**Redwood City El Camino Real Corridor Plan**

**Figure 9: Small Activity “Nodes” Concept**

- Potential Node
- Potential Activity Centers
- 0.25 mile (5 minute walk)
- 0.3 miles (10 minute walk)

- Hudson St
- Bay Rd
- Brewster Ave
- Veterans Blvd
- Spring St
- Hopkins Ave
- Roosevelt Ave
- Marshall St
- 2nd Ave
- Main St
- Chestnut St
- Cassia St
- Winslow St
- Middlefield Rd
- Broadway St
- 5th Ave
- Saint Francis Way

**Planning Area**
- Redwood City Limits
- Rail Stations
- Caltrain Railroads
- Study Area Parcels

**Classifications**
- Class I Path, Existing
- Class I Path, Planned
- Class II Lane, Existing
- Class II Lane, Planned
- Class III Route, Planned
- Class III Route, Existing
- Unclassified On-Street Bike Facility, Planned

**Distance from El Camino Real**
- 0.1 mi
- 0.125 mi
- 0.25 mi
- 0.5 mi
- 0.6 mi

**Concepts and Options Report**

January 2017

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Urban and Regional Planners

[Redwood City, California]
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I. Introduction

OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

The Concepts & Options Report introduces the second major phase of the Redwood City El Camino Real Corridor Plan project, in which the vision and priorities that the Redwood City community has expressed for the El Camino Real Corridor (Corridor) are translated into concrete choices for further consideration and refinement.

Rather than developing one or two discrete alternatives, this report introduces a series of concepts and options for a variety of topics that may be “mixed and matched” to a great extent (though not entirely; some may be mutually exclusive or mutually dependent) to create a cohesive draft plan for the El Camino Real Corridor.

The Concepts & Options Report will be presented to the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) on January 18, 2017 for review and discussion, and shared with the general public at subsequent meetings.

INPUT AND STRUCTURE

In addition to documenting existing physical conditions of the El Camino Real Corridor, the first phase of the planning process included a range of opportunities for the public to provide input on how it would like to see the Corridor transform. The community input was gathered through a series of stakeholder interviews, Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) meetings (and public comment provided at the CAG meetings), a community workshop, and an online survey, all of which were conducted in the fall and winter of 2016. The choices and concepts in this report are based directly on the ideas and issues raised by the community.

The Concepts & Options Report discusses the following topics:

1. Bicycling
2. Pedestrian Safety and Comfort
3. Parking
4. Land Use, Zoning, and Activity Nodes
5. Transit
6. Vehicle Travel and Traffic
7. Economic Development and Small Business Support
8. Community Benefits

For each topic, a summary of community input is presented, and various options are described that illustrate ways in which the community’s ideas and priorities could manifest. In most cases, advantages and disadvantages of each option are presented. Where appropriate, maps and diagrams illustrating the options are also included. In addition, other Corridor planning components that relate to and interact with each topic are listed, because there is a close relationship between many of the topics and concepts discussed. Finally, in a section called “Connecting the Community,”
some additional information or choices about how the subject at hand connects (physically or otherwise) to the rest of the city outside of the Corridor is described.

While this report breaks down the concepts and options by topic for ease of description and decision-making, there are many common themes among the ideas presented, echoing the broad goals and priorities of the community. These include:

- Use the right of way as efficiently as possible
- Remove or mitigate bottlenecks
- Focus on movement of people, cars, bikes, transit; parking should be secondary
- Emphasize safety for all users
- Upgrade the overall experience of the Corridor—from aesthetics and comfort to safety and operations—to positively impact local businesses and Redwood City as a whole

The concepts and options presented in this report should be evaluated relative to how well they accomplish these overarching objectives.

2. Bicycling

WHAT WE HEARD

- Improving safety and convenience for cyclists along the El Camino Real Corridor is a high priority.
- Bicycling/bike lanes are seen as an efficient use of space to move people along the Corridor.
- Many believe that providing bike lanes on El Camino Real is the best option for cyclists who desire a straightforward, direct route; and the best way to allow cyclists to access housing and local businesses. These community members also assert that suitable parallel routes are not really present.
- Many also believe that, due to competing interests and safety concerns, an investigation into providing bicycle facilities should look not just at El Camino Real, but at parallel routes, where available.
- There is considerable support for removing on-street parking in order to provide bicycle lanes, if needed; there is virtually no support for removing a vehicle travel lane.
- Considerations regarding bicycle facility design should emphasize safety; we should look at either a fully protected bike lane (Class IV) or a painted bike lane (Class II) that is well buffered and outside of the “door zone.”
- Many would consider bicycling to access the transit station if it were possible or made more convenient.
- Painted or protected bike lanes on El Camino Real was the highest ranked answer to the survey question that asked respondents to prioritize potential improvements to the Corridor.
Nearly half of survey respondents said they would be likely to walk or bike on the Corridor if better sidewalks/bike lanes were installed.

**CONCEPTS AND OPTIONS**

Because the El Camino Real right of way varies throughout its extent through Redwood City, there will be some places where bike facilities may be provided differently than others, based on the available roadway width. For example, the segment of El Camino Real north of Woodside Road is the narrowest segment the roadway within Redwood City, measuring approximately 75 feet wide. Elsewhere, El Camino Real measures approximately 83 to 85 feet wide. As a result, a different type of bicycle facility may be indicated on this relatively narrow segment north of Whipple in comparison to segments south, unless certain trade-offs are made, such as significantly narrowing the median in the middle of the roadway and the barrier between cyclists and vehicular traffic. This explains why in Figure 1, a Class IV facility (fully protected cycle tracks) is indicated for the portion of El Camino Real south of Whipple, but not north of Whipple.

Class II bike facilities (left) are painted bike lanes, Class III (middle) are shared rights-of-way with bicyclists represented by a “sharrow”, and Class IV (right) are fully protected cycle tracks.

1. Provide bicycle lanes on El Camino Real for its entire extent through Redwood City. Possible variations are as follows:

   1a. Class IV (fully protected cycle track), one way in each direction, on the roadway or designed as an extension of the sidewalk. This concept is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows a Class IV cycle track along the extent of El Camino, with the exception of the segment north of Whipple, where a Class II painted bike lane is shown due to space constraints.

   1b. Class II (painted bike lane) with painted buffer strip, one way in each direction, on the roadway. This concept is illustrated in Figure 2, which shows a Class II painted bike lane along El Camino Real, with the exception of two segments in which a Class III bike facility (sharrows) are indicated to illustrate the option of accommodating existing on-street parking in those locations and the trade-off that would need to be made in order to do so.
**Concept:**

Continuous Class II (minimum width: 4 feet with 1 ½ foot painted buffer on each side, or a 2 to 3-foot buffer where adjacent to parked cars) or fully protected Class IV “cycle track” (minimum width: 4 ½ feet with 1 to 3-foot wide physical barrier and potential additional painted buffer) would be provided along the entire length of El Camino Real, with single-direction lanes provided on each side of the roadway. Wider buffers between the cycle track and the street may be used for rain gardens (sustainable stormwater management) as well as planting strips for larger trees. Additional variations are possible and also depend on whether on-street parking continues to be provided or not. These could include placement of the bike lane within the right-of-way (ROW), including adjacent to the curb, with parked cars (if parking is kept) located between the bike lane and the travel lanes where parking exists; or between the parking lane and the travel lane.

Another variation could be a two-way cycle track (8 – 12 feet width plus 1 – 3 foot buffers as needed), provided on one side of the street or the other, or a cycle track located in the median. Neither of these options is recommended because of the volume and frequency of vehicle left turn movements, both at intersections and into driveways throughout the Corridor.

“Mixing zones” may occur around intersections where bike lanes come in conflict with turning lanes or where bike lanes coincide with bus stops. The ultimate design would minimize “mixing zones” to the greatest extent possible, although there will always be some areas in which bicycles and other modes occupy the same space, because every roadway user (bicycles, cars, and buses alike) must make turns at some point.

Another design variation could be to include “protected intersections” at activity “nodes” or high priority locations. This design maintains the bike lanes through the intersection, increases visibility of people riding bikes, and slows the speed of turning vehicles.

**Advantages:**

- Provides a consistent, straightforward path for cyclists moving through Redwood City or accessing local businesses or housing on El Camino Real
- Has the potential to increase business at local shops on the Corridor, as studies have shown that bike routes increase retail profit (increased visibility, better likelihood people will stop and shop)
- Most straightforward wayfinding
- Redwood City would be a leader on the Peninsula in fully accommodating cyclists on El Camino Real
- Consistent with General Plan and Grand Boulevard Initiative objectives
Figure 1: Bike Facilities and Parking Concept 1A - Cycle Track with Planting Buffer (1 of 2)

1. Class II Bike Lane with Striped Buffer (4 lanes)

2. Cycle Track with Planting Buffer, No Parking (4 lanes from Whipple to Woodside)
   CTC Width: +/- 85’
   (7’/4.5’/12’/11’/10’/6’/12’/11’/4.5’/7’)

Class II Bike Lane with Buffer
(4 lanes North of Whipple Road)
CTC Width: +/- 75’
(4.5’/1.5’/11’/11’/12’/6’/12’/11’/1.5’/4.5’)

1 CAMINO REAL CORRIDOR PLAN
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3. Cycle Track with Planting Buffer, No Parking (6 lanes South of Woodside Road) CTC Width: +/- 83' (4.5'/3'/11'/11'/11'/2'/11'/11'/11'/3'/4.5')

Figure 1: Bike Facilities and Parking Concept 1A - Cycle Track with Planting Buffer (2 of 2)
Figure 2: Bike Facilities and Parking Concept 1B - Class II Bike Lanes with Key Curbside Parking Areas (1 of 2)

1. Class II Bike Lane with Striped Buffer (4 lanes North of Whipple Ave) See Concept 1A for illustration. CTC Width: +/- 75' (4'/1.5'/11'/11'/12'/12'/11'/1.5'/4.5')

2. Class II Bike Lane with Striped Buffer, No Parking (4 lanes from Whipple Ave to Brewster Ave) CTC Width: +/- 85' (4'/5'/2.5'/12'/11'/10'/6'/12'/11'/2.5'/5'/4')

3. Curbside Parking & Sharrow at Storefront Areas (4 lanes from Brewster Ave to Broadway) CTC Width: +/- 85' (8'/15'/11'/10'/6'/12'/15'/8')
4. Class II Bike Lane with Striped Buffer, No Parking (6 lanes)

Figure 2: Bike Facilities and Parking Concept 1B - Class II Bike Lanes with Key Curbside Parking Areas (2 of 2)
Disadvantages:

- High traffic volumes and speeds make safety a paramount design concern, and even with fully protected lanes, some cyclists will never feel comfortable biking on El Camino Real and will want alternatives.
- Variable right of way means that in some instances, on-street parking would need to be removed in order to make room for bike lanes and maintain traffic lanes; or curb would need to be moved (a greater expense) for some configurations.

Comparative Discussion of Class II Bike Lanes versus Class IV Cycle Tracks

Both the Class II buffered bike lanes and the Class IV protected cycle tracks would provide continuous bicycle facilities along all of El Camino Real. Class II buffered bike lanes are a less costly solution, requiring only repainting of the existing pavement, and could be implemented quickly or even as a pilot program. Less infrastructure intensive and without physical barriers, they also allow for “mixing” of bicycle facilities with the needs of other modes (such as at right turn pockets and space for buses to pull aside) where the right of way is most constricted. Disadvantages to Class II bike lanes are that by allowing for more mixing areas, they also increase the potential for conflicts. As Figure 3 shows, right-turning cars would need to merge into the bike lane and turn from the curb, requiring any cyclists to pass on the left of the vehicle. Painted buffers do not provide physical barriers and therefore potentially expose cyclists to moving traffic.

Class IV protected cycle tracks do a better job of addressing safety concerns, particularly with the interaction between cyclists and vehicles and buses. As shown in Figure 4, cycle tracks physically separate cyclists from vehicular traffic. Conflicts at intersections can be reduced through the use of a bicycle traffic signal phase, allowing cyclists time to enter (and potentially clear) the intersection before vehicle traffic receives a green light. A greater number of cyclists, across a broader range of ages and abilities, will feel comfortable using a cycle track. However, cycle tracks require more infrastructure investment and installation, making them more expensive and time-consuming to install. Cycle tracks that are an extension of the sidewalk, at the same grade with no physical barrier, can also cause conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians who may not recognize the demarcation of the bicycle facility.

Cycle tracks can also reduce conflicts at intersections by directing cyclists through a curb bulb-out.
2. **Rely only on parallel routes and do not create bike lanes on El Camino Real.**

*Concept:*

Routes roughly parallel to El Camino Real, which are suitable for bike travel, would be identified. If not already designated as bike facilities, each would need to be assessed to determine appropriate design (likely Class II or Class III) and painted. Wayfinding signage or similar demarcation would be required. A parallel route concept is illustrated in Figure 5. This figure identifies two potential routes – one to the north and one to south of El Camino Real. At certain points, the distance from the bicycle routes to El Camino Real are shown, to provide information regarding how far cyclists are removed from thoroughfare and the homes and businesses along it.

*Advantages:*

- Physically separates cyclists from the high-speed, high volume vehicle traffic on El Camino Real
- Creates bike routes that are more comfortable for a broader segment of the population
- Keeps the majority of cyclists away from buses

*Disadvantages:*

- Significant segments of El Camino Real do not have suitable parallel routes (within two blocks of the Corridor)
- Discontinuous parallel routes make route-finding difficult and bike trips longer, and would require unsignalized crossings at intersections, which could be less safe at major roadways such as Jefferson and Whipple
- Parallel routes provide less direct access to homes and businesses located on El Camino Real, and also discourage less experienced cyclists who may not know to map out routes ahead of time
- May need to identify two sets of parallel routes – one on each side of El Camino Real. Additional analysis on the type of bike facility might need to be prepared for each segment, if the segments are not already designated as bike facilities
Figure 3: Class II Bike Lane Typical Intersection
Figure 4: Class IV Cycle Track Typical Intersection
Figure 5: CONCEPT 2
Parallel Routes to El Camino Real
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3. Provide bike lanes on El Camino Real only where reasonable alternatives (within two blocks) do not exist.

*Concept:*

A hybrid approach, this concept would combine elements of the first two, creating a network of bicycle facilities that only utilized El Camino Real where reasonable alternatives (within two blocks) do not exist, and where current physical conditions would result in inconvenient or unsafe routing of cyclists. Wayfinding signage would be required. Figure 6 shows such a hybrid approach, providing routes to the north and the south of El Camino Real along certain segments of the Corridor, and that utilize El Camino Real where the previously mentioned criteria are met.

*Advantages:*

- Keeps the majority of cyclists off of El Camino Real and out of the way of fast-moving, high-volume vehicle traffic as much as feasible
- Creates bike routes that are more comfortable for a larger segment of the population, along some segments
- Keeps the majority of cyclists away from buses for some roadway segments

*Disadvantages:*

- Wayfinding could be a significant challenge
- Cyclists might be forced to make multiple left turns (which are more difficult to make) on and off of El Camino Real in order to follow the prescribed route
- Discontinuous parallel routes make route-finding difficult and bike trips longer, and might require unsignalized crossings at intersections, which could be less safe
- Indirect routes make it difficult for cyclists to access homes and businesses located on El Camino Real on the segments where the route is parallel, and may discourage less experienced cyclists who may not know to map out routes ahead of time
- May need to identify two sets of parallel routes – one on each side of El Camino Real, for most segments. Additional analysis on type of bike facility might need to be prepared for each segment, if the segments are not already designated as bike facilities

**INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS**

- On-street parking
- Transit
- Economic development/small business support
- Pedestrian safety and comfort
Figure 6: CONCEPT 3
Bike Lanes on El Camino Real where Reasonable Alternatives do not Exist
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CONNECTING THE CITY

Regardless of which option is chosen, the following lists recommended improvements to the bicycle network connecting the El Camino Real Corridor with the rest of Redwood City:

- Class II or III bicycle facilities through the Palm Park neighborhood (connecting Woodside Road to Selby Lane) and connecting east to El Camino Real
- Class II or III bicycle facilities through the Downtown/Middlefield and Stambaugh-Heller neighborhoods connecting to El Camino Real, potentially on Maple Street (while Chestnut Street would also be an ideal bike route, it is physically limited by curbs and railroad tracks)

3. Pedestrian Safety and Comfort

WHAT WE HEARD

- El Camino Real is not generally regarded as a safe or pleasant place to be a pedestrian; few go to the Corridor to walk along unless there they have to. Community members point to narrow sidewalks, obstructions in sidewalks, poor lighting, lack of trees, adjacent traffic speed (and noise) and little pedestrian interest (in building design) as the main problems.
- Crossing distances are too wide for some to make it across the roadway in a single signal cycle, and few intersections have safe places for pedestrians to wait in the median.
- The distance between crosswalks on the Corridor is too great.
- There is some interest in creating a pedestrian bridge over El Camino Real to more safely connect neighborhoods to destinations and shopping on the other side, but even those in favor of this idea recognized its challenges.
- The Woodside Road undercrossing is seen by many to be uninviting and unsafe for pedestrians.
- Significant safety concerns exist with people illegally crossing the railroad tracks at grade.
- Lack of safe and clear pedestrian infrastructure at the Sequoia Station shopping center, where it connects to the Caltrain station, is also a concern.

CONCEPTS AND OPTIONS

Improvements to pedestrian safety and comfort will be a high priority in the Corridor Plan. The concepts and options presented in this section are not meant to be seen as “either/or” decisions and should be further refined and incorporated into the Plan. Some variations in the location and nature of improvements may vary based on what other options are selected for other topics.

1. Reduce distances between pedestrian crosswalks.

In numerous instances, the distance between crosswalks on El Camino Real is greater than 1,000 feet (almost a five-minute walk). In order to make it easier, safer, and more convenient to cross El Camino Real on foot, additional crosswalks should be introduced. The locations of these crosswalks should be located to reduce the greatest gaps.
• Between Jefferson Avenue and Vera Avenue (1,265 feet);
• Between Oak Avenue and Charter Street (1,665 feet; Woodside Road is located in this segment); and
• Between Northumberland Avenue and Oakwood Avenue/Dumbarton Avenue (1,150 feet).

Figure 7 shows the location of these potential new crosswalks on a map. New crosswalks on El Camino Real may not have full traffic signals (stop lights). Rather, they might instead be high-visibility crossings with paint, yield signs, and lighted beacons (such as on Jefferson Avenue at Clinton Street). However, new fully signalized intersections may be possible in some locations and may not generate delay if designed correctly. This option could be tested through traffic modeling.

2. Widen sidewalks.

Sidewalks on El Camino Real should be wide enough to comfortably accommodate not just pedestrians, but also various amenities and safety features. These include bus stops with seating and information; trees; lamp posts; street furniture such as trash cans and benches; newspaper boxes and utility boxes; and similar. Pedestrians—including those using wheelchairs or pushing strollers—should be able to pass through unimpeded. Additional space contributes to pedestrian comfort and allows people to maintain a safe distance from adjacent car traffic. Eight feet is considered the minimum sidewalk width; 12 feet minimum is preferred (and is the minimum standard for new development in the existing zoning regulations); sidewalks that are up to 18 feet wide provide even greater space for public uses such as outdoor seating, small plazas, or deeper entryways. Approximately 40 percent of El Camino Real’s sidewalks are narrower than eight feet today.
Figure 7: Pedestrian Comfort and Safety Improvements (1 of 2)

Recommended Improvements

- **City Limits**
- **Frontage Improvements**
  - Sidewalk expansion
  - Infill canopy trees
  - Pedestrian oriented street lighting
- **New Crosswalk with Pedestrian Signal to provide 600’ maximum between crossings**
- **Median Refuge**
- **Corner Bulb-out**

- **Bus Shelter**
- **Add Median Canopy Trees and replace existing conifers and/or small trees**
- **Remove Slip-Lanes**

Wide Sidewalk

Bus Shelter & Pedestrian-Oriented Lighting

Corner Bulb-out

Rain Garden
Figure 7: Pedestrian Comfort and Safety Improvements (2 of 2)

Recommended Improvements

- City Limits
- Frontage Improvements
  - Sidewalk expansion
  - Infill canopy trees
  - Pedestrian oriented street lighting
- New Crosswalk with Pedestrian Signal to provide 600' maximum between crossings
- Bus Shelter
- Add Median Canopy Trees and replace existing conifers and/or small trees
- Remove Slip-lanes

Controlled Mid-Block Crossing with Refuge

Infill Street Trees and Finishings
Priority areas for wider sidewalks include those where sidewalks are currently less than eight feet, where new development occurs within an “activity node”; and/or where excess right of way width exists after other travel priorities are met. These areas include:

- Between Whipple and Hopkins (east side)
- Between Hopkins and Brewster (both sides)
- Between Vera and Roosevelt (both sides)
- Between Roosevelt and Oak (west side)
- Between Hazel and Center (west side)
- Between Charter and Center (east side)
- Between Carlos and Renato (west side)
- Half block on each side of Dumbarton (east side)

Figure 7 indicates where these priority locations for sidewalk widening are located, and additionally where existing sidewalks are less than 12 feet wide. As the figure shows, sidewalk widening is preferable and recommended along almost all of El Camino Real.

3. **Shorten crossing distances with pedestrian refuges and curb bulb-outs.**

Only the crosswalks at Brewster Avenue and Northumberland Avenue have pedestrian “refuges” in the medians, shortening the crossing distances for those who cannot make it all the way across in one light cycle. Pedestrian refuges should be added in medians wherever feasible, and especially at crosswalks that see high volumes of pedestrians or are unusually wide due to streets intersecting at oblique angles, presence of extra turn lanes, and wide curb radii. Figure 7 indicates the recommended location of pedestrian “refuges” at intersections throughout the whole corridor. The highest priority locations for installing pedestrian refuges include the following:

- Whipple
- Broadway
- Jefferson
- Center

Curb bulb-outs also reduce crossing distances. However, bulb-outs reduce the amount of space available for all modes at intersections. On El Camino Real, curb space at intersections is most likely to be used for right turn lanes now or potentially bicycle lanes in the future. Figure 7 indicates potential bulb-out locations for this intervention; however, recommended placement of curb bulb-outs should be finalized after a desired bicycle facility solution is determined and in conjunction with determining placement of median refuges.

4. **Priority area: Woodside Road underpass.**

The Woodside Road underpass would be made safer and more comfortable with the addition of brighter lighting, a physical barrier between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic, and potentially a mural.
or other bright painting on the concrete walls adjacent to the sidewalk. In the southbound direction, just south of the underpass, aging chain-link fence should be replaced with a higher quality fencing material. Just south of the underpass, in the northbound direction, a crosswalk should be marked across Manzanita Street.

In Campbell, the Highway 17 underpass previously was dark and uninviting for pedestrians or cyclists (left). It was recently redesigned to include a wide, well-lit path with landscaping and public art that is welcoming for all users (right).

The Redwood City General Plan calls for removing the overpass, which would be a major project for the long term. Other nearer term opportunities for improving pedestrian safety include removing the slip lanes and traffic islands (such as the configurations at Redwood Avenue and Laurel Street), and replacing them with a more standard intersection configuration. In Figure 7, the location of the slip lanes to be removed and replaced are noted.

5. Other pedestrian amenities to improve aesthetics and comfort.

High priority amenities to improve aesthetics and comfort include pedestrian-scale lighting and street trees throughout the Corridor where not currently provided. These are currently required for new development in the existing zoning regulations, but other mechanisms should be explored to extend them throughout the Corridor independent of new development.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Vehicle travel
- Bicycle facilities
- Transit
- Economic development/small business support
- Community Benefits

CONNECTING THE CITY

Creating a safer and more pleasant experience on El Camino Real for pedestrians and other passers-by will contribute immensely to the City’s overall public image, safety, and economic vitality.
4. Parking

WHAT WE HEARD

- On-street parking is seen by many to be an inefficient use of the limited space on El Camino Real.
- Many were surprised by the low quantity and occupancy of on-street parking on El Camino Real, and were more willing to consider removing it once they had this information.
- Given the opportunity to “design your own roadway,” most participants elected to remove on-street parking and use the space for something else.
- Small businesses that do not have parking on site do rely on El Camino Real street parking for their customers, and people enjoy the convenience of being able to park directly in front of their destination. This is particularly true for seniors and families with children, who are more reliant on cars.
- On-street parking may not be needed where there are large surface parking lots adjacent to the roadway, or where it is underutilized.

CONCEPTS AND OPTIONS

1. Remove on-street parking on El Camino Real in order to use most efficiently use the right of way for movement of people by various modes.

Concept:

Recognizing that on-street parking is not a very efficient use of space on a roadway where right of way cannot be expanded, all on-street parking would be removed in order to make the space available to accomplish other Corridor objectives. Locations are identified where replacement parking could reasonably be provided. Replacement parking would be provided at intervals of no greater than a quarter mile (five-minute walk), with signage provided to direct drivers to nearby parking facilities. In Figure 8, potential locations for replacement off-street parking are roughly identified. These have been sited because of their proximity to an activity “node,” the number of on-street parking spaces proposed to be removed in their proximity and their utilization rate, and the distance to the next replacement parking site.

Advantages:

- Increases flexibility for use of the right of way.
- Proactively identifies locations for consolidated, shared parking along the Corridor.
- Improves traffic flow, as drivers will not slow and stop in the travel lane to back into parallel parking, or slow and circle looking for parking on El Camino Real.
-Reduces potential conflicts between cyclists and drivers pulling in and out of parking spaces, and opening car doors.
- Improves visibility of business frontages and signage, and improves visibility at corners for cars pulling into traffic on El Camino Real.
Disadvantages:

- Removes a parking resource that many see as convenient and necessary for small businesses without their own off-street parking lots.
- On-street parked cars provide a buffer between pedestrians and fast-moving vehicle traffic (however, buffered bike lanes or cycle tracks can also provide this service), and can also be a buffer between vehicle traffic and curb-adjacent bike lanes.

2. Retain on-street parking on El Camino Real as much as feasible while accomplishing other objectives.

Concept:

Selectively remove on-street parking in areas that meet certain criteria: where right of way is most constrained and could reasonably be used to meet another need (such as bike lanes, transit pull-outs, pedestrian amenities, etc.); where ample on-site parking on adjacent lots is present; and/or where utilization is low. Selectively retain on-street parking where it is heavily used by patrons of local businesses that lack on-site parking, and where other parking options are not available. For example, in Figure 2, Class II bike lanes without parking are indicated along most of El Camino Real. However, between Brewster and Broadway and Madison and Vera, on-street parking remains; due to space constraints, a Class III bike facility (sharrows) are provided along those segments.

Advantages:

- Keeps parking where it is most needed and frees up some ROW for other purposes.

Disadvantages:

- Does not free up as much ROW for other modes, limiting the design options to meet other objectives.
- Could result in discontinuous bicycle facilities and/or an inconsistent roadway design.
- Maintains problems associated with having on-street parallel parking on a busy roadway, including disrupted vehicle flow, conflicts with cyclists, and reduced visibility for business frontages and for drivers entering the roadway.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Bicycle facilities
- Pedestrian safety and comfort
- Transit
- Economic development/small business support
- Land use, zoning, and activity centers
Potential Location of Accommodating Lost On-Street Parking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On-street Spaces</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0-48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>43-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>50-94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0-50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>76-100%</td>
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Figure 8: Potential Locations for Off-Street Parking
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CONNECTING THE CITY

If alternative locations for parking are identified, the Plan must carefully consider locations, and what other land uses (adjacent to the Corridor) would use it.

Where the El Camino Real Corridor Plan area passes through Downtown, the Plan should consider how parking on and adjacent to the Corridor could be incorporated into the existing Downtown parking management program.

5. Land Use, Zoning, and Activity Centers

WHAT WE HEARD

- When people come to El Camino Real Corridor today, they are typically going to the transit station, to shop (particularly at Safeway/Sequoia Station, Target, and Whole Foods). Some are also headed to City Hall, or crossing it at various points to get to Downtown.

- Affordable housing remains a priority, and this was frequently cited as a type of development that many would like to see.

- At the same time, some community members also attributed El Camino Real’s traffic congestion (and the City’s taxed infrastructure overall) to the amount of new development, and were not eager to see more construction on the Corridor.

- Some expressed support for taller buildings than are currently present, which would support transit, walkability, and a mix of uses. Traffic resulting from more intense development would have to be mitigated.

- Setbacks, upper story step-backs, buffers, and high quality design should be employed to protect adjacent neighborhoods at the rear of buildings on the Corridor. Good urban design, signage, and architecture should create pleasant, pedestrian-friendly buildings along the face of El Camino Real.

- Current development patterns are seen as inefficient and auto-oriented.

- Some believe that the amount of parking that is required for new development is too high and that it is underutilized, and can be a constraint to developers.

- The prevalence of small, narrow lots and diverse ownership is a hurdle to redevelopment.

CONCEPTS AND OPTIONS

1. Create a series of small activity “nodes” along the Corridor.

Concept:

This concept would continue to support development close to Downtown, but would also intentionally foster reinvestment in other “nodes” along the Corridor, creating smaller activity centers near neighborhoods, where clusters of small businesses already exist. With the exception of a slightly larger node near Downtown, the “nodes” would extend approximately one-quarter mile in length—a five-minute walk end to end—and would be centered roughly:
From Whipple Avenue to just south of Hopkins Avenue
From Brewster Avenue to Jefferson Avenue
From Maple Street to Pine Street
Around Charter Street

Figure 9 maps these activity centers. Highlighted are potential nodes, the parcels that may see zoning changes or targeted investments to strengthen these activity centers. Opportunity sites, which are the parcels that are most likely to experience reinvestment or new development in the long term, are also shown.¹

Advantages:

- Distributes energy and vitality throughout the Corridor, supporting local businesses outside Downtown
- Promotes a broader range of travel options by creating destinations or activity centers closer to the residential areas parallel to El Camino Real; residents could walk to a neighborhood restaurant with collection of small shops rather than drive to Downtown
- Has the potential to create streetscape improvements and promote walkability along a greater length of the Corridor, if new development makes these improvements
- Supports shared parking concepts, with publicly available parking located in or near these smaller nodes along the Corridor

Disadvantages:

- There may be less market support for multiple nodes of intense development, since Downtown is the City’s strongest economic area and has the most transit service
- Placing new development near Woodside Road has the potential to further impact intersections that are already performing at a poor level of service for vehicle travel
- May require more substantial zoning changes and other economic development actions on the part of the City

2. Continue to focus activity nearest Downtown.

Concept:

Building on the success of Downtown Redwood City and proximity to the transit center, this land use concept maintains the current approach of the General Plan and Downtown Precise Plan by focusing the greatest amount and intensity of future development on the stretch of the El Camino Real Corridor that is closest to Downtown—roughly between Brewster Avenue and Main Street—and where the Downtown Precise Plan zoning applies. This concept is mapped in Figure 10.

¹ For further information on how opportunity sites are determined, see Section 4.5 in the Redwood City El Camino Real Corridor Plan Existing Conditions Memorandum #1.
Figure 9: Small Activity "Nodes" Concept

Potential Opportunity Sites By Category:
- Vacant
- Underutilized (AV Ratio less than or equal to 0.5)
- Underutilized (AV Ratio over 0.5 and less than 1.0)
- Current Development Projects

Potential Activity Centers:
- 1/4 mile (5 minute walk)
- 2/5 mile (10 minute walk)
Figure 10: Potential Locations for New Parking

- 25 on-street spaces, 20-40% occupancy
- 44 on-street spaces, 50-94% occupancy
- 8 on-street spaces, 0-50% occupancy
- 48 on-street spaces, 76-100% occupancy
- 27 on-street spaces, 69-86% occupancy
- 27 on-street spaces, 0-48% occupancy
- 29 on-street spaces, 62% occupancy

Figure 10: Focus Activity Near Downtown Concept

Potential Opportunity Sites By Category:
- Vacant
- Underutilized (AV Ratio less than or equal to 0.5)
- Underutilized (AV Ratio over 0.5 and less than 1.0)
- Current Development Projects

Potential Activity Centers:

- Caltrain Station
- Caltrain
- US Highway
- State Highway
- Ramps
- Railroads
- Potential New Streets
- Study Area Parcels
- El Camino Real Corridor Planning Boundary
- Downtown Precise Plan Boundary
- Redwood City Limits

Potential Node

- Potential Activity Center/Node

Data Source: City of Redwood City GIS, 2016; San Mateo County Geographic Information Systems, 2016; ESRI, 2016; Dye & Partners, 2016
Advantages:

- Positions development to be able to take best advantage of transit, both Caltrain and SamTrans (and any potential additional transit, such as a streetcar or shuttle), fostering reduced auto dependency
- Contributes to the vitality and momentum of Downtown Redwood City
- Coincides with current zoning for the Downtown Precise Plan district
- Supports the long-term redevelopment of the Sequoia Station shopping center

Disadvantages:

- Concentrating the greatest intensity of development in one place may put more strain on infrastructure in a smaller area, and not adequately support businesses elsewhere
- Many of the parcels in the target area are small, narrow, have disparate ownership, and/or are small local businesses—i.e., many are not good redevelopment candidates
- Places new development in an area that has already seen substantial investment in the last few years, which may be a cause for concern among some residents

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Walkability and streetscape
- Vehicle travel
- Economic development/small business support
- Community Benefits

CONNECTING THE CITY

Encouraging production of housing on the Corridor, particularly nearest the transit center, can help address the City’s housing supply and affordability challenges.

Regardless of which option is pursued, the Corridor Plan will recommend changes to the existing zoning regulations to ensure that adjacent neighborhoods are protected and do not see adverse impacts associated with building heights, design, and intensity. Potential supplements to the zoning regulations to be explored may include:

- Visual cues to show the transition from commercial to residential areas (such as neighborhood entry signage, paving treatments, landscaping elements, etc.); and
- Transfer of development rights for properties adjacent to low scale residential areas, or otherwise restrict properties to maintain a low-scale or existing character on their parcel in exchange for transferring development rights to another more appropriate location.
6. Transit

WHAT WE HEARD

- Community members value bus service on El Camino Real and don’t want to lose it, but would appreciate shorter headways.

- It is frustrating to have SamTrans buses moving in the same, slow traffic as all the cars.

- Caltrain is a great resource—especially the fact that Redwood City has Baby Bullet service—but it has gotten too crowded. Some are concerned with its ability to handle more ridership that more development may bring.

- It is difficult to access Caltrain/transit station from the western neighborhoods, as well as from Redwood Shores; more bus service serving Woodside Plaza and Farm Hill was mentioned by many.

- There is some enthusiasm for a streetcar on Broadway; but also support for a shuttle service that would have more flexibility and cost less, like the Stanford Marguerite or Emery Go-Round.

- When the City’s transit survey asked what other means people would consider for accessing the Caltrain station, if it were made possible or more convenient, the most popular response was bus or shuttle.

- The City’s transit survey also asked what changes people would like to see at the Transit Center, and the most popular response was “better or more frequent bus connections to places I need to go.”

CONCEPTS AND OPTIONS

SamTrans completed the El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit Phasing Study in 2014, which concluded that full Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with dedicated lanes for transit is not feasible in the short term but may be feasible in the long term (i.e. 2040) if significant new development occurs throughout the Corridor. In the short- to intermediate-term (2020+), two options were recommended:

- Full Rapid bus (making fewer stops, operating in mixed flow traffic) service layered on top of the regular El Camino Real local service; or

- A Hybrid Rapid bus service, which replaces the current local service, making fewer stops than the local but more stops than a full Rapid.

Therefore, dedicating a lane to transit service is not recommended for consideration, at least not within the time horizon of the Corridor Plan. Other features that improve bus service for either of these options (or for other transit providers, such as commuter shuttles and urban circulators, discussed below) follow.
1. **Implement transit signal priority.**

*Concept:*

Transit signal priority (TSP) is a technology that coordinates signal timing with bus movement. In passive TSP, the signals are programmed to align with transit times and/or optimize general traffic flow. In active TSP, the signals communicate directly with the buses to grant the bus priority when it is detected.

*Advantages:*

- Helps reduce variability in bus travel and arrival times
- Can result in smoother traffic flow for all vehicles

*Disadvantages:*

- Passive TSP may not be truly effective in times of greatest congestion

2. **Install bus bulb-outs.**

*Concept:*

Located at a bus stop, bus bulb-outs are an extension of the curb to be adjacent with the right-most vehicle travel lane. Buses stop directly in the travel lane for passenger boarding, without pulling in or out of traffic.

*Advantages:*

- Reduce bus merge times
- Create more space at bus stops for shelters, boarding areas, and street furniture
Disadvantages:

- Negatively impact traffic flow, as vehicles must stop behind buses or move around them
- Interrupt other uses that may be curb-adjacent, such as right turn lanes and parking
- Accommodating a curb-running bike lane and a bus bulb-out at the same location could be challenging; design alternatives could include a raised bike lane going through the bus bulb-out

3. Create queue-jump opportunities in select locations.

Concept:

Queue jumping allows buses to move ahead of the rest of vehicle traffic in dedicated segments of roadway, at signal-controlled intersections. Queue jump lanes may be right-turn lanes where the bus is allowed a through movement.

Queue jumping provides preference to buses at intersections. Source: AC Transit
Advantages:

- Improves transit travel time by allowing the bus to “jump” ahead of the other vehicles
- Can take advantage of existing extra right of way at intersections (where applicable)

Disadvantages:

- Available space may not be present at all intersections, if a right-turn lane or parking area does not exist
- Has the potential to create conflicts with bike lanes and right-turning cars
- Could increase delay for non-transit vehicles

4. Enhance bus stops along El Camino Real.

At a minimum, all bus stops on El Camino Real should include benches and schedule information. Additional enhancements should include shelters, real-time bus arrival information, and lighting. A BRT or Rapid bus service may also include specialized branding, which should be reflected at the appropriate stops as well.

5. Redesign the Sequoia Station Transit Center and improve connections to Caltrain.

As a separate effort, the City is conducting design studies for the Transit Center, including pedestrian, shuttle, taxi, and bicycle connections as well as train platform improvements and inefficiencies in the surrounding parking lots. The City is also studying the feasibility of a streetcar line, including economic analysis of a streetcar or urban circulator along Broadway connecting the Downtown to Stanford in Redwood City. While these efforts are separate from the El Camino Real Corridor Plan, the study areas (near Downtown and the Transit Center) overlap, and the efforts and recommendations are being coordinated.

6. Establish a Corridor-wide Transportation Management Association (TMA).

A Transportation Management Association (TMA) is an organization of businesses—and in some cases may include a partnership with a public agency or agencies—focusing on providing and/or promoting a range of transportation options within a given area to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips. TMAs can be an effective way for small businesses to provide these services and options to their employees by pooling resources. Businesses on the El Camino Real Corridor could form their own TMA or partner with an existing TMA, such as San Mateo County’s commute.org.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Vehicle travel
- Bicycle facilities
- Pedestrian safety and comfort
CONNECTING THE CITY

Facilitating transit along El Camino Real helps lessen the traffic burden on the roadway and helps maintain a reliable, affordable, sustainable transportation option for the community. However, in order for more people to choose transit for more trips, the bus network must be strengthened throughout the city, linking to El Camino Real at the Transit Center and various other points along the Corridor. This could be accomplished through increased SamTrans service and/or through provision of commuter shuttles (some already present) or a separate City shuttle bus or urban circulator.

7. Vehicle Travel and Traffic

WHAT WE HEARD

- Generally, the community has a negative opinion of the amount of traffic congestion present on El Camino Real today.
- There is general acknowledgement of the fact that El Camino Real cannot or should not be widened to add vehicle travel lanes, so the solution to traffic congestion must come through other means.
- Due to the amount of congestion, there is virtually no support for removing a vehicle travel lane to allocate that space to another purpose; changes to the right of way allocation should only involve the parking lane/shoulder.
- Many feel that the City and region as a whole have allowed for too much new development without adequately mitigating traffic impacts.
- Specific problem areas mentioned included left turn queues backing up into travel lanes, the short distance between the Roosevelt Avenue and Chestnut Street lights, the design of the Whipple Avenue/El Camino Real intersection, and the area around the Woodside Road interchange.
- Many would like to understand what percentage of vehicle travel on El Camino Real is “pass-through” traffic (people just traveling through Redwood City with no intention of stopping) versus local traffic.

OPTIONS AND CONCEPTS

The City, in conjunction with Caltrans (who owns the El Camino Real ROW) is already engaging in numerous strategies to improve vehicle traffic flow through Redwood City, such as ensuring that traffic signals are timed and synchronized. In addition, none of the options presented in this report recommend removing a vehicle travel lane, so at a minimum, the current number of vehicle travel lanes (four north of Woodside Road and six south of Woodside Road) is recommended to remain the same.

In addition to the reconfigurations proposed in the Bicycle section above, the following is an option for the use of the ROW between the curbs:
Use parking lane for a third travel lane north of Woodside Road during the peak hour.

Concept:

North of Woodside Road, use the parking lane as a third vehicle travel lane in the peak direction during the corresponding peak hour. This can be achieved through the use of parking restriction signage.

Advantages:

- Provides additional north-south vehicle capacity
- May reduce delay during peak hours, if traffic volumes do not increase

Disadvantages:

- May preclude the ability to add bike lanes, curb bulb-outs and bus bulb-outs
- May result in decreased comfort for pedestrians and other users of sidewalks
- Has the potential to attract more through traffic which would nullify any reduction in delay

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Bicycle facilities
- Transit
- Parking
- Pedestrian safety and comfort

CONNECTING THE CITY

El Camino Real is an important artery in the city and region’s larger roadway network. Any changes to the roadway design and traffic throughput capacity will have effects on the vehicle travel experience elsewhere, and the impacts are difficult to isolate. The reverse is also true—improvements to other roads such as Highway 101 may also have an effect on the El Camino Real Corridor.

8. Economic Development and Small Business Support

WHAT WE HEARD

- Most community members, when going to the El Camino Real Corridor today, are going to shop. The Corridor is an important commercial center.
- Making the Corridor more pedestrian-friendly would positively impact the local businesses.
El Camino Real is many people’s only exposure to Redwood City, and we are not putting our best face forward with the way it looks today.

The entire Corridor does not need to be retail, as there is probably not market support for that many shops. A broad mix of uses should be considered and encouraged, and retail could be clustered in a few activity centers.

The City should facilitate parcel assembly to help make new projects economically feasible.

Existing businesses that could use a “facelift” are often hesitant to do so because improvements trigger expensive upgrades to bring the buildings up to code.

There is concern that new development raises prices and pushes out older established businesses; people value small independent businesses on the Corridor.

**OPTIONS AND CONCEPTS**

**Supporting Small Businesses.**

A small business support program could supply grant funds for regulatory compliance (e.g., code upgrades) and business advisory services. Marketing assistance grant funds could be supplied for professional marketing strategy and marketing implementation support.

**Improving Existing Buildings.**

A façade improvement program could grant funds for aesthetic improvements to building exteriors. A sales tax reimbursement program could provide partial reimbursement of tax revenue for building improvements or other priority uses.

In addition, new development projects could offer to cover the cost of façade improvements for neighboring businesses (as SummerHill did for the Lane on the Boulevard project) as part of a community benefits package.

**Promoting economic development through public realm improvements.**

Establishing a Corridor Business Assessment District could create the funds for a maintenance program to provide regular cleaning and upkeep. In addition, businesses that are financially committed to the Corridor are more likely to take pride and ownership in maintaining their own public face.

**Redevelopment Program.**

A tenant retention program could include requirements to maintain existing businesses in redevelopment projects (potentially part of a community benefits program; see below). A parcel assembly density bonus could provide entitlement enhancement for projects that assemble small sites.
INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Land use, zoning, and activity centers
- Pedestrian comfort and safety
- Parking
- Community Benefits

CONNECTING THE CITY

Strengthening the local economy and supporting businesses benefits the city at large. Merchants are successful, residents and visitors have more options for shopping and services, and the City’s tax base increases, allowing it to provide important community services and invest in needed infrastructure.

9. Community Benefits

WHAT WE HEARD

- Affordable housing is the top priority for community benefits on El Camino Real – both provision of new affordable housing and protection/retention of existing affordable housing. Housing is needed overall, and providing housing close to transit is seen as a good idea.

- Provision of parks and other publicly-accessible open space along the Corridor is also desirable, especially since the Corridor lacks good access today.

- Bicycle, pedestrian, and streetscape improvements are also seen as a community benefit to which the development community could contribute.

OPTIONS AND CONCEPTS

Redwood City’s approach to community benefit leaves open various options for pursuing these types of agreements, which can be tailored to match the characteristics of a particular development project, geographic area, or plan. The Corridor Plan should include policies that specify the range and type of community benefits that would be considered acceptable and most desirable. Multiple approaches should be considered for how community benefits could be determined and conferred, as numerous strategies are possible—ranging from impact fees to development incentives to voluntary contributions.

Regardless of approach, it will be important to state clearly in the Plan that provision of community benefits (beyond those to be garnered through impact fees) is voluntary on the part of developers. All projects will be subject to the City’s standard impact-related fees and requirements, but the provision of benefits above and beyond these cannot be mandated.
INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CORRIDOR PLAN COMPONENTS

- Land use, zoning, and activity centers
- Pedestrian comfort and safety
- Economic development and small business support

CONNECTING THE CITY

Ensuring that the entire Redwood City community benefits from new investment and development in the city has emerged in recent years as a top priority. Through Partnership Redwood City, the community has outlined a framework for garnering community benefits through collaboration with businesses, community groups, residents, property owners, and developers. Applying this framework to the El Camino Real Corridor Plan area will help ensure that as the Corridor sees new development over time, benefits accrue not just to the planning area but to the community at large.