



# CITY OF BUELLTON

## SPECIAL JOINT MEETING MINUTES CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

November 18, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers  
140 West Highway 246, Buellton, CA

### CALL TO ORDER

Planning Commission Chair Patty Hammel called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Mayor John Sanchez led the Pledge of Allegiance via Zoom.

### ROLL CALL

Present via Zoom City Council Members Ed Andrisek, Elysia Lewis, Vice Mayor John Sanchez, and Mayor Holly Sierra

Present via Zoom Planning Commissioners Aaron Liggett, Art Mercado, Marcilo Sarquilla, Vice Chair Bob Blokdyk and Chair Patty Hammel

Staff: City Manager Scott Wolfe (via Zoom), Planning Director Andrea Keefer, Assistant Planner Cara Meche, Contract Planner Irma Tucker (via Zoom), Public Works Director Rose Hess and Staff Assistant/Planning Technician Clare Barcelona

### BUSINESS ITEM

#### 1. GP-LUCE Update – Workshop #3

City Planning Staff hosted an informational study session for the City Council and Planning Commission. The session included the following:

- Introduction & Program Format
- Background
- Project Alternatives – Summary
- Preferred Alternative – Livable Streets / Walkable Community Circulation Plan
- Next Steps

A question and answer session followed the presentation. A summary of the City Council and Planning Commission comments is attached.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Planning Commission Chair Hammel adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

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Chair Patty Hammel

ATTEST:

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Clare Barcelona, Planning Commission Secretary

Attachment: Workshop Comments

**An audio CD of this Planning Commission Meeting is available upon request.**

**A video of this meeting can be seen on YouTube at:**

**<https://cityofbuellton.com/government/cityTV.php?vid=vTjne22c3Kk>**

## **LUCE Joint PC/CC Study Session – Feedback Received November 18, 2021**

### **1. City-Wide Complete Streets Circulation Improvements**

- Council Member Sanchez – question: What is transit on demand?
  - Contract Planner Tucker response: Something like dial-a-ride, Uber, or other local private vehicle services, using technology to link better opportunities to residents so that they’re not waiting a long time for rides.
- Mayor Sierra – question: We’ve already incorporated complete streets in our Circulation Element policies, but now we’re looking to incorporate more complete streets policies?
  - Public Works Director Hess response: We have development standards when we review projects, but not formally adopted in our Circulation Element, so we’d be doing that here.
- Commissioner Liggett – question: Have there been studies done on complete streets along highways?
  - Public Works Director Hess response: Complete streets is just having access for all methods of transportation along a street
  - Liggett comment: For example, a busier street might want a bigger buffer
  - Hess response: Yes, complete streets depend on the location, but it can be adapted to streets like Hwy 246

### **2. Skinny Hwy 246 West**

#### **PC Comments**

- Commissioner Mercado:
  - Likes skinny 246, if can get Caltrans on board
  - Mobility hubs on McMurray Road for bikes and buses = good idea
  - UPS/Fedex package drop off location at mobility hubs? Thinks it would help part of the congestion on 246 and some of the smaller streets in town.
  - Renaming Hwy 246 would be nice, need Caltrans support
  - 1 or 2 minutes might make a difference, we have a lot of commuters coming in and through Buellton from Lompoc and Santa Ynez and if their route is extended, they might just circulate around Buellton and get on the 101 instead of stopping like we would want. Look at the bigger picture.
- Commissioner Liggett:
  - Likes idea of renaming Hwy 246 – would bring identity to Buellton. Getting rid of the idea of a Hwy would slow down traffic.
  - Not sure there is a demand for mobility hubs in Buellton, but agrees with the idea
    - Perhaps a regional mobility hub instead?
  - Local shuttles= good idea, should coordinate w/all cities in SYV
- Commissioner Sarquilla:
  - Would like to do something with Hwy 246
  - Wants to see more trees. Would like to see trees split the Hwy, so as you approach Buellton you see trees to help you slow down.
  - Likes name change idea for Hwy 246
  - Likes “parkway” idea

- Commissioner Blokdyk:
  - Likes idea of Skinny 246 – need to slow down traffic
  - Question on whether of whether we’re planning on getting a traffic light at Sycamore
    - Hess answered that we have to follow Caltrans standard warrants for that, and we don’t have the volume of traffic on the side streets to warrant a traffic light. We even looked at blocking off other streets to force all the traffic through Sycamore and there still wouldn’t be enough traffic volume to warrant the signals.
  - One lane would help safety at Sycamore crosswalk, but then if you push all the cars to one lane there would be more of a constant stream, and it would be harder for people to pull out of the side streets, waiting forever
  - Likes idea of mobility hubs; maybe 1 in town would be sufficient. Doesn’t have to be in the middle of town, but connects different modes of transportation and has a place where all the buses park, people can park their bikes and cars. Mobility hubs for the sake of getting Amazon/Fedex [package delivery], sounds great
  - Likes idea of shuttle; need the shuttle!
  - Use of trees for traffic calming = good idea, important
- Chair Hammel:
  - Agrees w/ Skinny Hwy 246
  - Skeptical of need for mobility hubs in Buellton, “city seems really small for that”
  - Has concerns w/increased traffic in areas of mobility hubs, especially at Sycamore location
  - Wants to see an ariel sketch on exactly where the mobility hub would be, parking, bicycle racks, how traffic would move around it, etc.

#### CC Comments

- Council Member Lewis:
  - Likes Skinny Hwy 246 idea
  - Likes use of trees
  - Feels strongly on the idea of transit in Buellton and throughout SYV - important for young kids/teens to get places, current transit is not as comprehensive as it could be and that would help
  - Likes using the reclaimed right of way
  - Does know how she feels about mobility hubs yet – doesn’t know how much they’ll be used and worry about local teens mostly using them and may pose more of a risk
  - Likes name change for Hwy 246
- Council Member Andrisek:
  - Likes mobility hub idea; would give identity for different parts of our City, offers a chance for the community to get involved; opportunity to have public workshops, school project; could have memorials, art, community ownership
  - Inquired about how much a mobility hub might cost
  - Pocket parks would be a good place to start
  - Need to protect our walkers and bikers from cars
- Council Member Sanchez:
  - Thinning out the street – nobody who lives here is going to ride a bike out to the corner and then ride in on the Hwy, they’ll take side streets, thinks it would be a waste of resources to put a local bike lane on 246
  - Mobility hubs – not sure about this concept.

- Question if mobility hubs would be a UPS/Amazon drop-off stop?
  - Contract Planner Tucker response – could be an option, but it could be just a simple bus stop with bike racks
- Wouldn't want mobility hubs to add more traffic to intersections.
- What about adding bike rentals at the mobility hubs? Likes the idea of bike racks and bike shares at mobility hubs.
- Likes idea of name change of Hwy 246
- Mayor Sierra:
  - Mobility hubs – good idea, start with north and south park and rides and parklets
  - TOD – 220 unit mixed use on Hwy 246 – seems huge! But hard to foresee into 2045
  - SYV Transit – already exists, we pay into it. Only picks up every 30 min. but heard it's pretty good to get you to Solvang or Santa Ynez or even Los Alamos.
  - Skinny Hwy 246 – yes! yes! yes! Would love to see this.
  - Tried to get a stop light at Sycamore, but couldn't get the right volume
  - Will need to talk with Caltrans.
  - Have tried to talk w/Caltrans about trees; Caltrans doesn't want any trees or greening on Hwy 246 because we're in a drought.
  - Have we talked to Caltrans about reducing Hwy 246 down to one lane?
    - Rose: Yes, a little. No initial red flags.
  - Loves idea of reducing to one lane.
  - Renaming idea = yes! Would help slowdown cars.

### 3. E Hwy 246, McMurray, Avenue of Flags and Hwy 101

#### PC Comments

- Commissioner Mercado:
  - Likes idea of regional transit hub; would be very valuable. Important to link up to different stops and bus routes. Should get whole valley involved. Important to have the ability to be moved around by transit in a fast amount of time.
  - Pedestrian and bike bridge over 101 = great idea. Hard to cross this road, important to connect.
  - We need to look at this as to whether or not all of this is feasible, and part of that is asking the questions of “is it practical”? i.e. cost and time
- Commissioner Liggett:
  - Agrees w/ all ideas presented.
  - Strategies for complete streets from West side of town could be transferred to East side of town.
  - Ped and bike bridge over 101 would be great - could tap into the Federal Infrastructure Bill for funding
  - Could use art/sculptures instead of vegetation along Hwy 246 if Caltrans doesn't want greenery.
- Commissioner Sarquilla:
  - Mobility hubs need to interface with existing school bus system
  - Hub over @ McMurray = awfully congested. What about near Firestone or Albertsons?
  - Too dangerous to cross 101 while walking/biking – ped and bike bridge would be great
  - Sculptures along Hwy 246 would be good if we can't do trees
  - RV/large vehicle parking is important! Continue to develop

- Should have mobility hubs at north and south sides of Avenue of Flags
- Commissioner Blokdyk:
  - Transit hub on McMurray Road would be fantastic; regional hub that links to colleges, Santa Barbara and Santa Maria
  - Accommodating large vehicles for shuttle system? Would probably have to purchase land to store them
  - Bus stop on AOF and bike parking would do it → do not necessarily need a full on mobility hub.
  - 101 ped/bike bridge is a must
- Chair Hammel:
  - Regional transit hub sounds good, but concern on McMurray congestion – would have to be further on the north end

### CC Comments

- Council Member Lewis:
  - Likes idea of regional hub on McMurray, but has concerns as well – “the how”
- Council Member Andrisek:
  - No comments
- Council Member Sanchez
  - Flagpole plaza area near Chevron/Albertsons – may be a place for a mobility hub?
- Mayor Sierra:
  - East Hwy 246 – traffic congestion is terrible
  - McMurray Road is a great place for a mobility hub, but may not be able to handle this from a traffic perspective
  - \$3 million to extend RT Buell Dr. (10 years ago!) – agree that it is needed, but cost is bad. Grants for this?
  - Likes idea of statues on Hwy 246
  - Hates the rock median at Twin Oaks to La Lata – asked Caltrans for trees but they put in rocks