FAIR OAKS BOULEVARD BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PROJECT

Walkability Audit

Meeting Notes

11:30AM-1:30PM

The objective of the Fair Oaks Boulevard Bicycle / Pedestrian Project walk audit was to engage key stakeholders, perform small group outreach, review existing conditions, and build alternatives for the first public meeting. The walk audit brought community members together to discuss different perspectives for a more complete understanding of the corridor needs.

The following key project stakeholders, advocacy groups, business owners, nearby residents, and local partners gathered to discuss issues and opportunities along the corridor: Sacramento Regional Transit (Sacramento RT), Sacramento County Department of Transportation (SacDOT), Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS), Sacramento City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee, SACOG, Supervisor Susan Peters Office, Loehmann's Plaza, Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, Echelon Transportation Group, Sacramento County Planning Department, Design 4 Active Sacramento, Fehr & Peers, and local neighbors. Twenty-five people participated in the walk audit.

Walk Audit Notes

The following issues and opportunities were discussed during the walk audit:

- The corridor lacks public transit.
  - There are currently no bus routes on Fair Oaks Blvd (FOB), there are stops ¼ mile from Ruth's Chris and Fulton Avenue.
  - According to a representative from Sacramento RT, there has never been Sacramento RT service or shelters along this corridor, but there used to be bus service east of the corridor on Fair Oaks Boulevard.
- One group member provided clarification that there is not senior housing on the other side of Howe, but assisted living that includes seniors, people with dementia, and mental health issues.
- The group brainstormed nearby destinations, in addition to commercial destinations on Fair Oaks Boulevard:
  - Sacramento State
  - American River Parkway
  - Multifamily housing including condominium complex to the west (Campus Commons area)
  - Medical offices across University Avenue (people using wheelchairs have been observed crossing in the left turn lanes)
- Speed is a concern along the entire corridor.
- The group discussed difficulties involving frontage roads:
  - They are challenging for bicyclists, particularly at frontage road access along FOB.
  - There is a desire to reuse the space.

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- o Vehicular access points to the street can be mistaken to be crosswalks (confusing pavement markings).
  - o It is difficult for drivers to get back onto Fair Oaks Boulevard.
  - o It is difficult to imagine another alternative instead of frontage roads.
  - o Left turns are not well signed.
  - o There are safety concerns for some left-turning movements, such as entering Loehmann's Plaza.
  - o The group would like to see better wayfinding for frontage road egress.
  - o Group members felt that people were feel too comfortable going fast on Fair Oaks Boulevard.
  - o While walking on south side of Fair Oaks Boulevard (eastbound travel direction), participants noticed it was noisier and they felt safer on the other side of the street with the frontage road.
  - o There are no marked crosswalks in the east-west direction at side streets with Fair Oaks Boulevard.
- Safety is a key concern for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users. The group discussed collisions along the corridor:
  - o According to CHP, there are minor fender benders as people figure out who has right of way at frontage road access.
  - o CHP cited more collisions on Howe Ave with stop and go traffic than on Fair Oaks Boulevard.
  - o Along Fair Oaks Boulevard, most vehicle/vehicle collisions are broadside collisions as drivers make left turns and dart across traffic.
  - o According to CHP, there are few collisions on frontage roads, with drunk drivers occasionally leaving the restaurants.
  - o The group discussed issues issues with people making U-turns on Fair Oaks Boulevard.
- The Fair Oaks Boulevard Project provides funding for two pedestrian signals. The group discussed potential signal locations including:
  - o West signal location
    - ▪ The group discussed University Avenue as a natural location for a pedestrian signal or signalized intersection
      - A participant commented that University Avenue is a main bike route, however the stop sign at University Avenue is often not respected by motorists.
    - ▪ Group members expressed difficulty turning left onto University Avenue from Fair Oaks Boulevard, despite high volumes of left turns.
    - ▪ A group member expressed a concern that if there was a fully signalized intersection, then traffic may back up along Fair Oaks Boulevard.
    - ▪ Group members expressed a desire to slow traffic so that the crosswalk would be more desirable.
  - o East signal location
    - ▪ The group discussed candidate sites near Ettore's Restaurant or Fulton Avenue near Loehmann's Plaza.

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- ▪ A group member expressed concerns that if there was a crosswalk near Loehmann's Plaza it might cause more problems at Munroe Street.
  - o Suggestion of one signal every ¼ mile, FOB along this corridor is ¾ mile.
- Intersection of Fulton Avenue/ Munroe Street
  - o A group member mentioned that changes to the Sierra/Fulton/Munroe intersection would need to consider the four old trees that may be affected.
  - o The group expressed concerns about diverting traffic onto Fulton Avenue.
  - o Fulton Avenue/Fair Oaks Boulevard was cited as a location that may be a candidate for modifications including tighter turns.
  - o There is currently parking on only one side of Fulton Avenue but some business owners would businesses would prefer parking on both sides. This could also reduce speeds on Fulton Avenue. A group member mentioned that there is a noticeable difference between speeds on the side with parking and speeds are higher on the side without parking. A business owner said that people often park in Loehmann's Plaza and run across the street to get to business on the West side of Fulton Avenue.
  - o Changes to Fulton Avenue access need to consider Fair Oaks Boulevard, Fulton Avenue and Munroe Street as a system.
- Intersections at Fair Oaks Boulevard/Howe Avenue and Fair Oaks Boulevard/Munroe Street
  - o Collisions at these intersections are under City of Sacramento jurisdiction not CHP.
  - o A community member mentioned that pedestrians cut across from business to business instead of walking to the crosswalk at Fair Oaks Boulevard/Munroe Street.
  - o A group member expressed that there is not enough refuge on crosswalks and would like to consider a refuge island on west leg of Fair Oaks Boulevard/Munroe Street.
  - o Channelized right-turns at Fair Oaks Boulevard/Howe Avenue intersection are challenging for pedestrians.
- ADA Compliancy
  - o The group expressed many comments about the quality of existing infrastructure, including many locations that appear to be out of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards: utility poles, poor ramps on driveways, poor access to businesses
  - o A group member mentioned the potential for undergrounding utilities.
- Business owners mentioned the peak hour for businesses is most noticeable at lunch time with people appearing to make quick ins and outs, and appears to be busier on weekdays than weekends.
- In closing, group members brainstormed the following overall considerations and goals:
  - o Make Fair Oaks Boulevard more attractive/
  - o Keep bicycle and pedestrian facilities separated from travel lanes for comfort.
  - o Slow traffic in addition to adding intersections.
  - o Existing trees are an asset to the corridor.
  - o Consider ways to improve north-south connectivity between Sierra Boulevard and Fair Oaks Boulevard.
- The group brainstormed additional organizations to invite to the public meeting including:
  - o Nepenthe Organization Neighborhood Association

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- o Sierra Oaks Vista Neighborhood Association
- o Sierra Oaks Neighborhood Association
- o Principal of Sierra Oaks K-8 School very concerned about students crossing FOB to get to school
- o University Village
- o Pavilions

The walk audit group was invited to participate in the upcoming public meeting, on Thursday, May 12th from 5:30-7pm at Sierra Oaks K-8 School.

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