



Liu, Kaili. "Residential Neighborhood", Photo, Jan 17, 2014.

MOBILITY | GETTING TO, AND AROUND, VALLEY GLEN

INTRODUCTION

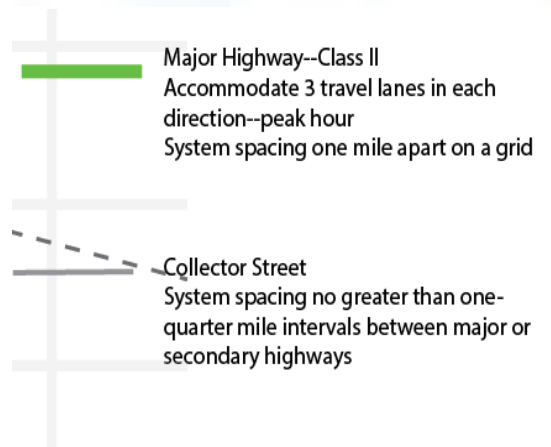
Mobility addresses the capacity to travel to and from destinations in a safe, efficient, and comfortable way. Currently, Valley Glen is a very vehicle-oriented community aimed at preserving a high quality of life for its residents. Creating a network of well-connected paths and convenient transit options will support community safety, health, and leisure. Furthermore, looking at mobility and place-making holistically in Valley Glen will allow for the minimization of intrusive traffic and nuisance in well-maintained residential corridors that are set apart from the major vehicular paths. Elements of mobility that are relevant to these goals are overall circulation, pedestrian-friendliness, public transit, biking, and parking. In order to address the identity of Valley Glen, mobility as a means to achieve accessible destinations--whether they are visual and historical landmarks, social and recreational activity nodes, or places to give and receive services--is important to convey the values of the neighborhood to the larger community.

Citation:
 Los Angeles classification system; <http://planning.lacity.org/PolicyInitiatives/Mobility%20and%20Transportation/LA%20Street%20Classification%20Final%20Report%20October%202010.pdf>
 Valley Glen: <http://valleyglen.org/map>
 Los Angeles City: <http://trafficinfo.lacity.org>
 Last Updated: 01/25/2014 23:02:12



CIRCULATION SYSTEM

The Valley Glen is well served by a circulation system of highways and collector streets. Like the rest area of United States, roads in the Valley Glen are arranged in the grid system, providing better access to anywhere in the community. In addition, the community addresses existing conditions of safety and maintenance occurring along major corridors, alleys and street ends. The lighting system along the streets can provide the basic needs for pedestrians and vehicles, but it also needs to promote. With a good lighting system, it can ensure the safety of the public. While there is a good circulation system in the Valley Glen, it still needs to reflect the specific needs of a community and its built environment, such as effectively addressing parking enforcement in residential areas.



WALKING

Walkability is an important concern for community health, neighborhood safety and accessibility, and quality of life which reflect many aspects of this Valley Glen. Factors that contribute to improved walkability include features of the built environment, such as sidewalk capacity and road connectivity, as well as design characteristics which includes visible crosswalks, legible signage and appropriate landscaping. According to Walk Score, a third-party source which determines walkability induces, Valley Glen ranks as the 45th most walkable neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles with a score of 63 (on a scale of 0 - 100 where 100 is the most walkable). Having a pedestrian-friendly environment renders the neighborhood more pleasant and safe, especially in areas where there is high vehicular traffic or little lighting. The abundance of trees and landscaping in most residential areas is salient as it contributes to shading against strong sunlight and plentiful space for those who walking and may own dogs. Walking is also an important facet in promoting public and environmental health, especially given the number of cars, amount of parking, and importance of ecological longevity for trees and other natural features contained within Valley Glen.



Ahn, Esther. "Valley College quad." Photo. Feb 8, 2014.



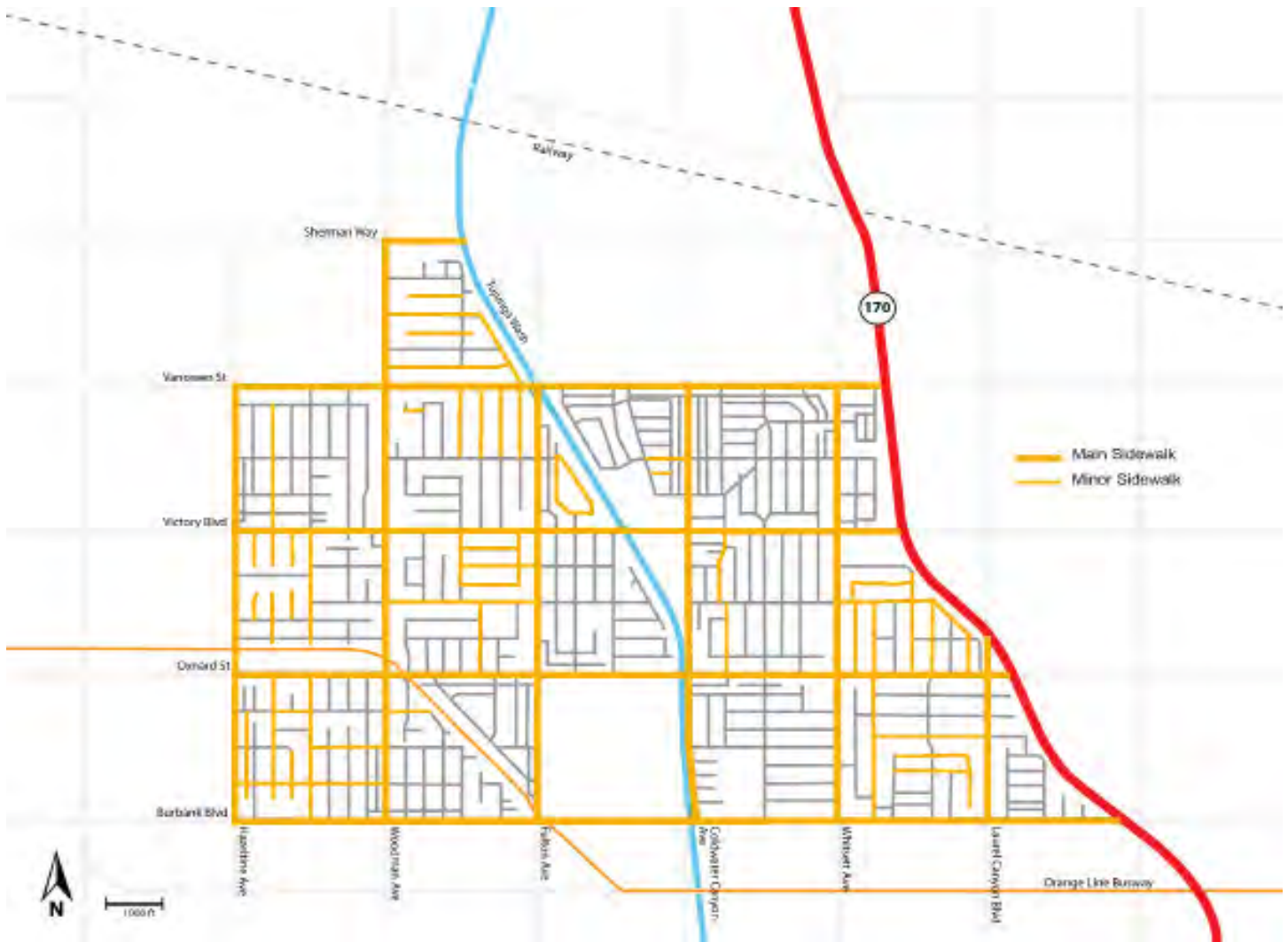
Ahn, Esther. "Incomplete sidewalk." Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Both private and public enterprises can help provide a more walkable neighborhood by contributing various amenities that enhance the pedestrian experience. Certain pedestrian-friendly policies include the implementation of shade-producing trees, outdoor furniture and adequate lighting, while other features can be more design-related such as visible crosswalks, on large streets especially, and signage to signal caution to drivers and bikers where there may be high foot traffic. The inclusion of pedestrian amenities not only promotes community health and vitality, but also creates a pleasant visual appearance which lends to a safer environment and the perception of such. Valley Glen strives to amplify its visual character while also protecting residents from crime and vandalism, thus the integration of pedestrian amenities can serve these multiple goals of the neighborhood.



Ahn, Esther. "Outdoor furniture at Community Park." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



SIDEWALKS & CONNECTIVITY

On a larger scale, accessibility for pedestrians via sidewalks and crosswalks to and from destinations is an important consideration for ensuring a complete and cohesive neighborhood. It is common to see sidewalks and paved paths embedded in the neighborhood, but there are opportunities to enhance the walkability further in order to amplify the larger goals of safety, sustainability, and tranquility which characterize the neighborhood. Places for community gathering and other services should be convenient to engage with, which can be accomplished with well-connected streets and pathways. While much of the residential areas of Valley Glen are planned to be quite secluded to maintain a quiet and undisturbed environment, streets should be navigable in order to easily way find and access key locations, such as schools and parks, in addition to major arterials for those who need to reach commercial areas. Although residents of Valley Glen are largely vehicle-dependent, parking areas and transit nodes, which includes freeway ramps and public transportation stations, should intuitively connect to other functioning pathways for travel. Furthermore, obstructions of existing streets and sidewalks should be mitigated in order to provide clear view corridors and practical usage.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

A unique stone sidewalk lines the front of a property in the residential area. This design promotes walkability as well as visual character that can be indicators of identity for residents and visitors alike.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

Diverse vegetation fills the spacious front yard of a residential property which creates an impressionable visual quality, but the public space lacks sidewalks for pedestrians to safely cross without walking on the natural landscape.



Ahn, Esther. "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Ahn, Esther, "The Road", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Yuanyuan, Bian. "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Kailli, Liu "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014

In some areas, the quality of sidewalks needs repair and maintenance. Streetscaping can help achieve this, in addition to features that consider existing public transit options.



BIKING

Biking is an important mode of transportation for its practical, health-related, and mobility benefits. Though there are many streets and alleys in Valley Glen, bike lanes do not exist on the main streets. According to the map, the existing bike lanes are concentrated at Burbank Boulevard and Woodman Avenue which are the boundaries of Valley Glen.

Currently, there are three types of commuter bikeways in Valley Glen:

- Bike Path - off-street shared-use path for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Bike Lane - on-street striped and signed dedicated travel lane for bicycles.
- Bike Route - on-street travel lane shared by bicyclists and other vehicular traffic.

Whether for traveling to certain destinations or simply for recreation and exercise, biking occurs on shared roads, so the safety of all involved parties is a significant concern under the topic of mobility. The designation of bike paths, which exist minimally at present in Valley Glen, is one common way to address these considerations. These dedicated bike lanes can be delineated with various kinds of signage, or with particular colors, symbols, and lines drawn on the road. The designs of such bike-friendly elements can reflect the identity of Valley Glen, and the collective attention to issues regarding bicycle safety is in line with the neighborhood's core values promoting safety, quality of life, and principles of sustainability.



Citation:

1. <http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2009/06/25/i-a-breaks-ground-on-orange-line-extension/>
2. http://media.metro.net/riding_metro/maps/images/system_map.gif

PUBLIC TRANSIT

In Valley Glen, there is a convenient public transit system including the Orange Line and Metro local line. High quality public transit encourages a car-free situation and provides the community many alternatives for commuting, gathering, and meeting basic needs. Stops for the local line along major streets allow for people to take the bus easily. Having quality options for public transit can lead to a cleaner environment for the whole community, with fewer emissions than produced by an entirely car-dependent population. According to the map above, people can travel easily within Valley Glen; however, it is difficult for people to reach farther destinations via rapid transit as the Orange Line is the only non-bus form of public transportation available. There is an implicit opportunity for Valley Glen to attain more economic activity and stand out as a recognizable neighborhood among regional centers such as Downtown Los Angeles and LAX.



In Valley Glen, bus stops are located at the junctions of streets, increasing accessibility for the public. These local lines can satisfy the needs of commuters in Valley Glen.



There are very few bike lanes in major streets. Bike lanes can create safety benefits to road users by separating the spaces. It also can encourage people to ride a bike when they leave their homes.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

Circulation System:

- A typical grid street system, making people know the direction easily.
- The Valley Glen is well served by a circulation system of highways and collector streets.

Walking:

- Wide sidewalks and street, as well as large block sizes, make walking as a mode for short trips inconvenient.
- Consequently, most people do not walk, and drive or take the bus instead.
- Some residential areas lack sidewalks entirely while others are not well-maintained or obstructed which disincentivizes walking.
- The complex network of residential pathways further discourages walking to and from local destinations.
- Local residents who do walk, for leisure or for taking their dogs out, do so at the Valley Glen Community Park.

Biking:

- The primary bike lane is along the Metro Orange Line path.
- There are minimal designated bike lanes and existing ones are not well-connected.

Public Transit:

- A convenient public transportation system exists for people to commute within Valley Glen.
- The current system of public transit is insufficient to provide connections with the nodes and landmarks that define the Valley Glen community.

Parking:

- There is abundant surface parking available in Valley Glen, and street parking is also convenient.
- Existing parking structures are difficult to find and not well-maintained, so very few people use them.
- Some of the strip malls are vacant, leading to empty store fronts and unused space in retail surface parking.
- Schools own large surface-parking, but require permits for people to use them. Because they are not publicly accessible, the expansive space used for this private parking may be underutilized.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY:

1. Organize Street Fixtures to Coordinate Multi-Modal Transportation
2. Ensure Pleasant and Well-Maintained Environments for Pedestrians
3. Designate Safe Areas for Bicyclists to Protect All Road-Users
4. Enhance Connections from Public Transit to Important Local Destinations
5. Utilize Overabundant Parking Space for Identity-Enhancing Programming