



FULTON CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Location: Banker's Ballroom, 1060 Fulton Street, Fresno, California

MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2010 – 5:15 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Sandra King called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m.

Members Present

Joyce Aiken, Alan Allen, Rosemarie Amaral, Donavan Byrn, Raul De Alba, Morgan Doizaki, Victoria Gonzales, Patrick Hammond, James Haron, Eric Kalkowski, Sandra King, Gary Lanfranco, Nancy Marquez, Roger Palomino, Polly Parenti, Timothy Schulz, Maribel Vera-Anaya, Brent Weiner, Allysunn Williams

Alternate Members

Suzanne Bertz-Rosa, Beth Eckloff, Jan Minami

Consultants Present

Stefanos Polyzoides, Juan Gomez-Novy, Charles Burbaun, Bob Gibbs

Staff Present

Department Director Craig Scharton
Senior Deputy City Attorney John Fox
Facilities Manager Kelly Riddle
Elliott Balch, Sandra Berney, Cynthia Dondero, Amy Huerta, Linda Lawrence, Wilma Quan, Elaine Robles-McGraw, Jenna Slawinski, George Smith, Kelly Trevino, Angela Vasquez

2. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Mayor Ashley ~~Swearingen~~ [Swearengin](#) welcomed the Committee and citizens; stated she looks forward to the meeting's discussion.

Opening remarks were given by Downtown and Community Revitalization Department Director Craig Scharton; introduced Consultant Stefanos Polyzoides; gave overview for the evening's meeting.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Agenda Approval (including modifications or changes)

No meeting minutes were discussed.

4. CONSULTANT TEAM'S SUMMARY OF DESIGN WORKSHOP

Consultant Polyzoides showed the same Plan Vision power point presentation for potential downtown designs that was shown in the previous Downtown Neighborhoods Community Advisory Committee earlier in the evening. Research and the recent Fulton Corridor Charrette revealed there is a market in the downtown area of the city with 2,000 units of housing, 1.5 million square feet of retail space and 2.5 million square feet of office space in a 20 year period. He identified four significant sub-areas – Cultural Arts District, Fulton Corridor, South Stadium and Chinatown. Each area had a model prepared and an illustration of a 20 year period of infill process and significant images with both renovation of existing buildings and producing new buildings. Highlights of proposed designs include:

- Cultural Arts District – Proposed buildings to replace existing parking lots.
- Fulton Corridor has two different possibilities: 1) Focus on three areas, Fulton and Mariposa, the north end, and south end around the stadium to generate interest in small increments; 2) Effect of high speed rail may show the need of a new station with development of office and mixed-use buildings around it. Potential development around the station has a proposed plaza with restaurants, entertainment, retail and office space.
- South Stadium shows infill proposals with retail, entertainment, hotel and office.
- Chinatown reflects a proposed plaza with new buildings around the Basque Hotel and fire station, while refurbishing existing Chinatown.
- Historic Preservation highlights both the present and potential historic resources with nearly every building. Crest building is a prime example of a historic building that could be restored to be an extraordinary commercial building. No downtown has turned around without taking advantage of this type of resource.
- Landscape and Open Space – Much attention to streets leading into the downtown area. Courthouse square and some streets leading to the mall will have choice street trees in elaboration of the center square at Mariposa. These are important 20 year projects for downtown. Additional design proposals include opening up and revealing City Hall, which is now hidden by trees, and closing the underground ramp/sidewalk at Mariposa in order to walk straight through. Even though this may seem like a minor thing, in the life of cities, removing obstacles like this could attract people and regenerate cities at an extraordinary pace.
- Transportation – Very little needs to be done other than turn a couple streets from one-way into two-way. Every street in the downtown area is given a particular configuration dimensionally with its lanes, sidewalks and streetscapes. Its functional characteristics are outlined so in the next 20 or 30 years, it is known exactly how to deal with every street as opposed to treating them piece-meal or allow them to be dysfunctional, as many of them are now. Also incorporated is the bicycle master plan, which will be proposed to Council in a couple weeks, and a street car study.
- Infrastructure – A lot of work needs to be done on ground water recharge units, sustainable storm water strategies, potential water exchange and water recirculating networks, and sewer improvement areas.
- Development Code – Urban standards, architectural standards and signage standards in Code are seamless from the Fulton Corridor Study, Specific Plan and to the Community Plan. He ended his part of the power point presentation with three documents, which will be presented to Council – Specific Plan, Community Plan and a Form-Based Code for both. A Code needs to be written in such a way that those who decide to engage in development, will do it with very little interference from the public sector, do it by-right as much as possible. He concluded with an idea to reset the course every year based on achieving concrete goals. The Specific Plan should be implemented in a way by both the coordination of City will and resources.

- Strategy – Market downtown area; Institutional and business recruitment; Resolve the mall challenge; Target developments; Reward people who wish to invest by limiting project processing time; and Yearly reviews of progress based on clear and concrete metrics.
- Implement Plan – Coordination of City departmental resources; Coordinate redevelopment powers and funds; Public investment in infrastructure and streetscape; Attract private investment in market-driven projects; Effective Building Code Enforcement; and Parking management.
- Success This Time – Political leadership is focused on downtown revitalization; Significant demand for marketing; Vision is community-supported; Coordinated public and private actions; Effective Form-Based Code that rewards those who wish to invest; EIR process for pre-approved projects.

Consultant Polyzoides mentioned the earlier meeting with the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Advisory Committee.

5. CAC SELECTION OF TOP 3 FAVORED FULTON MALL ALTERNATIVES

A. Fulton Mall Current Conditions Report – City Facilities and Parks Staff

Kelly Riddle, Facilities ~~Department~~ and Major Projects Division Manager, continued the power point presentation with a report on the current state of the Fulton Mall particularly the infrastructure; all fountains are not in working condition due to leaks with badly corroded electrical systems; the underground infrastructure is corroded to the point that they can no longer pull new conductor through the conduits in the line; the red ants are eating away at the insulation of the conductor; in order to restore the fountains, the pools would need to be restored; electrical vaults, which are underground beneath outdoor seating, are all highly corroded and damaged; cockroach infestation throughout the mall; electrical festoons breached by plant roots and foliage; christy boxes are vandalized at such a rapid pace, it is difficult to keep up; bases are broken on light poles throughout the mall; concrete heaving due to root growth has caused trip hazards; concrete cracked throughout the mall; dead landscaping due to the irrigation system failures; a lot of wear of tear on the 50-year old mall and a lot to be done to bring it back for all the fountains and lighting to be in working condition.

Discussion opened for public questions and comments:

Kiel Famellos-Schmidt, Fresno resident, commented that none of the disrepair happened overnight; questioned where is the City's accountability for the taxes that have been paid to maintain the city center; questioned the frequency of maintaining the mall compared to the frequency of repaving city streets.

~~Unidentified~~ Mick Marderosian, Fulton Mall property and business owner, has worked downtown for almost 35 years; commented that he did not believe the disrepair was due to lack of maintenance; stated he has seen maintenance workers trying to keep up with the decaying structures and landscaping; stated cockroaches have infested the businesses; felt it is unrealistic to repair the Fulton Mall as it is outdated and a change is needed to bring back people and vehicles.

Stefanos Polyzoides, Consultant, asked for more questions regarding the physical conditions of the mall.

Chair King diffused negative murmurings by requesting everyone listen to one another with consideration and respect.

B. Description of Proposed Alternatives, Including Costs and Revisions Since Workshop

Stefanos Polyzoides commended the assistance of Consultants Charles ~~Burbaun~~ [Birnbaum](#) and Bob Gibbs with the proposed alternatives. Juan Gomez-Novy assisted with the presentation of the descriptions and costs of the proposed alternatives. There are three types of costs: Construction; Maintenance; and Parking Meter Revenue. All costs and revenues were calculated over a 30 year time frame.

Alternative 1 (Leave as is):

Construction Cost: \$0.00

Maintenance Cost: More than \$3.2 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$234,000

Alternative 2 (Restoration and completion)

Construction Cost: \$8 - \$16 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$7.8 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$234,000

Alternative 3 (Open cross streets):

Construction Cost: \$9.3 - \$14.7 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$6.6 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$1.9 million

Alternative 4a (Keep four center blocks closed):

Construction Cost: \$10.2 - \$13.8 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$6.1 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$2.8 million

Alternative 4b (Keep three center blocks closed):

Construction Cost: \$10.7 - \$13.3 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$5 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$3.5 million

Alternative 5 (Keep two center blocks closed):

Construction Cost: \$11.1 - \$12.9 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$4.5 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$4.1 million

Alternative 6a (Reconnect Grid 1 with one-way street):

Construction Cost: \$9.4 - \$14.8 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$6.3 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$2.7 million

Alternative 6b (Reconnect Grid 1 with two-way street):

Construction Cost: \$9.4 – \$14.8 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$6.6 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$3 million

Alternative 7 (Connection of Grid 2)

Construction Cost: \$11.3 - \$12.8 million

Maintenance Cost: More than 4.2 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$4 million

Alternative 8 (Reconnect Grid 3 with transit)

Construction Cost: \$12 – 12.8 million

Maintenance Cost: More than \$3.7 million

Parking Meter Revenue: More than \$6.2 million

C. Public Comment

Kiel Famellos-Schmidt, Fresno resident, commented he has some experience with cost estimates and felt those just explained were a little suspect, primarily Alternative 2, which is only given in the million dollar range where all other Alternatives were factored to the hundred or thousand dollar range; felt there was not a lot of design thought for Alternative 2 with how the mall could be preserved; felt the highest numbers were given to this option as a way to decrease the interest in it; questioned the methodology of the figures. Consultant Polyzoides stated he was not sure why he felt there was a prejudice against saving the mall in terms of numbers; the job of actually trying to understand how to save it is so far beyond the scope of a planning effort that it is not even funny from an architectural point of view; what we try to do is to say if you were actually try to patch it and repair it, it would be one cost and if you were to tear it down and rebuild it, it would be another cost. For prejudice, it is rather telling that when you average out the project from top to bottom, they all fall within the \$12 million territory, which meant from a construction point of view, there is not any one plan that is superior over any other in terms of the price to repair or complete it.

Unidentified Fresno resident, commented for a city of more than 500,000 people, felt \$16 million is a pittance for the completion of a 6-block area; expressed surprise that the design can be done for no more money than this.

Bill ~~Patene~~[Patnaude](#), architect, has worked on the B.F. Sisk Federal Courthouse for about 3 years; stated the cost is \$55 million to bring the building up to current standards; the County Courthouse plans a \$112 million remodel and most to be used for the interior; challenged others to get a bit of reality as the cost is very little for the Fulton Mall project. Consultant Polyzoides agreed.

Elliott Balch, Downtown and Community Revitalization, stated the plan is for the Committee to recommend three alternatives for the Fulton Mall for further study; it is a community process and legal process, which meant additional options may be introduced at a later date to provide a sufficient range of alternatives; the goal is to provide maximum useful information to the Committee, City Council and Mayor; when the time comes to make recommendations and decisions regarding which option, experts will be requested to identify potential economic benefits of each option to determine how each alternative reaches the vision of the Fulton Corridor Charrette; the environmental review will begin next Spring and will identify the environmental impacts of each alternative; committed to keeping the public and Committee informed on the process; explained the voting and tallying process of the evening's meeting.

D. Selections by CAC

Chair King asked if the City had a preference whether Committee Members vote for only their personal top alternative or select their top two or three choices. Elliott Balch indicated it was the Committee's prerogative to determine the voting style.

Chair King asked if the Committee had a preference for selecting the top three alternatives.

Brent Weiner moved for each Committee Member choose his/her top two choices, second

by Alan Allen.

Suzanne Bertz-Rosa suggested weighing the top two choices; first choice weighed as two; and second choice weighed as one, which will give a numeric value for each choice.

John Fox, City Attorney's Office, clarified this is only a vote for the manner in which the Committee will vote; this is not the voting for the alternatives at this time.

Chair King agreed this is only the process to which they will vote.

Motion carried (18 yes, 1 no – Joyce Aiken).

Chair King asked the audience for a show of hands for each alternative plan. She explained procedures for public comments; each alternative plan will be discussed separately; there will be a three-minute limitation for each comment. Public comment for each Alternative Plan:

Alternative Plan 1:

Brian Angus, ~~P~~Downtown resident and CEO of Fresno County EOC, stated he is addressing all Plans and not Alternative Plan 1 alone; commented that these plans are not set in stone once the Committee votes due to modifications throughout the process; identified Plans 3 through 8 all call for the extension of Broadway Street; in order to extend Broadway Street one block, it would be necessary to take a property with two buildings that are in good shape and have been part of the downtown area for many years, he is unclear whether the benefits of extending one block outweighs the cost of eminent domain and demolition; there is no development around Broadway Street; disclosed that EOC owns the two buildings affected by the extension of Broadway Street.

Alternative Plan 2:

Linda ~~Zagrets~~Zachritz, Fulton Mall business owner, spoke on the Fulton Mall's status of disrepair and the City's neglect for proper maintenance, which included the present administration; felt this plan is the only viable plan; other plans remove pedestrians instead of cars.

Ray McKnight, Fresno resident, believed the public opinion is not new; commended Charles ~~Burbaun's~~Birnbaum's words in favor of the Fulton Mall; cars should not be more important than people (pedestrians); read several quotes that support the Fulton Mall.

Arthur ~~Subine~~Servin, Downtown resident, favored this alternative, with completion of needed repairs and bringing the fountains back into operation; supported Alternative 3 as a later option, if H Street to Van Ness Avenue could be kept as a pedestrian mall; favored benchmarks with Alternative 2, then move on to Alternative 3 in the future, still keeping the core as a pedestrian mall.

Gary Malazian, Fresno resident, commented on the disparaging remarks of the current administration and felt those were not in keeping with what the Mayor has done to bring this into fruition; favored to start with Alternative 2, then continue in

phases, beginning with Tulare Street and moving south.

Ryan Eddings, Fresno resident and an administrator of "Save the Fulton Mall" FaceBook page; felt the Fulton Mall is one of the unique places in Fresno and does not understand why we would want to destroy it and replace it with another street; he is part of a group that helps clean the mall on the weekends; questioned the costs for Alternative Plan 2 with the high as \$16 million compared to Alternative Plan 6, which included everything for Plan 2 plus much more and yet costs significantly less than the \$16 million; wondered how the City could come up with the money if they cannot even repair the electrical boxes.

Alternative Plan 3:

Matt, Downtown resident, stated his disbelief that opening up the mall will bring business to the downtown area; pointed out that currently there are many streets downtown that are opened up to cars and the business is lacking; felt if the Fulton Mall were an island of inactivity among thriving businesses, then he could see the reasoning; concerned the mall will end up looking like the rest of downtown with abandoned buildings.

Alternative Plan 4:

No public comment.

Alternative Plan 5:

No public comment.

Alternative Plans 6a and 6b:

Eric Von Berg, Fresno resident, felt there needs to be exposure to the mall with people driving downtown, people cannot see the Fulton Mall when driving on any of the cross streets and opening it up could be done even as a experiment for a three to six month period to identify the success before engaging any infrastructure; felt opening Mariposa Street is a key component in helping the economic vitality for the exposure of the mall.

Alternative Plan 7:

No public comment.

Alternative Plan 8:

Jeff Whitman, Tower District resident, described River Center in San Antonio, Texas, where the downtown was maintained as a vital piece of the city; felt that Fresno City needs to consider the economics of the area and figure out ways to bring the people to the downtown area; noted the forecasted parking revenue, yet compared it with River Park, where no one pays for parking and the place is packed with people; suggested free 2-hour parking like San Antonio; encouraged thinking of ways people will want to come downtown; favored a two-way street and more greenery.

Rick Roush, represented the ownership of T.W. Patterson building and was instrumental as one of the founders in bringing Triple-A baseball to Fresno after raising \$2 million and battled Mayor Patterson for a 12,000 seat capacity stadium

instead of 10,000 seats; mentioned his involvement in several coalitions to stop traffic on the Fulton Mall; admitted that he made a mistake; stated he now sees that he was wrong in his ideology; felt the City needs to open the Fulton Mall; adequate parking and egress for traffic are needed; time has changed and the city has grown; stated our downtown has something that very few towns have ever had a chance to do -- We found a way to finance and build one of the greatest stadiums in America; stated that we have some of the greatest architects of buildings and some of the greatest art in the planet; cannot sit here and not allow ourselves to prosper, to be respectful, gain prosperity, and have incentive eyes to bring investors back to Fresno to what they were in the 1980's and 1990's and to think rail is not going to be part of our lifetime and that air quality control to going to prohibit the way we live; stated we need to be forward thinkers; applauded the Committee and Mayor for taking the time to consider these ideas; expressed this is the lowest economic interest rate cycle we have had since World War II, to think you could borrow money at just 3% and could spend just \$12 million financed over 30 years and have the lowest tax base in your real estate and have it escalate back up over years, the math is pretty simple; the City needs to find a way to put that math together.

Kathy Omachi, Chinatown Revitalization of Fresno and Reedley resident, her family has been in the Chinatown area for 110 years; spoke of the maintenance issues on the Fulton Mall as a key part; mentioned changes in Chinatown with 350 parking meters installed over 5 years, it did not make sense in an economically depressed area to have parking meters; stated that finally with the support of the city, the meters are now removed and have a bus line that travels down F Street; stated they needed those small things to bring back foot traffic and not penalize people for coming downtown; suggested needing some creative thinking on handling the maintenance of any facility, the stadium, downtown and Chinatown without basing it on the parking revenue that may be generated; after the first or second parking ticket, you will not win them back to the downtown area.

David Wells, Fresno resident, spoke about high-speed rails; stated he was informed by the representative of high-speed rail, public relations and engineering from URS Corporation, there are three plans for high-speed rail to go through downtown Fresno, all are elevated at 60 to 65 feet; stated their plans, which are on the Internet, forecast 200+ trains a day traveling through Fresno at 200+ mph; warned that if you do not want to destroy property values and have all your work on the downtown area ruined, then the City needs to rethink this idea; stated that nothing cannot destroy a downtown faster than screaming trains all day long; suggested advocating to the City, County, Governor, High-Speed Rail Commission, Senate and Assembly to move the tracks to the west side for the expected 8 to 10 train stops daily and have a connection to a central station in the downtown area; encouraged research on the decibel level of high-speed rail to see what is on the horizon for the downtown area.

Jeff Whitman, Tower District resident, encouraged the Committee to consider street cars; respectfully disagreed with the previous speaker; stated high-speed rail does not travel at 200 mph as it approaches the train stations.

Robert Gerrail, Fulton Mall resident, stated he was here in 1964 when the Fulton Mall was opened and remembers it as a fabulous event, however now it has decayed; felt

to reconnect the grid will begin the process to restore the downtown area; stated vendors would be attracted again; believed it would be a positive step for Fresno.

Alternative Plan 9:

Kiel Famellos-Schmidt, Fresno resident, stated there is a need to infill the vacant lots at both ends of the Fulton Mall, across from the Gottschalks building on one end and the Housing Authority and CVS parking lots on the other end; the Housing Authority has the money to acquire and build affordable housing and mixed-use developments; they already own their parking lot, they should build a parking garage and mixed-use development on the land they already own, as well as, CVS should build a mixed-use development; felt a lot of the research promoted retail; suggested entertainment as a better means for a pedestrian mall; suggested to think about tourism with the city's world-class modernist landscape, which needs to be promoted by the City and market to European and Japanese tourists, who appreciate modernist landscape and could visit Yosemite while they are here; pointed out this is economic money coming from the outside; stated he sees Fresno as a depressed region and to look at this as a retail center, would mean passing a lot of the same money around; in order to get out of that, the City needs to look globally to bring in the money.

Annadelle Flint, Fresno resident and former downtown business owner, mentioned if anyone has business with the City or County, it is necessary to come downtown; favored an alternative that keeps automobiles off the mall; criticized the darkness of the room, where only the Committee has adequate lighting while the public is sitting in the dark; felt this is typical of the way the public has been treated throughout this process; commended the Mayor for her vision in allowing these public meetings, but they need to be made more comfortable for the public to have an equal chance to voice their opinions and to see what they are doing.

Hal Tokmakian, Fresno resident and former downtown business owner, stated the Fulton Mall is an important living organism as a historical resource and is acknowledged by the Federal Government and State of California as such; commented there has been some missing information without which we cannot have a comprehensive plan; felt land use needs to be considered as part of the comprehensive plan; stated the Fulton Mall is surrounded by its context of buildings, people and occupations; felt it is critical to consider what will be done on the vacant lots and what kind of people will occupy the buildings; wondered where is the discussion about mixed-use in this meeting and how does it fit into any of these alternatives; spoke about the circulation problem at the north end of Fulton and Tuolumne Streets; stated this issue needs to be solved in order to have linkage with the cultural center to the north; encouraged Committee to consider alleys as circulation for parking, driving or walking; felt too much information has been given in this meeting, with the public sitting in the dark and the Committee in the light, requested to continue the meeting to allow the public to consider and absorb the information.

Miguel Santos, one of the administrators of "Save the Fulton Mall" FaceBook page; stated he is a European native and a resident of Fresno for the last six years; stated the Fulton Mall is unique; stated he has traveled all over Europe and fell in love with this mall; felt the City cannot tear it apart and compared it to tearing apart a Picasso

work of art.

Scott Anderson, represented the Penstar Group, which owns several buildings downtown, stated he is a proponent of opening the Fulton Mall to traffic; stated many potential tenants for their buildings have mentioned there is no parking and no accessibility to the buildings; this is a very real challenge in order to bring business to the downtown area; felt the City is not in a position to continually maintain the Fulton Mall without generating revenue, such as property taxes and sales taxes; stated what is important is to bring the prospective tenants to the downtown area to generate those tax increments and drive up property taxes of the buildings downtown; agreed there are some incredible things on the Fulton Mall, however he felt for the greater good of the community, the mall needs to be accessible so everyone can enjoy it and not just the few that live and work downtown; felt mixed-use will be very important; commended Chair King in the restoration of the building of this meeting as an example of true mixed-use with residential, offices and retail; stated he envisions more mixed-use buildings once tenants are encouraged to come downtown; commended the Committee on their efforts and offered a letter of support.

Kyle ~~Fagrum~~ Pegram, Fulton Mall property owner, noted according to newspaper articles in *The Fresno Bee*, there is a cycle about every three years, which the City of Fresno entertains a plan for the Fulton Mall; admitted to not knowing the answer to fix the problem; stated Consultant Polyzoides presented 30 elements for a successful downtown; commended the Mayor for the meetings and disclosed that he was expecting to hear a consultant advocating the Mayor's opinion; admitted to his surprise when he heard one consultant speaking to preserve the mall and another speaking to generate retail and promote traffic and he immediately realized the process is being done in a fair manner; asked the Committee how many attended the recent Fulton Corridor Charrette; stated Fresno has suffered an identity crisis; illustrated through history that agriculture and commerce are the two bedrocks of civilization – We have agriculture, we need commerce; stated he believes Fresno needs to rebuild its civilization; we need to remember where we came from; stated a vote for redoing the mall is not a vote against art, it is a vote to create a vibrant society that once again can support art and artists, but without that vibrant culture, we will not have that ability.

Andrea Delcorn, Tower District resident, felt the patrons of the Fulton Mall are highly underrepresented here as they are pedestrians; stated that as a patron of the Fulton Mall, she likes to park her car and take her children for a walk along the mall; admitted she does not like having to pay for parking; felt more research needs to be done.

Brianne Marriott, Fresno resident, held a letter from the Mayor to Milford Wayne Donaldson, State Historic Preservation Officer; stated the letter was written to oppose the Fulton Mall's listing to the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historic Recourses; informed everyone that the letter can be found on the City's website; she read one line from the letter, "The nomination itself is a fundamentally flawed attempt to preserve what amounts to a failed urban renewal experiment that has bankrupted every effort to revitalize downtown Fresno for decades."; stated this letter was written April 13, 2011, which was well before the

Fulton Corridor Charrette or any of the planning meetings; questioned the premise that these meetings are at a level playing field or community-led, because it looks like the Mayor had some sort of position back on April 13, 2011.

Consultant Polyzoides responded to the public comments regarding the lack of participation and openness in this process; felt the level of engagement was deep, the alternatives were presented during the Fulton Corridor Charrette with at least 400 people in attendance on Monday night's presentation.

Trey Peacewinnig, Transportation Expert, stated the history of downtown buildings were constructed as transit-oriented designs to accommodate a transit system and not automobiles; believed opening up the mall to automobiles would be adding to the problem and what is needed is a transit system; felt the mall does not need an antique trolley with 100-year old technology; stated that new technology transit systems are available with \$36 million from Measure C.

David Wells, Fresno resident, responded to a public comment that was made after he spoke previously; felt that he was misunderstood and needed to clarify himself; stated he agreed if Fresno received high-speed rail, those trains stopping in Fresno will of course slow down, however, according to the master plan, out of the 200+ trains per day, we will be lucky to get 8 or 9 trains to stop; stated that most trains will not be stopping and the noise level will be at a higher decibel level.

Chair King apologized for the darkness of the room after negative public remarks; stated that normally, there is quite a bit of light flooding in from the mall and it is necessary to turn down the lights; stated there was no intent to keep anyone in the dark; mentioned it was discussed to table the meeting for further comment or to continue with the Committee voting.

Eric Kalkowski moved to continue with the Committee voting, second by Raul De Alba; motion carried. The meeting moved forward with comments from Committee Members.

Before Committee Members voted for their choice of top two plan alternatives, each expressed his/her comments and asked any further questions to the consultants.

Suzanne Bertz-Rosa, Alternate Member, asked how wide are the sidewalks on Alternative Plans 7 and 8. Consultant Polyzoides responded with 20 feet. She mentioned anchor stores and master developers are needed for Plan 2; questioned the pros and cons of going with the master developers and anchor stores in recruiting them. Consultant Polyzoides responded that the price for an anchor store is \$10 million and the possibility of retail of that magnitude is very difficult to garner at any one point. She questioned that if the budgets for Plans 3 through 8 are the same as for Plan 2 plus more, then why are the numbers different. Consultant Polyzoides responded that it is generally cheaper to build a conventional street than to build or restore a pedestrian mall. She verified that all art will be kept, but in some alternative plans, the art will be moved. Consultant Polyzoides agreed. She asked in the most extreme plan, how many pieces of art will need to be moved. Consultant Polyzoides did not have that number available, however it is in a report by Charles ~~Burbaun~~[Birnbaum](#).

Beth Eckloff, Alternate Member, favored the distinction of Alternative Plan 5, which supports closing some streets for a gathering place for activities and essential groupings that can be

distinctive of downtown for cultural events; understood that Plans 6 through 8, could reserve the ability for streets to be closed for certain events and supports this as well; appreciated and advocated one comment made earlier regarding the process of trying to not have traffic and seeing the detrimental fall-out from the previous stadium project; she is interested in seeing what it would look like to open up transportation in this area; stated she would like to see an alternative with a trolley street car, as well as a meandering street.

Jan Minami, Alternate Member, she is with the Downtown Association, which strongly supports and creates events for the public and it is important to have a good public space for such events; mentioned there are some things about the Fulton Mall that make events difficult and some make events quite easy; encouraged the concept of retaining the idea of public events; commented that no matter what alternative is selected, it is very important to honor the work that was done on the mall; suggested emulating other cities' malls with an indoor/outdoor museum that honors the original drawings and concepts that created the mall as it began; felt with the artwork relocation, there may be some type of concentration in conjunction with the museum that might be very effective.

Brent Weiner felt that with the Fulton Mall in its current state, there is only one option, and that is a pedestrian mall; affirmed he will cast his vote for some preservation, but preservation of not what is there now; wondered why there is a need to preserve something that is there currently and has basically economically failed; stated every Pop Laval picture of downtown shows Fulton Street in its vibrancy in the 1920's, 1930's, 1940's and 1950's; stated he will be casting his vote for preservation of not what we have now, but what we had back then when Fulton Street was vibrant; stated the reintroduction of vehicular circulation gives us again every option; believed there is an element in preserving some of the things currently on the mall, but it does give us the option of having the streets closed down to have events and still give us the opportunity for outside dining, walking and vehicular circulation.

Maribel ~~V~~nera-Anaya supported preserving the Fulton Mall, but not in its current state; stated it seems many people think that opening the mall to traffic means that everything will change, but the buildings and art will be preserved; felt it is a win-win situation; stated as a business person, having the traffic going by seeing the businesses would be positive; currently, people park in an area and are required to walk farther than their intended visit and do not see the rest of the businesses; stated she is in favor of closing the mall for events and felt that needs to be preserved.

Patrick Hammond stated the economy of the Fulton Mall is based on the surrounding community and feels that is what needs to be focused on; felt the economy of the mall will prosper.

Joyce Aiken has artwork on the Fulton Mall and supported the preservation and bringing it back to its glory; felt that if marketing was done for the mall as a destination place, it could bring the kind of tourism that is really needed; interested in Alternative Plan 9, however it was not shown until this evening; questioned whether opening Broadway Street and taking care of the buildings that are already there has been figured into the cost of opening up the mall for Alternative Plans 3 through 8. Craig Scharton responded that the cost of opening Broadway Street is not on the plans that were given; stated it is a loose part of the plan and is not what the Committee is considering in this meeting; stated the Committee is only

considering options for the Fulton Mall and its future; stated there are other parts of the plan that will include changing streets from one-way to two-way or dealing with alleys in the Cultural Arts District; stated there is not a firm plan to open the mall through those buildings. Nancy Marquez stated after listening to each public comment, she was almost convinced, but the comments that Consultant Polyzoides made that Charles ~~Burbaun~~ [Birnbaum](#) stated regarding bringing in the street traffic was the worst of things when some of us have been looking for some kind of compromise of keeping the mall and having traffic too with all of the in-between options, but now felt that maybe it is one or the other of the extremes with Alternative Plan 2 or 8; stated we may still be disappointed if we open up the mall fully; stated she felt we need something more.

Gary Lanfranco felt the Fulton Mall was an instant failure and has continued over 50 years to be an economic failure; stated he is in favor of Alternative Plan 8 as the only option to make the downtown a viable area to do business.

Victoria Gonzales questioned Alternative Plan 5, with the center section closed for two blocks, whether the underground ramp will be removed. Consultant Polyzoides responded that the ramp will be removed from all alternative plans (except Alternative Plan 1).

James Haron commented about information given during the Fulton Corridor Charrette regarding less than 10% capacity of the buildings on the Fulton Mall currently; stated as a business owner, this information was very compelling; stated he appreciates the art, but we must raise the capacity use of those buildings, stated we need to have them vibrant again; commented he has always enjoyed seeing the names on pictures of the business proprietors with hopes that the name of his business, which has been operating for 64 years, and other businesses have the names on the buildings; addressed the public that the Committee has been working on this for a long time and felt the public may not have been aware of some of the meetings; stated he appreciated the public's passion and encouraged the public to stay engaged with their input.

Roger Palomino stated he will support the position of preservation, stated we have given up too many of our historical monuments in the past; stated he sees the mall as becoming something different than what it is; stated that if we allow change, allow vehicles on the mall, it will change the whole concept of what the mall is; stated he favored Alternative Plans 2 and 3.

Allysunn Williams stated she is torn by some of the comments by both sides and felt her opinion is shifting a bit; stated she prefers a hybrid approach as she understood we need to drive foot traffic and visibility for business, however she would appreciate other ways of driving foot traffic and preserve more of the mall than tearing up the whole thing; stated one of the options is housing, but not sure which alternative plan would lend itself toward that type of development; stated when they talk about investing the City's dollars, it is more than just allowing cars on the mall or not, but what does this investment lead to after that, and in five years; wondered how do we accommodate growth in this area; how do we incorporate housing and other mixed-uses; stated she wished they had more time to discuss options on how to achieve several of their goals and not just traffic. Craig Scharton responded that the Specific Plan is much broader than the night's conversation; stated the Form-Based Code really allows for mixed-use and those are things the Committee will be considering as we

move forward; stated this is one critical piece and this decision will inform the other uses, the other traffic issues and the landscape issues; stated this is a starting point, the other issues will be incorporated into the plan, but not at this meeting.

Polly Parenti believed there can be a compromise to keep the art and the walkability in the green space and have additional vehicle traffic as well; stated she looked at it from a property owner's perspective and would want to see closer vehicular traffic coming to her business to bring in customers.

Timothy Schulz stated he has moved from one end of the spectrum to the other based a lot on the community input and opinions; stated there are a lot of good facts on both sides; stated one basic thing he kept coming back to is the success or failure of the Fulton Mall specifically and its outer lining areas do not hinge on decisions made here, it has been here historically, although admitted that it has not been an outstanding example of success economically; stated it is the entire community's responsibility to promote the area and the mall specifically and whether or not we are patrons of the businesses in the area; stated he leans more to opening the mall up to traffic; compared parking in San Francisco, it would be normal to expect to walk all day, but that is not necessarily the way it is in Fresno; felt we need to be open for change for things to be vibrant and felt opening the Fulton Mall to vehicular traffic while maintaining pedestrian traffic will help existing businesses, as well as any individuals looking to open a business; stated we need to be good stewards of what we have already and figure out the best way to continue to steward what we have and make it work best.

Eric Kalkowski stated Fresno has quite a few historical treasures with the majority located in the downtown region; stated over the history of our town, we have spent a lot of time dealing with tearing things down if they get into disrepair or if they are damaged by fire or neglect; felt too many times we end up without a heritage to look at when we are in this region downtown; stated the architecture along the mall is one of the largest examples and probably the most prevalent number of buildings we have that show our historical gifts; stated the installation of the Fulton Mall is in addition to that and we found out during one of our consultations that the length of the mall is one of the longest pedestrian malls in the country and felt that by opening up a portion of the mall to traffic and maintaining the central core closed for pedestrian we can achieve accessibility to a lot of the older buildings and still allows us to have that historical feel in the areas where we want to maintain that pedestrian activity, as well as festivals.

Chair Sandra King stated she loves the historical buildings on the mall and the art; stated she also enjoys walking on the mall and shopping; stated she was initially against opening up the mall to traffic then she toured Visalia in the old town and noticed an interesting storefront and drove around the block to see it a second time, and found it interesting and parked her car up close and went in and bought something, then it dawned on her that she never would have done that if she were in Fresno because she does not have the opportunity to drive and see the storefronts; stated it is important for more people in Fresno to see how beautiful our buildings are, to see our beautiful art, stated that she also wants to preserve the pedestrian aspect of our mall so she is seriously considering a meandering road that will incorporate pedestrian travel also; stated she felt the need to open up the mall to invigorate our downtown.

Alan Allen thanked Chair King, the design team and the City staff that put this meeting together; stated he was fortunate to attend all the Fulton Corridor Charrette meetings and mentioned this is the best education he has received in his lifetime; stated he is torn with the art issues; felt the mall should be opened up, but also knows that the design team, with what they have done and presented, will give us the best of both worlds; with 20 feet of sidewalks, we will have ample room for all the art, except Mr. Eckboe's work will be in Alternative Plan 8; stated his building is 50% occupied after 11 years; admitted one of the biggest complaints he received from potential tenants was the lack of visibility and access; stated with his current six tenants, five of them would like to see the mall opened up; stated he listened to Mr. ~~Burbaun~~ Birnbaum give a wonderful presentation of Mr. Eckboe's work and its importance, however Mr. Gibbs gave some economic aspects of preservation.

Raul De Alba stated at first he felt we should just fix what we have, but after hearing all of the comments, he felt there is a need to open the street for traffic so people can see the businesses; stated investors need to be attracted to the city to have different types of businesses downtown; stated the empty spaces will not be filled if it is not done; stated we should open it for traffic and beautify the Fulton Mall; favored keeping the artwork and placing it somewhere to be admired; felt promoting downtown will bring people to the area.

Rosemarie Amaral admitted at the very beginning, she was all about keeping it strictly pedestrian, however after attending the Fulton Corridor Charrette, stated she received a good education about the potential of the Fulton Mall and felt it is all about balance of pedestrian, green space and circulation in order for it to be viable; stated we also need to be respectful of art and a lot of the work on the mall; stated she agreed with Jan Minami with some ideas to preserve the art and keep it so that it is still there so people could walk along and observe it; stated the trees along the mall are very important for shade when walking, and shade trees will promote walking; stated we want people to be able to park their car and walk; believed downtown Fresno will be economically viable and with these changes, it will be a caulis of mixed-use of retail businesses to occupy a lot of the vacant buildings on the mall and throughout downtown; stated if they do this right, there will be a balance for all users for downtown Fresno and we will be able to see it thrive.

Morgan Doizaki stated he was unsure at first whether to keep the mall a pedestrian mall or open it to traffic, however after research and talking with people, he felt opening up the street will improve the sales for the businesses the most; noted that a lot of buildings on the Fresno Mall were there prior to 1964 when there was traffic on the mall; stated traffic on the mall should help improve sales and give profit to the building owners to restore the buildings to the way it once was when there was a street; stated the more research he has done, felt what will improve sales the most on the Fulton Mall is opening it up for street traffic.

Donavan Byrn stated if a street is put through the mall, that does not mean business will improve; also stated if the mall is restored and people walk up and down, that does not mean things will get better either; stated whatever is done, it needs to be a concerted effort and will be formed more by the Form-Based Code on how we drive our business, and where we allow people to build and reinvest, stated that if we continually allow things to move north, then it does not matter what is done here; stated Fresno has a bad history of running away from its history and tearing things down instead of preserving; stated foot traffic is critical, people walking makes something vibrant, not people driving; stated it is

important to get people down here and redirect the flow of business for preservation.

Alan Allen called for a vote from the Committee for the top two alternatives from each Committee Member, not including Alternates. The vote resulted as follows:

| Committee Member: | First Choice: | Second Choice: |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Joyce Aiken | 2 | 9 |
| Alan Allen | 8 | 7 |
| Rosemarie Amaral | 7 | 6b |
| Donavan Byrn | 2 | 4a |
| James Connell (absent) | | |
| Raul De Alba | 8 | 7 |
| Morgan Doizaki | 8 | 7 |
| Victoria Gonzales | 8 | 6b |
| Evan Hammer (absent) | | |
| Patrick Hammond | 2 | 1 |
| James Haron | 5 | 4b |
| Eric Kalkowski | 5 | 7 |
| Saundra King | 8 | 6b |
| Gary Lanfranco | 8 | 7 |
| Nancy Marquez | 3 | 8 |
| Roger Palamino | 2 | 3 |
| Polly Parenti | 5 | 3 |
| Timothy Schulz | 6b | 7 |
| Maribel Vera-Anaya | 8 | 7 |
| Brent Weiner | 8 | 7 |
| Allysun Williams | 4b | 5 |

[There was a 5-minute break to compile research after which Chair King reconvened the meeting.]

Vote was tallied to reflect the top three alternatives and placed on the screen for all to view:
Alternative Plan 8 – with 17 votes
Alternative Plan 7 – with 10 votes
Alternative Plan 2 – with 8 votes

Chair King stated there are eight Committee Members that do not want to open up the mall, one Committee Member wants to leave it as is, they would like to know if any of the Committee Members, who voted for Alternative Plans 3 through 5 would like to discuss or change their vote. Alternative Plans 7 and 8 were the top choices, but Members were to change from Plans 3 to 4a, 4b or 5, then that would be the third choice. She asked the Committee for their thoughts, asking if anyone wanted to change their vote. She asked if anyone who voted for Plans 4a or 4b would be interested in changing to 5. She stated that they have not turned in their official vote and she is not coercing anyone to change their vote. She is asking the Committee Members once they looked at the numbers if they would like to change their vote.

John Fox, City Attorney's Office, stated that this vote was for purposes of preference and the final vote has not occurred; stated the Committee established a process of how the voting would occur and the preferences have been made; cautioned that if the voting is to

be modified, a vote would need to be made to modify the process that has already been adopted. Chair King clarified that the Committee would need a motion to modify it. John Fox responded affirmatively.

Chair King asked if anyone, after looking at the numbers, would like to change their vote. If so, they would need to create a motion to modify, and if not, the votes will stand as the screen states. After a brief pause, she asked for a motion to accept the numbers as stated on the screen.

Allysunn Williams moved to accept the votes as is; second by Roger Palomino.

Patrick Hammond questioned that Alternative Plans 8 and 7 are being adopted; stated he would prefer casting just one vote at this time to see what the only option would be, as of now, it appears it is for Plans 8 and 7.

Elliott Balch clarified the City has asked the Committee to help prioritize and recommend alternatives that should be studied and further the planning process and environmental process that follows; clarified that this is not a final decision, but rather a recommendation for further studies; for instance, the Committee may recommend the top three vote-getters to be studied and maybe the issue of some of the partial opening options, perhaps in a motion, the Committee may also suggest the planning process and environmental process study those options too and the City reserves the right to study other options as well.

Patrick Hammond stated he understands there has been a motion on the floor and a second, however he felt there should be consideration with regards to point out that Plans 8, 7 and 2 are the top three and should be considered as a recommendation.

Suzanne Bertz-Rosa stated her concern with accepting the numbers as they appear, is that Plans 7 and 8 are so close together and felt that the Committee recommend something in the middle so the Committee could study Plan 2 for sure and either Plan 7 or 8 and then something that is more in the middle, just to look at the widest range of options when the Plans go through the EIR process.

James Haron clarified the motion on the floor is to accept the numbers as reflected on the screen and then if there is further action, it would be followed with further motions to indicate how many and which are to be submitted back to staff.

Allysunn Williams stated that Plans 4a, 4b and 5 are either to close 2, 3 for 4 blocks of the mall and that was 11 votes, so if the Committee were to propose an interim, maybe a block closure, the Committee could ask the group to come back to us with a study of a partial closure.

James Haron stated that even though he did not vote for Plans 2, 7 or 8, it is clear having the number of alternatives has diluted the significance of all the different alternatives versus Plan 2, which is to restore the mall; stated that by diluting the value of the number of alternatives against Plan 2, it is skewed and does not really reflect the feelings of the Committee; stated Allysunn Williams had a wonderful idea for the Members that did vote for Plans 4a, 4b and 5, which showed they wanted to keep part of the mall, there was just a difference on how much to keep; suggested possibly combining those and have 4 alternatives for study; stated it seemed pretty significant that Plan 8 received 17 votes.

Alan Allen stated he thought combining Plans 4a, 4b and 5 was offered to any of them that wanted to come together on those options.

Chair King stated the Committee has a motion before them to submit the numbers as presented on the screen; clarified whether James Haron was advocating to combine the votes for Plans 4a, 4b and 5 or to present a fourth plan for further study. She was reminded that the Committee has already voted on the method of voting.

Beth Eckloff expressed her agreement with the statement that the Committee has already voted on the method of voting; stated there are no grounds to group the Plans together since the same argument could be taken to combine Plans 7 and 8 and come up with another number; stated there should not be any further discussion and the Committee should take what has been voted on and leave it at that.

Rosemarie Amaral expressed her agreement with Beth Eckloff's statement; agreed this is getting too complicated and felt the voting is representative of what was spoken tonight from the Committee, as well as from the audience; stated she heard a lot for Plan 2 and a lot for opening up the mall.

Chair King called for a vote to accept the numbers as they are presented on the screen.

Motion carried (18 yes, 1 no – James Haron).

Elliott Balch clarified that the recommendation from the Committee is to study Alternative Plans 2, 7 and 8; requested a motion to reflect the recommendation for study.

Patrick Hammond moved to recommend Alternative Plans 2, 7 and 8 for further study.

Motion carried (19 yes, 0 no).

6. NEXT STEPS IN PLANNING PROCESS

Consultant Polyzoides spoke regarding the Specific Plan Schedule; In December, the City will receive the First Administrative Draft on the Specific Plan for their comments, which will be an internal document to be circulated among the departments; the City will return the First Administrative Draft within 30 days; In January, the First Administrative Draft will be followed by a Screen Check Public Draft, which is a response by the Consultants to generate a second set of comments; In February, the City will return the Screen Check Public Draft with any comments; at that point, the Specific Plan will be ready to be issued as a Public Draft document and will be available to the Committee and the rest of the citizens of the city that are interested in commenting; there could be meetings and/or comments on various aspects of the Plan; there are many technical issues to be discussed, as well as the Code; In February or March, the process will move forward to City Council and Planning Commission workshops; In March or April, there will be meetings with City Council to initiate the EIR; once the City Public Draft, City Council and Planning Commission workshops and the City Council initiates the EIR, the Committee will receive the document for a chance to comment either as a group or individually; there will be Committee meetings intermittently, as many as you feel are necessary to review the provisions of the Plan; there is a lot of work to do in the near future and he appreciated the focus and concerns on the project.

7. UNSCHEDULED COMMUNICATION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Chair King asked for comments from the Downtown and Community Revitalization staff, the public and the Committee.

An unidentified member of the audience stated that even though there was not a motion to study road closures, wondered whether Alternative Plans 3, 4 or 5 could be considered at a later time. Elliott Balch responded affirmatively; mentioned that obviously we have seen there is support for the idea of at least a partial closure so that will be taken under advisement too.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Approval Date: _____

CRAIG SCHARTON, Director
Downtown and Community Revitalization Department