

BikeWalkSolana Comments on Phase III Workshop – May 29, 2019³

BikeWalkSolana supports all the objectives of the Lomas Santa Fe (LSF) Corridor Improvement Project to create an attractive transportation environment for our major east-west arterial through Solana Beach:

- Improve safety for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians while maintaining vehicle travel efficiency
- Provide a pleasant environment for travel throughout the city for all road users
- Provide a safe route for children to walk or ride bikes and scooters to school
- Improve the environment and residents' health and quality of life by making active transportation a more viable option to:
 - Get more people to walk and ride bikes for short local trips, including to the beach, stores, schools, parks, sporting events, and the library.
 - Enjoy walking, riding, and driving the roads of our beautiful seaside community

With those objectives in mind, the features proposed during Phase II and Phase III that BikeWalkSolana endorses are:

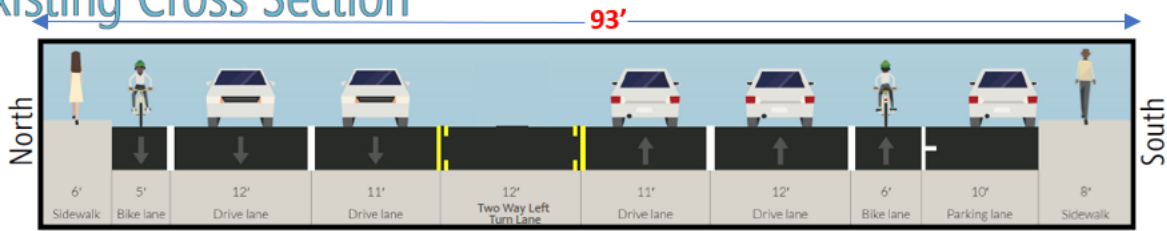
- Narrow the travel lanes to reduce speed while maintaining overall travel times.
- Widen the bike lanes and add buffers, utilizing green paint to guide through conflict areas.
- Improve pedestrian crosswalks and use lead pedestrian signal phasing to improve safety.
- Add the eastern section Multi-Use Class I path presented in Phase II.
- Add western section Multi-Use Class I path proposed on May 29.
- Add the pocket park on southwest corner of LSF / Stevens.
- Add landscaping and furnishings throughout the LSF corridor to beautify.

In the detailed comments below, please note that BikeWalkSolana additionally recommends changes to both drive lane and bike lane widths, particularly for the western section Multi-Use path. That Class I path will provide a separated facility on the northern side of LSF to greatly improve safe routes to schools and to provide a safer, more comfortable biking and walking experience for much of the length of LSF. It has been proven throughout the USA (and worldwide) that bike facilities that offer separation from vehicle traffic will encourage more people to experience the joy of using a bicycle more often^{1,2}.

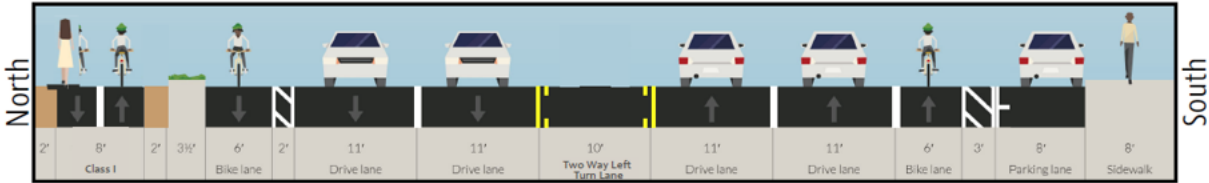
Briefly, BikeWalkSolana is suggesting narrowing the drive lanes throughout the corridor to match the successful lane narrowing of Hwy 101 in 2013. For the western section Multi-Use Class I path, we would like to widen the usable path width to the 10'-12' range like other Class I paths in San Diego County. The 8' two-way path shown on May 29 is the absolute minimum, as a cyclist needs a good 4' of horizontal operating space for safety and this path is to be shared with pedestrians, children, pets, etc. A wider path improves both safety and beauty.

The graphic below shows the May 29 Multi-Use Trail proposed roadway cross-section and we have added our suggestions to show that they might even be achieved without right of way changes. This suggestion only shows there are possibilities for improvement as BikeWalkSolana does not claim to have engineering or planning expertise.

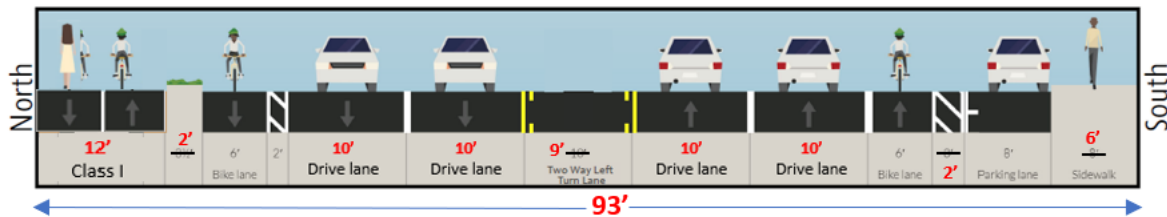
Existing Cross Section



Class I Multi-Use Trail Cross Section @ May 29 Workshop



Suggested Width Modifications to Multi-Use Trail Narrower lanes, wider path, No Right of Way Required



Detailed comments on BikeWalkSolana's endorsements:

1. *Narrow the travel lanes further.* Exhibits shown at the May 29 workshop show lane widths primarily narrowed from 12' to 11', with a few narrowed to 10' for some options. BikeWalkSolana recommends that the City should follow the example of our successful Hwy 101 project, where all the travel lanes were effectively narrowed to 10'. As we've seen on both 101 and on Santa Helena, the 10' lanes provide a psychological friction that slows down drivers. A well-known statistic emphasizes that slower speeds improve safety for motorists. It also improves the safety of cyclists and pedestrians, too. Besides the primary safety benefit, narrowing the lanes from 12' to 10' gives an extra 8' on the roadway to improve the adjacent bike facilities everywhere. Note also that Oceanside routinely uses 9' width for left turn pockets.
2. *Widen the Multi-Use Class I path.* Many of our children who walk or ride bikes and scooters to our local schools use the north side of LSF sidewalks for a route they and their parents find more comfortable than on-street bike lanes. Having a separated facility on both sides of I-5 will only make walking and riding to school a safer and more popular option. Additionally, many residents currently feel uncomfortable using the common bike lanes on Lomas Santa Fe. In addition to the wider, buffered bike lanes proposed during Phase II, two possible options for separated bikeways on the west section of LSF were also presented on May 29 for comment, one involved a Multi-Use Class I

path similar to the eastern section and the other a Cycletrack Class IV separated bikeway. For details regarding Class I, II, and IV bikeways in the California context, please see definitions and comments below.

- a. After reviewing these options, BikeWalkSolana prefers the Multi-Use path and would like the City to consider our primary recommendation to widen the western section Multi-Use path to a more comfortable 12'.
- b. The primary reason for not supporting the Multi-Use Class I facility exactly as presented on May 29 is that a width of 4' each way for 2-way bicycle traffic is too narrow, especially since this is to be shared with pedestrians, strollers, dogs, and portions will involve grades where bicycle head-on collisions need to be eliminated. If that could be widened to *at least* 6' each way, that would improve the safety and the aesthetic appeal of the facility. By narrowing the travel lanes per Hwy 101 dimensions, extra width for the Class I path would be available. Also, the concrete separation could be narrowed to 2' as in the Cycletrack Class IV option because the bike lane provides additional separation. It would be great to have a clear part of the path marked for pedestrians because one of the attractive features of the Cycletrack option is that it is for bicycle use only, whereas the Multi-Use path needs to be wider as a shared path.
- c. We also realize that our Multi-Use preference with improved dimensions may still have right of way issues, although our suggested graphic indicates it may be possible to fit. If that is the primary drawback to safe separated facilities, then the original buffered bike lane idea would still be a good choice, although it eliminates both the benefits afforded safe routes to school and encouraging more residents to bicycle. The Class II bike lanes could also be used as a first phase, with a well-designed separated facility to be added on at a later date when funding and right of way issues are resolved.
- d. Although currently out of scope because Caltrans must be a partner, BikeWalkSolana would like to eventually see a north side multi-use path under I-5, with special signaling to allow less reliance on crossing guards for school children. Ideally this would involve removing the bike lane right of the pillars for a super-wide path all the way to the pillars under the freeway and putting sharrows in the westbound #2 lane for experienced cyclists who want faster and safer transit under I-5.
- e. The only reason we are not endorsing the Class IV Cycletrack option is the absence of an adjacent bike lane for more experienced cyclists and groups who may want to avoid slowing down to accommodate slower cyclists as well as avoiding 2-way bicycle traffic at higher speeds. Without that extra bike lane buffer that is in the Multi-Use option, oncoming traffic for eastbound cyclists in the cycletrack would only be separated by 2' and it is assumed that either families or folks who currently want the separation will be using the cycletrack as opposed to the wide eastbound bike lane on the south side of LSF; fast moving opposing motor vehicle traffic so close would be uncomfortable. Because cycletracks are optional use, westbound cyclists and groups who want to ride faster would likely not use the cycletrack. Without an adjacent bike lane as in the multi-use option, they would need to use the adjacent travel lane. If a cycletrack is used anywhere within our City, we suggest adding sharrows and Bikes May Use Full Lanes signage to the adjacent travel lanes. This will educate those who may not understand why cyclists may be controlling that full lane when it looks like a perfectly good (to a non-cyclist) bike lane exists right next to it.

Definitions and Comments on California “Bikeway Classes”:

1. **Class II Bikeway** (common bike lane) – These facilities are marked with Bike Lane text or symbols, and cyclists are legally required to use Class II bike lanes. Cyclists may leave a Class II bike lane to prepare for left turns, pass slower cyclists, avoid hazards such as debris or opening car doors, continue through intersections to avoid cars turning right, or if traveling the same speed as normal traffic.
2. **Class I Bikeway** (multi-use path like our Coastal Rail Trail). This is a completely separated facility. It may be close to an existing road or wandering through the countryside. This is the best of all possible worlds for general safety if you have a completely connected network of Class I paths that have very few conflicts with vehicle crossings. Nevertheless, problems can occur at vehicle conflict areas and some Class I implementations in areas outside San Diego give all right of way to cyclists where a vehicle roadway intersects a Class I path. Often, reduced speeds are required to safely coexist with other cyclists and users on foot with kids, strollers, and dogs on Class I paths. Class I bikeways are always optional use; a cyclist is not required to use a Class I bikeway.
3. **Class IV Bikeway** (cycletrack: relatively new to CA – few examples in SD County, but more are being planned). [Ref: [Caltrans DIB 89-01](#).] “A Class IV Bikeway (separated bikeway) is a bikeway for the exclusive use of bicycles and includes a separation required between the separated bikeway and the through vehicular traffic. The separation may include, but is not limited to, grade separation, flexible posts, inflexible physical barriers, or on-street parking.” Key features are that use is exclusive to cyclists to avoid pedestrian conflicts and that it is adjacent to the roadway with a separation to provide extra safety and comfort from adjacent traffic. Class IV bikeways are always optional use; a cyclist is not required to use a Class IV bikeway. Some recent Class IV bikeways in SD County simply involve placing plastic bollards in left side buffers of well-designed bike lanes. Many of these have caused issues, including making it more difficult for experienced cyclists who find nice bike lanes taken away from them, especially when they need to leave the bike lane for left turn or through movements. Adding separation to make a Class IV facility without an adjacent bike lane means that cyclists who bypass an optional cycletrack have the legal right to use the adjacent lanes as they do on all CA roads. Given that cycletracks are so new, sharrows in the adjacent travel lanes educate all to the legal right a cyclist has to use those lanes.

References

¹ National Institute for Transportation and Communities, Final Report: “Lessons Learned from the Green Lanes: Evaluating Protected Bike Lanes in the U.S.”, [NITC-RR-583](#), June 2014.

² [People for Bikes Facilities Statistics](#)

³ [Lomas Santa Fe Corridor Improvement Project](#)