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**FEBRUARY 23, 2022 RAINIER AVENUE PAVEMENT RESTORATION AND TRAFFIC CALMING VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOP RECAP**

On February 23, 2022, the City of Petaluma held a community-wide public workshop to discuss plans to perform pavement restoration and traffic calming work on Rainier Avenue between Sonoma Mountain Parkway and McDowell Boulevard. Our City team shared a presentation outlining the purpose of the project and ideas for improvement, then opened the session up to the public to share their perspective.

We were pleased to have 33 community members attend the meeting - nearly 50% of which shared their concerns, ideas, and hopes for the project. We will take this important feedback into consideration as we move forward with planning and design.

Thank you to all who took the time to engage in this crucial conversation with us. Rainier is an important road in Petaluma and our goal is to make it the best it can be for all users and residents.

Below are some of the main ideas we heard from Petalumans during the meeting. CLICK HERE to view a full recording.

**Traffic Calming & 4-to-3 Lane Conversion**

* Participants were in favor of traffic calming, and many expressed that Rainier Ave. is currently unsafe for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Some participants noted that traffic calming is particularly needed given the potential traffic increase from the Crosstown Connector. They felt that making the street safer would encourage walking and cycling and advance the City’s climate goals.
* Participants were generally in favor of a 4-to-3 lane reduction. One participant voiced concern about garbage and mail trucks blocking traffic while stopping in the traffic lane. Several suggested installing speed humps along Rainier as a speeding deterrent.

**Walking**

* Participants were in favor of complete streets improvements to improve pedestrian conditions. Participants specifically spoke out in favor of ADA curb cuts, midblock crosswalks, lit crossings at Prince Albert and Acadia, and eastbound activation buttons at crosswalks.

**Biking & Parking**

* Participants agreed that Rainier Ave. is dangerous for cycling, leading to a low number of cyclists using the street currently. Several participants noted that more potential cyclists are moving to the neighborhood and said that improving conditions would lead to higher use. Participants suggested that safer connections were needed from Rainier to Southpoint and the Lynch Creek path.
* While the majority of participants were in favor of bike lanes, opinions varied on the best type to install on Rainier Ave.
* Opinions were split about parking protected bike lanes. A number of participants were in favor of this option, particularly given Rainier’s proximity to several schools. However, there were also several worries from residents of the street. Some were concerned that parking protected bike lanes would reduce safety for drivers and cyclists due to blind spots when drivers turn into or out of driveways. One thought that parked cars would be closer to traffic, potentially leading to property damage. Another felt that parking protected bike lanes would make it more difficult to put out garbage bins for pickup.
* Several residents voiced their concerns about a loss of parking from the parking protected bike lane options. They noted that households own several cars each and quad residents cannot park in the driveways. As a result, few parking spaces remain on the north side at night. There was concern about elderly residents having to cross the street and walk to their vehicles. More information was requested about the potential parking availability from setbacks around driveways. One participant suggested that free parking permits could be used to ensure that residents have adequate parking supply.
* A few participants voiced their support for the buffered bikeway option. One suggested adding bollards to this design.

**Landscaping**

* There was general support for adding street trees along Rainier. Participants cited their ability to calm traffic, reduce the heat island effect, create a more welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and advance the City’s climate goals. However, several participants mentioned that trees should only be added if this can be done right, which could be costly. One participant said that she did not want to be responsible for the maintenance of new trees, including raking leaves.
* Some participants voiced a desire for other landscape improvements along Rainier. These included the addition of benches, plantings, and a park at the western end of Rainier.

**Other**

* A number of participants were concerned that adequate outreach was undertaken to reach residents of Rainier Ave., particularly between Rushmore and Maria. They noted that the context of the quad housing units needed to be taken into account. One suggested that future events should be listed on the City’s Meetings webpage.
* Several participants mentioned that noise and pollution were issues in the area, and that the City should look beyond Rainier when addressing them. Others noted that the City should consider broader modal shifts including citizens using non-vehicular modes on Rainier to access the other side of Petaluma in the future.
* One participant advocated for bus stop enhancements and pull-in areas for buses at all stops along Rainier.