

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Laura Margoni Feb 05, 2015



Photo by Erik Jepsen, UC San Diego Publications

Creating a More Bike-Friendly Campus

A popular pathway is about to get a makeover as part of UC San Diego's efforts to create a more bicycle-friendly campus. Peterson Hill, located between Peterson Hall, the Cognitive Science Building and the Faculty Club is undergoing extensive improvements that will transform the way bicyclists and pedestrians access the busy area.

"UC San Diego was originally planned for cars, not bikes," said Gary C. Matthews, vice chancellor of Resource Management and Planning. "But with our goal of becoming a carbon-neutral campus by 2025, we need to proactively address the challenges of becoming a more bicycle-friendly campus. This project is just one of many steps we're taking in that direction."

Construction on the University Center Bike and Pedestrian Improvements project began this week and is expected to be completed in summer 2015. The project – which was developed with extensive student input and support – will replace an existing steep, shared-use path with separate pedestrian and bicycle paths and create a new ADA accessible route from Peterson Hall to Geisel Library. Pedestrians will be able to use a new concrete walk with a series of staircases on Peterson Hill, while bicycle riders will be able to use the designated bike paths. A ramp will be available for all wheeled and disabled users.



In addition to the Peterson Hill improvements, a second dedicated bike path will also be installed to run through the Park Eucalyptus Grove, west of the Student Health Center. Called the Grove Path Connection, the route will parallel Library Walk and enhance bicycle connection with Peterson Hill. Once the Grove Path is open, bicycle riders will have an alternative to pedestrian-only Library Walk, where they are required to dismount.

“These improvements are going to make a tremendous difference,” said campus landscape architect Todd Pitman of Physical and Community Planning. “Peterson Hill is a very high-traffic area with up to 1,200 people passing through on a daily basis. Once construction is completed, everyone who travels through the area will benefit.”

In addition to the new paths, improvements will also include adding signage and lighting as well as installing improved drainage. There will also be significant re-forestation done within the campus’s iconic eucalyptus grove.

“We’re planting two trees for every one tree we have to remove,” said Pitman. “The new trees will be much healthier and will ensure the eucalyptus grove continues to thrive for years to come.”

During construction, safe alternative pathways will be provided to users and a construction fence will enclose all sides of the project. Pedestrians and bicyclists should follow all signs and remain alert near construction areas. Bicyclists should also dismount on crowded walks.

The University Center Bike and Pedestrian Improvements project is one of several bicycle improvement projects happening on campus. The Gilman Transit Center, completed last fall, incorporates dedicated bicycle lanes on Gilman Drive between Villa La Jolla and Myers Drive. Several other projects will also feature dedicated bicycle lanes. These include:

- **Interstate 5/Genesee Avenue Interchange Improvement Project:** A dedicated bicycle path will be included along the west side of I-5 between Genesee Avenue and Voigt Drive near Warren Field. The path will safely connect the campus to the regional bicycle network and provide a critical link between the Sorrento Valley Coaster Station and UC San Diego. Construction on this City of San

Diego/Caltrans project begins in February 2015 and is expected to last approximately three years.

- **Gilman Drive Bridge:** UC San Diego is partnering with Caltrans to build a new bridge over I-5 that will provide another connection between east and west campus. The bridge will include eastbound and westbound vehicle lanes, sidewalks and dedicated bicycle lanes. Construction is expected to begin in 2015.
- **Voigt Drive Bridge Replacement:** The existing bridge will be replaced as part of the Caltrans North Coast Corridor improvement project and dedicated bicycle lanes will be provided. There are currently no bicycle lanes on the bridge. Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2016.
- **Hopkins Lane:** This project will improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation at Hopkins Lane/Parking Lot 309 and reduce conflict between drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Shared lane markings, or “sharrows,” will be added to indicate that bicyclists have the right to use the vehicle travel lane. Sidewalks will also be added for pedestrians and there will be landscape improvements as well. This project is still in planning stages.
- **Gilman Drive Bicycle Lanes:** This project will narrow the median on Gilman Drive between Myers Drive and Osler Lane/Scholars Drive South to provide dedicated bicycle lanes. This would achieve the goal of providing bicycle lanes throughout the entire Campus Loop road. This project is still in planning stages.



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“I’m really excited for these upcoming improvements at UCSD,” said Nick McManus, a fourth year student and chair of the UCSD Bike Committee, an undergraduate student group that pursues bicycle infrastructure improvements on campus. “By increasing the feasibility of biking on campus, our hope is that more students will begin to use bicycles as their primary mode of transportation. That, in turn, will create a greater need to make UCSD and the surrounding areas more bike-friendly and help promote alternative transportation improvements.”

If you have any questions about the University Center Bike and Pedestrian Improvements project, please contact Jamie Bohannon in Facilities Design and Construction at jbohannon@ucsd.edu or (858) 246-0830.

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