Meeting Opening
Vikrant Sood from SANDAG opens the meeting by welcoming participants. He mentions that the project is being funded by SANDAG through HHSA (via a federal CDC grant) and that the focus of the grant is to create healthy communities – for example, mobility and accessibility to things like healthy foods.

Phil Trom introduces himself as the project manager and highlights the public health context for the project, and that we are conducting a health impact assessment (HIA). He reminds the group that the RTP identified the 47th Street Trolley station as a forthcoming capital project.

Phil then pollsthe room to get a sense of where participants/stakeholders are coming from: many participants were residents of the community; some worked in the community; a number of business-owners, community-based organizations and non-profits were also present; several academics. Others included architects, planners, project staff, and engineering professionals.

Barrow Emerson from SANDAG provides an overview of the specific project that was the subject of the health impact assessment. The HIA will help inform the alternatives for this project (where walking/biking paths should be; addressing safety concerns; how to better serve the population, etc).

- Comment: A community member asks whether the project is included in the 2050 RTP, and Barrow responds affirmatively.

Phil then asks how specifically do you, as the community, value public health in the public process? One of the ways to measure the importance of health to one’s community is through the HIA process. Phil explains that the consultant team is here to facilitate the process and answer questions along the way. As a part of a community, we want to hear about what you all care about and what you would like to integrate into the HIA process. He then introduces the consultant team: Lili Farhang and Jennifer Lucky from Human Impact Partners (HIP).

HIA Overview
Lili Farhang, the project manager for the HIA introduces herself and HIP as an organization. HIP is based in Oakland and is a 401(c)3 non-profit organization. Their objective is to improve public health by making public policy decisions more accountable for their health impacts. We ask the question: How can this project improve our collective health goals as a community?

Lili and Jen conduct an exercise to introduce participants to the theoretical framework guiding the HIA (see photo below). First, Lili asks what diseases/illnesses participants see in their community. Participants mention: diabetes, obesity, emphysema, depression, asthma, hypertension, cancer, and the common cold. She then asks participants to list some of the behaviors contributing to these diseases/illnesses. Participants mention: smoking, physical activity, hygiene, laziness, and lack of motivation. Lili then asks what social/environmental conditions might facilitate these behaviors. Participants mention: location of where you live or work, proximity to environmental hazards, your social community, the built environment (walkability), functionality of the public right of way, your income (economics), information and education, fear/safety, and food deserts.
Lili and Jen highlight that so much discussion focuses on the first two categories (diseases/illnesses and behaviors) and puts our individual health status in our individual hands. There remains this idea that “You are responsible for your destiny.” But what research shows is that the social/built/environmental factors play a huge role in our health status. In this HIA, we are trying to focus on the root causes and how they affect health. For example, genetics accounts for 20-30% of health; healthcare only accounts for 10% of health status; social/environmental/behavioral factors account for 60-70%. There is a much bigger bang for your buck when you look at the social/environmental factors.

Lili discusses, “Why this project?” Within the state of California, counties are in the process of updating their RTPs. In all places, planners and public health professionals are trying to think about ways to promote health in their RTPs. Complete neighborhoods can facilitate nutrition through supermarkets, through fun and accessible parks, local schools can facilitate walking and biking. The links are very clear when it comes to what
makes a healthier city. A project like this that is trying to improve regional bus systems, can improve health in a number of different ways.

Lili then turns to the printed maps to provide the context for the project. The maps are here to think about what some of the impacts might be for people who work, live, and socialize in proximity to the station. The buffers are to ground ourselves in relation to the project area. Lili asks participants for any thoughts they had.

Comments/Questions:

- A participant made reference to the mural by the trolley station and how it represented a mental health perspective that also needed to be considered in the HIA.
  - Response: That’s a very good example of local knowledge that we want to include in the HIA, and mental health is definitely something we want to consider.
- A participant said we should be sure to connect with the Health and Human Services contracted medical facility in the Southeastern district.
  - Response: Excellent suggestion. We’ll be sure to reach out to them.
- A participant described how there had been proposed plans to lay footpaths along the Creek. However, there were elevation and layout issues in regards to leveling the Creek and plans had not come to fruition.
  - Response: There are a number of limitations to realizing public health goals – but our hope it to try and identify ways to address these challenges. Possible that not everything we propose will be able to be implemented.
- A participant asked whether there were any local consultants that could conduct the HIA.
  - Response: HIP’s role as an organization is also to build local capacity by conducting trainings and providing technical assistance. Through this project, we hope to build capacity in San Diego so that local groups can fill the current void.

Lili then clarifies several definitions, including “What is a HIA?” This research will use a number of different tools to judge the public health impacts of the proposed regional bus service project. The HIA will also make recommendations to the planning process about how to mitigate any negative impacts and support any positive impacts.

Comments/Questions:

- Is the freeway widening a part of this HIA? The freeway project will have greater impacts.
  - Response: No, the freeway widening project was approved and is in the implementation phase; HIA could have been done on that like 10 years ago.
- When you have perfected the HIA process, can you see if this was the best job you could do with an HIA? How do we know we aren’t being slighted as the Guinea Pig for this project?
  - Response: The HIA process follows specific stages and is very transparent. What HIP/SANDAG are trying to do with this HIA is have an open dialogue to receive community input that will help steer the project. At the end of the HIA process is the Monitoring and Evaluation stages where you can see the actual impacts and assess what could have been done differently/better. Lili noted that it will take 10 plus years for the health impacts to be assessed.
- How does this project interface with the RTP?
  - Response: This HIA is on a single project that is just one of the many projects in the RTP. The input gained throughout this process will be helpful for other analysis down the line.

Lili shows the map of HIAs performed around the United States. CA has the most number of HIAs, mostly because the practice of HIA started in the Bay Area. This is the first HIA being implemented in San Diego.
This project will be focusing on a “built environment” project, but HIAs have also been done on a wide range of other sectors. There are other HIAs that focused on policy issues such as proposed living wage and sick days laws, natural resource extraction projects, etc.

The HIA, similar to so many other processes, believes that it is so important to bring in community input and ideas – especially to groundtruth the findings in what the community experience actually is.

Lili also describes the main topics identified in the scoping portion of the HIA: walking and biking, transit use, access to jobs, access to retail/services, safety, air quality and noise. The point of us meeting tonight is to get feedback on these topics and assess “What is missing?” Lili also describes the scoping pathway. For example, what are the impacts of decreasing driving, increasing public transit use, etc. on health? All of these indicators will give you more time for physical activity. Access to jobs and access to income are two of the biggest indicators of health. All of the above can eventually be connected back to “adding regional bus service.”

Comments/Questions:

• How do you connect things like “adding bus system accessibility” to operational services?
  o Response: There are things that you can assume about regional bus service. The bus will run more frequently and at higher speed. Once you have frequency and speed, then you can think about the time savings.

• One participant stated they had concerns about what is going to be done health-wise in relation to the 47th Street station? When they first built 47th street they built it where there was a safety issue. Coming down the hill (from the housing development) was an issue. Would the space be open where the people can see the trolley coming around and over the corner? The safety of the community is the issue.
  o Response: Lili says that these are all examples of the kinds of things that we would look at in the HIA, and hopefully make recommendations on.

• Concern around the connection and relocation of the buses at Euclid/Market St, the latter impact is larger for the community – how are you addressing this?
  o Response: Barrow says that as the planning process gets underway, this is something we might want to consider to create a more efficient transit center – but nothing is set in stone and we want to just keep an open mind in the planning process.

• There is understanding on the timeline, and that we are talking about safety for the future. Is there any opening so that we can talk about safety about the current planning area? With 47th street in particular, there is no way to cross the road in a safe manner.
  o Response: Another participant from a government agency responds that they could take specific complaints about traffic issues and try and get them addressed through alternative processes.

• 47th street needs lights.
  o Response: Very helpful information that could be incorporated into the HIA.

• How does SEDC fit into this conversation?
  o Response: Nancy Lyttle with redevelopment was present and participating
Small Group Break-out Discussion
After the large group discussion about the project, Lili instructs participants to break-out into small groups and answer the following questions:
1. Are we looking at the right issues in this HIA?
2. What’s missing from the questions and pathway?
3. How would you prioritize these issues?
4. Using the maps, point out any specific locations where you think we should pay special attention to.

Notes from those small group discussions are included below.

Group 1 Summary

1. Are we looking at the right issues in this HIA?
   • Walking
   • Biking
   • How walking/biking affect safety/fear
   • Crime

2. What’s missing from the questions and pathway?
   • Impacts on senior services and access to centers; How does walking impact seniors and their walking paths? How do they get to their centers?
   • Disability access - How does curbside compliance for the disabled fit into this conversation?
   • ¼- and ½-mile access and impediments to transit
   • Parking - Where does one park one’s car and how do you increase access to the station?
   • Access to school
   • Resident/property-owners adjacent to the trolley stop
   • The other part is crosswalks at 47th street and the areas where shrubbery can be removed for betterment of sight.
   • Graffiti and gang control - Can gang control and graffiti be a part of bettering the safety process with this study?
   • The improvements related to the relocation of 47th and market, would bring in community confidence that would thus bring in the safe access to school for children.

3. How would you prioritize these issues?
   • Safety and crime
   • Lighting and crosswalks

Potential Recommendations:
• Add a platform over the freeway (e.g., like in City Heights)
• Move station to 45th and Market to improve viability
Group 2 Summary

Are we looking at the right issues? / What’s missing?

Housing
- The zoning for mixed use (want more of this near transit)
- Affordable and accessible housing (accessible to all people, so people can age in their own homes)
- Housing close to transit is a benefit, but also introduces concerns such as noise and air pollution – creative mitigations for these things (types of busses for example – non-diesel, that run more quietly)

Aesthetics
- Consistent with the diverse cultures in the area – for example: landscaping, art where community has the opportunity to participate

Jobs
- Why not locate more jobs in the area, so that people are not just commuting out to jobs?
- SEDC could help with thinking about this
- Adding businesses and amenities into the area (bike repair, grocery, healthy food)

Education
- Transit scheduled to fit with times that schools start and end
- When schools get out it creates a lot of traffic – will this project take into consideration the transit activity and pedestrian safety accommodations to address this?

Access to Retail and Services
- People need more places to buy transit passes
- People need places to go when waiting for transit (coffee shop, etc.) – to make the wait more palatable

Other Comments
- How much car traffic can come into the area?
- How will the project accommodate for people coming into the community (not just going out) – both attracting people to the community and making access to the community easier?
- Currently, people have to transfer way too many times (trolley to bus, etc.) when getting from home (47th St. area) to anywhere else in the city.
- There is a lack of service frequency, and schedules get way off track.
- Lack of options (for example, just one bus line comes near many homes).
- How will the project impact Chollas Creek?
- Shuttle or mini “DART” to connect areas on other side of freeway, such as K street.
- This process feels redundant with a lot of other things that are going on, and that people have given feedback for (RTP – 2010, 2020 plans, etc.). It also feels like nothing has happened for the community despite all of the input and participation.

Places of Interest Marked on the Map
- K-Street – this area is currently cut off/lack of access to 47th St. Station – would be great to find way to connect this.
- A lot of schools in the area (Gompers, Chollas Elementary, Lincoln HS)
- Places where there is planned development:
  - Walmart and Walgreens planned to be put in at 47th/Market
  - Medical Center going in at 47th & Market
  - New housing planned for North and South side of Market (where the factory is being torn down
Group 3 Summary

Concern about possibility of Euclid bus bays shifting to 47th Street Station:

• Community has prioritized economic development that includes helping residents get to jobs outside the community, BUT also includes creating jobs IN the community AND bringing in people from outside to spend money INSIDE the community
• Community has worked to create an economic base at the current Euclid Ave station
  “Transportation centers away from the economic center will make it easier for money to leave the community.”
• Moving buses from Euclid station takes people away from the economic center
• If bus bays are moved, then need to have economic development in the 47th Street station area and expand the physical footprint of the economic development center so that it’s a larger area that it includes both Euclid/Market and 47th Street areas, as one.
• Bring retail to the 47th street station.
• If this shift happens, how will it affect the community plan update?
• How do we get money into the community – how do we reverse the direction so that money comes in and economic development happens here?

Are we looking at the right issues in this HIA?

• Add to bucket list: social cohesion, economic development, access to nature, access to education and vocational training
• For the Air Quality and Noise bucket, shouldn’t it be called “environmental health”
• Under “access to nature”, include access to the creek and open space and improvements to the creek
• Change “safety” to “Safety and Crime”
• Important to build culture/sense of place in whatever gets built AND extend the area’s unique “branding” outward so that it radiates beyond Market Street Plaza to 47th street area and even beyond the community boundaries.
• Ensure locally-owned businesses

Elements that should be considered/included under Safety and Crime:

• Efforts to increase “Cognitive Power/Clarity of Environment” of residents/visitors – increases clarity/familiarity/understanding of the area and the local context. Based on concept that when people are more intimately familiar with a place, it’s not foreign to them and they have less fear and are more comfortable being in the place. Methods include way finding maps and other efforts that get people out and exposed to the place so they can “experience” it.

Priorities:

• Priorities = social cohesion, economic development, and build/extend community’s unique cultural/sense of place “brand”

Location Specifics:

• Lots of schools (10) in the 47th Street station area – need to capitalize on this asset - enhance this and make 47th street station a welcoming facility and more pedestrian accessible for students/all.
  “Feels like you’re walking up the hill to the cemetery to your death”
• Current site is geographically isolated from what’s around it and feels very isolating.
• Improve walking access across I-805 or along creek (or both) to connect to YMCA
  “Need to reconnect the community”
• Poor visibility
Group 4 Summary

- Address key health issues in the neighborhood such as asthma, obesity and pedestrian safety. Address disproportionate impacts on the youth, people with disabilities and seniors.
- Focus on economic development strategies that will help create a healthier and more vibrant community.
- Link the neighborhood to regional job centers such as the University Town center (UTC), Otay Mesa and the Downtown.
- Create a mixed-use housing and retail development around the trolley station. Provide more parks to serve new and existing residents. Address circulation and traffic. Explore shared parking options.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and access in the neighborhood. Provide multi-modal facilities and amenities, improve safety and connectivity, install traffic calming measures, provide lighting and crosswalks, and expand safe routes to schools. Build a bike lane to the cemeteries.
- Mitigate the impact of freeway widening on the neighborhood. Address air quality and the lack of pedestrian and bicycling facilities across the 805. Improve access ramps on 94.
- Take advantage of the wide rights-of-way in the neighborhood to accommodate safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities. Include medians and planter strips. Use native plants for vegetation.
- Utilize the creek as a neighborhood asset. Address flooding and pollution in the creek. Build trails (and bridges) that can provide alternative walking and bicycling access. Provide recreational areas, pedestrian lighting and native vegetation.
- Provide access for people with disabilities in the neighborhood and the trolley station / regional bus stop.
- Promote public art throughout the neighborhood. Celebrate different cultures and nationalities.
- Address soil contamination through remediation in the neighborhood.
- Improve access to healthy food for residents. Modify zoning codes to allow community gardens. Create a “food network” that includes community gardens, food cooperatives and community-supported agriculture. Encourage restaurants and schools to source fresh and healthy food from local farms and gardens. Create a business plan to make it financially viable.
Conclusion

After the report-backs, the group turns their attention back to Lili. She mentions that, thankfully, based on the small group report-backs, HIP isn’t off-track in their focus of the HIA. Rather, details were provided that will only enhance the scope of the project.

She reviews the timeline for the next several months. In November and December, staff will begin collecting data and sorting through the issues that were brought up tonight. In addition, on 12/13/11, a group of project staff, including some local volunteers, will go out and collect walkability information and data on the streets that are within ½ mile from the station. Also, 1/24/12 will be the second community meeting where findings from the HIA will be discussed. At that time, staff will also go over draft recommendations with the community and collect feedback on the process. By February, the final reports and recommendations will be disseminated to the public.

Comments/Questions:

- **A participant mentioned that he would like to see the walking boundaries surrounding the planning area be extended to a mile, if we are talking about building a healthier community. He mentions that this is a low-income community where some residents cannot afford the gas and thus are more willing to walk to their destinations.**
  - Response: If possible, we will do that.
- **A participant mentioned that meeting fatigue may be the reason why more people did not turn out. The community member noted that meetings need to be incentivized in order for residents/business-owners to attend. If their voices are heard, they may feel like they are making a meaningful contribution to the conversation and that their time is not being wasted. He also noted that greater efforts should go into coordinating with other agencies and community groups in the area that are discussing similar issues.**
  - Response: This is a problem everywhere. We will try and coordinate – one potential approach in the future is to have public health folks as part of those discussions so health isn’t a separate process.
- **How can we participate in the walkability assessment?**
  - Response: SANDAG will assess space issues and send an email out to meeting attendees so they can participate if possible.
- **Will there be a website set-up to get more information?**
  - Response: SANDAG will set something up so folks can track the process.

The meeting adjourns around 8:10 PM.