



Conference/Seminar Summary

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To: The Honorable Mayor & City Council
Council Meeting Date: 06/25/2024

City Council Member: Vanessa Quiroz-Carter
Conference/Seminar: Netherlands Study 2024
Location: Den. Haag, Rotterdam, Delft, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Dates of Travel: June 2-7th, 2024

Please provide a brief report on the conference, seminar, or meeting you attended.

I was part of a Santa Cruz County Delegation of over 30 people who attended the Netherlands Study Visit. We went to the Netherlands in order to gain firsthand experience from Dutch mobility experts and to learn about design and policies that contribute to safer streets for pedestrians, cyclists, cars and anyone else who uses public roads. On Sunday, June 2nd we traveled from SFO and arrived in Paris on Monday, June 3rd. We then took another flight to Amsterdam and then took a train to Den Haag where we stayed. On Tuesday, June 4th we awoke bright and early and walked to our destination. We were met by Margot Daris, who told us some history of cycling in the Netherlands, and then we had presentations. The first presentation was by Teun Zeegers, of the Ministry Infrastructure and Water management, the second presentation was by Teije Gorris on Network planning, the third presentation was on Infrastructure Design by Matt Bearden, and the final presentation was on Cycle Highways by Ruben Loendersloot, of Loendersloot International. Each of the presentations emphasized not only planning for one mode of transport, but instead planning for all modes of transport to have connecting hubs for safer and faster travel. Each of the presentations also emphasized having strong public transport like trains, trams, and buses, and the importance of passengers to have the ability to bring their bikes onto public transport. After the presentations, we had a group discussion, and then had lunch, followed by cycling around Den Haag. We rode over ten miles that day on a low stress trip through Den Haag to the beach and back. We had a pleasant (and

delicious) group dinner and settled in for the night. On Wednesday, June 5th, we took the train to Rotterdam and walked to our location. We learned more about World War 2 and how Rotterdam was built more like an American rather than European city. We had 3 presentations; the first presentation was about the City of Rotterdam by Bart Christiaens, the second presentation was on Car Management by Ruxandra Aelenei of RA Planning, and the final presentation of the day was on Intersection Design by Maurits Lopez Cardozo of Bike-minded. The City of Rotterdam had many different intersections to accommodate traffic flow; for example, one intersection light that our group found very interesting was a light that changed direction. We thought that was very innovative and it really kept traffic flowing. One thing to note about the Netherlands is that they do not really have large 4 way intersections like American cities, but rather they have traffic circles and separated crosswalks for bikes and pedestrians. The traffic circles keep traffic at a steady flow and moving throughout the city. After presentations, we had a group discussion and lunch, and then we cycled through Rotterdam. Cycling in Rotterdam was more intense than in Den Haag because it was a denser city with more traffic. We rode over another 10 miles, then had a group debrief and a free evening. For my free evening, I took the train to visit Amsterdam with Supervisor Hernandez. We walked around and marveled at the local architecture and beautiful canals of Amsterdam. On Thursday, June 6th, we took a train to Delft and walked to our location. We had 2 presentations; the first was on Pop-up to Permanent and Tactical Urbanism by Lennart Nout of Mobycon, and the final was on School zones by Anna Wyner of Mobycon. Lennart and Anna demonstrated ways we can make our school zones and neighborhoods safer by utilizing tactical urbanism and bright colors to signal school safety zones. Our final day was a day of travel, and on Friday, June 7th very early in the morning we took a shuttle to the Amsterdam airport and took a flight to Paris and then another flight to SFO. I learned so much about how we can create safer streets in Watsonville and am eager to work with our staff on implementing some of the interesting ideas we learned.
