

# Community Workshop #2 Summary

The following provides a summary of the second community workshop for the Milpitas Gateway-Main Street Specific Plan, held virtually on February 13, 2023 at 6:00 pm. This summary describes the purpose of the community workshop, provides an overview and summary of the workshop format, and shares key takeaways from input received through the small group breakout discussion exercises.

## Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to provide the community with an update on the emerging project vision and framework, review community engagement to date, and allow the project team to gather feedback about specific land use, mobility and public realm proposals in three Focus Areas within the plan area boundary.

Feedback received during the workshop will help guide the project team in refining the plan scenarios and strategies that will be presented in the forthcoming draft of the Specific Plan. The following is a brief overview of major agenda items and a summary of key themes captured during the small group breakout discussions.

## Overview

The meeting was held in the evening from 6:00-8:00pm via zoom. Attendance included twenty-nine members of the public and ten members of the staff team, including the following city staff from the Planning Department: Ned Thomas, Planning Director; Jay Lee, Principal Planner; and Randy Baez, Associate Planner and Vice Mayor, Evelyn Chua. The following items were the foundation of the meeting:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Presentation
  - a. Background and Status Update
  - b. Community Engagement and Guiding Principles
  - c. Economic and Market Update
  - d. Focus Area Concepts
3. Interactive Activities
  - a. Polling Questions administered via Mentimeter
  - b. Small group breakout discussions using display boards on the Miro platform
  - c. Report Back
4. Next Steps

## Welcome and Introductions

Dave Javid, with Plan to Place, welcomed participants and provided an overview of how the meeting was to be facilitated. Next, City of Milpitas Planning Director Ned Thomas provided introductions of key project team members and elected officials present and shared a brief overview of the meeting's purpose. Jay Lee from the City then provided a short welcome and presented an overview of the night's agenda. To broaden the introductions to include a snapshot of community members in attendance, participants were then asked to complete a short live online poll to gather demographic information (see the Appendix for the poll results).

## Presentation

Jay then began the presentation with an update on the planning process and project timeline. Christine Babla, representing the lead consulting firm Ascent, continued with an overview of community

engagement to date and shared guiding principles that have emerged to help shape the vision and proposals within the plan. Next, Chelsea Guerrero of BAE Urban Economics provided an economic and market update, including conclusions of a recent development feasibility analysis for Main Street. Following this update, Christine, followed by Angela Khermouch from Ascent, presented detailed proposals for three Focus Areas: Crossroads, Main Street, and Abbott District. After the presentation sections for each Focus Area, Julie Flynn from the Plan to Place team collected initial feedback on specific proposals through 2-3 online poll questions, the results of which are shared in the Appendix. Responses to the polling questions were shared briefly with attendees as part of the presentation and were also used to jump-start the small group breakout discussions immediately following. Attendees were encouraged to submit questions through the Zoom chat function during the meeting. The project team answered questions from the chat in real time where appropriate, and also revisited topics of interest for deeper discussion during the small group breakout discussions. A transcript of chat comments received appears in the Appendix.

### **Small Group Breakout Discussion**

Following the presentation, attendees were moved to 3 virtual breakout rooms, where a facilitator and note taker from the project team recorded feedback on a virtual whiteboard (see snapshot below) in response to discussion prompts. The following summary provides an overview of the small group breakout discussions, including key themes that emerged from the activity.

## Discussion re: Focus Area 1: Crossroads (15-20min)

**Land Use & Development.** Do you agree with the mix of uses & scale for this Focus Area?

**Open Space & Public Realm.** What do you think about the public realm concepts? Is there anything you would add or change?

### Crossroads Land Use/ Neighborhood Framework

#### Land Use Approach

- Mixed-use destination and active gathering space
- Anchor (at Serra) with theater or attraction
- Higher-intensity mixed use and residential
- Retail and restaurant
- Hotel
- Creative use/maker spaces

#### Scale

- Higher intensity: 5-7 stories

#### Mobility and Public Realm

- New central civic space
- Street and streetscape improvements
- Urban Parks and Plazas



Mixed-Use Retail, Restaurant, Entertainment



Higher-Intensity Residential and Live-Work

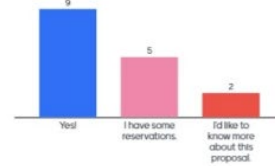


Parks, Plazas, and Gateway Focal Points

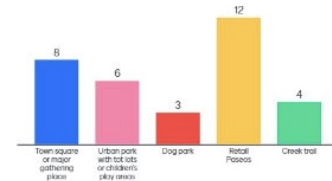
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### Poll Results

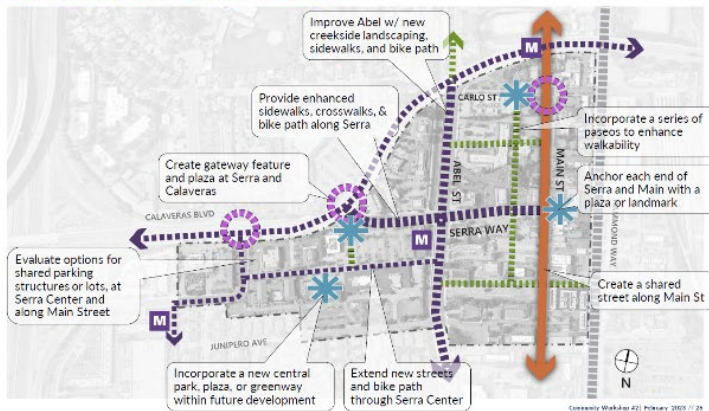
Do you agree with the approach of The Crossroads being an area with the highest intensity investment? A potential new vibrant center for Milpitas?



What types of open space would you prefer to see at the Crossroads?



### Crossroads Public Realm Framework



## Small Group Breakout Discussion Prompts

The following discussion prompts were used to facilitate the discussion with meeting participants in the small group breakout rooms. Discussion questions were mirrored across each of the three Focus Areas, discussed within each breakout room first for the Crossroads, then Main Street, and finally the Abbott District.

- **Discussion Prompt 1: Land Use and Development**
  - Do you agree with the mix of uses and scale of development for this Focus Area?
- **Discussion Prompt 2: Open Space and Public Realm**
  - What do you think about the public realm concepts for this Focus Area? Is there anything you would add or change?

## Main Takeaways from Small Group Breakout Discussions and Meeting Chat

The following bullets summarize the main takeaways from chat comments received during the presentation as well as the discussions in each of the breakout rooms. Feedback themes are categorized by Focus Area and small-group breakout discussion prompt.

## **Focus Area 1: Crossroads**

### ***Discussion Prompt 1: Land Use and Development - Do you agree with the mix of uses and scale of development for this Focus Area?***

1. Plan Process/Limits
  - Discussions about how the plan will/can impact development through site-specific concepts, incentive strategies, etc.
2. Overall Reactions
  - Excitement for the ideas in the presentation, particularly livability and active outdoor spaces for families
  - Alignment around the idea of making Main Street more walkable, more inviting
3. Development Type/Intensity
  - Acknowledgement that this Focus Area has a large urban, commercial potential and is perhaps the best site for a downtown area of Milpitas
  - Openness to 5-6-story development in this area given needs/demands
  - Desire to see the Specific Plan provide a mix of housing options in line with requirements from the Housing Element
4. Retail/Small Business
  - Concerns about the price/accessibility of retail spaces for small businesses
  - Desire for the right retail mix to adequately match community demand/desires (Ex: not saturating the area with similar format restaurants)

### ***Discussion Prompt 2: Open Space and Public Realm - What do you think about the public realm concepts for this Focus Area? Is there anything you would add or change?***

1. Stewardship of existing spaces
  - Noting graffiti, trash, etc. plague existing public spaces and gateways and that this must be addressed for new proposals to be successful
  - Concerns about safety of new public spaces, considering existing crime rate; noting as well that more public life and activity might mitigate crime issues
2. Calaveras Boulevard Corridor
  - Concerns that current congestion leads to pollution that makes this zone less suitable for public gathering, amenities, etc. unless pollution is mitigated
3. Desire for community amenities, landscaping, and “greening” of the area
4. Transportation Access
  - Desire to see access to all, even those who cannot walk or bike long distances
  - Highlighting the need for low-stress bike connections, such as protected bike lanes and trail connections over the railroad tracks, as well as integration of transit (including the Personal Rapid Transit project)
  - Traffic noted as a key concern, but one that shouldn’t be overvalued at the risk of reducing amenities that make the plan area more livable
  - Specific concerns about adding more people and traffic to the already-congested Calaveras Boulevard corridor area

- Discussion of limits of city role and need for coordination with regional/state entities (such as Caltrans) for traffic calming on Calaveras to be feasible
- Recognition that while parking is an issue, making the area more walkable and/or accessible via alternative modes may alleviate parking pressure.
- Discussion of tools, such as property-based improvement districts and/or shared public parking areas to help support project development feasibility.

## **Focus Area 2: Main Street**

### ***Discussion Prompt 1: Land Use and Development - Do you agree with the mix of uses and scale of development for this Focus Area?***

1. Development Type/Intensity
  - Desire for housing that is affordable and walkable to amenities for both seniors and the next generation of residents (ex: young families and/or young adults who grew up in the area and want to move back)
  - Concern about tall buildings blocking views of hills in some areas; acknowledgement that views of hills are an asset in this area
  - Acknowledgement that if denser housing is developed, it is critical to provide adequate open space for kids and families as part of the development
  - Request that any multi-use development be adaptable for changing market conditions and community needs
2. Retail/Small Business
  - Desire to support small business in this Focus Area
  - Paseos with retail frontage positively received
  - Questions regarding viability of new retail on Main Street if existing retail space at the nearby Great Mall is already hard to fill; questions about demand/need for more retail in general
  - Desire for a mix of businesses that are affordable - noting that high operating or rent costs could create a condition where only high-end businesses can thrive

### ***Discussion Prompt 2: Open Space and Public Realm - What do you think about the public realm concepts for this Focus Area? Is there anything you would add or change?***

1. Overall Reactions:
  - Support for making Main Street a center for Milpitas
  - Enthusiasm for outdoor dining on Main Street if traffic is slowed; also support for outdoor dining along retail paseos if included
  - Noting regional case studies like downtown areas of Mountain View (Castro Street) and Sunnyvale, as well as Santa Barbara's State Street, as desirable examples. All are welcoming and walkable, with adequate parking nearby, but behind the retail frontage.
  - Desire to see more trees, greenery, plants in the plan vision
2. Transportation Access
  - Need for traffic calming/speed reductions on Main Street for new amenities to be welcoming, and to make biking conditions safer today; suggestion to leave Abel as primary through street

- Need for parking nearby to make Main Street amenities accessible. Noting that ground floor of parking garages can be activated too, and voicing a desire to balance parking needs with other modes (walking, biking, transit) and the opportunity to bring amenities - some voiced a sentiment of not wanting to wait for a major parking project to improve Main Street
- Bikeway options:
  - Support for Abel Street bikeway design that is fully separated from vehicles, preference for some for separation from pedestrians as well
  - Acknowledgement that for Main Street, having bicycles share street space with cars can be viable with adequate traffic calming measures
  - Noting the importance of gateways to provide safe bike access to new and improved infrastructure on Able, Main, etc. from other areas of Milpitas meeting

### **Focus Area 3: The Abbott District**

#### ***Discussion Prompt 1: Land Use and Development - Do you agree with the mix of uses and scale of development for this Focus Area?***

1. Development Type/Intensity
  - Support for overall approach to this area, including addition of light industrial, but acknowledgement that it is close to a residential area so transitions will be important for uses to co-exist
  - Some confusion on what is being proposed - images of the large industrial complexes makes suggest there is a proposal for this site to develop; assumption that previously there was no housing proposed in this district at all
  - Acknowledgement that proposed development could create more jobs in this area
2. Elmwood Facility
  - Desire for more information about how the facility will be addressed
  - Desire to see thoughtful transitions/crossings to and from the facility
  - Noting that screening/mitigating visuals of this facility may be important to attract development
  - Suggestion to explore a hotel/motel near the facility for visitors

#### ***Discussion Prompt 2: Open Space and Public Realm - What do you think about the public realm concepts for this Focus Area? Is there anything you would add or change?***

##### 1, Transportation/Access

- For bike access to/from the area, safe crossing points over the railroad will be important; one participant noting that Curtis could be an important street to look at for bike transitions.
- Additionally, a comment that integrating transit access is important.
- Suggestion to add more parking to the Abbott District with a shuttle service to Main Street and the Crossroads

### **Next Steps**

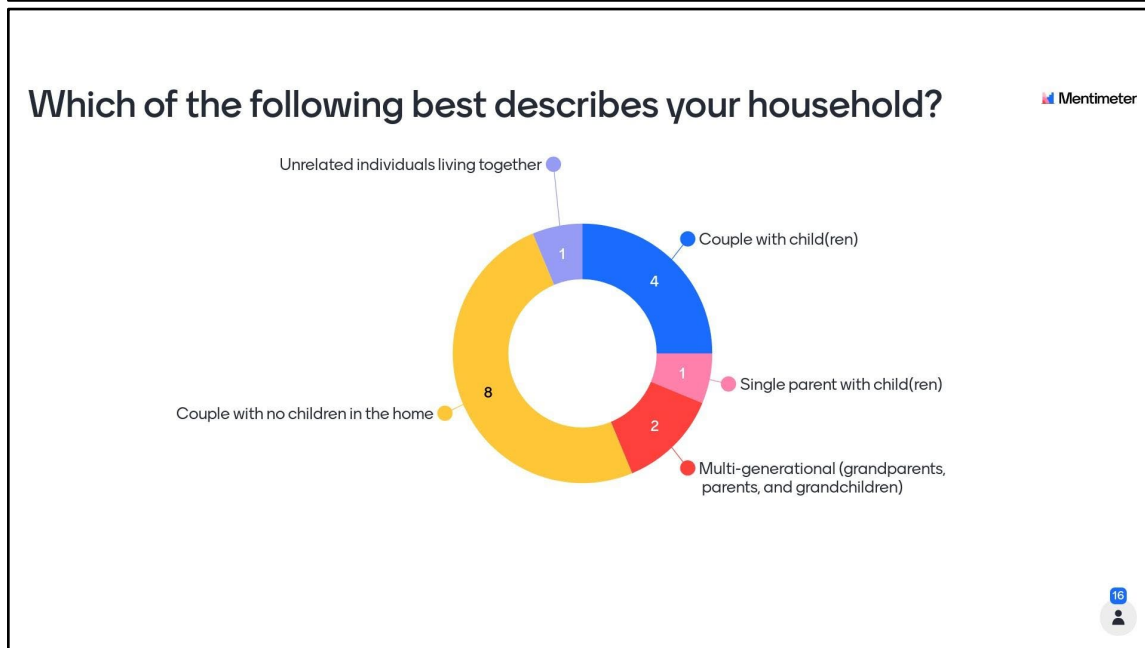
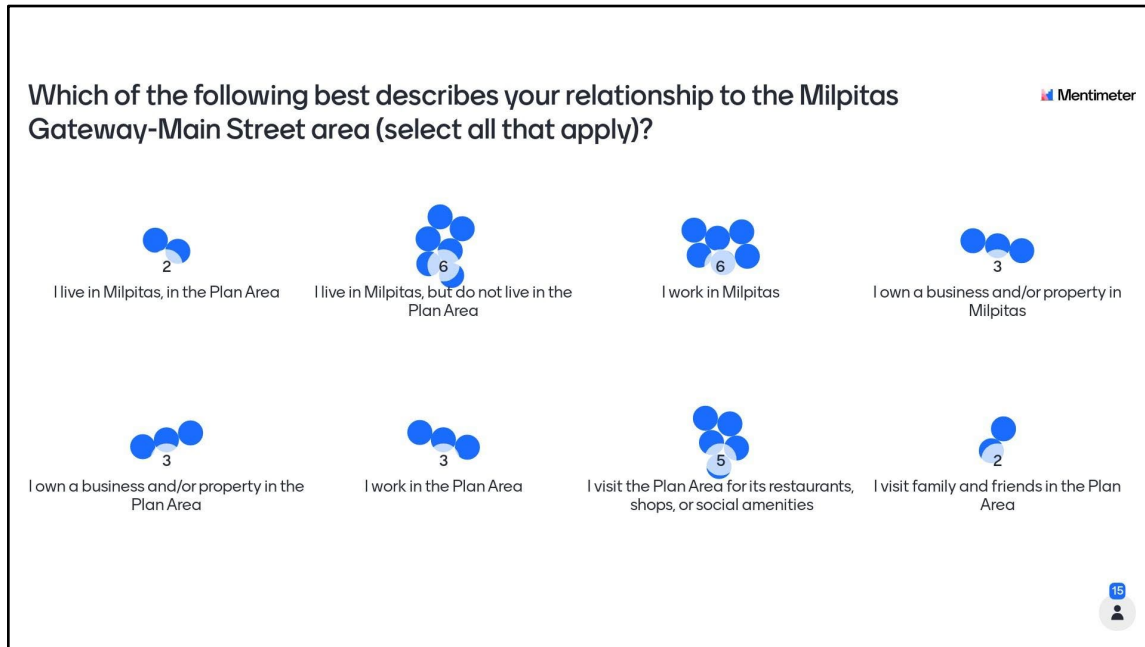
Following a report out on key themes of the small group breakout discussions, the project team reviewed next steps, including continued engagement through February. Participants were encouraged to visit the project website ([www.milpitasmainstreet.org](http://www.milpitasmainstreet.org)) to access the presentation and meeting recordings and to submit additional feedback to Jay Lee at the City of Milpitas. An online feedback form was also posted to

the project website to gather additional input related to the material presented at the workshop and extend outreach to those who were unable to attend the virtual workshop. The project team highlighted that the next major milestone will be to finalize plan scenarios and strategies in Spring 2023, moving to a draft plan and Environmental Review Process targeted for late 2023.

# Appendix

## In Meeting Live Poll Results:

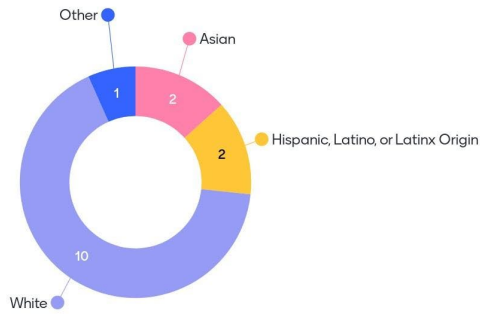
### Demographic Questions





If you self-identify, what race or ethnicity do you most identify with? (Select all that apply)

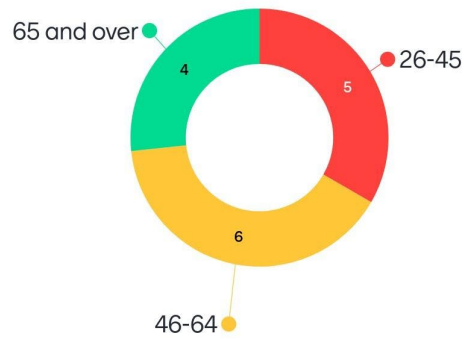
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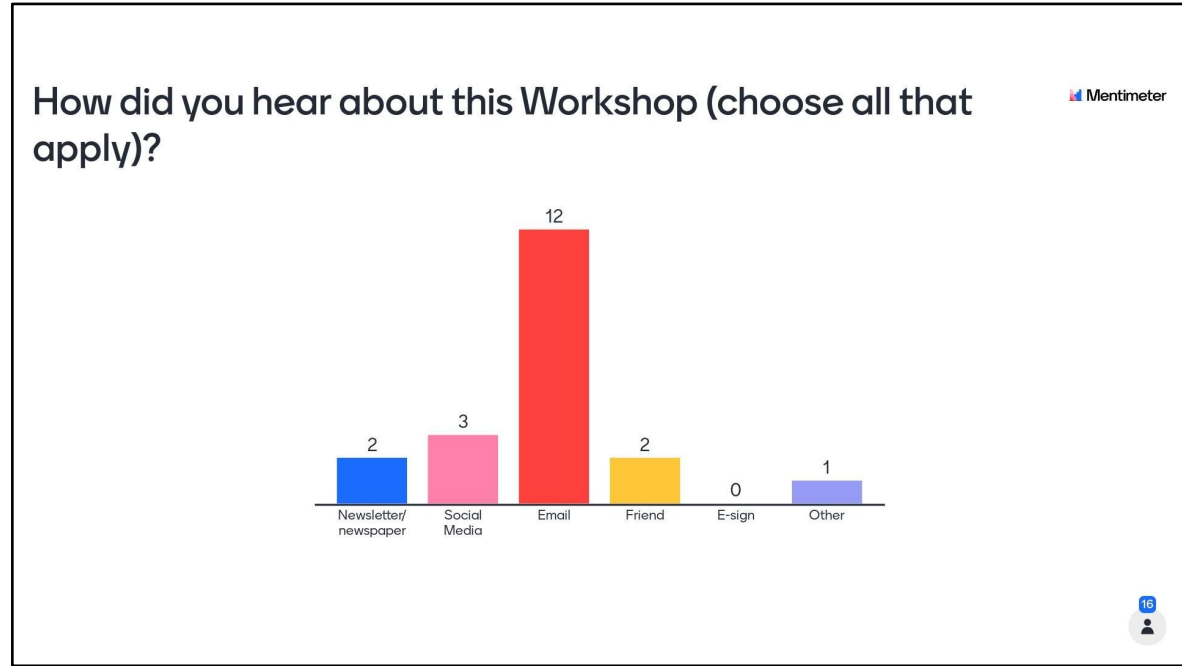
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What is your age?

Mentimeter



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## Focus Area 1: The Crossroads

**Mixed-Use Retail, Restaurant, Entertainment**

**Higher-Intensity Residential and Live-Work**

**Parks, Plazas, and Gateway Focal Points**

**Do you agree with the approach of The Crossroads being an area with the highest intensity investment? A potential new vibrant center for Milpitas?**

Mentimeter

Response	Count
Yes!	9
I have some reservations.	5
I'd like to know more about this proposal.	2

16

**What types of open space would you prefer to see at the Crossroads?**

Mentimeter

Open Space Type	Count
Town square or major gathering place	8
Urban park with tot lots or children's play areas	6
Dog park	3
Retail Paseos	12
Creek trail	4

19

## Focus Area 2: Main Street

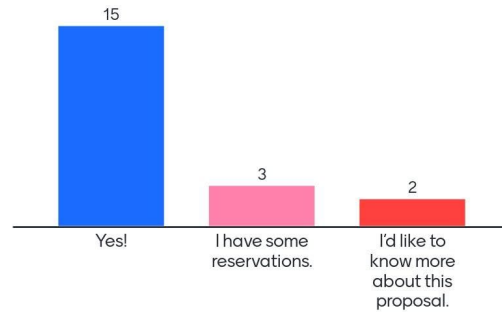


Shared Street - Madison WI



Do you like the idea of making Main Street a shared street?

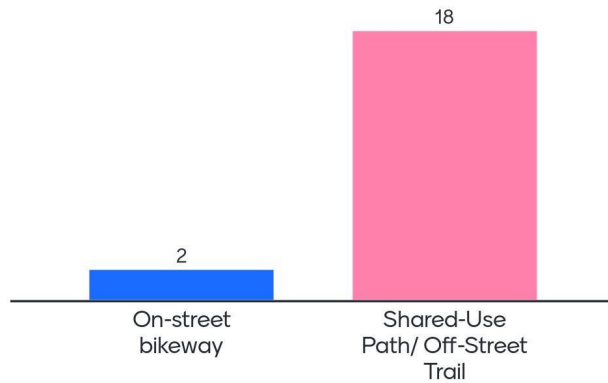
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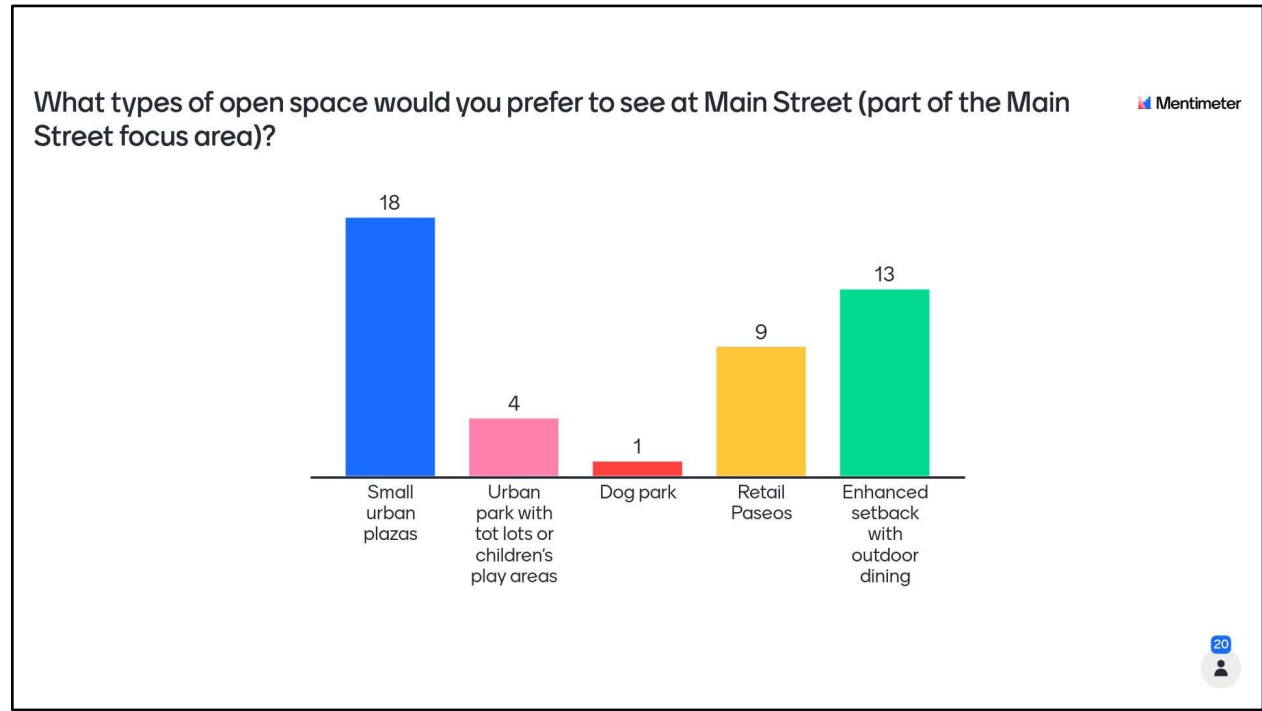
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What are your preferences for the design of Abel Street (part of the Main Street focus area)?

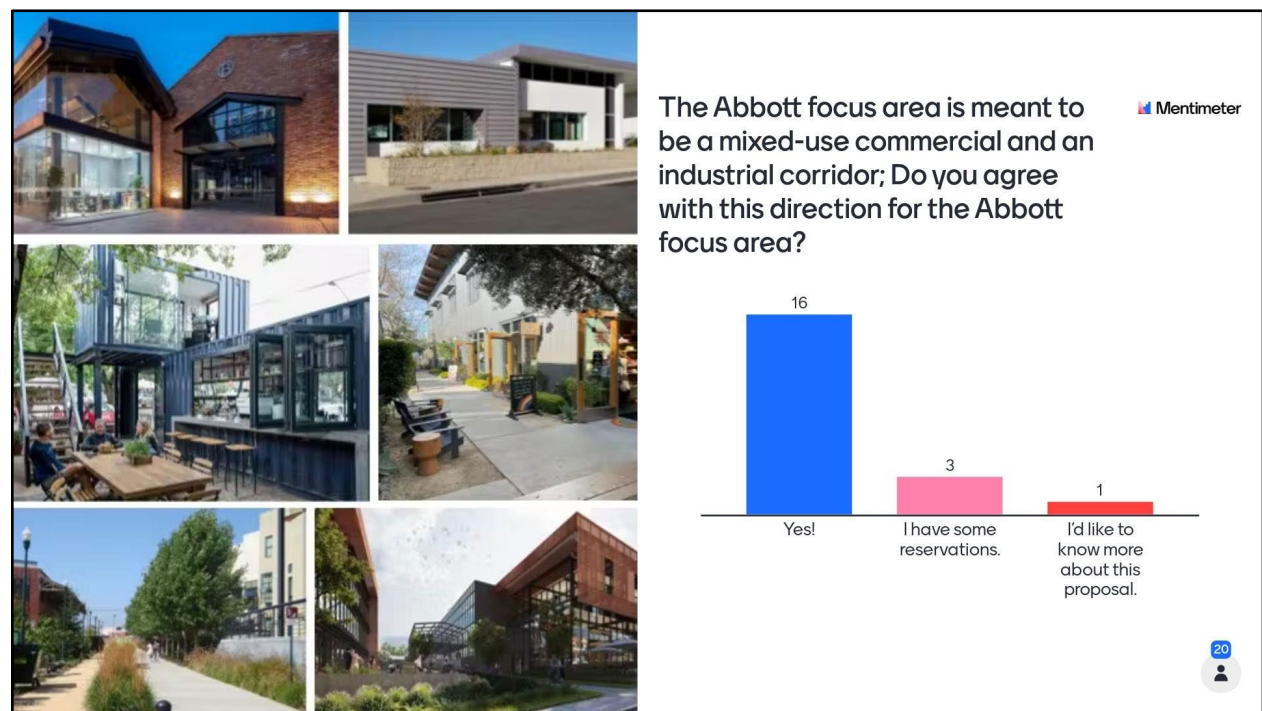
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### Focus Area 3: The Abbott District



## Transcript of Public Comments Received through Zoom Chat:

The below reflects a transcript of comments shared through the Zoom Chat function during the presentation, prior to the small group breakout sessions. Themes from the transcript below have been reflected in the summary sections of this document.

- While reviewing Mobility Concepts, what thoughts were rendered about extending the Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) project from the Metro Area?
- Can you say more about what high intensity and area of priority mean?
- "You-nip-ero" = Junipero
- Is the plan including a different access to 680?
  - Team Response: No, 680 is outside the Plan area.
- Christine - have you been to the site and walked it (Comment directed at project team member Christine Balba)
  - Team Response: Thank you for the question. Yes- I and our team have walked the area extensively, including during rush hour.
- But not really - Calaveras is the main connection from 237 to 680 - residence in this area seems problematic
  - Team Response: We would be happy to chat with you about this; please feel free to reach out to me. Understood, but the scope of the project doesn't include looking at Calaveras east of the Plan area. Regarding housing in the Plan area, the General Plan and Housing Element identify this area as an area for more housing. The State is requiring local jurisdictions to plan for more significantly more housing. Also, any traffic impacts will be analyzed as part of the environmental analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - Understood, but the scope of the project doesn't include looking at Calaveras east of the Plan area. Regarding housing in the Plan area, the General Plan and Housing Element identify this area as an area for more housing. The State is requiring local jurisdictions to plan for more significantly more housing. Also, any traffic impacts will be analyzed as part of the environmental analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - We are also coordinating with Caltrans and VTA about their future vision for Calaveras. Developments will also be required to mitigate any traffic impacts resulting from their project. Mitigation could include better multimodal transportation options, roadway/signal improvements, etc.
- "new railroad crossings" of what type. At-grade crossings are prohibited, while pedestrian overcrossings are expensive and somewhat inconvenient due to the 25-foot high clearance required by the railroad companies.
  - Team Response: We've had preliminary discussions with Union Pacific about this. Great point about overcrossings being expensive. We will definitely carefully consider the benefits/costs of any public improvement, but especially ones that might be more expensive.
- If a parking district were created to fund a parking structure, how much money are we talking about? I hear that such parking can cost \$50,000 per car space. What are realistic numbers?
  - Team Response: We haven't analyzed this yet but we will look at impact fees later and after the Plan is updated.
- San Francisco calls it "You-nip-ero" with a German J, but the J should be the Spanish J, so it should be "Hoo-nip-ero".

- 4 to 5 stories - there are some multi-level buildings already but many are single story
- Creek Trail, WHAT creek?
- Penitencia Creek runs parallel to Abel (on the West side).
- Penitencia goes all along there
- Penitencia is a good ways west of Main....
- Is Elmwood moving?
- They are talking about Abel, which is the western boundary of the "Main Street" Focus Area. The earlier cross-sections were for Main Street.
- Residents of Sylvia and Corning might have serious reservations about the traffic.
- Having a "downtown" in Milpitas would be great. I am put in mind of Castro Street in Mt. View. The parking is extremely tight in that scenario. I would like to see PRT (Personal Rapid Transit) included in the Milpitas version of downtown which could combine with parking structure to service the high retail/restaurant area.
- Please do post on Go Milpitas Group on Facebook. Let me know who you are can approve
- Great meeting. Thank you all!

## Miro (virtual whiteboard) Comments:

The following are both chat and verbal comments taken from each of the virtual rooms during the breakout session:

### Room 1 (Main Room)

- I bike on Main Street quite a bit and can confirm the fast car situation (especially during off-peak hours).
- My kids cannot live here - they both have moved out of the area
- I do remember hearing that the Abbott district would not include housing

### Room 2

- Parking will be critical
- I like option 1, separate bike and pedestrian
- Most of Milpitas's population is east of the railyard. Main/Abel/Abbott are a narrow band west of the railyard. I live in The Pines and would not walk to the Crossroads or Abbott but Abbott COULD house a lot of parking and a shuttle could then transport people to Main/Abel/Crossroads.
- Adding to that more bike safe cross points over the railyard



# Miro Board Images

**Facilitator: Christine Maltzman | Angèle**

**Discussion re: Focus Area 1: Crossroads (15-20min)**

**Land Use & Development:** Do you agree with the mix of uses & scale for this Focus Area?

**Open Space & Public Realm:** What do you think about the public realm concept? Is there anything you would add or change?

**Comments/Questions**

**Verbal Comments**

**Discussion re: Focus Area 2: Main Street (15-20min)**

**Land Use & Development:** Do you agree with the mix of uses & scale for this Focus Area?

**Open Space & Public Realm:** What do you think about the public realm concept? Is there anything you would add or change?

**Comments/Questions**

**Verbal Comments**

**Discussion re: Focus Area 3: Abbott (~10min)**

**Land Use & Development:** Do you agree with the mix of uses & scale for this Focus Area?

**Open Space & Public Realm:** What do you think about the public realm concept? Is there anything you would add or change?

**Comments/Questions**

**Verbal Comments**

**Facilitator: Paul Maltzman | Julie**

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**Comments/Questions**

**Verbal Comments**