

**Community Development
Department**

Planning Division
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***El Camino Real Corridor Plan
Citizens Advisory Group***

Kevin Bondonno (Chair)
Marc Manuel (Vice Chair)
Roger Buckhout
Erin Callaghan
Stacy Huisman
Brian Jaffe
Stephanie Kolkka
Alma Montalvo
Elliot Rivas
Muhammad Safdari

**January 18, 2017
Meeting Summary**

**7:00PM
City Council Chambers**

PRESENT: Chair Bondonno, Vice Chair Manuel, Members Buckhout, Callaghan, Huisman, Jaffe, Kolkka, Montalvo, Rivas, Safdari

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Planning Manager Steven Turner; Lindy Chan; Diana O'Dell; Apollo Rojas

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

NEW ITEMS:

Introductions

Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) member roll call.

Staff Presentation - Lindy Chan

Ms. Chan gave a presentation, introducing staff and providing an overview of the project timeline. The CAG discussion will be focused on prioritizing streetscape improvements within the El Camino Real right-of-way by ranking the uses and understanding the trade-offs. As the right-of-way is fixed, prioritizing one option impacts how we address the other streetscape options. This will in turn be used to help us narrow down and refine the options for our next CAG meeting. She emphasized the importance of feedback at this stage, as the team is considering concepts.

Consultant Presentation – Sophie Martin & Terry Bottomley

Sophie Martin of Dyett & Bhatia and Terry Bottomley of Bottomley Associates gave a presentation. (see [PowerPoint presentation](#)). Together they summarized the options and considerations for bicycle lanes on, and off, El Camino, on-street parking, transit, and pedestrian safety. The presentation concluded with discussion points for consideration on each topic.

CAG DISCUSSION:

The Committee questioned current bicycle ridership and potential impacts of bike lanes on emergency access, property values, and parking. While bulb-outs were not supported, the group thought refuge islands were a good idea for pedestrian crossings, especially if created naturally from the protected bike lanes to reduce travel distance. The group also discussed the importance of cleanliness, trees, signage, and parking for certain businesses who rely on corridor parking. These elements could still be achieved, even if not in the right-of-way. The focus of this space should be on moving people.

If protected bike lanes could improve vehicular traffic, they should be on El Camino Real throughout. There was no support for sharrows anywhere. It would be so jarring to go from protected bike lane to sharrows. There is a danger in watering a bike lane down so much and rendering it useless. There needs to be predictability and continuity with intersection design. In addition, the plan is a long-term view of our community, which will want to be more conducive to mass transit and cycling. Protected bike lanes would act as a buffer between pedestrians and cars and provide bike routes safe for families and commuters. They may also bring more cyclists on to El Camino.

The beautification will encourage walking and mitigate parking loss. The loss of parking should be made up for somewhere else. It would be good to clearly make out what the parking situation will look like in the next iteration.

Increased safety is critical for pedestrian crossings, especially for Broadway & James intersection for Sequoia High School students. New pedestrian crossings should require some user input, so when there is no pedestrian waiting to cross the street, car traffic flows. We need more cross-walks and they all need to be safe. If they are more than ¼ mile apart, people will jaywalk.

The group didn't recommend a reduction or increase in traffic lanes; rather the approach is to reduce or avoid the creation of any bottlenecks. Keep continuity along the corridor to make it predictable for drivers (local and afar). For buses, need more information on bus bulb outs and the other options.

The general consensus was the following priorities:

- 1. Bicycles / cars
 - 2. Transit
 - 3. Pedestrians
 - 4. Parking
- } Aesthetics

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Adam Cozzette – Safety for cyclists is not optional. It is a professional and ethical obligation to provide safety for cyclists if this plan is going to provide a bike lane. Once, I was riding on El Camino Real, in sharrows, and a car driving behind me laid on horn and passed right by me within inches. I am avoiding El Camino Real now and will likely find a new dentist who is not located on El Camino Real. I think there can be ways to mitigate businesses' loss of parking. I don't want to trivialize businesses, we still need to think about their parking needs, but if there is a bike lane safety is key.

Kris Johnson – Gave handouts and talked about zoning and questioned why it is not being considered in the corridor plan. We prescribe to Grand Boulevard Initiative. 89 projects listed on web. Most are 5 stories or under. One was approved last night by our Planning Commission. Sequoia Station is a very important part of plan. Current zoning allows 10 stories along El Camino Real and 12 stories along the tracks. That's a signature piece of property. Why aren't we here to talk about zoning? Consider adding it to our scope. We should add FAR into the mix.

John Lanbein – I am encouraged about the drift of this conversation that you're having. I want to think about the vehicles and bikes all along El Camino Real. It would be great if Redwood City plans for the future. People won't just be using single-occupancy vehicles in the future.

Eva Nazarewicz – Very exciting to see the presentation. A few comments about pedestrians and bikes. My husband and I moved to Redwood City 2 years ago. We used to live in San Francisco. We love that we can walk to everything here. Take Caltrain. Get our groceries at Whole Foods. We are very active pedestrians. It is not very fun to be a pedestrian on El Camino Real. My husband is a hard-core cyclist (estimates that 10% of cyclists fall into this group). Then there is everyone else – that's me (estimates that 90% of cyclists fall into this group). The cycle track will only get the folks like me to bike on El Camino Real.

Billy James – Bike lanes need to be continuous from one end of El Camino Real to another (within Redwood City). I spoke to the owner of Chain Reaction, a bike shop on El Camino Real. He likes the idea of protected cycle tracks, but he is concerned about eliminating parking. Will people who move into these building on El Camino Real, will they push strollers, and will those strollers fit on El Camino Real? Will there be enough retail to serve them? Please consider public art! Bus stop – often on the roadway there will be a concrete pad set up for bus, and where it meets with asphalt, it can hazard for cyclists when the asphalt degrades.

Robert Page – I've been very encouraged by what I heard from the group. It is important to have a continuous bike lane on El Camino Real. If we're going to get lot of people to bike on El Camino Real, the bike facility needs to be protected. It is important that the design be consistent through Redwood City.

Emma Shlaes – Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition. We support protected bikeways on El Camino Real. Studies have shown that they make everyone on road feel safer. They get more people biking, more people shopping. Most daily trips are under 5 miles. There was a question from the group about who is biking? Recreational riders. People going to school, work, running errands. This type of facility can really help.

Garrett Bruer – I'm glad to hear that other new residents to Redwood City are showing up. I picked Redwood City because it's in between lots of jobs. I would have biked to Caltrain if El Camino Real wasn't so scary. I like transit best. Hate driving El Camino Real. It's important to tie it all together. If the stretch of El Camino Real in Redwood City looked noticeably nicer than in the adjacent jurisdictions, people would notice, remember, and frequent businesses there. Sequoia Station is a huge opportunity.

Matthew Self – I just moved here. Excited about the level of support. It is all about safety. There is a binary- if it is safe then people will ride; if it is not safe then people will not ride. There is a latent desire to ride bikes along El Camino. Palo Alto and other areas have nice routes that get a ton of use. Even in San Francisco where it used to be a nightmare to ride, there has been a resurgence and protected bike lanes/routes have helped. Painted buffers are not attractive (and not safe) and NO SHARROWS. It is confusing to people. Question the need for 11' and 12' travel lanes for non-trucks. 10' might be better. We should look at reducing the width of existing vehicle lanes and should look at planting trees either in the center median or along the bike lane.

Andrew Boone – San Jose resident; used to live in Palo Alto and ride El Camino regularly. Has over 10,000 miles traveled cycling and considers himself an expert urban cyclist. Even so, still terrified for his life to bike on El Camino. Has had negative experience with safety and harassment along the street. Atherton and San Carlos currently feel safer to ride on El Camino. Current Redwood City El Camino design encourages cars to ride fast. If the intent of the El Camino Corridor plan is to create a complete street then it should not have an alternate parallel bike route. There needs to be separate bike lanes to be part of a complete street. This requires separated bike lanes all the way through. I am glad to see the support from the people and see that the panel agrees. Restripe the parking lane and get some more space. As for sidewalks, I do not think we will get if we wait for developers to redevelop sites then it will not happen.

Isabella Chu – Think about the future. Driving subsidizes cycling because roads are paid for (and maintained) by cars. A protected bikeway throughout the corridor is important. A bike way that dumps into a roadway is the same as a roadway that dumps onto an airport tarmac. Don't stop thinking about the borders of the city. I am thankful for the thoughtfulness of this group.

Karen Davis – I have lived her for 29 years and you have my full support for either a class IV or class II throughout the corridor. My ranking would be Bicycles/Cars -> Transit -> Pedestrians. A note about speaking for the hearing impaired. Make sure to speak into the microphones during the next meeting.

Massoud Badakhshan – Gleb Music has been around for 77 years. Do not forget about loading for businesses and delivery loading. My preference would be to have a North/South protected bike lane in the center median protected by landscaping. This could also act as a pedestrian refuge island.

- Public Comment Closed -

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned to the next CAG meeting, to be scheduled at a later time. The Planning Commission receive a status update on the Corridor Plan, tentatively scheduled for **February 21 2017** at the City of Redwood City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063. Public notification will be provided at that time.