



Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

January - March 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

The City of Fairfield has recently initiated a comprehensive update of its General Plan (as well as preparation of the city's first Climate Action Plan) that will help facilitate its ongoing transformation to a vibrant 21st century community. The State of California requires each city and county to have a comprehensive General Plan that outlines the community's long-term policies related to growth and development. Fairfield's current General Plan was last comprehensively updated over 20 years ago, although amendments have been periodically made. The updated General Plan will address a spectrum of topics including land use, housing, transportation, public services, environmental quality, and safety.

More information on the General Plan Update is available at <https://www.fairfieldforward.com>.

Public Involvement and Participation

The process of drafting a new General Plan enables the community to assess opportunities and challenges, establish a vision for the city's future, and outline a systematic process to achieve the vision. Preparation of the General Plan is far more than a legal formality – it is an opportunity for community members to define Fairfield's future, and to ensure a high quality of life for themselves and for subsequent generations.

While the planning process will take direction from many sources, the most important voice is that of the community. The valuable input of community members is essential to the creation of a new General Plan that accurately reflects the common goals, needs, visions, and desires of the community. In addition to the stakeholder interviews that this report covers, key outreach efforts in the General Plan process to date include:

1. Fairfield Forward Visioning Survey (February-March 2021)
2. Virtual Community Workshops (February 2021)
3. Fairfield Student Outreach (March 2021)

Summaries of the above are available at the project website <https://www.fairfieldforward.com/reports-products>.

1.2 THIS REPORT

This report describes the results of stakeholder interviews, which were designed to bring together key individuals representing agencies, businesses, and community groups for one-on-one or small group discussions with project staff. Representatives from 26 organizations participated. The purpose of the interviews was to solicit the knowledge and expertise of these stakeholders regarding conditions in Fairfield, and to ensure that the General Plan's vision and policies accurately reflect the priorities of the groups these stakeholders represent. The format was a relatively free-form discussion; interviewers from the project staff used a list of questions as framework/prompts for the discussion, with identification of key issues and priorities left to the interviewees.

The following section highlights major themes that emerged across all interviews; section three provides a summary of the perspectives, ideas, and priorities from each interview; and the Appendix contains the notes taken from each interview.



2. Major Themes and Findings

This section provides an overview of the cross-cutting themes that emerged among all stakeholder interviews. While these findings address the overarching General Plan Update (GPU) themes of housing, open space, transportation, and economic development, they are all connected by their relationship to Fairfield's land use pattern.

2.1 ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

When asked what their top one or two priorities for Fairfield to focus on in its GPU, almost all stakeholders noted addressing homelessness as a key issue. Many stakeholders stated that homelessness must be addressed in order to address other pressing issues in the city. For example, stakeholders representing neighborhood groups, environmental groups, business advocates, and developers discussed the impact that the visibility of homelessness has on perceptions of safety in the city's public spaces, and how this affects both businesses and parks. In particular, Fairfield's Downtown and Linear Park Trail were locations that were brought up by numerous stakeholders as areas heavily affected by the presence of unhoused communities. Other stakeholders, particularly those representing faith organizations, public schools, and private employers from healthcare agencies, discussed homelessness from a socioeconomic and public health lens. These representatives discussed the connections between and impacts of homelessness on physical and mental health and the need for wrap-around services to address homelessness. Faith leaders discussed the need for affordable housing to match the range of experiences and needs among the unhoused, and that economic development plans must also incorporate the needs of the unhoused.

2.2 DIVERSIFYING HOUSING OPTIONS

A key issue for many stakeholders was the lack of a variety of housing options in Fairfield. Stakeholders representing developers, neighborhood groups, public schools, private employers, and business advocates felt that Fairfield has come to be seen as a "bedroom community." That is, many perceive it as a largely suburban residential community from

which residents commute out of to reach jobs in other parts of the Bay Area. These stakeholders emphasized the effect that this has on Fairfield's jobs-housing. Notably, stakeholders representing Travis Air Force Base (AFB), public schools, and large private employers stated that many of their entry-level or mid-tier employees struggle with finding housing that is affordable to them, which can create problems in recruitment and retention. They felt that Fairfield is lacking in housing options outside of homeownership of single-family homes. Thus, according to stakeholders, one part of ensuring a healthy jobs-housing balance in Fairfield will be creating diverse housing options such as rental family housing to meet the needs of Travis AFB's relatively transient workforce, smaller and more affordable live-work units to attract younger couples or single people wanting to live in mixed-use areas, and workforce housing to allow entry-level employees to live in Fairfield before they may be able to move on to home ownership. The majority of stakeholders believed that Fairfield should focus its new housing on infill development within its existing neighborhoods.

2.3 PRESERVING AGRICULTURE AND OPEN SPACE

Stakeholders representing the County of Solano, environmental groups, and neighborhood groups noted the protection of Fairfield's surrounding agricultural and open space land as a major priority for the GPU. Reasons cited included the economic importance of the region's agricultural production, their contribution to Fairfield's setting and identity, the positive environmental and climate change impacts provided by these lands, the need to maintain open space recreational resources for people, and the lack of public services available to serve new development in these outlying areas. Several of these stakeholders brought up the importance of reinforcing Fairfield's Urban Limit Line policy. Rather than expanding development further out, these stakeholders felt that the city should focus on expanding infill development in neighborhoods such as Downtown or along North Texas Street in order to reduce pressure to develop along the city's edges or in unincorporated areas such as Suisun Valley.

2.4 PROMOTING PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Many stakeholders noted that parks need to be accessible to all. Along with addressing homelessness, this includes ensuring that recreational activities and programming in the city are reflective of the city's diversity and the needs of its changing population. Representatives from public schools and neighborhood groups noted that youth, particularly from communities of color within Fairfield, are not represented in many of the city's recreational programming. Additionally, stakeholders from environmental groups noted that public spaces across the city should be made more accessible by addressing needs related to urban heat. These stakeholders stated that actions such as increasing Fairfield's tree canopy, decreasing the amount of impermeable surfaces, and adding facilities such as water bottle filling stations would both contribute to climate change adaptation and promote accessibility.

2.5 EXPANDING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) noted in discussion the shift their agency is moving away from a focus on highway-oriented projects and towards active transportation-oriented projects. For Fairfield, STA is particularly interested in active transportation projects to improve connections Downtown around the Fairfield-Suisun Train Station. STA sees expanding active transportation as a critical part of decreasing vehicles miles traveled (VMT). In addition to STA, representatives from environmental and neighborhood groups echoed the need to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure across the city as a GPU priority. These stakeholders noted that demand for biking and walking as transportation modes has increased and more people are interested in travelling via environmentally sustainable modes. Additionally, these representatives stated that promoting mixed-use infill development can go hand-in-hand with achieving goals for increased walkability and reduced VMT.



Representatives from public schools and from North Bay Healthcare, a private employer, noted that increasing traffic is an issue at their sites. These stakeholders felt that having more accessible public bus stops would help to alleviate traffic problems, as well as improving safe bicycle and pedestrian routes to school for children. Air Base Parkway and Peabody Road were two routes noted by public school representatives as particularly dangerous areas for children currently. Stakeholders representing Travis AFB also noted that safe connections from the Fairfield-Vacaville Train Station to the Base are lacking. Increasing access from the station to the Base by creating a closer access point that would not require use of Air Base Parkway would help to promote use of the train for those commuting to the Base.

2.6 ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders representing business advocates emphasized Fairfield's strengths, such as its location on the capital corridor, access to infrastructure, and access to high quality water, that have allowed it to become a leader in sectors such as food manufacturing. These strengths have helped Fairfield to attract companies such as Anheuser Busch and Jelly Belly. These stakeholders noted the importance of building on these strengths. Suggestions included encouraging large companies to incorporate visitors' experiences, such as factory tours or informational centers, which would help to promote tourism as well as promote the companies to Fairfield residents. Business advocates, neighborhood groups, environmental groups, and developers all noted the strength of Fairfield's surrounding agricultural sector as well. To build on this strength and better connect the agricultural sector Fairfield's residents and economy, stakeholders suggested promotion of agritourism and adding space for tasting rooms or other shops in Downtown Fairfield.

Downtown Fairfield and North Texas Street were brought up by stakeholders as areas of focus for the GPU. In addition to increasing the density of housing in these areas—and in

particular mixed-used housing—to stimulate economic activity, business advocates felt that Fairfield should focus on reducing fees and updating its zoning to be more person-oriented rather than auto-oriented, which is a particular issue along North Texas Street. Stakeholders felt that Fairfield lacks in evening activities or entertainment options. Additionally, business advocates noted the importance of focusing on Fairfield's small businesses in the GPU, as doing so not only promotes economic vitality among small business owners, but also propels tourism by ensuring Fairfield provides a unique shopping, dining, and entertainment experience. Many small businesses are now starting out of people's homes, and Fairfield should be encouraging towards this innovation. Lastly, business advocates and private employers noted the importance of workforce training to ensure job readiness and promote economic mobility for working class residents in Fairfield.



3. Interview Summaries

Below and is an overview of the major discussion points from each the interviews individually. These are ideas, priorities, and perspectives of the participating public agencies, business groups, and community groups.

3.1 TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE

Stakeholder: Travis Air Force Base

Travis Air Force Base (AFB) currently has a number of construction and planning projects happening. They are constructing a new parallel taxi runway, which will require acquisition of land from Fairfield and Solano County to the northeast of the Base. Travis has limited concerns about the new runway creating any hazards, as the northeast area of the Base is undeveloped and under the Travis Reserve. Additionally, Travis is analyzing options for the Base's water source moving forward. Depending on the results of an economic analysis, Travis AFB may connect to City of Fairfield water sources rather than relying on the 50-year-old water plant currently on Base.

Travis AFB manages an Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) in an area to the northwest of the base. EULs represent a method for funding construction on federal property by allowing a private developer to lease underutilized property. This EUL area, which is adjacent to Vanden High School, is about 80 acres and was previously old housing. Now, Travis is looking into leasing out this space to a developer to provide beneficial uses for both Travis and the city. Travis AFB expressed interest in seeing the EUL land turned into a mixed-use development as well as potentially relocating the Base's Heritage Center to this area for easier access. If development were to occur, Travis would relocate the fence that currently surrounding the area so that it would be accessible to the public and that any housing developed would be open to the general public.

Most Base personnel currently commute via car, though Travis AFB provides reimbursement to employees for taking the train on regular basis. As part of encouraging commuters to

take advantage of the nearby Fairfield/Vacaville Train Station, Travis representatives discussed a desire for improved access between the Station and the Base. Currently, in order to access the Base, personnel commuting via train must take Peabody Road to Air Base Parkway, which representatives noted is a dangerous intersection for bikers or walkers. It would be preferable for bikers and walkers to be able to access Base without having to use Air Base Parkway. A potential shuttle between the Station and the Base was also brought up as a method to improve access.

Other major concerns for Travis AFB revolve around improving the quality of life for base personnel. Stakeholders brought up housing costs in Fairfield as a barrier to homeownership for personnel. Most Base personnel would like to be able to live closer to Travis but a lack of affordable housing in the area is an issue. Additionally, stakeholders noted that there are not accessible sit-down restaurants or businesses around the Base. Personnel often travel to Vacaville for lunch or other shopping needs. Lastly, representatives noted the Air Force Community Partnership that has been in place with the City of Vacaville and provides access to the City's swimming pools at the Vacaville City rate for Base personnel. Forging similar partnerships with Fairfield can provide needed opportunities to promote Base personnel connecting with the larger community.

3.2 COUNTY OF SOLANO

Stakeholder: County of Solano

The County of Solano is currently going through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. Following this process, the County will soon be undertaking the update of its Housing Element. County representatives noted that there has been increasing demand for housing to be approved in unincorporated areas, even though there is limited build out of public services in these areas. The County noted that there is the potential for additional partnerships between the County and City in order to help fund additional housing development with the city that would reduce the need for more

development in unincorporated areas. Additionally, there have historically been and continue to be concerns about encroachment of housing and commercial development into agricultural areas of the county—in particular in the Suisun Valley.

Agricultural and open space land are important both environmentally and economically for the county. Open space land helps to sequester carbon and meet climate action goals. However, the County is also interested in promoting agrotourism in order to promote economic flexibility and viability for farmers. Stakeholders noted that straight agriculture is somewhat antiquated, while tourism can be a major sustaining factor. Promoting a balance between expanding agrotourism and maintaining the agricultural character of Suisun Valley and other agricultural areas around Fairfield is critical to economic and environmental sustainability in the long-term. As stated in the County's Suisun Valley Strategic Plan (2011), the County sees it as vital to collaborate with cities to attract business and tourism industries to agricultural areas.

3.3 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stakeholders: Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District and Travis Unified School District

Currently, the main priority for both Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD) and Travis Unified School District (TUSD) is to get students safely back to in-person learning following the COVID-19 pandemic. School staff anticipate challenges due to significant learning loss and mental health concerns stemming from remote learning and the stress of the pandemic. Promoting mental health among youth is thus a major component of the Districts' plans moving forward.

In terms of priorities for the City to focus on, FSUSD and TUSD noted the lack of affordable housing in the community. Affordable housing is necessary to ensure that all students are housed and have a place to meet their basic needs. The Districts noted they are interested in any potential partnerships to address homelessness and ensure families have

necessary resources to support their children. Additionally, more affordable housing will make recruitment and retention of school staff easier—particularly staff who are more representative of the diverse demographics present in FSUSD and TUSD schools. Representatives noted that Fairfield has been branded as a bedroom community, but creating a live-work identity and related housing resources is important to teacher retention.

The Districts also brought up traffic as priority for the City. Schools need accessible, safe sites to load students. TUSD schools in Fairfield are particularly face a traffic issue as they are all located on one block. Reopening Markeley Lane to Peabody Road would help to provide another ingress/egress for these schools. A lack of accessible public bus stops close to schools was also noted as a barrier. In terms of traffic safety and safe routes to school, TUSD noted that Peabody Road crossing is a dangerous area for students, while FSUSD noted Air Base Parkway as their primary area of concern.

Regarding capacity, FSUSD noted that, while their District is set to decline about 1,000 students over the next decade, schools in the Cordelia area are at or reaching capacity. On the other hand, in the area of the Rolling Hills School, enrollment is declining as the community ages but empty-nesters have not moved out. FSUSD called on the City to find land in the Cordelia area to preserve as public facilities for new FSUSD schools.

3.4 SOLANO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Stakeholder Represented: Solano Transportation Authority

In addition to administering Solano Express service to carrying bus commuters from Solano County to San Francisco and Sacramento, the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) coordinates funding for transportation-related improvements across Solano County and its five transit agencies. STA's focus is on working with CalTrans and the Bay Area Metropolitan

Transportation Commission (MTC) to acquire funding for projects. Some STA projects focus on highway maintenance and expansion, but a growing emphasis at STA is on funding for active transportation projects. STA recognizes the importance of the connection between transportation and land use. Thus, a major focus for STA into the future will be on how STA programs can help cities reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

STA emphasized that land use around designated Priority Development Areas (PDAs) within Fairfield should be a priority for the City. STA noted that the Suisun rail hub is the anchor point for the Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan. As a PDA, STA hopes to partner with the City to ensure that this area can receive funds from MTC and from the State to implement Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan improvements. STA also emphasized that the General Plan Update should push for continued intensification around the Fairfield-Suisun Station because of plans for future expanded regional and intercity rail services that will connect the station to more destinations throughout the Bay Area.

Active transportation planning is an area where STA looks for cooperation with cities. In particular, STA has focused on bicycle and pedestrian access into the Fairfield-Suisun Station. STA recently completed updating its Active Transportation Plan countywide, which identified priority active transportation improvements across the county and within the City of Fairfield. STA emphasized its role as a resource to Solano County cities. In order to get the most out of the relationship, STA stated that it is important for the city to continue clearly prioritizing projects and maintaining close partnerships with STA staff.



3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

Stakeholders Represented: Sustainable Solano, Solano County Orderly Growth Committee, Solano Land Trust, Climate Health Now

Environmental groups emphasized the importance of agricultural and open space lands as vital to Fairfield and surrounding Solano County. The open space separations between cities in Solano County are necessary to preserve quality of life. Stakeholders stated that it is critical to minimize urban encroachment into these areas. Thus, a major priority for these environmental groups with regard to the General Plan Update include ensuring that Fairfield's Urban Limit Line is maintained. To achieve this priority stakeholders noted the importance of creating more energy-efficient, high-density development in Fairfield's core. Doing so will also promote goals of the environmental stakeholders regarding reducing VMT by creating walkable communities and promoting a better jobs-housing balance in Fairfield. Additionally, better active transportation infrastructure across major barriers in the city (I-80, Highway 12, Travis Boulevard, and others) will help to further reduce VMT.

Another General Plan priority noted by stakeholders was the promotion of green infrastructure. One stakeholder noted that the City should set an example by using clean energy for all public buildings and transitioning City lighting to solar energy. Large rooftop spaces should be utilized for solar panels. Additionally, stakeholders emphasized enhancing open space within the city as a priority. Parks should be more accessible and feel safe to use by all residents. Furthermore,

public spaces outside of parks, such as plazas or courtyards, should be greener with less concrete. Increasing the tree canopy will make public spaces more desirable and resilient.

Regarding the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP), environmental group representatives emphasized that there should be a focus on climate change mitigation within the Plan. While measures to stop further climate change are important, the Plan must acknowledge that climate change is here and we must be planning to adapt rather than hoping to stop it entirely. Stakeholders also recommended CAP promote community choice energy. In order for the CAP to be successful, stakeholders emphasized that accountability must be integral to the Plan. Clear and measurable metrics with designated responsible parties are necessary.

3.6 FAITH LEADERS

Stakeholders Represented: Bethel Community Church, City Church, St. Stephen's Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Salvation Army of Solano County

Fairfield's faith centers provide many resources to the community beyond just being places to worship. City Church runs a 12-month live-in facility primarily for drug users experiencing homelessness to receive services and achieve eventually achieve housing outside the program. City Church's Strike Force program does outreach to homeless encampments in Fairfield and includes mobile shower units, haircuts, clothes, and meals for homeless residents. Beth Community Church and St. Stephen's Church both provide food and clothing services to unhoused residents. The Salvation Army's Cross Center has been providing free emergency childcare for the children of frontline and essential workers throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The major priority for the General Plan Update identified by stakeholders was affordable housing. Stakeholders emphasized the difficulty the unhoused community members face in finding affordable housing due to the lack of supply. One noted that housing costs are reaching points where those who are able to maintain consistent employment are still un-

able to afford to rent. Stakeholders stated that the City can only attract more affordable housing developers if it streamlines affordable housing development and reduces fees. In order to make Fairfield an affordable place to live, development has to be attractive not just to larger developers doing greenfield development, but also to smaller developers who will develop on a couple of acres within the city's existing neighborhoods.

Other priorities for addressing homelessness addressed job access and economic development. Stakeholders stated that the City should play a larger role in promoting unhoused residents to employers by helping employers to understand the positives of hiring an individual who is experiencing or has experienced homelessness. Additionally, one stakeholder noted that many companies now receive employment applications exclusively online. This means that unhoused individuals need access to greater resources to be able to access and navigate the internet.

3.7 NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

Stakeholders Represented: Rockville Homeowners Association, Octo Community Group, Green Valley Landowners Association, Fairfield Community Services Foundation

A priority noted by neighborhood group stakeholders was the importance of focusing on infill development in the General Plan Update. Stakeholders wanted to ensure the protection of Fairfield's surrounding open space areas, in particular the Suisun Valley, and indicated that the City should be emphasizing infill development to achieve this. Stakeholders identified the neighborhoods located adjacent to North Texas Streets as areas appropriate for infill development. Additionally, stakeholders stated that vacancies are growing in retail locations, and that these may be good candidates for conversion to infill residential developments. And when the City does permit greenfield development, stakeholders emphasized that resources and facilities for these new neighborhoods must be carefully planned so as that development follows services and not the other way around.

Another priority for neighborhood group stakeholders was the revitalization of Fairfield's downtown. Stakeholders noted that the Downtown Theatre, located along Texas Street, is a great resource for the city. However, it is underutilized due to residents' safety concerns about homeless residents in the downtown area at night. A large number of vacant parcels, few people out and about, and a lack of lighting downtown contribute to safety concerns. Stakeholders identified high rents downtown and a lack of parking as reasons that businesses have struggled along the Texas Street corridor. In order to make downtown a vibrant place for the community, neighborhood group representatives stated that the City should focus on addressing homelessness and on bringing in more nighttime activities and entertainment to downtown. One suggestion included tasting rooms for Suisun Valley farms, which could be part of a larger community market.

Other areas of concern for neighborhood group stakeholders included programming for youth and seniors, a need for more bicycle infrastructure and facilities to meet demand, and the need to address the safety and accessibility of parks. Stakeholders noted that youth programming should reflect the diversity present in the city. One stakeholder suggested that pocket parks can make recreation opportunities more accessible in more areas of the city.



3.8 DEVELOPERS

Stakeholders Represented: B&L Properties, Discovery Homes & Seeno Homes, Lewis Management Corporation

The developers present at the stakeholder meetings focus on the development of new single-family homes in the Bay Area, typically in master-planned subdivisions. Their properties include the One Lake development in Northeast Fairfield, the Goldhill development in the Cordelia neighborhood, and the Villages at Fairfield located in Northeast Fairfield. B&L Properties also owns several industrial and commercial buildings in Fairfield, though they are currently exiting all of their straight retail projects. As home builders, these developers foresee a shrinking footprint for retail a growing footprint for residential as shopping and commuting patterns continue to change, in particular following the COVID-19 pandemic. And as one stakeholder noted, the more outlying areas of the Bay Area, such as Fairfield's suburban neighborhoods, are where the Bay Area's middle class has gone over the past several years.

Regarding multi-family development, stakeholders stated it is often difficult to make such projects pencil out in Fairfield due to high impact fees. Green Valley was noted as an exception due to high rents in that area. However, developers noted that, rather than in such outlying neighborhoods, Fairfield needs to focus its multi-family housing in infill areas of the city. North Texas Street and the Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan area were suggested as areas where mixed-use with greater residential density are needed in order to succeed as corridors. Additionally, developers noted that increasing density in Fairfield does not have to come in the form of structures five stories or higher, but rather increasing the prevalence of low-medium residential across the city could go a long way towards addressing housing need.



Priorities for the General Plan Update highlighted by developers included creating better connections between Fairfield's neighborhoods (particularly between Cordelia and Central Fairfield), increasing the diversity of housing types, and increasing flexibility in land use and zoning designations. Such flexibility, stakeholders noted, would allow creativity in housing solutions and would help to streamline housing development by limiting the need for variances or conditional use permits.

3.9 BUSINESS ADVOCATES

Stakeholders Represented: Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce, North Texas Street Business Association, Visit Fairfield, Solano Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Business advocates in Fairfield are focusing on improving the landscape for business owners and employees, attracting new businesses to Fairfield, and drawing in tourists and residents to Fairfield's patron businesses in Fairfield. In order to be business-friendly, advocates say the City should focus on lowering fees and updating its zoning and land use. For example, North Texas Street was mentioned by one stakeholder as a location where it is difficult to bring in a variety of person-oriented businesses because surrounding businesses are primarily auto-oriented in both use and design. One stakeholder noted that North Texas Street is in need of another full-service grocery store. Additionally, stakeholders noted that North Texas Street would benefit from having greater

residential density. Having more people around would eliminate many of the problems that North Texas Street faces in remaining viable, stakeholders stated.

Recognizing that the nature of retail and commercial space is changing as more people shop online, stakeholders also noted that large retail spaces like the mall are becoming obsolete. One stakeholder suggested the mall be reimagined as a gathering space for the community. Furthermore, Fairfield will need to re-think how it draws in tourists and customers to its businesses. Stakeholders noted that dining and evening entertainment are crucial pieces to this effort. Promoting a greater variety of activities for residents beyond retail shopping should be a priority of the General Plan Update. Possible activities included encouraging visitors' centers and facility tours at large factories such as Jelly Belly and Anheuser-Busch, chains such as Top Golf or Dave & Busters, and tasting rooms or other activities that would capitalize on the agricultural assets of the Suisun Valley and bring them to downtown Fairfield.

Business advocates also emphasized the importance of focusing on small businesses in the General Plan Update, not just chain businesses or some of the large employers that Fairfield is known for. Not only will doing so promote a vibrant economy in Fairfield, but it will also attract more customers who come for the unique experience provided by small businesses. In particular, a growing area of businesses represent-

ed by the Solano Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (SHCC) run out of people's homes. Supporting these budding business owners, many of whom are pursuing their business as a "side gig," will be important to supporting the economic viability of Fairfield's diverse population. SHCC noted that one possible avenue for this support could be in providing grants to support workshops for minority business owners.

3.10 PRIVATE EMPLOYERS

Stakeholders Represented: North Bay Healthcare, Partnership HealthPlan

North Bay Healthcare is a non-profit, independent health system focused on Central Solano County. They oversee an acute care hospital as well as several urgent care center in Fairfield. North Bay has approximately 2,200 employees in Fairfield, and they estimate about 35-40 percent of these live in the Fairfield/Suisun area. Partnership HealthPlan (PHP) is a non-profit medical plan providing healthcare services for Medi-Cal managed care beneficiaries in 14 Northern California counties. PHP is headquartered in Fairfield with approximately 400 employees at their Fairfield office. PHP estimates that a majority of these employees live within 20 minutes of their office location. Both companies foresee their growth over the next couple of decades to be modest. In 2019, North Bay completed a \$200 million expansion of its hospital located adjacent to Solano Town Center, though they are not planning on any further expansions.

The top priority for the General Plan Update noted by stakeholders was to increase the inventory and diversity of housing in the area at both ends of the spectrum—high and low-income. In terms of high-income housing, North Bay noted that it is often difficult to retain top talent in terms of specialized doctors or surgeons due to the lack of housing to meet their needs. Greater amenities in the city would also help to attract these doctors, as many currently live in Napa or Davis. However, affordable housing is also needed to serve the entry-level workforce.

Additionally, both North Bay and PHP emphasized housing as a solution to homelessness. Both organizations view homelessness through a public health lens and see provision of housing and wrap-around homeless services as necessary to promoting health. PHP provides funding to local entities to build and manage housing for those with substance abuse disorders or those experiencing domestic violence, though currently none of their 19 housing projects are located in Fairfield. For North Bay, its Emergency Room has become a default homeless shelter during the winter months. Shelter services in Fairfield have become difficult to navigate and expensive, which places a high burden on the hospital.

Another area of concern brought up by North Bay was traffic and transportation. Parking is an issue at the Fairfield hospital location and stakeholders noted that transportation improvements are needed. Most staff drive to the facility, but if there were more frequent transit options some staff may prefer to commute by bus. Additionally, connections between the hospital location and offices in Green Valley are insufficient. North Bay is also interested in ensuring that new development around its Green Valley office site provides complementary uses for their workforce or patients, such as restaurants or apartment housing.



Appendix A: Stakeholder Meeting Notes

A-I: Travis Air Force Base

JANUARY 20, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Goals and Priorities

What changes are anticipated in Travis's goals and priorities, and infrastructure and operations in the coming years that may affect land use compatibility of the surrounding areas? How can the City support these goals and priorities?

- Currently \$300M of active construction on the base going on for the next year
- Constructing new parallel taxi runway – will require acquisition of land from Fairfield and Solano County to the northeast of the base
- Analyzing water source for the base – water plant currently on base, over 50 years old and in dire need of full replacement, or for base to connect to other sources of water
 - Possible connection to City of Fairfield water sources
 - Decision will be based on economic analysis
- North Gate Road – currently a two-lane road in poor condition that connects to base, City has plans to upgrade it to 4-lane, multi-modal road – City needs to fund this project
- Need a better connection to the Amtrak train station to access base
- Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) area to the northwest of base – about 80 acres that was previously old housing (adjacent to the schools northwest of base) – TAFB is looking into leasing out this space to a developer to provide beneficial uses for Travis and the City
 - TAFB would like a mixed-use area, as well as potentially relocating heritage center to this area – depending on the ultimate developer's bid
 - Would be a long term, potentially 50 year lease
 - TAFB would move the fence so the area could be accessible to the public (housing could be used by anyone)
 - Also considering building a better transition for base personnel to use the train station – the gate in the EUL area is only open at very specific times due to manning for security forces
 - Currently, personnel using the train station must take Peabody to Air Base Parkway, which is a very dangerous intersection for bikers or walkers in order to access the base
 - A parking lot and an unmanned gate so that people can access base directly from the train station via bike or foot without having to take Air Base Parkway
- IGSA provide opportunities for Travis to partner with the City on improvements affecting both entities – traffic lights provide a successful example

Concerns

What concerns does Travis have about land use compatibility or foresee any potential impacts related to noise, hazards zones, or other issues?

- Limited concerns about new runway creating hazards, as the northeast area of the base is undeveloped
- There are areas to the south that TAFB refers to as “accident potential zones” – highest potential zones are at the ends of each of the runways
 - APZs 1 and 2 extend beyond the end of the runways, but are primarily not in Fairfield
- Advocating for a new noise contour map to be developed later this year
 - Current noise map has aircraft departing in routes that aren’t always followed
- Encroachment zone: nature preserve on the base created to support the housing built on base, want to keep people away from this area
- Due to fires in 2020, traffic had to be pushed to North Gate Road, which caused extreme traffic backups
 - Have considered creating another potential access point to the base from the southeast to provide access to Hwy 12, however Creed Road and S Meridian Road are currently dirt/gravel
- Commercial solar must be properly sited so that panels don’t blind the air traffic controllers

Employees

How many people work at the base? How many of them are housed on the base, and how many live in Fairfield?

What changes do you foresee for Travis’s employee base? Based on these changes, what considerations are there in planning for housing, transportation, and other factors?

- TAFB will send along stats on base residents and housing units
- Retiring the KC-10 – no projected increase in the personnel for TAFB in the next 5-10 years
- No data on how workers access the base, but estimate the vast majority are driving in from the surrounding areas
 - There are base workers who live in Fairfield, Vacaville, and all the way up to Sacramento
 - Most would prefer to be able to live closer to base than farther
- It’s hard for personnel to access homeownership given the cost of housing in the area
 - Having affordable housing in the area is an issue
 - DOD provides a basic allotment for housing – each time it’s increased, you see a corresponding increase in apartment costs in the area
 - TAFB has 41% increase from base DOD pay due to location in SF Bay area, which is the highest in the country
- TAFB provides reimbursement to employees for taking the train on a regular basis
- There is bus service that comes to the base, but there is no shuttle that goes from the train station to the base (or from elsewhere)

Other

Are there any other issues, priorities, or concerns as they relate to the General Plan Update?

- Improving quality of life for base personnel:

- There are no accessible sit-down restaurants or businesses around the base that personnel can go to for lunch – have to go to Vacaville or closer to the mall for sit-down, chain restaurants
- Air Force Community Partnership with City of Vacaville has been in place – provides access to the City’s swimming pool at the Vacaville City rate for base personnel – a similar partnership with Fairfield can provide opportunities to get base personnel out into the community

A-2: Environmental Groups

FEBRUARY 16, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introductions

- Agriculture is vital to Solano County and Fairfield
- Open space separations are needed to preserve quality of life
- Open space in Solano is purposefully difficult to develop
- Disappointed when the City of Fairfield did not put the ULL back on the ballot in November
 - Looking for a way to solidify this through the GPU
- Major concerns include regenerative agriculture (drawing carbon out of the atmosphere), energy resiliency through clean/renewable energy microgrids, and increasing walkability and open space throughout the city

How does your organization define sustainability? (What does Orderly Growth mean?)

- Orderly growth – communities that avoid sprawl and focus on in-fill encourage walkability, jobs-housing balance, reducing VMT, and increasing community engagement
 - We have a high rate of commuting out for jobs
 - Should develop and attract jobs within the urban footprint
- We need a greater emphasis on multi-use developments
 - Single-use developments aren’t adaptable
- We need better active transportation access across the major barriers
 - I-80, Highway 12, Travis Blvd, etc. need to be complete streets
 - New developments go in without any connection to services and community (schools, retail centers, etc.)
- Revitalizing the center of the city
- Sustainable has almost lost its worth – move towards “regenerative,” “resilient” – we don’t just want to sustain what we have, we want to improve
 - Resilience relies on people’s ability to be together

What are your concerns for the General Plan?

- Making what we have more high-density in order to preserve the ULL and boundaries
- Do not want to expand into agricultural land in particular in the Suisun Valley or onto Travis’s land to preserve Travis as economic driver
- We need more affordable housing – the city should be considering policies for how to re-use existing retail space that is underperforming for residential

- We need to devote resources to solving homeless crisis – houseless residents are living in parks and open space
- ULL needs to have more teeth – can't just be up to the council to change it for any developer
- We need a climate mitigation plan, not a climate action plan – we are not going to stop climate change, the time has passed
 - Major services need to be addressed
- Local food production: urban agriculture needs to be brought in with very little restrictions
 - Fairfield would be a prime location for “agro-hoods”
- Some land owners in Suisun Valley are not producing agricultural products intensively on their land because they are assuming they're going to be the next step out for the City
 - This then leads to people thinking that land needs to be developed
- When we say agriculture we aren't necessarily saying “food-producing agriculture” – a lot of what we're protecting is grapes and the cash-crop of the moment
 - Need the distinction between food-producing agriculture and others
 - When well done, grazing restores the soil – grazing is lacking in Solano County
- City lighting shouldn't pull from off the grid – can't keep taking and taking
 - Solar generation atop of government buildings, supermarkets, etc. – need to be able to create our own energy
- The trains are too expensive for commuting – we need something like extending BART
- Increase the number of refillable drinking water stations
- City needs to set the example – are all City buildings using clean energy? No. Does the City have an adequate number of charging stations, so people are comfortable buying electric? Does the City have enough access to e-bikes and other mobility options?
- Making parks more accessible and better maintained should be high on the priority list

What policies have done well so far that should be continued?

- The City of Fairfield partnered with the Solano Irrigation District to create the Suisun Valley Fund – went on for 10 years
 - Incentivized the farmers in Suisun Valley (grape growers primarily) to create markets, rather than competing with each other
 - Contributed to why they are doing so well now
- ULL (25 years ago implemented) provided policy direction so developers won't think that they can change policy over night
 - Allowed the city to focus on other things rather than constantly entertaining development proposals
 - There used to be intense interest in developing around Travis
- Travis Preserve created a rock-solid approach for the community to say they will not get any closer to Travis AFB

How do we make a Climate Action Plan actionable (not sitting on the shelf)?

- Going to clean energy companies for community choice energy
- Someone has to be accountable to what the plan says – following and measuring what the plan says
 - Are you crafting the plan in a way that can be measured?
 - 8-10 metrics to measure if we're making positive changes or not
 - A yearly report card
- Flooding concerns need to be covered by the CAP

What is green infrastructure and how can it be incorporated?

- Green infrastructure = using nature for the built environment
- Fairfield in some locations has high tree canopy coverage, but other areas do not – ordinances can increase canopy coverage
- Gray water needs to be mentioned
- Public spaces should be greener and more park-like, not just concrete

Two key actions for the City to focus on?

- Focus on the city center and making the center whole, vibrant, resource-rich
- Make things as green as possible and regenerative with our energy
- Climate mitigation and community cohesion (community spaces and places to gather)
- An audit or assessment that establishes where Fairfield stands in comparison to best practices in the state regarding key issues (walkability, VMT, energy usage, etc.)
 - How far do people have to travel to destinations (i.e., children to schools)
 - The baseline assessment
- A well-protected ULL
- A score card that ties the City to climate action

How can we best reach communities you are affiliated with?

- Need to build trust
- Different populations have different ways that they connect – need to tap into these different modes
 - Holy Spirit Church for Hispanic/Latinx, Filipinos are often employed in medical profession

A-3: Business Advocates #1

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Who's visiting Fairfield now?

- A lot of corporate travel – Fairfield has proximity to many large businesses
 - They cannot impact this so much
- Also, many leisure travelers from Oregon, Nevada, and other parts of California
- 50% business visitors, 20% transient, 22% general leisure, 8% international

Agrotourism

- Anand doesn't believe agrotourism is a driving force of demand
 - Agrotourism can add to the diversity that can draw people to Fairfield for an overnight stay – needs to be in a collection of other attractions

What else is needed to be attractive to businesses? What businesses does Fairfield need to attract?

- The city needs to be business-friendly (e.g., lower fees, zoning)

- Zoning is antiquated – hard to bring in a boutique when there are almost entirely tire shops around – need to be planning for the businesses we want, more strategic
 - North Texas Street as example
- Wine tasting once per week downtown, pop-up shops – i.e., need to think differently about attracting businesses
- Bringing in big box stores would be great, but we have to look at what actually works in our community
- Businesses on N Texas St are doing well because they're mostly automotive (essential) – it's restaurants that are closed
 - Downtown is what is struggling

How should we think about North Texas Street into the future?

- 320 businesses along the stretch – those that are clustered are doing well
- More housing options – mixed-use, affordable housing
- The more people we bring to North Texas Street will eliminate many of its problems
- We do not need more fast food, automotive – a grocery store would be great
- North Texas and West Texas are gateways to our community – it has to look more appealing
 - Curb appeal isn't what it could be or should be
- It is a very long stretch of road – needs to be tackled through comprehensive zoning, can't be piecemeal

Are there sectors Fairfield is strong in? Or sectors that need to be strengthened?

- New BMW dealership represents a sector doing well – car dealerships are thriving and beautiful
- Restaurants – we need to bring people to our communities
 - Would be good to have more entertainment at night – we have the theater, but nothing to stay for after the theater
- Dining is a crucial piece for drawing visitors
 - Local restaurants – not franchise chains
 - Despite the pandemic, we've had at least three local restaurants open up this year
- Malls are obsolete – Fairfield mall should be reimagined as a gathering place
 - Brick and mortar retail stores are a gamble right now
- Live-work set-ups are the way of the future
- Fairfield has thrived in food manufacturing – represents an opportunity for more tourism activities
 - Large employers should provide a visitors' center experience like at Jelly Belly
 - Facility tours bring people in and expand the notoriety of the business
 - Anheuser-Busch closed their tasting room, which was unfortunate
 - We want people to know about these great businesses in our community – we have perfected food manufacturing in Fairfield
- We have great water, which is what brings large food manufacturers to our community
- We need more activities for both residents and tourists – should not just all be retail
 - Top Golf, Dave & Busters, etc.
- Fairfield's two public golf courses are highly successful – they are affordable and attract people from everywhere
 - Considered two of the best public courses in Northern California

Travis Air Force Base

- Draws people from all over the country who will live here for only a few years

- Always need to be thinking about if we are serving this community properly and bringing these people back to Fairfield to retire

Top 3 things you think would change Fairfield in a positive way?

- Debi:
 - Moving forward with the Heart of Fairfield Plan will change the landscape of downtown
 - Continuing the growth in Suisun Valley and Green Valley
 - Supporting our current small businesses to keep them in Fairfield – without our small businesses we will not have a community
- Anand:
 - Growth in Green Valley has been too focused on residential – not enough services for the housing that exists
 - Renewed sense of partnership with Suisun Valley – wine production is on the precipice
 - Cannot just focus on the largest employers – need to focus on the smallest employers
 - Variety of smaller entities is what keeps things exciting, not Target and Chili’s

A-4: Solano County and Solano Land Trust

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Biggest challenges for the County right now

- Housing – County will soon be updating Housing Element, currently going through RHNA process
- There is more and more of a push to get housing approved even in unincorporated area, but there are limited services in those areas
- There have historically been concerns about encroachment into agricultural areas – especially into the Suisun Valley
 - There are a lot of concerns about the ULL in Fairfield – Fairfield hasn’t put a moratorium on extending services into the agricultural area

Mission of the Solano Land Trust

- Seeking opportunities to preserve land and engage with land that has been preserved for public access
- Continue land conservation through the lens of community separators, support the agricultural community, keep soil and water clean
- Always looking to increase public access

Unincorporated areas bordering cities

- County identified 10 unique agricultural areas within the county (different soils, irrigation processes, etc.) and is preparing aerial maps of these areas
 - County wants to keep these agricultural with the potential flexibility for agrotourism
- Maybe these areas can provide a sort of rural-residential buffer between urban and agricultural
- The farming community has concerns about areas where agriculture pushes up against urban development

- County's Right to Farm Act
- The County may like to see some additional economic development at the edges of the cities

Agrotourism

- Discussed in the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan – tourism-type uses to promote economic flexibility
 - Making it a mini-Apple Hill – tasting rooms, tours, cafes, etc.
 - Straight agriculture is somewhat antiquated – tourism will help sustain economically

Actionable strategies the City should include in its Climate Action Plan

- County relies heavily on preservation of the agricultural and open space land
 - Open space land helps to sequester carbon
- Climate Action Planning at the City level is different from how they look at it in the unincorporated areas
 - City will probably look at housing and renewable energy requirements

Economic development opportunities

- Portions along the interstates are zoned for commercial development in the county, but serviced by cities – cities don't want to annex these areas, so opportunities that would allow for development
 - Not as prevalent in Fairfield as with Vacaville and Dixon

Opportunities for Fairfield over the next 30 years

- Potential for additional partnerships between the County and the City to spur additional housing development within the City to spare unincorporated County (i.e., funding partnerships)
- Establishing a recreation district

Top two key issues for the City to focus on

- Open communication
- Maintain the greenbelt areas
- Partnership mirrored off of the Rockville Hills management
- Minimizing urban encroachment into the agricultural areas
 - Maintaining consistency with the County's policies in this area

A-5: Public Schools

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

District goals and challenges

- Transportation – accessible, safe sites to load students
- Getting students back in person safely
 - Contingency plans
- Once kids come back – significant learning loss and mental health concerns

- Been recognized as an issue long before Covid as well
- Making sure there is affordable housing in the community to ensure families have their basic needs
- Working to raise graduation rates and lower drop-out rates
 - Creating technical career pathways to connect students to job opportunities
- Don't have a lot of Kindergarten classroom facilities, but need to expand
- Recruitment and retention of employees – more representative of the demographic in the area
- Working around homeless issue is a concern for the school districts as well
 - Interested in any potential partnerships to ensure families have necessary resources
- Some families do not look at outside recreational activities as opportunities for their children
 - Making open space recreation opportunities more culturally appropriate
 - Talking with representatives from Hispanic/Filipino community about what activities might engage those kids
- More intensive program to support 3rd-5th graders in social-emotional learning
 - PAL Center doesn't start until 7th grade – need more after school programming for youth
 - Suisun City has more programming for kids and they're packed
 - Partner with Fairfield Parks & Recreation

Enrollment trends over the last 10 years

- Rolling Hills School area – aging community where students have aged out, but empty nesters aren't moving out
- On the westside of the freeway schools are increasing their enrollment (Cordelia area)
 - Nelda Mundy, Cordelia Hills, and others are at or near capacity
 - Green Valley is growing
- Set to decline about 1,000 students (entire state is in declining enrollment)

Challenges for Travis

- Huge challenge with drop-off and pick-up traffic because most of Travis's schools are on the same block
- Will not be able to have buses for the foreseeable future due to social distancing
 - Will make traffic worse
- Do not have public bus stops close enough
 - Having one close to the train station
 - Reopening Markeley to Peabody would provide another ingress/egress

Housing issues and teacher retention

- FSUSD recruits teachers from out of state – when they arrive, they often struggle to find affordable housing
- At one point, there had been discussions about developing housing for educators
- Marketing of Fairfield – Fairfield doesn't have as positive of a reputation as even Vacaville
 - Many employees live in Vacaville because they perceive it as safer
 - When the district goes out to recruit, they have to sell the city
- One Lake development is marketed to Silicon Valley, not to work and live in Fairfield
- We have branded ourselves as a bedroom community, but we're not a bedroom community
 - We're not working with developers to see the positive attributes of the area
 - So developers are doing the marketing saying that this isn't a live-work community
- We need affordable housing in places that will draw families in – walkable neighborhoods
- Downtown Fairfield should be a tourist destination

Ways the City can support the districts

- Find land in the Cordelia area and lock it in as public facilities for new FSUSD schools
 - 10 acres for elementary, 20 acres for middle, 50 acres for high school
 - Enrollment in Cordelia area is reaching crisis level
- FSUSD transportation yard is biggest facility challenge – not on land owned by the district
- Traffic issues around Travis secondary schools
- Travis needs investment for school renovations
- Do not play up the state funding program – it is a mess and not helpful to the schools

Top two issues to be considered

- Open communication with the City
- Traffic patterns around the schools
 - For Travis, Peabody Road crossing is a big safety concern
 - For FSUSD, Air Base Parkway is a big safety concern
 - David Weir School has significant traffic issues for FSUSD
 - Schools on DeRonde have traffic issues for Travis
- Working together on how we promote Fairfield (as a live-work community)
 - And creating the solutions around it (affordable housing)

Engagement

- Student advisory committee would be a great place to meet virtually with students – breakout rooms could be facilitated to talk directly

A-6: Neighborhood Groups

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Main concerns and vision for Fairfield

- Woodcreek 66 development
 - Much of the land is also owned by Solano Irrigation District (SID), which makes the development only 17-18 acres
 - Would make the housing (33 houses) much denser than the zoning allowed one house per acre – now the development is up to 66 houses
 - Feels like the beginning of development for the Suisun Valley, which should not be developed
- Octo Group fought a five-story development in their neighborhood
 - The City needs to look at the history of Fairfield when considering development
 - Older neighborhoods just disintegrate with this type of planning
- Many areas don't have the resources to fight developments they don't want
- Sacramento and Vacaville are able to maintain their older neighborhoods
 - Maintenance goes to the newer homes and areas
 - The feel disintegrates – homes become rentals, lose their sense of community, strip malls go in

- The City would be wiser to put their money into preserving the neighborhoods we already have
 - City should not be looking to push its boundaries outwards when there are so many needs within the city

Where should growth go?

- The city needs to consider infill development
 - Lots of vacant retail centers
- The One Lake community has a good family vibe – more thought out than other areas
 - The resources and facilities (Journey Coffeeshop) are already there, rather than the other way around
- The plan needs to accommodate people who are already here – not speculating about people who might one day live here in the future
 - We cannot leave behind lower income residents and areas by not paying for their facilities
- Downtown is infeasible for developers
 - Until there's parking, nothing can happen downtown
 - When they added brick and planters to improve pedestrian experience, we lost significant storefront parking
 - Causes businesses to struggle downtown
 - Rents are very high as well
 - City needs to look at subsidies or sales tax rebates
- Neighborhoods off of North Texas Street are appropriate for infill development

What policies or actions by the City have worked well?

- Downtown performing arts facility is good
 - Need supports (parking) for this resource downtown
 - Doesn't feel safe getting out of a show late at night
- Coffee with a Cop program was a good resource for safety

What will make Fairfield attractive to visitors and be a resource for residents?

- Would be good to bring experiences of Suisun Valley to downtown to encourage people to explore the Valley itself
 - A community market
- Need to address the homeless situation – we do not have enough resources for these individuals
 - We need an integrated service delivery system (can't be individual organizations delivering each facet of services)

Needs that are not being met among the community

- Need more programming for youth and seniors
 - Programming needs to reflect the diversity of the City
- Seniors need more opportunities for socialization
 - Adult Recreation Center is a good resource – need to make sure seniors feel safe accessing it and that its programming matches their needs
- More and more people are biking – need to improve facilities for riders
- Parks should feel safe and accessible – make a community feel connected
 - Pocket parks can make recreation opportunities more accessible
 - Parks right now that are not in a gated community are not safe (because of homeless)

Top two priorities

- In-fill development
- Safe and interesting improvements to the downtown area
 - Adding a surface parking lot
 - Need to better manage the existing parking supply
 - Private security service to make sure people feel safe at night
- Linear Trail should have a variety of activities and should be beautiful
 - Right now, it is unsafe
- Programming for youth

A-7: Developers #1

FEBRUARY 19, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introductions

- Anthony Russo – B&L Properties – Fairfield-based family operation
 - Development partner in the One Lake development – 2,300 units – first large project in the Train Station Specific Plan
 - Driving force behind Specific Plan back in 2008
 - Also several projects in Green Valley and own industrial and commercial buildings in the city
- Kevin English – Discovery Builders & Seeno – largest private home builder in Solano and Contra Costa Counties
 - Several projects in Cordelia area
 - Goldhill – 3,000 unit Master Planned development

Higher and better use

- For those who have retail zoned properties are trying to figure out the future for brick and mortar retail
- As home builders, they see a shrinking footprint for retail and a growing footprint for residential

Trends

- Working from home trend is going to continue and affects developers as homebuilders
 - People are fleeing out of San Francisco/Oakland
 - They don't have to live where they work anymore
 - Young families are looking for space in single-family residence – accessible open space
 - Willing to give up some of the assets of city living in return for a safe space where they can work and live from home
- Fairfield needs to start providing some of the other things people want – places to gather
- B&L is exiting all of their straight retail projects
 - Going to have a huge impact on North Texas Street
- Now, people as far south as San Jose are looking to move to this area
 - Looking for something nicer because they can afford it

- The outlying areas such as Fairfield are where the Bay Area's middle class have gone

Multi-family development

- One Lake has an affordable, work force multi-family development
- Very difficult to make multi-family development work in Fairfield because of the fees
 - Unless you are in Green Valley where the rents are quite high
- The price you have to charge for rent to make a multi-family development work without any subsidy, residents might as well buy a house
- \$23M mitigation cost at One Lake – these costs significantly drive up the cost of housing
 - We are not going to stop seeing these mitigation costs – the way traffic is looked at these days
- In-fill development is where Fairfield should focus multi-family development
 - North Texas Street needs more people in order to succeed
- Higher density does not have to be 5 stories plus – low-medium is a much better solution that fits the demand
 - 8-14 units per acre max (this IS high density for HERE)
 - We will not mirror the in-fill patterns of the inner Bay Area – and people don't want to

Urban Limit Line

- There are pieces of land around the city that logically should be included in the city limits
- There has been a fear of growth

Economic development and jobs

- Solano EDC has been looking at what kinds of businesses can we bring to Solano for years
 - We are successful in biotech, medical, food manufacturing
 - They will tell you what jobs we can see coming
- Green Valley office park has been dead in the water for years
- We are not attracting a lot of jobs except in the clusters we are already strong in
- Retailers believe they can't make business work in the south Cordelia area

Downtown

- Need to create a safe environment for people who want to shop – homeless issue negatively affects downtown
- The Linear Park goes right through downtown and it's where a lot of homeless residents have taken up
- Infill housing there can help solidify the retail that's there – but there's way too much retail on the corridor – it'll never survive
- The specific plan needs some seed projects to show that it can succeed

Town connections

- You need to bring more people here – specifically high-income people – in order to bring Whole Foods
- Cordelia needs to be better connected to central Fairfield

Top two priorities

- Find a way to make Fairfield a single community – connect the neighborhoods
- Need to start capitalizing on our assets to bring people here
- Creating safe, rural communities – the types of communities that people want
- Create more flexibility in land use categories – should not be such a barrier trying to get change in a GPLU designation
 - Form-based zoning

A-8: Faith Leaders

FEBRUARY 19, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introductions

- City Church also runs 12-month live-in facility primarily for drug users – 20,000 square feet, currently housing 40 people – previously intended to be a school, turned classrooms into dormitories
 - Dual zone for commercial and high density allowed them to convert to housing
 - Strike Force includes mobile shower units, haircuts, clothes, and meals for homeless residents which occurs in the parking lot
 - Strike Force goes out by bike to homeless encampments each weekend
- Bethel Community Church – primarily from Fairfield/Suisun area, about 250-300 members
 - Food program, clothing giveaways
- Cross Center (Salvation Army) – emergency childcare since the beginning of the pandemic, scholarshiping the children of frontline workers and essential workers
 - Provide monetary aid to Solano County residents
- St Stephen’s Church – provide food services, Covid-19 testing site currently

Key issues

- Affordable housing
- Shelter services – having enough beds each night for folks
- Folks graduate from City Church’s 12-month program without much money saved – struggle to find affordable housing to move into
 - Difficult to get in Section 8 housing
 - Gateway Village is one of just a few tax credit apartments in Fairfield
 - Very few developers willing to build in the tax credit arena, which is typically the most affordable
- Housing and rent costs are so high that people who work are not even able to afford
- So much demand for tax credit housing waiting lists can be three years
 - Qualifications are very specific (income brackets)

Increasing affordable housing

- City can only attract affordable housing developers if they streamline affordable housing development and reduce fees

- Otherwise profit margin isn't there
- Agency cooperation can help bring more housing online
- Fairfield imposes high impact fees
 - Need to make it attractive not just to larger developers doing greenfield development, but also to smaller developers who will develop on a couple of acres

Ways the City can support

- Be visible, be more involved in the community
 - Partnerships with the city has decreased
 - Council and City Manager, their visibility has decreased
- Use hotels for housing the homeless
 - Or other properties that are failing or behind on their property taxes
 - Can help bail out failing properties through leases to house homeless
 - Project Room key has seen homeless numbers drop
- Many people want to just push the homeless out of the areas that they are trying to revitalize – downtown area
 - Neighbors push back on shared housing – can't get neighbor buy-in
- Need to differentiate between low income, very low income, and homeless

Economic development and jobs

- Helping employers understand that many homeless are moving forward with their life
 - And many homeless who have never struggled with addiction or abuse – they just don't make enough money to live in Fairfield
- Rents rise every year with no improvements
- Many companies now only do online applications – so homeless must come to a place where they have navigation services
 - Fairfield lacks these navigation services for the homeless

Top two priorities

- Affordable housing
 - Need to be transparent about the City's current plans regarding affordable housing
- Non-profit partnerships
- A homeless taskforce could be a way to pool knowledge and resources
- Not just actively homeless, but homeless prevention for the working poor as well

Engagement

- Voices United
 - Anna Deneene 707-631-1728
- Survey does not address affordable and low-income housing enough

A-9: Private Employers

FEBRUARY 22, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introductions

- North Bay is a non-profit, independent health system focused on Central Solano
 - Acute care hospitals in Fairfield and in Vacaville
 - 150 beds in Fairfield, 50 in Vacaville
 - Urgent care centers in Fairfield and Vacaville
 - Founded 60 years ago
 - 2,700 employees – ~2,200 located in Fairfield
 - ~70% live in Solano County
 - ~35-40% in Fairfield/Suisun area
- Partnership Health Plan is a non-profit health plan
 - Cover just under 600,000 Medical members primarily in Solano, Yolo, and Napa (14 county service area)
 - Headquarters in Fairfield
 - ~400 employees – majority live within 20 minutes of the office (Fairfield and Vacaville)
 - ~900 employees across all four offices
 - Most staff live in Solano/Napa area

Issue areas

- North Bay struggles with recruitment at the high-level specialties and with entry-level affordable housing
 - Struggle is on the two ends of the spectrum
 - High-level doctors do not find the executive level housing they're looking for – Green Valley is where they primarily go
- When recruiting mid to higher level employees, potential employees want to make sure the school system in the area is good
 - Sometimes takes a new manager a few years to get a house and move to the area
 - High-end surgeons/doctors will live in Napa or Davis regardless

Jobs and economic development

- Solano College provides a nursing program – Bachelor's Degree
 - North Bay helps get nurses from 2-year programs ready for 4-year degrees
- Work closely with Toro University on community programming and recruiting
- Partnership raised lowest wage floor 5 or 6 years ago and instituted internal career ladders

Future planning

- Strategic development at North Bay has been in neutral over the past year due to COVID-19
- According to North Bay, growth in healthcare in Fairfield will be in the outpatient realm

- Room for more another urgent care and for primary care center growth located closer to residential centers around central Fairfield
- North Bay completed a \$200M expansion of the hospital in downtown Fairfield in October 2019
 - Not planning on anymore expansion going forward, just replacement
- Modest job growth over the next couple decades at North Bay – maybe a few hundred
- Parking and traffic are notorious problems for North Bay at downtown facility
 - Any future growth will go up not out
- Growth for Partnership is expected to be modest over the next couple decades
 - Difficult to project given the past year and because much of their work with Medi-Cal members is state mandated, tied to what programs the state is putting in place

Housing Initiative

- Partnership – \$25M provided for housing for those with substance abuse disorders or those experiencing domestic violence who are Medi-Cal members
 - Role at the community level is as a funder – buildings are run by other community entities
 - Reflects the belief that there is a link between health and housing
 - ~19 housing projects throughout their counties that are under development
 - None in Fairfield – closest is in Dixon
 - Focused on Yolo County right now, areas where there are currently fewer resources

Downtown Fairfield

- Transportation improvements are needed
 - Most staff drive, but if there were more frequent transit options some staff may like to commute by bus
- Not easy to get from Green Valley to downtown
- North Bay hospital now has high-end café within the hospital – not a lot of hospital workers get lunch out
- If downtown were more attractive from a parking perspective it would attract more of the hospital attendees

Green Valley

- Business Center Drive – North Bay happy with the Spanos apartment development across from their administration facility (220 employees)
 - Provides transitional housing for newer employees – before they move on to a SFH
 - A complementary use for their workforce
- Half of the North Bay campus in Green Valley has not been developed
 - Do not want to build patient-centered facilities if the adjacent parcel is industrial-focused

Public Health

- Mental health is a number one priority – a dismal failure on the part of the local mental health agency to make any meaningful headway to provide an appropriate care center for these individuals
 - Often spend an inordinate amount of time in the ER – taking away space
- Housing – how can we end the cycle of homelessness and move people into a program of wrap-around services
 - City needs to provide that venue effectively
 - Shelter Solano (run by Shelter Inc.) has become a high-barrier facility for hospitals

- Model is to pay for your bed – rate is similar to a board and care facility where residents receive care from shelter staff
 - Police Department must also follow the fee-for-service model there
- At Shelter Solano, North Bay still has to go in and provide care
- According to the lease with the City that Shelter Solano has, it cannot be a drop-in shelter
 - Restriction put on the property because it's next to a gas facility that has security concerns about homeless residents
- There has been a lot of filling in the gaps with churches and faith-based organizations
- ER becomes default homeless shelter in the winter

Top two priorities for the City

- Greater inventory and diversity of housing choices – both ends of the spectrum
 - Affordable housing needed for entry-level workers
 - High-end housing needed to retain skilled doctors
- Ameliorating homeless situation

A-10: Business Advocates #2

MARCH 3, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introduction

- SHCC serves Hispanic businesses in all seven Solano County cities
- Goal is to continue bringing resources to small businesses – many resources have to be in Spanish

Economic trends in Fairfield

- Businesses out of people's houses
 - People are able to promote them on Instagram or have an online shop
 - Easier to get started, low-cost
- Increasing number of “side gigs”
- Online shopping is still a far concept for many in the Hispanic community
- More and more people working from home and even building home office spaces

What might help businesses respond to COVID-19 or other situations

- Many SHCC members have been considered essential, so they have not been working from home
- Local government should have a committee that is dedicated to continue the conversation
 - What businesses are struggling, what do they need
 - An Economic Development Committee
 - Ensure that efforts are coordinated across agencies and departments

Should Fairfield be developing anything to be more attractive?

- City's vision to do more and develop more in downtown is good

- More events will attract economic drivers
- Platform where businesses can post deals or other promotional materials
- Keeping public spaces clean so that people want to be in them

Texas Street Corridors

- Food businesses could do well in these areas
 - Increase in foot traffic is needed
- Hotels are a maybe
- Attracting conventions

Top two priorities

- Grants to allow minority organizations to help out with workshops
 - SHCC is all volunteers and so lack the capacity to go after big grants
 - Collaborate with the organizations who already have the audience the city is trying to reach
 - Hispanic community can have distrust with government, so partnering with churches would be a good place to leverage
- City processes should have a human touch
 - Think about the people that resources are intended for – do not make things complicated to complete, do not make it technology driven
 - Especially when targeting lower income or diverse language populations

A-11: Solano Transportation Authority

MARCH 9, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

Introductions

- Coordinate funding for transportation-related improvements, including those that help support housing improvement
- Coordinate among 5 transit agencies in the County
- Focus on working with CalTrans (building highways) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission, getting funding for projects (highways, active transportation)
- There is a strong nexus between transportation and land use
- They administer the Solano Express service that carries bus commuters to SF and Sacramento
- Relationship with the Capital Corridor Joint Powers Authority

Priorities

- Continued relationship
- Land use around PDAs
- Suisun railhub is the anchor point for the HoF plan
 - Want to secure that as a focus for the area, for MTC, and for the state to receive funding
 - Hannigan station is also a PDA
 - Fairfield Transportation Center is gateway to HoF – STA is helping the City with HoF improvements

SMART Plan (Suisun station)

- Developed after HoF plan – makes the area just that much more ready for TOD
 - Will want GPU to push for continued intensification around Suisun station as the SMART plan continues to develop
- Suisun railhub is important connection to the west
- BART and Capitol Corridor are looking to start another major investment to begin a new TransBay tube – Link21 – will add another rail connection to SF
 - Will provide more frequent and faster service to SF
 - Current riders have to make a transfer at Emeryville
 - Will reduce travel time from 1:15 to 0:45

Active transportation

- A big area where STA looks to cooperation with cities
- Looking at bike and ped access into Suisun station
- Recently completed Active Transportation Plan
 - Identified priority bike/ped improvements in all of the cities

I-80/680 Interchange project

- Will have big effects on the Cordelia area
- 7 phases of the interchange – have done 3 so far
 - Expansions along 80 with the truck scales
 - Express lanes
- Includes Business Center Drive improvements, Lopes Road dramatic changes to the circulation

Planning for the future – transportation post-COVID

- Trying to figure out how STA programs can help cities reduce VMT
- More emphasis on PDA development
 - Less on highway expansions – going to be very difficult to expand highways moving forward
 - Going to focus on active transportation, safety improvements instead
- Looking at sea level rise and what it means for infrastructure – where we might be vulnerable
 - Rail infrastructure, arterials – will be interested to see what the GPU says about this infrastructure and climate change

How can the City support STA's vision?

- Like to think it's the other way around – STA inserts themselves where the City needs their help
- Want to be a resource
- In order to help the City, City should continue prioritizing projects
- Safe Routes to School coordinator works directly with City staff
 - Continue close partnerships

Emerging forms of mobility

- STA hasn't focused planning efforts on autonomous vehicles – still far off
- Have focused on EV planning – infrastructure for charging stations

- What is the role of the city in providing free electricity in certain areas? Public areas and private
- STA has discretionary funds for clean air funding – grant opportunities for EV charging stations
- AVs will likely be EVs as well

Top two priorities

- Jobs-housing balance and then balancing that with supporting infrastructure
 - Need to get the jobs to match the housing – will help the transportation system immensely

A-12: Developers #2

MARCH 9, 2021

DISCUSSION NOTES

1. Please **introduce yourself** and give us an overview of what your main focus is and what you currently have both planned and underway in Fairfield.

Projects

- Villages of Fairfield- West side of Peabody, near train station, village one, village 2, in the midst of adding a third village. Nearly 3000 total units.
- About a third of the way through.
- Close to linear trail; amenity rich
- Trying that in 2A, approaching SF detached 10 du/ac. 2400 sf lots. Co-sharing neighborhood.

Development and Density

- Found city to be great to work with, staff eager to try, current and new markets (reasonably sized house, but on smaller lots), near significant amenities, bikes parkways, etc.
- Current zoning for res, low medium for Fairfield is lots that are 4500 sq ft, not res low med, those are low low. Extremely suburban and exurban type neighborhoods.
- In creating better urban footprints and utilizing space more holistically, and providing more amenities, connectivity, those drivers, force them out into community mixing.
- As big as Fairfield is, still not dense enough. Something that's not yet been addressed. Green valley is not right place- can be dense, but not vertical. Certain places are more appropriate for density than others; Green Valley is not, downtown is.

Mixed Use

- Lots of ideas about density and mixed use- vertical.

- Vertical mixed use will not work everywhere. In the Train Station and downtown, it might work; but a lot of cities are making the mistake- locking in GP with urbanized footprints, but not allowing for the transition.
- Need to balance market realities with vision; very tall buildings won't happen overnight
- Mixed use in green valley business park area- stuff slated for commercial never came to be. Looked at several and switching out for housing, pushback b/ people wanted retail. Rethought and revitalized. How do you fix those? Make sure they're not only planned appropriately- **designation with greatest flexibility, as zoning code follows, that it provides that maximum flexibility.**
 - Boxes are suggested, not required.

Flexibility

- Would like flexibility in meeting density minimums. Lower threshold in density range- even though we come in 9.5 units per acre, density set at 14 at lower limit. The intent is there, but would like flexibility of saying here's what we're reaching for.
- Land that is ripe for job centers west of Budweiser. Not housing, but jobs center. Mix of uses- what looks good today as industrial might look better as commercial tomorrow.
- City needs to undertake outgrowth and a catalog of what it has. What's the actual amount of land that's been set aside as commercial/retail.
- Encouraging flexible use- 113 corridor mixed use, a good start. Along Texas. Encouraging more housing with a retail corner.

Affordability Considerations

- Fairfield- influx of higher income, but not buying power. As more people leaving south bay moving into Fairfield. Unknowns. Texas is a ripe corridor for opp, assemblage is biggest blocking factor, and willing sellers.
- 120% AMI- affordable by design, not by force is more effective. Target, but everything's up for discussion- what works well- we need target at 120% AMI, developer can say here's our plan for attracting that. Whole neighborhood coming in under 120%. Small lot- 10% of units locked out for fixed mortgage.
- Better solution- how to work on density so we're creating smaller lots, reasonable size houses, and provide sale points below 120%. Affordable by design.

Economic/Market Considerations

- Barriers to development- financial in nature. Thought housing market would crash. Only going well in certain pieces- people buying mixed use flats- worried about being too close to each other, those buildings are struggling. Some people don't mind no setback, no separation, but want my own place. Type of current development is what banks are loaning on.
- When we think about what is buildable, its what market will absorb. Need to put out stuff people will buy, what banks will mortgage for, and get creative. True in housing retail, commercial.

- Reason mall is empty and dying- that model of retail delivery and style that was done is no longer valid. People want to go to downtown (want an experience).
- Need to have more rooftops to support retail, and where it will go, and experiential. Has to be something that can get financed by bank.

What two things will make the biggest difference in Fairfield?

- Homelessness and affordability- more and different types of housing, ability to deliver and be creative in that delivery. Not everything will be luxury. Market all throughout Fairfield. Opp for all kinds of different housing types as market dictates.
- Texas- drive market- use land as quickly as possible and get it reutilized- allow developers to come in with creativity but allow flexibility to get things done. Allow for people that want to build a 6 unit place. Add an ADU.
- Economic development- Opportunities include HoF gets implanted, green valley as napa p 2, Texas and mall beyond commercial. Move forward in way community wants- see a lot of vacancy. Pride of ownership, people who want to be there own it, and have financial ability to get there. Small businesses, infill, people who will do upkeep, etc.

