Pilot Summary

The City of El Cajon Parks & Recreation Department worked with the Public Works Department to temporarily widen the walkway around Renette Park located at 935 S. Emerald Avenue. The walkways surrounding all three sides of Renette Park were widened by installing temporary barriers (K-rails), “no parking” signage, social distancing banners, and large planters along Emerald Avenue, Renette Avenue, and Estes Street.

In July, all curbside parking was restricted and cars were directed to park elsewhere, allowing for an increased footprint that gave the community greater access to outdoor passive recreation uses. The new temporary widened area allowed community members to effectively social distance while still enjoying local outdoor recreation activities close to home and around the park. The City's shared streets project was installed on June 29, 2020, and removed on August 3, 2020.

Challenges

Some challenges the City of El Cajon faced while trying to implement the pilot program were the delays in delivery for ordered supplies and materials due to COVID-19. Another concern for the community was the loss of 10 parking spots along Estes Street. Several apartment residents needed to find additional parking on adjacent streets during the Shared Streets Pilot.

Successes

During the month of July, the success of the Shared Streets Pilot Program was seen in the community. Extending the area around the park not only increased the area for recreation and social distancing but also activated an area of the street in a safe way that brought families and other community members outside to recreate. Several positive survey comments were received. Residents and park users requested the Shared Streets pilot be extended for the duration of the pandemic and others praised the Shared Streets pilot for making it safer for families to enjoy the park again. Another huge success was the collaboration of multiple city departments to execute the pilot program. Parks & Recreation, Public Works, and the Traffic Division all played key roles in the Shared Streets pilot.
Shared Streets Pilot Program Summary

Impact
There was an increase in park usage during the pilot program. Those enjoying the park socially distanced while still getting well needed outside time. The biggest increase in usage occurred between 4 and 7 p.m. based on an hourly count. This translated to a 20% increase in visitors during the Shared Streets Pilot.

Marketing
The City of El Cajon Parks & Recreation Department marketed the Shared Streets Pilot Program through the City’s social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. Door hangers were also created and delivered to the surrounding community to provide information on the temporary shared streets program and contact information for any questions that might arise. During the Tuesday, July 14 live-streamed City Council meeting, the Parks & Recreation Director gave a presentation on the Shared Streets Pilot Program. Lastly, the department created a QR code that was linked to a shared streets survey which helped gather community feedback.

Resources
SANDAG
sandag.org/sharedstreets

City of El Cajon
cityofelcajon.us/your-government/departments/recreation

There was a 20% increase in park usage. Source: City of El Cajon

Marketing the Shared Streets Pilot Program through social media. Source: City of El Cajon