportunity to review this display material.

Workshop attendees were provided with a package of information including an Agenda, a copy of the “list of priorities”, and a brief questionnaire.

The meeting commenced with a welcome by Hon. Kevin Faulconer, City Councilmember for District Two, and an introductory overview by CCDC. Everyone in the room was then asked to introduce themselves. The introductions were followed by a presentations by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an overview of the purpose and scope of the C-Street Master Plan project, provide a preliminary assessment of existing conditions, and to invite input from the public on issues and priorities that should be addressed as part of the Master Plan project.

Following the presentations, attendees were invited to participate in an open discussion facilitated by Wade Communications. The open discussion was informed by the preliminary list of planning and design issues and priorities. Additional issues and priorities were identified and added to the list.

In order for the consultant team to understand which issues were of greatest importance to the community, workshop participants were asked to both rank and “vote” for the top five planning and design issues associated with C Street. Handouts were used to record the ranking of issues. Voting of the priorities was undertaken by placing stick-on “dots” next to the issues listed on presentation boards.

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Following these ranking and voting exercises, workshop participants completed a brief questionnaire that was submitted to the consultant team and the completion of the workshop.

**COMMENTS SUMMARY**

Following initial presentations, workshop participants were invited to raise issues and share ideas and visions for the future of C Street. A diverse range of comments were provided and specific themes included Land Use, Investment in Development, Security and Identity.

*"C Street suffers from a crisis of spirit"*

It was quickly identified that people perceive that C Street suffers from a lack of investment. Many participants expressed that C Street is in need of bold actions and solutions by both public agencies and the private sector. Citizens called for a series of "dramatic steps" beginning with the redevelopment of major sites such as California Theatre, City Hall and the Hotel Churchill. Many suggested the street needs a "comprehensive land use plan." Citizens also called for bold approaches to streetscape enhancements and street function.

The role and function of C Street was identified as an important issue. Importantly, the street does not end at the project boundary and serves a vital role in connecting a variety of neighborhoods, activities, and services. Reference to C Street as a "corridor" does not reflect the role of the street and alternative terminology could be considered in defining the study area.

*"C Street is a jewel that needs polishing"*

Even though C Street draws a high volume of pedestrian traffic due to existing transit services, it was noted that most transit users do not stay on the street and other pedestrians avoid it altogether. Animation, defined activities, and a unified identity is desired to raise its profile as a 'destination.' Opportunities for high quality retail uses, such as sidewalk cafes or a farmers market, could be introduced to attract both local visitors and tourists. International examples were provided – such as the "Gastrotram" service in Zurich.

Future development should be sympathetic of existing retailers and efforts should be made not to "wipe-out" long-term businesses. In addition, development should preserve and enhance historic resources.

*"Walking in the shadow of death"*

It was noted by many workshop participants that safety should be improved in order to enhance the pedestrian experience. Pedestrian safety is affected by crime activity, sidewalk clutter, poor landscaping, inadequate lighting, and vehicular access to garages and general vehicular movement. In addition to improving pedestrian safety, the C Street Master Plan could create enhanced connections for pedestrians and cyclists to adjacent streets, including north-south streets, nearby open spaces and community services.

With regard to transportation, the notion of expanding C Street's role as a transportation corridor garnered less support. Citizens expressed more interest in land use, redevelopment, public safety, identity, and streetscape enhancements than they did in transit service or automobile access. Some

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support was demonstrated for enhancing existing trolley stations and improving the roadway conditions along the corridor.

A more detailed summary of specific issues, ideas and visions discussed by workshop participants is provided in the Appendix.

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**ISSUES & PRIORITIES VOTE SUMMARY**

Approximately 45 citizens participated in the “dot” voting exercise in which each person was given five colored dots and asked to place them next to the five most important issues they would like to see addressed in the C Street Master Plan. It is important to note that participants were limited to selecting their “top five” priorities. A low number of “votes,” therefore, does not necessarily signify a total lack of interest on the part of the participants. A total of 227 “votes” were cast.

The following table summarizes the voting results:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Votes</b>
1. Redevelopment of blighted buildings	11.5%	26 votes
2. Crime prevention Landscaping	8.4%	19 votes
3. Pedestrian-friendly Comprehensive Land Use Plan	7%	16 votes
4. Pedestrian safety	6.6%	15 votes
5. Lighting Identity	5.7%	13 votes
6. Transit Station Enhancements	3.5%	8 votes
7. Civic Center renovation Entertainment venues Maintenance Public art Retail/restaurants	3.1%	7 votes
8. Roadway improvements Implementation Strategy Mixed-Use (Live, Work, Play)	2.2%	5 votes
9. Cultural facilities	1.8%	4 votes
10. Automobile access Light rail capacity Residential Shuttle Urban Market Street Animation	1.3%	3 votes
11. Homeless Issues	0.9%	2 votes
12. Bus Rapid Transit (express commuter bus) Office buildings On-street parking Paving enhancements Seating Signage Public Restrooms Don't let the size of the trolley car dictate the place	0.4%	1 vote
13. Hotels Links to education Gastrotram (dining train concept)	0%	No votes

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**APPENDIX A**

Flipchart Summary of Recorded Public Comments

- C Street continues east of Park Boulevard. Relationship of eastern end is important.
- Lack of investment is a key issue.
- Confidence needed to attract investment.
- Take a dramatic step – redevelop specific sites such as the California Theatre and Hotel Churchill.
- C Street is a neighborhood and not a corridor.
- C Street suffers from “a crisis of spirit” .
- Animation is required to reinforce C Street as a destination.
- Consider concept like Zurich’s “Gastrotram” with arts information and bright exterior.
- Major public or private investment in land is required.
- Comprehensive land use plan is required.
- Define activities along street – make it fun and exciting.
- Don’t wipe out older/original merchants.
- “C Street is a jewel that needs polishing” .
- What are the short term goals and redevelopment activities?
- Public parking must be provided with priority for C Street.
- Cultural resources should be identified and protected.
- Outdated buildings/facades should be improved.
- Farmers market could be established.
- Cluttered sidewalks need to be addressed.
- Architectural details are important – refer to the California Theater.
- Security first – need to feel safe as a pedestrian and shop-owner.
- Fix dark spots – use lighting extensively.
- Retail – sidewalk cafes could attract new pedestrian activity.
- Rehabilitate existing transit – make connections easy and efficient.
- Outdoor seating and landscape improvements.
- Make C Street a destination.
- Minimize parking impacts – many garages enter of C Street.
- Limited police resources – a greater police presence is required prevent crime.
- More retailers needed.
- What is the “big idea”? – urban development or a green transit corridor?
- Consider C Street’s relationships to Broadway, B Street and A Street.
- Transition options in the broader area – connections?
- Enhance north-south connections.
- Many trolley riders don’t stay on C Street.
- Improve safety around Westgate and elsewhere. Use guardrails adjacent to vehicle ramps, etc.
- Need a dedicated police presence.
- Make trolley stops safe and friendly.
- Shared cars/flex cars are an option.
- Bring tourists to C Street – a tourist trolley.
- “Walking in the shadow of death”
- Parking access off C Street is a major problem. Get cars off C Street.
- Accommodate bicycles.
- Program activities along street – make the street interesting and exciting.
- Introduce family oriented uses.

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**APPENDIX B**

Written Comments from Participant Surveys

1) What is your relationship to the C Street Corridor? (Resident, merchant, property owner, interested party, other)

Thirty seven of the approximately 50 participants identified themselves. They can be grouped into the following descriptive categories:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of People</b>
Resident	8
Merchant/Business Owner	7
Interested Citizen	7
Employee on or near C Street	6
Property Owner	5
Real Estate Professional	3
Government/Transit Agency Rep.	2
Education (Student/Administrator)	2

2) Name one word that describes C Street today:

Dirty, Wasted, Avoidable, Problematic, Dirty, Unsafe, Dismal, Dirty, Shanda (Ask Anyone Who Speaks Yiddish), Crime Scene, Dirty, Light-Rail, Blighted, Eclectic, Unpleasant, Potential, Metropolitan, Jewel Needs Polishing, Tired But Interesting Potential, Seedy, Dangerous, Dismal, Worn Out, Blighted, Blighted, Bridesmaid, Life, Trolley Line, Unsafe, Blighted, A Place To Buy Crack, Sad, Bohemian, Blighted, Sedated, Uncomfortable, Opportunity, Ghetto, Seedy.

3) Name one word that would describe the ideal C Street of tomorrow:

Inviting, A Place, Energized, Vibrant, Vibrant, Attractive Pedestrian Center, Charming, Beautiful, Fabulous, Transit Magnet, Vibrant, Light-Rail, Vibrant, Cleaner, Access, Home, Let's Go Down to C Street, Inviting, Inviting, Safe, Magnet, Engaging, Inviting, Activated, Interactive, Culture, Identity, Friendly, Vibrant Community, Playground for the Urban Family, Destination, Renovated, Alive, Comfortable, Fun, Friendly, Vibrant.

4) What issues would you like to see addressed in the C Street Master Plan?

- Pedestrian flow patterns and control/crime activity.
- Uniform street frontage and designed streetscape.
- Maintenance, safety, investment.
- Safety, landscape, hard scape, ingress/egress.
- Safety, modern look, cleanliness.
- Pedestrian/retail activity & public transit.
- Blight, cleanliness, safety.
- Parks & greenery, high quality aesthetics.
- Small retail, crime, better pedestrian activation.
- Residential, retail, arts, restaurants.
- Station location/size.
- Connectivity, visual aesthetics, public drinking, drug dealing & pedestrian safety.

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- Screening of parking lots that front the street-there's no way that all those lots are going to be developed in the next 20 years-let's screen them as part of the streetscape improvements-have fun-make it a public art project!
- Removal of drug dealing, more art & landscape.
- Make a commitment to transit & pedestrians. Doesn't need vehicles, prioritize pedestrian use over BRT. Need open space of generous sidewalks.
- Traffic, safety, lighting, parking.
- Safety, cleanliness, maintenance issues, landscape.
- Activities at street level.
- Safety, removal of transients, lighting.
- Crime, loitering, trash.
- Pedestrian enhancements, beautification, public safety.
- Improve the image of public transit with a quality pedestrian environment for transit users.
- Everything included in your scope of work and homeless issues.
- Land use is critical to any plan.
- Phasing out auto access, pedestrian improvement.
- Wider, better transit stations.
- The disconnect.
- Crime, blight.
- Security, business (retail, café, etc) along the corridor.
- Land use, public art, transportation, etc.
- Make it more pedestrian friendly.
- Blighted buildings, public safety.
- Homeless population, mental facilities.
- Maybe the buses should go down C St. instead of Broadway.
- Night life/retail.
- Add cars both ways.
- More business on street, market space, art & craft booths/businesses/supermarket.

**5) What should C Street look like ten years from now?**

- Lots of plants with established growth, a relaxed commuter zone.
- Uniform street frontage and designed streetscape.
- No more abandoned buildings, higher caliber tenants and businesses, new infrastructure.
- Pedestrian friendly, interesting mix of retail, sidewalk cafes, some more residential.
- Attractive, vibrant pedestrian center, where people come and go, dine, shop, green and friendly.
- Shops with people moving, homes and public transit.
- Green, friendly.
- Lots of trees, flowers, green, bustling with people coming and going, enjoying the cultural diversity of the city.
- Gallery row, art, music, food.
- Better.
- Cleaner, safer. A downtown destination.
- The ability to become a major modern urban space using technology & public attractions.
- Dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, transit-oriented, active uses, active architecture with entrances that open onto C St, art oriented, civic-oriented with series of liked green spaces.
- Small shops, galleries, cafes, music venues at street, office & apartments residences above. Street is alive until midnight.
- I would enjoy seeing C St have a Little Italy type vibe, not too touristy, but also inviting to locals.

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- Beautifully landscaped, boutiques, art stores, delis.
- 5th Ave/Gaslamp.
- A high quality, European style transit corridor for Centre City that dignifies transit users.
- Filled with people, trolleys, landscaping & thriving businesses.
- Intensive, active development with restaurants, access and retail fronting on C Street.
- Large row dedicated to trolley, bike & pedestrians.
- As though it evolved and that the trolley is not a visual distraction.
- Clean, upscale, modern, eclectic, alive.
- The place to be...no derelicts, crack heads.
- More commerce, retail/shops/places to spend and enjoy urban living.
- Bicycle/trolley/pedestrian corridor.
- Urban corridor with active uses connecting work (west) to home (east)
- Open 24 hours.
- All corners active.
- Vibrant neighborhood service street with shops, cheese, wine shops, art galleries, bistro, civic theatre, make retail spaces, small and inexpensive ethnic mom & pop restaurants, not big restaurants, think small business.

**6) What type of transit services would you like to see on or connected to C Street?**

- Mixed with dedicated stations for bus, taxis, bicycle, and user friendly & comfortable.
- It has enough transit in it!
- The limited right of way (width of C St.) could be dealt with by building underground/platform high rail/bus/vehicle lanes.
- BRT-but am concerned how it would run/coordinate with the trolley. C St is narrow-could be overwhelmed with public transpiration.
- Trolley is enough. Would be nice to allow cars one way.
- Trolley, bikes, rickshaws, pedestrians.
- Trolley, new shuttle
- Bike paths, shuttle buses.
- Street cars.
- Shuttle-free and frequent like on Denver's 16th St. Mall. Bike lanes.
- A downtown transit loop that is a "free zone".
- Removal of car traffic; public transit & pedestrian/bike traffic flow only.
- Underground primary transit systems that links the region. Trolley should serve as a secondary system to this primary system. BRT would then work as well as vehicles, bikes.
- Vibrant trolley services emphasizing safety & cleanliness.
- Same connections from stops north to Hillcrest & colleges, south to Gaslamp and waterfront.
- I enjoy the present transit services, being an urbanite I enjoy walking & it's easy to catch the trolley.
- The trolley is sufficient. Incorporate the Little Italy Presto.
- Only trolley. Choose one mode of transportation, focus on pedestrians, cars and buses can use Broadway.
- Trolleys, bicycles, streetcar circulator (a Centre City loop).
- Buses (free service) if not already in place.
- Trolley with streamlined stations and business serving structured parking.
- Trolley on C St with bus connections to other neighborhoods.
- Trolley and "destination loop" shuttles.
- Street or other parking.

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- Bike lanes, stroller area, segway-pedestrian friendly sidewalk.
- Bicycle path, buses are already on Broadway. Cars are on every other street downtown.
- In addition to current light rail, a downtown only bus route which connects to trolley at different routes (make sure it's brightly colored).
- To run all night
- Light rail, Pedi cab, bicycle taxis, no cars.

**7) What is the first thing you would do to improve C Street tomorrow?**

- A long term meaningful, effective, highly visible law enforcement presence.
- How the buildings front the street and frame the street.
- Rip out the landscaping, fix or remove planters, enforce safety.
- Clean sidewalks, put up more cameras, 24 hour security, nicer trees, flowers, maintenance of buildings.
- Plan land use and start the development process which will clean things up considerably.
- Let some kids loose with paint to paint the street-just to get some attention in the street that something is happening.
- Incentive street retail, even carts to activate enforcement of drug pusher, remove barriers on sidewalk.
- Anchors, Churchill hotel/Cal theatre/MOCA.
- Station locations/size.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Place safety ambassadors every other block and have them move around. Outlaw panhandling immediately.
- Develop blighted buildings along this corridor.
- More existing uses entrances to C Street to activate street. More parking lot entrances to other streets & close off to vehicular traffic. Consistent design approach for L.S./H.S.
- Parking, traffic access.
- Clean up homeless & drug activity.
- Get rid of "street stuff" that's broken, have local owners receive dollars for "main street" type improvements.
- Increase safety. Make the street more inviting and better lighted. Clean the sidewalks.
- Safety patrols, plant flowers, develop vacant properties.
- Put windows at pedestrian level in every single building flanking C St., a la Portland.
- Upgrade paving for sidewalks and street. Artistic lighting enhanced landscaping.
- New landscaping...quick way to make the corridor look fresh while working on all other "stuff".
- A detailed land use plan.
- Clean up trash, ask owners of vacant building to put art or interesting displays/banners in windows. Partnership with arts commission? Use work & local artists printed on vinyl window clings.
- Lighting.
- Pedestrian safety.
- Get rid of crack-addicts & associated crime.
- Trolley tracks replaced with changed pavement.
- Remove massive planters.
- Increase public safety, re-route trolley stops
- Don't block off to all traffic (if possible) and see what happens with pedestrians.
- Crime.

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- Major civic/investment. Creates excitement and investment interest.
- Provide jobs for the jobless, and then enforce the laws.

**8) Any additional thoughts or comments?**

- Out-of-towner's see the area around the Westgate Hotel as a "necessary evil" - it should be a compliment to the City.
- Do not put art on our C route corridor. Too intense. Spread the transit wealth.
- For all the planned improvements, please think long term-important to make wise planning choices that will pass the test of time.
- Thank you for undertaking this effort. It's such an important boulevard.
- Gastrotram – a dedicated trolley to loop around the city [Zurich, Switzerland].
- Require development to create approachable open access and dictate smaller retail space/not huge boxes.
- I support Gastrotram.
- Continue public dialogue that moves toward valued, focused actions, priorities.
- Activate existing sidewalks with vendor carts, art displays, art events & deal with drug addicted homeless. Provide new trees & landscaping in interim while planning work is done. Remove taller barriers-planer walls.
- Expansion of roadway to accommodate trolley and two lanes of traffic (one to park one for moving traffic).
- Make C Street an "experimental street", sustainable, a LEED street.
- Please don't homogenize the corridor. The east end should not be the same as the west end. It should be high on charm not slick, bland redevelopment. Please help hideous, blank, City Hall Concourse.
- Make the final product high quality vis a vis materials used. Don't do it on the cheap.
- Concerned about homeless issues that might occur with revitalization. Also safety especially after dark. What about thinking outside of the box (C St.). What about relying traffic dependency on C St and provide free bus transportation along A Street and Broadway for the same 17 block length. Look at Portland, Oregon.
- Do not focus on paving, planters and other streetscape items until a detailed land use plan is in place.
- Provide additional improvements down "side streets" between C St. and Broadway at the trolley stops to draw people between the 2 main corridors.
- I was a student here and now I work downtown, it has changed for the better. It almost feels like it's alive, like a busy N.Y. street. Please do not make it look like 12th between Market & Imperial. It doesn't feel real.
- I really like the comment that this area is a jewel that needs to be polished. A few more gems west of 4th will add to it.
- All of C St has free hop on hop off for buses and trolleys.
- No phoo phoo-we need initial significant focal change.
- Need public restrooms periodically public market place, supermarket "downtown's neighborhood" shopping district-books, laundry, food.