



**CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES
June 10, 2024
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

52 Natoma Street – Folsom Community Center

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Present:

Gary Eckhart
Edward Igoe
Kris Steward
Liz Ekenstedt

Tom Econome
Joe Gagliardi
Dan Dreher
Mark Johnson
Tim Kuntz

MEETING PURPOSE AND PLAN

Pam Johns, Community Development Director explained the purpose of the meeting with Committee and City Staff/Project Manager to go over project purpose, policy direction, and clarify what the Master Plan will and won't do.

MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Master Plan Overview

Summary of Relevant General Plan Policies and Related Studies and Projects

- Pam Johns gave a brief overview of previous studies and work underway and how it relates to the Master Plan. Much of the information is included in a Handout that was made available to the group.
- Stephanie Henry, Senior Planner, provided an overview of the General Plan update, Zoning Code Update, and Opticos housing study. She indicated that residential is allowed in the Central Business District since the 2018 General Plan update when an overlay was placed on the district allowing mixed use.
- A separate effort is going forward to provide additional targeted areas of the city including the Central Business District to meet the city's fair share capacity of housing.
- Confirmation that the Master Plan is not proposing a General Plan or Zoning change.
- Committee members asked clarifying questions regarding increased housing in the Central Business District.
- Pam clarified that the City needs to show capacity to the state for additional high-density units, but that the city does not control what ultimately is proposed, and

that it may not mean that additional units will be built within the district during this General Plan Housing Element cycle (2021-2029).

- Committee members expressed concern with the compatibility of new multi-family residential especially adjacent to existing neighborhoods and want to make sure design features such as stepping back and buffers are included.
- They also expressed concern about making sure residential has adequate parking and doesn't impact traffic.
- Concern that housing developers want to own the land and not necessarily lease land in conjunction with other businesses (impediment to horizontal mixed use).
- Pam clarified that the City Council has directed Kimley Horn as part of a separate grant to look at five locations within the District. To the extent that information becomes available over the next month or so, that information could inform the Master Plan.
- Discussion regarding the Roundabout First Policy, including whether additional right-of-way is needed, how that will impact traffic, and if it will improve safety for pedestrian.

Master Plan Draft Table of Contents

- The Committee had a brief conversation of the expected contents of the Master Plan with an emphasis on Urban Design, Economics and Transportation/circulation.

COMMITTEE INPUTS

Committee Confirmation of Inputs to Date (confirm, refine, qualify, or modify):
Walked through several slides on concepts to date. Committee comments:

Mobility

- Public art- like placing a heart of Folsom. Family interested in doing little things like that.
- A Committee member indicated that the property owners really need to be on board. The consultants have great ideas about activating mid-block but its up to property owners to do these improvements, if they aren't interested it's not going to happen.
- Small base hits instead of a home run.
- E. Bidwell and Riley need to be improved. Can't get out of subdivision when school gets out. No signal or crosswalks.
- Making sure cross connections, and pedestrian links between Riley and E. Bidwell.
- Need to be open to traffic improvements, current traffic should be improved upon, studies show that roundabouts increase capacity from 30-50%. Consolidate

driveways, reciprocal access between businesses. (Through Kohls and Bank).
Lanes don't always equal capacity.

- Needs to keep main vision of through fare, not o.k. with reductions.
- If buildings are re-envisioned on E Bidwell, then maybe opportunity for wider right of way, bike lanes and two lane roundabouts. There will be additional inputs for public input as things come forward.
- Key word is throughput- same or better throughput, and ability to turn into business. Access is key.
- Master plan won't change right of way, but recommendations can drive future analysis.
- Add spines north of Riley to break up the blocks, maybe not streets, but pedestrian connections.
- Gotta be a two-lane roundabout. Adamantly opposed to one lane.
- If all experts indicate it needs to be lane, we should be open to what the experts say. Don't have enough information to know.
- Gary Eckhardt pulled current rental property information that are for sale and all list 13,700-15,000 average daily traffic is important to those that want to locate here.
- Hard to merge onto one lane roundabout, easier to access if its two lanes.
- Group wants to better understand roundabout function at future meeting. 5 of 13 intersections being analyzed in this District. Not sure what information will be available in time for committee, but will try to get that information.
- 300-block of E Bidwell Needs improvements (Hanley's Western Wear). No continuous sidewalks.
- What incentives are available if additional right of way is needed. City would buy that property at fair share, unless property was getting an entitlement.

Vertical Mixed Use

- Concern with high density concepts- compatibility with existing residential neighborhoods.
- Concern with parking, visibility of existing centers
- Infrastructure constraints

Transformative Ideas

Each Committee Member was asked to report out on one or two top transformative Idea(s) they'd like to see for the District

- Accessibility and pedestrian easements to connect parcels internally and provide better access to businesses
- Post office should be relocated and DMV is ripe for redevelopment.
- Large signage would be great, as well as signage like on Fulton Avenue
- More attractions, pocket parks, better circulation, eat, dine and recreate. Paseo.

- Good circulation, bikes and pedestrians. Additional right of way to maintain capacity of roadways.
- Events to create a destination
- Focus of Sibley, Glenn also needs improvement. Connections to Highway 50.
- Incentives important, grants, matching funds
- Supports large parking areas for housing, and accommodate people for events.
- Reciprocal access should happen sooner rather than later, consolidation of driveways, improve flow. Help with transitions between businesses.
- Beautification critical, sidewalks.
- Leverage Lembi park.
- Aerial cross over on East Bidwell for pedestrian access
- Paseos, or pedestrian only links, easement to Kohls to provide connections between E Bidwell and Riley
- The District should have a “retro” theme, like 1960’s neon signage. Several members concurred. Build on what it was in time.
- Large signage to place make District. (Fulton Avenue example)
- Beautification such as green space and benches, sidewalks, lighting
- Tax incentives, grants will be key
- Enhance safety
- Continue adequate traffic flow, better lighting
- Area of opportunity to utilize parking lots for housing.
- Punch Market all the way through to Riley. Can be a nice little improvement.
- DMV parking lot do something with that. Turn Walmart and have a natural market place where parking lot is. Get rid of the post office.
- Parking by an arena, pedestrian only that is safe for families.
- Overall picture of a theme such as retro is really good, it is not competing with Palladio or historic District. Priority for a theme and making steps that would tie together going forward.
- Are roundabouts safer for pedestrians? Pedestrian crossing are usually before them, cars are slower. Collision rate is less severe.
- Grass valley example closed to traffic and really busy on one thoroughfare, really comfortable, music etc.
- Retro pylon signs, Mayor indicated sign grave-yard, attraction for Instagram photos. Master Plan can direct for a change to the zoning code to make it happen-drive change where it may not be allowed elsewhere in the city. What makes this district unique? Or could create uniqueness.
- Maybe make it more like an artist station.
- There is a pedestrian easement already along eastern side Market to Kohls property line. It’s narrow, 20- or 25 feet. Should continue to explore in Master Plan.
- Sutter Middle School creates a bottle neck, work with the school master plan to identify solutions
- E Bidwell better traffic flow, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting for pedestrian

walkways, access to big box and variety of smaller business. Most businesses can't afford to locate in Palladio, so district should continue this charm.

- Consider reduction of width of lanes (11.6-13-foot wide) Consider 9-foot lanes, enough room for bike lane. Would reduce speeds. Ten-foot lanes are standard.
- Pedestrian district like Higuera Street in San Luis Obispo. Park in perimeter and walk in.
- Better connected sidewalks
- Public space venues for music to create more places to go
- Infill housing
- Improved streetscape,
- Place making to help business retention
- Process to continue to include businesses going forward and to get feedback as plan is implemented.

Vision

Committee confirmed the Vision with proposed clarifications:

Sustainable Revitalization: Support the redevelopment, revitalization, and economic activation of the district.

➤ **Destination Oriented:** Develop the district into a thriving destination for working, shopping, recreating, and living.

➤ **Multimodal Connectivity:** Expand and advance accessible transportation for all residents and visitors *(without impacting traffic flow)*.

➤ **Identity/ Placemaking:** Create public spaces that support a vibrant social life and foster a sense of community *(and commerce)*.

➤ **Housing:** Encourage *(compatible integration of)* high quality housing that supports a variety of incomes, market preferences, households, and ages.

Key Objectives: The following suggested changes were made to the Key Objectives

- Commercial Corridor Revitalization/Economic Development *(develop funding incentives and sources)*
- Mixed-Use Residential Development *which creates a buffer with existing single family residential.*
- Placemaking and Design *(to create a thriving destination)*

- Improve Circulation/Mobility (improve streets for all to maintain or improve capacity and movement of traffic flow)
- Safety
- Lighting and Landscape Improvement
- Infrastructure Improvement

Comments from Advisory Committee on Objectives

- Refine Economic Development. What has been missing in the past is a funding source for the District. Bullet should be revised to include: Develop funding incentives, identify funding sources. Sales Tax measure has a line item for Central Business District.
- One member indicated strongly that two lanes be maintained (no lanes ever eliminated) and proposed that under improved circulation/mobility that language be added to indicate two lanes in each direction.
- Pam reminded the group that an Environmental Impact Report is currently available that includes information on increased residential traffic impacts.
- Capacity circulation and flow and function is what is important. May even need three lanes.
- General consensus was to not modify the language. That without a traffic analysis it is not known how efficiently the traffic would flow, and that most importantly traffic flow needs to be maintained and improved.
- While improving, not impacting traffic flow and function.

Should specific land uses in the district be changed?

- Liked idea of allowing brewery or distillery district.
- Want to make sure that if uses change, existing uses can be grandfathered in.
- Committee asked for additional time to think about examples.
- Table showing what is allowed in the C-2 commercial district will be sent out to the group this week.
- Zoning code update is going forward over the next couple of weeks and the Master Plan can make recommendations.

SCHEDULE REVIEW/NEXT STEPS

- Committee Meetings (tentative dates: ~~July 15~~ July 22, August 12, September 9) for key inputs and recommendations. Committee confirmed that July 22nd did not work for a majority of the members and indicated a preference for the next meeting to be **July 15th**.
- Community Workshop - September
- Planning Commission Hearing and Recommendation –October

- City Council Hearing and Adoption – November/December

PUBLIC ATTENDEES COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public wished to speak

ADJOURNMENT: 5:55 p.m