

Neighborhood Improvement Team Meeting

General Meeting, Senior Center

October 22, 2016, 10:00am-12:00pm

City Staff Present: Garrett Evans, Fritz McKinley, Don Buchanan, Kolette Simonton, Laura Wright, Maria Aliotti, Sharon Jackson, Kristin Pollot, Richard Abono, Bobby Joaquin, Jill Hecht, Lt. Phil Galer, Myla Rivers

City Clerk: Alice Evenson

Mayor Ben Johnson

Federal Glover's Office Rep: Ed Diokno

Planning Commission Member: Mark Gargalakis

Number of Residents attended: 21

WELCOME – Garrett Evans, Assistant City Manager

- Welcome
- I started off as an analyst here and worked my way up
- These meetings are designed so you can help us
- We need you to contact us with any questions or concerns by email, phone, or web
- Approximately 70,000 citizens and only 265 employees, we need your help
- Can even enter requests through our Government Outreach system which forces us to abide by timelines
- Many members that help this city run
 - Kolette Simonton – Economic Development/Waterfront
 - Laura Wright – Environmental Affairs and about 18 other franchises including NIT meetings
 - Maria Aliotti – Development Manager for the Successor Agency, CDBG, and Housing Authority
 - Jill Hecht – Assistant Community Development Director overseeing Building, Planning, Engineering and involved with California Theater
 - Richard Abono – Engineering Department
 - Kristin Pollot – Planning Manager
 - Bobby Joaquin – Public Works Supervisor
 - Don Buchanan – Supervisor for Parks Maintenance Division
 - Lt. Phil Galer – Police Department now has 81 sworn officers which is the highest number of officers ever
 - Myla Rivers – Code Enforcement

*QUESTIONS/ANSWERS (answers marked with ** in blue)*

- Why doesn't the Police Department or Code Enforcement enforce the Shopping Cart Ordinance? I drive down Harbor Street every morning and see multiple people with sometimes two shopping carts.

**We are looking to improve on this. Yes we have an ordinance but we need to work with businesses and figure out how to eliminate the carts from being taken. We don't have an impound fee but are looking to possibly add one. If you see them, call Code Enforcement or go to our Go Gov app and add a service request. We pick up between 5-500 carts every week and store them in our yard.

- I use the hotline but that is reactive. The PD drives right by people in the morning pushing their carts, why not stop and cite them?

**If you see police officers in the morning driving by around 7:00am or 8:00am they are most likely on their way to a call or traffic collision. Our Day Shift crew consists of 4-5 officers at that time and routinely we get called on 3-4 traffic collisions in the morning. There is a balance of shopping cart details and other details. We do want to be accountable for getting the carts off of the street. Please call so that they can be retrieved. Also, we have to remember that the items in the carts are someone's belongings. They may not be of value to you or me but it is to them. If we confiscate their cart we can't just throw the items away, we have to itemize everything which could potentially take an hour and a half, which takes an officer off of the street for that amount of time.

- Harbor is a problematic corridor. This ordinance is not new. We've had it for years. I wish the City/PD would enforce it.

**We will be setting new conditions on what recycle centers can allow, and they are not allowed to accept recyclables brought in via shopping cart if they want to continue operating in our City. We are transitioning with new conditions with the stores also.

- What kind of homeless population do we have?

**We don't have an exact number but we can get one. Officer Lambert & Officer Thomas are our officers in charge of Homeless Encampments and Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) respectively. Buchanan Park ravine has been a problem encampment and is cleaned out on a regular basis. The PD serves and "eviction" notice and after 72 hours it gets cleaned up. We had one officer tied up for 4-2 hours just to remove one man from a sidewalk encampment. Some encampments can take up to a week to remove.

**We will follow up w a population count.

- Is there a place for homeless to go in the winter?

**We have transitional facilities, but Concord has the biggest facility.

- How will you handle the neighborhood parking for BART?

**We've had meetings with the residents of High School Village and are currently working on ways to minimize impacts to the neighborhoods. Permit parking has worked well in the Oak Hills neighborhood and we are considering implementing a similar program for the High School Village neighborhood.

- Will there be any type of security at or around the BART station?

BART will have cameras, as will we. There will be 20 cameras at the Pittsburg center and we are prepping for more.

- It sounds like the parking facility at this new station is getting smaller and smaller. Will there be parking for elderly or handicap and will there be an accessible path of travel from the lot on Bliss to the BART station?

**This is slated to be an infill station, not the big ones that Hillcrest and Bay Point are. It's meant for people to walk/bike or use public transportation to get to. Both BART and the City will be promoting other methods of transportation. In addition, there is a BART Park & Ride lot on Bliss Avenue which is less than a 10 minute walk to the station. It will be reconfigured for 200+ parking spaces. We've teamed up with BART to design & build an accessible, safe walking path from Bliss Avenue parking to the station on Railroad Avenue @ California Avenue. We will also be creating a bike path to BART and will include bike lockers and racks at the station.

- What are the structures being built across the high school on Harbor Street and School Street?

**This will be a subdivision with 83 single family homes similar to Clipper Cove.

- Why didn't the school district purchase the land and make more classrooms for the kids?

**There will be more classrooms built by the baseball field.

- With BART coming in there will be a lot of thru traffic through High School Village. Can we make this a gated community? There is already high density traffic on Army Street and Navy Street.

**We are considering all of our options. On November 17th we will have another meeting about High School Village and will look at the options like permit parking, red curb, etc. As much participation from the residents would be helpful to us.

- BART population has exploded since school started. Can't the City nudge BART for parking garages at Hillcrest or Bay Point stations so people aren't walking ¼ mile in the rain? I drive to Concord BART and pay \$2.50 less to park.

**We are aware of the problem with parking. We would love to see a parking garage or the reuse of the surface parking lot to include a garage. The City has approved a master plan for the area surrounding the Bay Point station that includes plans for a future parking garage.

- Can BART add more trains and not just replace old ones for new ones?

**BART recognizes that the accessibility is not where it should be.

- Thanks for the right east bound turn lane on Loveridge Road.
- Is the lot across from Safeway on Bailey Road the BART overflow parking?

**It has become an unofficial overflow parking area, but the land belongs to the County and they are currently looking for a developer to develop it.

- When are the new BART stations scheduled to open?

**Between December 2017 and March 2018.

- Kudos to keeping the parks and streets clean with street sweepers, etc. I use the Go Gov app for vehicles and shopping carts. I want to give Public Works a compliment because they always respond to pick items up in a timely manner.
- How will we control the air quality with all of the industrial development at the Waterfront?

**We've been working for a year and a half with Air Quality Control District. We want an air station in our city even though several of our industrial facilities have shut down. The bigger contributors to impacts of air quality are going away so we are curious to what is causing pollution. Transportation is the number one contributor. There are a lot of cars on Hwy 4. Transportation issues, population and growth are different contributors. A monitoring station is going in in our city and we've also partnered with the school district to eliminate parents idling their cars while waiting to pick kids up from school. In addition, it is important to note that every new project coming into the city is subject to some level of environmental review, which includes analysis related to air quality impacts (when warranted).

- How can we help High School kids with jobs?

**We work with high school students with job programs and also have Future Build. This takes 40-45 people and teaches them trades to move on in life.

- Why not use our Federal Transportation dollars for something like the Altamont Commuter Express Train and have a train going from Tracy to Jack London Square?

**CCTA is looking at other creative ways to move people. There are Amtrak commuter trains in operation.

- Amtrak runs too late and we have available railroad tracks that aren't being used.
- Kudos to the cameras on Hwy 4!

**The PD, Fritz McKinley, Jill Hecht, and a couple of guys from Public Works worked on this. A little bit of insight – there are License Plate Readers (LPRs) on the cameras so they are not only used for video surveillance, but have software in them that alert officers of stolen vehicles travelling on the freeway. A still photo is transferred onto officers' MDCs in their vehicles. To date 39 stolen vehicles have been recovered by these cameras and 41 arrests have been made. They originally went up because of the shootings we had been having on Hwy 4 but we haven't had one shooting since they've been up. Cities are now asking to "grow" this into other jurisdictions on the freeway.

- Will we have more bike friendly access in Pittsburg?

**When we work on road projects we look at whether bike lanes can be worked into the projects. We are hoping to work on a City-wide bike plan if we received a grant to do so (application currently pending).

- Pittsburg bike trails are desolate with not much to look at. I would rather drive to Walnut Creek and walk or bike those because ours are so boring.

**We are in design of a Class 1 bike path for pedestrians & bicyclists north of Mi Pueblo and will be going to bid soon for it.

- Kudos to the National Night Out event you hold! I went for the first time and it was great to see the Police Department coming together with children and the citizens. It was nice to see Police officers cooking for everyone! I also think your Chips with a Cop event was good too. Keep these events going!
- I live on E. 16th Street and during the football games parking gets terrible in our neighborhood. They block our driveways and take up all of our parking.

**We can ask the high school to encourage people to park elsewhere. If your driveway is blocked call the PD and they can cite or tow the vehicle.

- Kudos on the installation of the bathroom & bocce ball courts at John Buckley Square and replacement of the 2 palm trees that were replaced

**Don't forget the 5k Halloween Fun Run/Kids Run from the park to the Marina. This is a fundraiser for the Pittsburg Arts & Community Center.

- Do we have an ordinance on number of cars a house can have?

**We cannot monitor number of cars a residence has, but we can monitor if the vehicles are legally parked, currently registered and moving on a regular basis.

- Do we still have the Hillside Ordinance that protects the hillside from over development?

**In 2006 we had drafted a new ordinance and regulation; however, because an Environmental Impact Report was going to be needed and the City did not have the funds to prepare one, the project was put on hold. The homes currently being built in the hillside areas were included in the General Plan, which also includes a number of protections in place for hillside development.

**Keller Canyon has been cutting into the hillside but they are being monitored.

- The portion of Bailey Road heading into Concord is dangerous. Will it be widened or developed any more than it is?

**That area is a challenge because there are multiple ownerships: Concord, Contra Costa County, and Pittsburg. Keller Canyon pays repair fees for the road and other fees come from developers' traffic

mitigation fees. As the Weapons Base develops we are keeping an eye on Concord to make sure improvements are made as needed.

- There is always traffic on Bailey Road from the Keller Canyon trucks and the trucks cause a lot of pollution.

**Keller Canyon has asked for an increase on daily tonnage so we will have to see how it all works out.

- I love the downtown and am excited about the new park, but have noticed there is a new business on E. 5th Street @ Black Diamond Street and it seems like they are always smoking marijuana and having street parties and causing a nuisance. I didn't really want to call the PD because I didn't think there was much they could do about it. They weren't really committing any crimes but it's discouraging to see when my kids are playing in the park.

**We received a lot of complaints about this business and that space is no longer occupied. The business is gone. We have different units within the PD to handle different things – narcotics, investigations, etc. Sometimes businesses like that are under investigation and we “let” these things occur to get more leverage against them to stop them for good. There is a process that property owners and businesses go through to start a business. But we want those types of businesses that cause public nuisances so please call about them so we can keep them on the radar.

**Mayor Ben Johnson: You are our eyes and ears of the City. I encourage and advise you to call so we can see what is going on in our City. Remember you are part of this team. I'm glad you came to the meeting and are asking these questions.

- Do we have a loud music ordinance? I called and the dispatcher said there is no ordinance and a police officer won't be coming out.

**Loud music cannot be unreasonable. If you get an answer you don't like then keep calling.

- Would it be better if all of the neighbors that don't like the noise ban together and all call?

**You can do that and the dispatcher center would duplicate all of the calls together.

- There are a lot of cars that use High School Village as a way to get from Railroad Avenue to Harbor Street. They speed on Navy Street and Army Street. How can we slow them down?

**Is there a particular time of day? (3:30p-7:30p Monday – Friday) We will get a traffic officer out there for a short term solution. Long term solutions we can implement some traffic calming measures. We will cooperate on that and talk to the Traffic Engineer.

- There are lots of kids out there too during those times.

**Safety is our number one concern.

- Thanks to the Police Department for putting officers out at Stoneman Elementary. But will we have a long term solution? There are parents that are even driving on the wrong side of the

road almost causing accidents. I hope more people report incident like these so that PD knows what is going on although I understand the PD can't be everywhere.

**Continuous enforcement can change people's driving behavior. An SRO has been brought in to hopefully identify person(s) doing this. We will be working with the school district on traffic circulation and communication at the schools and look at way of managing signals and structures.

- What was going on at the high school the other day when all of the police officers were by E. 16th Street?

**We had VSET which is when different agencies get together as a task force for certain enforcements.

- How did the property at School Street and Harbor Street not become a developed parcel for the school? Isn't it a critical need?

**The school board did not pick that parcel of land up. There are decisions being made with their capitol and there were other priorities for their money.

- Will they use eminent domain for BART parking?

**It would take \$500-600k per house and we don't have the money or plans for that.

- The traffic lights at Railroad Avenue and Alturas/Mariposa are terrible. Can we do something about that?

**We recently signed a new contract for our infrastructure and new software will be put in place to fix the Railroad corridor signal timing. Keep in mind some of the signals by Hwy 4 are controlled by CalTrans and we stay on them to adjust.

- At the new John Buckley Park why is the new sign facing the north, and why are the palm trees still gathered?

**In regards to the palm trees, the bundling puts the tree in a dormant state. Once the tree gets settled in the twines will usually break away. We will be contacting the contractor soon to remove the twine. For the sign, that was the best place esthetically for the entrance to the park. If we put it on Railroad Avenue we would have had to squeeze it in obscuring the dramatic effect we were looking for. We felt that spot would be the best spot for the dramatic look.

- Who is the best person to speak to in regards to the design flow of eastbound Hwy 4 at Railroad Avenue?

**We will get you hooked up with the right person.

- Trees in wires in High School Village overflow onto residents properties. How can this be addressed?

**Don Buchanan will follow up with you.