

Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Neighborhood Workshop #2 California Avenue Concept Plan June 23, 2009

Summary of Key Issues

California Avenue

- ◆ Several groups stressed the importance of California Avenue as a retail center for adjacent neighborhoods, and stated a strong desire to retain and expand retail uses along California Avenue.
- ◆ While some groups wanted strictly commercial uses along California Avenue, other suggested having more mixed use in the form of housing over retail.
- ◆ Many groups suggested looking to nearby neighborhoods to identify appropriate height, density and architectural styling of new housing. One group specifically suggested using the development at the intersection of California Avenue and Park Avenue as a model for new housing, based on its density, setbacks, and number of units.
- ◆ One group was concerned with the growth of commercial and office uses in area and critiqued mixed use as allowing an oversupply of commercial and office at the cost of enough additional housing.
- ◆ There was general support for ensuring that any additional housing be made to include any necessary additional infrastructure, such as parks, schools, parking, and pedestrian improvements.
- ◆ One group expressed support for bringing back a theater to California Avenue.

Park Boulevard

- ◆ Several groups expressed support for transit-oriented development along Park Boulevard. One group also expressed support for live/work units and another for research and development space.
- ◆ One group expressed concern that building higher density near Caltrain doesn't necessarily mean people will use it.
- ◆ Other groups stated that multi-family housing near Caltrain will not necessarily attract families, and that it could attract singles, young couples, and retirees who wouldn't further burden the school system.

Olive Avenue Residential Area

- ◆ There was support from several groups for more village-type residential, meaning slightly higher-density than single-family, near the existing single-family homes on Olive Avenue.

Fry's Site

- ◆ Most groups expressed strong support for retaining Fry's on its current site.
- ◆ If Fry's were to leave, some groups supported transit-oriented, mixed-use development or multi-family residential on the Fry's site. Other groups strongly supported keeping the retail use on the Fry's site through a service commercial designation.

Parking

- ◆ There was a general desire for additional parking throughout the Plan area. Several groups expressed support for new parking structures near California Avenue. One group suggested underground parking near the courthouse with retail or other uses above.
- ◆ One group suggested that new businesses agree to strategies designed to prevent parking overflow into adjacent neighborhoods.

Open Space

- ◆ All of the groups expressed a desire for more open space in the California Avenue Concept Plan area, including play areas.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Access

- ◆ Several groups supported improvements to make California Avenue more pedestrian friendly, including widening sidewalks, and adding pedestrian amenities, traffic calming devices, and plantings.
- ◆ Several groups also supported adding bicycle paths to California Avenue, though there were concerns that bicycles would conflict with drivers trying to back out of the parallel parking spaces.
- ◆ There was a general desire for improved pedestrian and bike connections along Park Boulevard.
- ◆ Multiple groups suggested the need for better and more direct bicycle and pedestrian connections across the Caltrain tracks, either in the form of a new underpass or overpass.

General

- ◆ One group suggested modifying the California Avenue Concept Plan boundary to include two parcels on Lambert Avenue and Birch Street (marked on Group A2's map).