

Centerville Complete Streets

COMMUNITY MEETING #1: IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE KEY ISSUES

Date of Meeting: December 9, 2019

Location: Centerville Community Center (Centerville Room)

Staff Present: Jeanne Suyeishi (City); Connie Wong (City); Hans Larsen (City); Joel Pullen (City); Tina Kapoor (City); Cliff Nguyen (City); Bruce Brubaker (PlaceWorks); Janet Chang (PlaceWorks)

Elected Officials Present: Mayor Lily Mei, Vice Mayor Rick Jones, Council Member Jenny Kassan, Council Member Teresa Keng, AC Transit Director Diane Shaw

Meeting Summary:

The Centerville Complete Streets project will improve segments of Fremont Boulevard (Alder to Eggers) Thornton Avenue, and Peralta Boulevard. The recent relinquishment of SR 84 allows the City to have local control over this street right-of-way to repave the streets and implement “complete streets” improvements to enhance safety and mobility for all users, including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, school children, and businesses.

About 60 people attended the first community meeting for the Centerville Complete Streets project at the Centerville Community Center. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the project to the community, report on key findings from the Opportunities and Constraints Memo, explain the purpose and benefits of complete streets, hear and collect input from the community, and work with the community to prioritize complete street components along different street segments within the project’s focus area.

Welcome and Introductions. Jeanne Suyeishi, the City’s project manager, welcomed attendees and introduced members of the project team as well as present elected officials.

Presentation. Bruce Brubaker from PlaceWorks initiated the presentation by providing background on the project and describing the extents of the project’s focus area. He explained the City’s vision and previous planning work for the focus area to become a vibrant and identifiable district and transform Fremont Boulevard into a “Main Street.” Janet Chang from PlaceWorks provided an overview of the project’s scope and schedule, including opportunities for community engagement at each phase of the project. She presented the key findings from the project’s Opportunities and Constraints memorandum (posted on the project website) and potential improvements as part of this project. Bruce Brubaker presented on the purpose and benefits of complete streets and presented a case study of how complete streets improvements on First Street in Livermore, CA transformed public life and created new investment in restaurants, shops, and a theater.

Small Group Exercise. Meeting attendees were assigned and divided into six groups at random to participate in a small group exercise. Each group had approximately ten participants and was

facilitated by City and PlaceWorks staff.

For the exercise, participants were asked to prioritize and choose their top four complete streets components (out of nine component options) for different street segments within the focus area. Facilitators emphasized that each street segment may have a different set of prioritized complete streets components since each vary in character and that the components must be prioritized because they all compete for space on a roadway.

Each group discussed their chosen priorities and assessed whether other group members agreed or dissented. A map of the focus area was provided on each table to allow participants to note specific locations for potential improvements and/or problem areas during the discussion. Notes and maps from each group's discussion are attached.

Report Back. A representative from each small group provided a brief summary of their group's discussions to all meeting attendees. The following is an overview of each group's summary. Most groups only discussed priorities for the Main Street segment of Fremont Boulevard while other groups also discussed the suburban segments as well as Thornton Avenue and Peralta Boulevard.

Group 1: There was dissension among group members about potential improvements. Some felt strongly that Fremont Boulevard should maintain the width and number of vehicle travel lanes, while others felt strongly that there should be a removal of a lane to help improve the identify of the area and surrounding businesses. There was also division on whether to add a landscaped median in the suburban segments of Fremont Boulevard. A High Intensity Activated Crosswalk should be installed at the intersection of Fremont Boulevard and Bonde Way. Artist Walk needs more on-street parking.

Group 2: Sidewalks should be fixed especially along Peralta Boulevard and near American High School. The streetscape in front of Artist Walk is a good example. People who live in the area need to travel through Fremont Boulevard. The group reached consensus that the number of travel lanes on Fremont Boulevard needs to be maintained but could be narrowed to allow for a bike lane. Narrower lanes should be implemented around American High School (AHS) to increase safety for students. There could also potentially be on-street parking near AHS. Wayfinding would help people park at the back of businesses.

Group 3: There should be no on-street parking within the Main Street segment to provide bicyclists increased safety. Instead, there should be improved wayfinding so that drivers are aware of parking at the back of buildings. There is concern about homeless people gathering at potential transit amenities. For the suburban segments of Fremont Boulevard, any potential improvements should consider people getting to and from the schools.

Group 4: The group was in support of widened sidewalks, landscaping, and bike lanes within the Main Street segment. Fremont Boulevard can have slower traffic, but Thornton Avenue should not lose any travel lanes because it feeds into I-880. The drop-off and pick-up at schools need improvement. There is concern for business owners' responsibility to maintain street trees. Livermore is not an exactly parallel example to Fremont because it is surrounded by single-family homes.

Group 5: The area around the train station is very dangerous and should be improved, including

improving the crossing at Bonde Way, the addition of bike lanes, and turning the transit station's parking lot into a bus depot. The group agreed that removing on-street parking and slowing traffic along the Main Street segment is worth it if it means it will make Centerville a destination. Outdoor seating would help revitalize Centerville businesses. Parking along the Main Street segment should be focused at the back of buildings. If diagonal parking is implemented, it should be back-in to increase safety for bicyclists. Transit amenities should be designed to help protect bicyclists and pedestrians from transit vehicles such as bus islands. For any improvements, the City needs a plan to maintain improvements such as landscaping and parking enforcement.

Group 6: Wider sidewalks, outdoor seating, and designated areas for buses to pull over were desired by the group, but there is a concern for implementing potential improvements because of the existing amount of high traffic flow. Parking along the Main Street area should be off street. One person thought that diagonal parking can be dangerous where traffic is high. Another comment was to not allow residential units in the Main Street area of Fremont, rather that should be businesses.

Next Steps. The project team will review input from the first community meeting and work to develop design alternatives for the focus area and analyze any traffic impacts. The design alternatives will be presented at a second community meeting for community feedback tentatively scheduled for April 2020.

The meeting's materials can be found online at the project website:
<http://fremont.gov/CentervilleCompleteStreets>