



CHAPTER 2:

# planning process

**IN THIS CHAPTER:**

- 1. Project Management Team**
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Community input was an essential component of the planning process, and **Chapter 2** describes the process of developing public participation practices with guidance from the Project Management Team and Technical Advisory Committee. Outreach events and activities were planned to seek diverse input across the entire Morongo Basin region. The Plan also conducted public art-related outreach and engagement to seek feedback on potential creative placemaking elements. The input provided during the outreach process informs the analysis and recommendations completed as part of the Plan.

## 2.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

In addition to the consultant team, the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan was guided by a Project Management Team (PMT) made of staff representatives from SCAG, San Bernardino County, City of Twentynine Palms, and Town of Yucca Valley. As a regional effort, the PMT provided direction based on varying jurisdictional needs, perspectives, and experience. Monthly PMT meetings were held throughout the Plan development process to track the status of all project efforts, from outreach and data analysis to potential countermeasures and final recommendations.



## 2.2 TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

While the PMT offered jurisdictional guidance on the Plan, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was also formed to include major stakeholders, advocates, and other community members in the overall development of the Plan. The Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan TAC included partners from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Highway Patrol (CHP), Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Inland Empire Bike Alliance (IEBA), Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT), Morongo Basin Healthcare District (MBHD), Joshua Tree Chamber of Commerce, Copper Mountain College, Morongo Unified School District (MUSD), Marine Corps, National Park Service (NPS), SCAG, San Bernardino County, City of Twentynine Palms, Town of Yucca Valley, and other interested stakeholders. TAC meetings were held on a bi-monthly basis and provided a way for members to offer input and feedback through multiple stages of the project.



## 2.3. COMMUNITY & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In collaboration with the Project Management Team (PMT), a branding strategy was developed, utilizing the region's color palette to create both a recognizable and representative logo for the project.

With an established identity for the project, project staff then developed additional communication tools (e.g. email, phone number, MailChimp email service, social media accounts) to disseminate information and news throughout the development of the Plan. This included posting reminder notifications for all outreach activities, coordinating logistics, utilizing cross-promotional capabilities through social media with project partners and organizations, and more. The Project Team ensured inclusivity and considered equity across every component of the outreach process through bilingual content and materials and the presence of bilingual staff at every event.

This section summarizes the community outreach and engagement process that occurred during the development of the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan.



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS & EVENTS

As a part of the community engagement process, the Project Team coordinated outreach efforts at four community events to allow students, residents, and community members an opportunity to provide input and talk to the Team about the City's Active Transportation efforts.

### Health & Community Resource Fairs

*Twentynine Palms – October 14th, 2017 | Yucca Valley – May 12th, 2018*

The Project Team organized a booth at both the Health & Community Resource Fairs in Twentynine Palms and Yucca Valley. Hosted by the Morongo Basin Health District (MBHD), the Fairs are held in partnership with local government and community organizations to provide free health screenings, activities, and access to local and regional resources. For the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan, the two events provided an opportunity for project staff to engage with the local community and discuss how active transportation infrastructure can help – amongst other benefits – improve public health and enhance recreational opportunities. In addition to collecting input through surveys, the project booth included large maps, project information and materials, a kids' coloring corner, and a pop-up gallery of kids' active transportation-related coloring sheets done during the event.

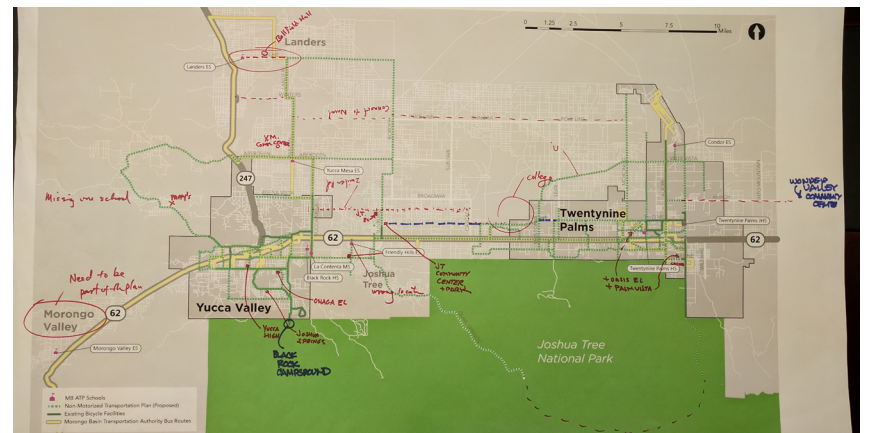
The Team received over 90 completed surveys and engaged with over 120 participants between both Fairs.



## Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC) Meeting

*November 13th, 2017*

In November 2017, project staff introduced the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan at the Morongo Basin Municipal Advisory Committee's (MAC) monthly meeting and facilitated a discussion with participants on what it could mean for their community. Around 20 residents, advocates, and other members from areas like Morongo Valley and Landers helped pinpoint specific locations for active transportation improvements and voiced concerns relevant to their own communities. MAC meetings, inclusive of 8-10 community representatives, are an important “forum for the unincorporated areas of Morongo Basin to learn about and comment on issues relevant to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors”. Through discussions at this meeting, the Project Team worked with the PMT to expand the Morongo Basin project boundaries to include additional unincorporated communities in the region.



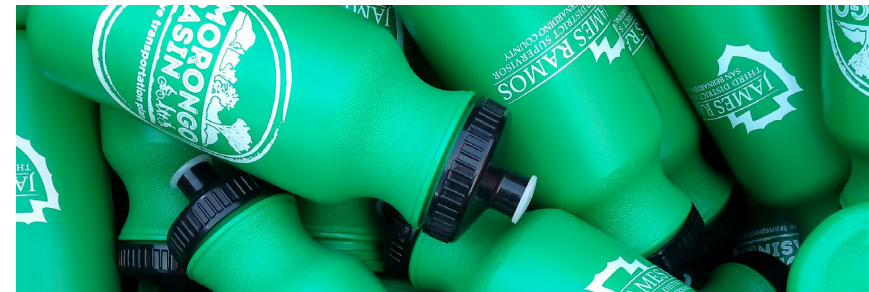


## Water Education Day

March 25th, 2018

Hosted by the Joshua Basin Water District, Water Education Day served as a fun and informational event for the Morongo Basin community by promoting conservation and environmental sustainability - an important part of Complete Streets and active transportation, particularly in the Morongo Basin region.

The Project Team organized a booth at this event to conduct surveys and engage with local participants on active transportation needs and challenges within their communities. Project-branded bike water bottles, sponsored by Third District Supervisor, James Ramos, were given away to event participants when they filled out a project survey. Project staff collected over 45 surveys and engaged with around 60 individuals that day.



## Park2Park Bike Ride

*April 28th, 2018*

The Park 2 Park Bike Ride is an annual partnership effort between the City of Twentynine Palms, Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms to provide a scenic cycling event from Knott's Sky Park in Twentynine Palms to Key's View in JTNP and back. As part of the 3rd annual Park 2 Park, project staff rode alongside community members for the entire 52-mile route to evaluate existing conditions from Twentynine Palms to Joshua Tree. This year, the event featured a family fun ride for the first time to encourage families and non-recreational cyclists to participate in a shorter 7.5-mile ride. Project staff set up a pop-up cycle track on Hatch Road, at the start of the route, to demonstrate the impact that a protected bike lane facility can have on the safety of bicyclists along a high-speed roadway. On the day of the Park 2 Park Bike Ride, the event had over 80 registrations with almost 30 family bike riders.

At Knott's Sky Park, community organizations also organized post-ride activities. The Project Team hosted a booth to gather surveys and engage with participants about regional and local active transportation improvements. Other activities included a bicycle rodeo put together by California Highway Patrol (CHP) and booths from the Morongo Basin Healthcare District and National Park Service.

**“With the help of [the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan], we can link the entire Morongo Basin with trails -- whether it be hiking, walking, riding bikes and so forth, we want to be able to get through the Morongo Basin.”**

**Randy Council**

**Community Services Director (City of Twentynine Palms)  
Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan (TAC Member)**



## WALKING SAFETY ASSESSMENTS

As part of the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan, the Project Team also focused on how to make the region a safer place for parents and children to walk and bike to school.

To complement the already ongoing **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** efforts from the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA), Walking Safety Assessments (WSA) were conducted at the nine schools in the Morongo Basin region that were not included in SBCTA's SRTS Phase 1 and 2 Plans. As part of these Plans, SBCTA already identified improvements for the other seven schools within the Morongo Unified School District (MUSD) through similar assessments.

The goal of a WSA is to walk with parents and the community members most familiar with the school area and pinpoint safety concerns that present barriers for students walking and/or biking to school. Specifically for middle and high schools, the Project Team organized workshop activities with the students themselves. With support from MUSD Superintendent Tom Baumgarten, the Project Team worked with principals from all nine schools to schedule WSAs that occurred in February and March 2018.

A WSA, sometimes referred to as a walk audit, is an opportunity for the Project Team to engage directly with each school community. It allows the team to not only hear concerns and input directly from parents, school staff, students, and other community members, but to also experience it in person from the perspective of WSA participants. The WSAs enable school community members to contribute to the SRTS improvement process by sharing their experiences. Residents and community members know the school zone and area better than anyone, making their participation, involvement, and contribution incredibly valuable to the Plan.



Throughout the months of February and March 2018, the Project Team conducted a WSA at each of the nine schools where participants provided comments, concerns, and improvement ideas. The Project Team also observed either morning arrival or afternoon dismissal activities at and surrounding each school site to identify infrastructure or behavior challenges that may be addressed through recommendations in this Plan.

**A list of the nine schools and the day in which each WSA took place can be found on the following page.**

Conditions within the Morongo Basin region present some challenges to the safety of parents and children walking and biking to school. Although pedestrian infrastructure is generally more built out around school areas, issues highlighted during WSAs included high traffic speeds, low-visibility or faded crosswalks, and other barriers to safe pedestrian crossings. School-specific observations and feedback are detailed in the Chapter 6 Local Projects factsheets.

## WSA Objectives

- Experience the surrounding area as a pedestrian and/or bicyclist alongside members of the school community
- Evaluate the safety and quality of the pedestrian and bicycle experiences near schools and within the community
- Identify opportunities for a safer and more walkable and bikeable environment within the school community
- Identify areas of concern that do not allow for a walkable and bikable environment to exist near schools of interest and within the community
- Allow members of the community to provide valuable feedback and identify opportunities for improvement
- Propose recommendations and improvements based on the community's feedback and the Project Team's technical expertise, knowledge, and judgment.

## WSA Process

1. Pre-WSA field observations: Before each WSA begins, the Project Team conducts field observations of the school and surrounding area to identify potential areas of concerns
2. Briefing Workshop: WSA participants are given a brief presentation to orient them with the project and are provided with instructions for the WSA
3. WSA: Participants and the Project Team split into small teams, and walk around the vicinity of the school to areas of concerns
4. Debriefing workshops: Back in the classroom, the Project Team discusses observations and potential solutions with participants

