Cycling in Coronado
Past, Present and Future

ASLA Conference Tours 2011
Field Session 12

30 October 2011
Field Session Outline

1. Coronado Island is not an island
   a. Overview of the history of Coronado
   b. Geography of Coronado and its natural features
   c. Basic bicycle safety tips and rules of the road

2. Navy Presence in Coronado
   a. How the Navy has shaped Coronado
   b. Land use, traffic and environmental impacts

3. The Village of Coronado
   a. Residences large and small, historic and new, but are these compatible?
   b. Roads, alleyways and right-of-ways, how have they shaped the neighborhoods
   c. Health and vitality of Coronado’s commercial district

4. The Hotel del Coronado
   a. Early history: Hotel del Coronado and Tent City
   b. Present day: Compatibility between historic structures and newer development
   c. Future development: Earning California Coastal Commission approval

5. The Silver Strand
   a. Environmental, recreational and art opportunities around San Diego Bay
   b. Design considerations for multi-use paths and innovative bikeway facilities
   c. Creation of a city hall and community center

6. How to make Biking even better in Coronado
   a. Physical attributes
   b. Expanding bike culture

Session Learning Objectives

• Learn Coronado history, including early vacationers, the Navy, residences and commerce.
• Experience the factors that create a walkable and bikeable community.
• Understand the sensitive marine ecosystem of San Diego Bay.
Session Description

In Coronado, incorporated in 1890, residents are blessed with a richly historic village atmosphere. Guided by knowledgeable landscape architects and city staff, this 15 mile bike ride on level terrain will explore Coronado’s waterfront, neighborhoods and Navy installations, as well as the Hotel del Coronado and Silver Strand.

1 Landscape architects have long been very involved in Coronado’s evolution from a vacation destination known as “Tent City” along the Silver Strand in the late 1890s to the well-balanced community it is today. While Coronado has significant natural attributes, there have been numerous challenges to achieving this balance. This tour will start with a water taxi ride to Coronado from the San Diego Convention Center. The group will then take off by bike from the Old Ferry Landing, follow a 12-15 mile scenic loop through Coronado, then return to the Old Ferry Landing and take the water taxi back to the Convention Center.

2 The U.S. Navy has a very large and historic presence in Coronado. Naval aviation began here 100 years ago and the Navy’s first aircraft carrier, the USS Langley, is shown in the image to the right. Naval Base Coronado encompasses several facilities, including the airfield at North Island, the home port for three aircraft carriers and an amphibious base south along the Silver Strand. The Navy recognizes the need to be a good neighbor, but their primary training missions do not make this easy. Land use encroachment, traffic congestion and other environmental issues create great discord. Landscape architects and planners who have been involved in the Navy’s planning efforts in Coronado will discuss steps being taken by all stakeholders to resolve these issues.

3 The residential and commercial neighborhoods reflect the historic beginnings of Coronado. The vibrant commercial district draws many visitors while serving the residents well. Locally owned shops and restaurants coexist with a small number of franchises. Walkability is key, but through traffic and parking create conflicts. The tour will look at some of the solutions the city has implemented to create a more bicycle and walk friendly core in support of their commercial district. Tree-lined streets, alleyways, parks and open spaces contribute to residential character, but while many lots near the waterfront are larger, most are very narrow and challenging for homeowners and designers. With very defined city boundaries, how do you increase density, accommodate growing families and respect the historic fabric of the community? We’ll point out some of the more notable residential landscapes designed by landscape architects as we ride.

4 Few hotels have earned a place in American history like the Hotel del Coronado. Charles Lindbergh was honored here after his first transatlantic flight, and it was at “the Del” that Marilyn Monroe romped on the beach in “Some Like It Hot.” It is even rumored that the Duke of Windsor met his future wife, Wallis Simpson, here. While its notoriety is unquestionable, decisions to expand the hotel dating back to the 1970s have not always served the community. Later towers were not in character with the original landmark, public access to the beaches was limited and expansions contributed to traffic congestion. However, current expansion plans seek to correct some of the earlier deficiencies, honor the original design, increase public access (both physical and visual) and resolve traffic issues. These plans received California Coastal Commission approval in December 2009, an achievement in itself. The hotel’s planning director will give a short presentation on its past, present and future plans, and we’ll get a tour of the new Windsor Garden.
Access to Coronado is limited to a ferry from the Embarcadero or the Convention Center for bikes and pedestrians, the stunning San Diego-Coronado Bay and the Silver Strand, a narrow sliver of land that connects Coronado with Imperial Beach to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the west and San Diego Bay to the east. The Silver Strand is a diverse environment, including natural habitat and wetlands, historic resources, a civic and community center, naval installations (including the west coast’s Navy SEAL special forces training facilities), sand dunes and beaches, housing, elementary school, resort hotel, parks, marinas, and a California state beach and campground. A five-mile multi-use path parallels a state highway and provides access to all of these facilities. The Silver Strand Path is an integral component of ongoing city efforts to improve bicycle access and safety. Planners and landscape architects will be on hand to talk about some of the innovative techniques being considered by the City to improve the cycling experience in their city, as well as some of the resource enhancement and interpretive programs implemented by Coronado to increase public awareness of the local maritime environment’s sensitivity.

Coronado’s flat terrain and grid street system contribute to its bike and pedestrian friendly environment, but city policies and programs also help. More people get around by bike in Coronado per capita than any other city in the region, even though there are currently few existing facilities designated for cyclists. A recently completed bikeway plan strives to leverage the existing cycling culture to convince more residents and visitors alike to consider biking instead of automatically reaching for their car keys. The plan’s primary goal is to reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions while promoting healthy lifestyles, as well as encouraging residents to experience their community in a more holistic and personal way.

Itinerary

9:30 am - We will depart from the marina behind the San Diego Convention Center via water taxi to Coronado’s Old Ferry Landing. From there, we will walk a short distance to the bike rental shop to be outfitted with bikes, helmets and locks.

We will gather in Centennial Park just north of the Ferry Landing to discuss the rules of the road, bicycle safety and to hear an overview of what the group will see on the tour, including a brief description of the city’s history and geography. This is a great spot to look back across the bay to the downtown San Diego skyline.

10:00 am - The group will ride through a waterfront neighborhood, viewing many of the wonderful homes and taking note of the city’s urban forestry program along the way. The group will then ride to the northeast corner of Naval Base Coronado where tour leaders will discuss traffic issues affecting residential neighborhoods and encroachment issues affecting the base.

10:30 am - We will ride south on one of Coronado’s distinctive diagonal streets, passing by a Cliff May designed residence on the way, as well as a classic California garden apartment complex dating to the 1920s.

11:00 am - We will stop at the physical and perceptual center of Coronado, its beloved library. We will discuss the library’s many iterations, the new police station, and other nearby developments and historic renovations along this stretch of Orange Avenue, the city’s primary thoroughfare. We will also address the difficulties of incorporating bicycle facilities within this context, and why most people don’t feel comfortable riding this street in its present configuration.
11:15 am - We will take a meandering course via another diagonal street through a neighborhood of beautiful homes to the beachfront and then make a brief stop at Rotary Park, an example of how the city knits its gridded streets with the irregular arrangement surrounding the core. This stop will also address the history of the commercial area, the opportunities for walking and cycling, and the challenges of through traffic and parking.

11:30 am - We will ride by a number of historic homes, and then head back to the beachfront for a brief overview of the challenges created by the coastal environment, as well as look at a unique, and literal, landmark.

12:00 pm - We will make a stop at the historic Hotel del Coronado for a bathroom break and snack provided by a local sponsor. The director of planning and his historian will discuss the hotel’s history and future. The hotel is famous for its striking architecture, the Crown Room, its setting for many movies and its ghosts!

12:25 pm - We will depart the Hotel del Coronado to pass through the Coronado Shores condominium complex to the south, the purported impetus for the California Coastal Commission. We will make a brief stop before crossing Orange Avenue to the Silver Strand Bike Path to discuss the difficulties of accommodating bicycle facilities along high speed, multi-lane arterials.

12:30 pm - We will then proceed south on the bike path past the municipal complex and naval installations to the award winning “Nature’s Bridge to Discovery” interpretive area. The landscape architect will provide highlights of the project and the ecosystem of the Silver Strand and San Diego Bay. Birders will especially like this stop.

1:00 pm - We will return up the Silver Strand bike path to the recently constructed City Hall and community center for a brief tour by City staff. An interpretive display discusses the Tent City in Coronado, a popular vacation destination in the late 1800s/early 1900s.

1:15 pm - We will depart the community center via Glorietta Boulevard and pass by Glorietta Bay Park, the city’s largest open space, and then turn inland to tour the Irving Gill designed 1906 Lodge at Coronado.

1:40 pm - We will return to Glorietta Boulevard where we will make a brief stop to discuss efforts to complete an off-street recreational bike and walking route around the city, a long-term city goal and a priority project in the recently completed bikeway master plan.

1:55 pm - We will then return to the Old Ferry Landing via the bayfront, on a path that runs along the golf course and under the San Diego Coronado Bay Bridge. The path goes through Tidelands Park, past the Le Meridien Hotel and back to the Ferry Landing, where we will drop off our bikes at the rental shop*, and then enjoy box lunches from Tartine Restaurant.

2:25 - We will board the water taxi for the return trip to San Diego.

2:30 - Arrive at the San Diego Convention Center.

*Note: For those you who want to continue your ride around Coronado on your own, please consult with the rental shop before we depart (Bikes & Beyond, 1201 1st Street, Coronado 92118, 619 435-7180 - http://hollandsbicycles.com/articles/bikes-and-beyond-find-us-pg499.htm).

If you do arrange to stay later, you will need to take the ferry back to San Diego. Ferries return to the Broadway Pier and the Convention Center. Check schedules at http://www.sdhe.com/san-diego-bay-ferry.html. Tickets are $4.25 one-way. The Broadway Pier is just over a mile from the Convention Center, but the route is a pleasant waterfront experience.
Standard California Bike Facilities Types

Class 1 - Bike Path

- Provides a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with cross-flow by motorists minimized.

- **Description:** Right-of-way separated from motor vehicle traffic. Used where adjacent roadway speeds and the volume of traffic is too high for safe shared use. Also used for connections through open space areas and parks, or where no other facility type is feasible.

- **Design Guidelines:**
  - Eight foot paved with two foot graded edge minimum width for two-way use. Greater width is recommended for high use corridors.
  - Bike paths adjacent to a highway closer than five feet from the edge of the shoulder shall include a physical barrier (guard rail).

- **References:**
  - Caltrans Chapter 1000, California MUTCD (Revised 2006), MUTCD 2009

Class 2 - Bike Lane

- Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.

- **Description:** Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway. Installed along streets in corridors where there is significant bicycle demand, and where there are distinct needs that can be served by them. In streets with on-street parking, bike lanes are located between the parking area and the traffic lanes.

- **Design Guidelines:**
  - Five foot minimum width for bike lanes located between the parking area and the traffic lanes.
  - Four foot minimum width if no gutter or parking exists. Including a normal 2-foot gutter, the minimum bike lane width shall be 5 feet.

- **References:**
  - Caltrans Chapter 1000, California MUTCD (Revised 2006), MUTCD 2009

Class 3 - Bike Route

- Provides for shared use of the roadway with motor vehicle traffic.

- **Description:** Within vehicular right-of-way, delineated by directional signage. Used where roadway speeds and traffic volume are fairly low and shoulder provides adequate room. Bike Routes indicate to bicyclists that there are particular advantages to using these routes as compared with alternative routes. A shared lane marking or ‘Sharrow’ may be added to guide the cyclist in correct lane placement in higher traffic or parking turnover conditions and to warn motorists of bicycle presence.

- **Design Guidelines:**
  - Wider than standard outside lane recommended.
  - Because bicyclists are permitted on all roadways (except prohibited freeways), bicycle routes should offer a higher degree of service than other streets.
  - Center of Sharrow marking should be at minimum of 11’ from curb face.
  - Sharrows are only approved for use in the CA MUTCD on streets that have on-street parking.

- **References:**
  - Caltrans Chapter 1000, California MUTCD (Revised 2006), MUTCD 2009
Coronado’s Existing Bike Facilities and Activity Centers

City of Coronado
Existing Bicycle Facilities*
Class 1: Bike Path
Class 2: Bike Lane
Class 3: Bike Route
Activity Centers**
Commercial
Schools
Public Facilities
Hotels/Motels (Low-Rise)
Office (Low-Rise)
Hospitals and Health Care
Marina
Parks and Recreation
Golf Courses
Beaches
Military

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Bicycle Suitability Modeling Results

![Bicycle Suitability Model](image_url)

- **City of Coronado**
- **Existing Bicycle Facilities**
  - **Class 1**: Bike Path
  - **Class 2**: Bike Lane
  - **Class 3**: Bike Route

**Bicycle Suitability Model**
- **High Bicycle Activity**
- **Low Bicycle Activity**

*KTU+A*
Proposed Bicycle Facilities

Existing Bicycle Facilities

- **Class 1:** Bike Path
- **Class 2:** Bike Lane
- **Class 3:** Bike Route

Recommended Bicycle Facilities

- **Class 2:** Bike Lane
- **Class 3:** Bike Route

Activity Centers

- Commercial
- Schools
- Hospitals and Health Care
- Public Facilities
- Hotel/Motel (Low-Rise)
- Office (Low-Rise)
- Parks and Recreation
- Golf Courses
- Beaches
- Military
- Resort

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Example Proposed Project: Glorietta Boulevard Bike Lanes
Example Innovative Bike Facilities

Bike Corral - vehicle parking spaces converted to bike parking

Potential protected route around golf course along Glorietta Bay
Potential “jug handle” crossing at Avenida del Sol to Silver Strand bikeway

Potential “green lane” installation on Orange Avenue