

Fall 2024 Neighborhood Improvement Team/Townhall Meeting Notes

Pittsburg Meeting Tackles Traffic, Safety, Business, and Community Development Issues

Date & Time: 2024-09-25 18:30:49
Location: Los Medanos Elementary
Attendees: [Insert Names]

Background

During this meeting Pittsburg addressed community issues such as traffic management, safety concerns, business challenges, code enforcement, illegal dumping, economic development, and community services. Key topics included traffic congestion, safety improvements, business compliance, illegal dumping, rezoning projects, retail shopping challenges, youth programming, homelessness, infrastructure projects, and local hiring practices. Participants included law enforcement, city officials, business owners, and residents, discussing solutions like road widening, camera projects, property compliance, and economic development initiatives.

Q&A

1. Traffic management and safety improvements on Buchanan Road and other areas.

- The traffic team evaluates traffic collisions and enforces safety in school zones. They are aware of concerns on Buchanan Road, Leland, San Marcos, and Railroad Avenue.
- Improvements on Buchanan Road include widening the road and installing a median. However, there is no definitive plan to extend the median further due to space constraints.
- East County communities work together on traffic issues, with a group from different agencies such as Oakley, Brentwood, and Antioch collaborating on enforcement. CHP assists with highway traffic.

2. Concerns about a recent homicide and business challenges in Pittsburg.

- A business owner, expressed concerns about safety and the difficulty of opening businesses due to code enforcement issues.
- The city is working on a camera project to improve safety, with funding in place and final contract details being addressed.
- The city aims to support businesses by providing financial support and working with property owners to improve compliance.

3. Code enforcement and property management issues in shopping centers.

- The city is working with property owners to ensure compliance with municipal codes and improve shopping centers.
- Specific conversations with business owners are planned to address code enforcement needs.
- The city is citing problematic property owners daily to ensure compliance.

4. Illegal dumping and maintenance issues in Bay Point.

- Resident from Bay Point raised concerns about illegal dumping and overgrown vegetation.
- The city clarified that Bay Point is outside their jurisdiction but offered to investigate and coordinate with the appropriate authorities.

5. Economic development and rezoning of the golf course project.

- A project involving rezoning to industrial light industrial is moving to the city council.
- The project includes a data center and other developments.

6. Concerns about the environmental impact and traffic due to the proposed development.

- The EIR indicates that the development would not have significant impacts. The project includes 30 diesel generators for backup power, which are redundant and not expected to operate simultaneously.
- Traffic on Leland Road is expected to increase to 3,300 car trips per day. Mitigation measures include encouraging building occupants to use buses.
- Public hearings will be held for zoning administrator approvals, allowing community input.

7. Timeline for presenting the project to the City Council.

- The project is slated to go before the City Council on October 7th.

8. Potential for green jobs and alternative locations for development.

- The technology campus aims to create green jobs and attract technology companies to Pittsburg.
- The open space on Century by Winterport is privately owned, and the current proposal focuses on the east side due to existing infrastructure like high-voltage PG&E lines.

9. Reasons for businesses leaving Pittsburg and efforts to attract new businesses.

- Target left due to lease expiration, lack of investment, and retail theft issues. The city had invested in the area to retain Target, but sales were low.
- Efforts to attract businesses include improving property aesthetics, increasing public safety, and working with property owners to reduce theft.
- The city is focusing on attracting technology and sports complexes to create job opportunities and generate revenue.

10. Concerns about limited retail shopping options in Pittsburg, leading residents to shop outside the city.

- Efforts are being made to support retail establishments and ensure their success.
- A substation has been opened at Century Plaza shopping center to serve the community and improve police presence.
- Negotiations are ongoing for a second location on the west end of town in the Safeway Shopping Center.

11. Inquiry about youth programming and partnerships with businesses for young people.

- The Marina Community Center is available for indoor activities and partnerships with businesses.
- Current partnerships include Bridge Builders to the Next Generation, WNBA, Junior NBA, and Junior Giants.
- The city is open to collaborating with businesses for youth programming and will follow up with interested parties.

12. Appreciation for police efforts on Crestview and inquiry about future plans for police presence.

- A project has been awarded to a contractor to improve four intersections to slow down traffic.
- Measures include installing a traffic signal, raised medians, and enhanced crosswalk features.
- Construction is expected to start soon.

13. Concerns about homelessness and encampments affecting the community.

- The city works closely with the county and other agencies for outreach and cleanup efforts.
- Resources are provided to the unhoused, including mental health support, hygiene packets, and transportation assistance.
- Efforts are made to connect individuals with stable housing and family support.

14. Inquiry about the maintenance of Bailey Road and its poor condition.

- Bailey Road is a county road and not maintained by the city.

- The process to address the road condition involves coordination among businesses that front the road.

15. Construction of a pathway behind buildings for pedestrian access from the BART station to the parking lot.

- The pathway is being constructed due to the lack of a sidewalk along the front edge of Bliss, which is private property. BART provided a grant for this construction, and lighting will be installed for safety.

16. Potential for a major grocery store at Highlands Shopping Center.

- Residential development like Tuscany Meadows is needed to attract grocery stores. The city and property owner are advocating for a grocery store, and efforts include reducing permit costs to facilitate development.

17. Traffic signal timing improvements from Bliss to Buchanan.

- A new timing plan was implemented to coordinate traffic signals and improve traffic flow. Feedback on specific problem areas and times is requested for further adjustments.

18. Interest in a new gym facility in Pittsburg.

- Currently, there are no plans for a new gym. The city is working with Retail Strategies to attract businesses, including gyms, to Pittsburg. Community feedback will be considered in future development plans.

19. Combining the farmer's market with car shows or other events.

- Discussions are ongoing about combining events like the farmer's market with car shows. Coordination with event organizers is necessary to determine feasibility.

20. Local hiring practices for new businesses.

- There is no municipal code requiring local hiring, but the city encourages it through agreements with businesses. Some businesses have committed to seeking local hires.

21. Amtrak station relocation and potential for a new station in Pittsburg.

- The Antioch Amtrak station is moving to Oakley. The city has reached out to the San Joaquin Road Powers Authority to discuss the possibility of a new station in Pittsburg.

22. Funding opportunities for community organizations.

- The city does not have a specific program for funding youth organizations, but there are regional grant programs like the Keller Canyon Mitigation Fund and Los Medanos Health Advisory Commission that provide funding for community services.

Pittsburg Community Meeting Addresses Park Security, Marina Project, and Local Development Concerns

Date & Time: 2024-09-28 10:36:50
Location: Marina Community Center

Background

The consultation meeting focused on addressing community concerns and providing updates on various projects and initiatives in Pittsburg, including park security, marina project, tech park, hotel development, safety in the Garcia industrial area, government contracting opportunities for minority-owned businesses, police staffing, and local business impacts.

Q&A

1. Timeline and security measures for the park closure and renovation.

- The park will close at the end of October, avoiding crucial duck and fishing seasons. The original plan was an 18-month shutdown, but this is not feasible.
- Security measures include a security company presence in the evenings and nights, gated boat parking lot, strategic lighting, and vandal-proof restrooms.
- A new substation will be built to encourage Marine Patrol units to use the facilities, enhancing security.

2. Concerns about tailgaters and park patrol.

- A security company patrols parks at night to enforce curfews and ensure cleanliness. This may extend to daytime to prevent tailgating.
- Enforcing curfews has made a significant difference in maintaining order.

3. Issues at Riverview marina and usage of Dream Courts.

- Riverview marina is often messy. Our marina staff does what it can to maintain it clean.
- The courts will be managed by a private operator, holding tournaments and providing community access during certain times.
- The goal is to create a recreation hub with basketball courts, soccer fields, and a community room, supporting both sports tourism and community use.

4. Concerns about the tech park's proximity to homes.

- An extensive environmental impact report determined no noticeable noise impact for nearby homes. A 25-acre buffer provides distance between homes and the tech park.
- The tech park includes 30 generators, which are redundant and will not operate simultaneously. Biodiesel will power the generators, tested periodically.

5. Request for quarterly meetings and engagement with the Yacht Club.

- The city staff was thanked for their participation. A request was made for quarterly meetings and a presentation to the Yacht Club about the marina project.

6. Question about the new hotel project near Loveridge and Wal-Mart.

- The question was raised about the rationale for a new hotel given the proximity of existing hotels like Hampton Inn and Marriott Courtyard.

7. Need for extended stay hotels in East County

- The hotel across from Wal-Mart next to Planet Fitness is an extended stay hotel, which is doing well due to construction projects and contractors in East County.
- These hotels also rent nightly to visitors for events like sports days.
- The development is funded by private money, not public dollars, as investors see a market for these hotels.
- The brand involved is Hilton Home 2 Suites, with other brands like Marriott also looking into the area.
- City council members frequently question the need for so many hotels, but data and analytics show a demand for more hotels in East County.

8. City's financial involvement in hotel projects

- The courtyard hotel had a \$36 million construction budget, with a \$600,000 federal ARPA grant from the city and a commercial bridge loan at 6% interest.
- The Hilton project involved a loan from the city at 12% interest.
- The city's financial involvement is minimal, with most financing coming from private sources.
- Performance bonds, personal guarantees, and collateral are in place to ensure project completion and mitigate risks.

9. Sister city program

- Pittsburg has four sister cities: Shimonoseki (Japan), Isola Delle Femmine (Italy), Yahualica (Mexico), and Pohang (South Korea).
- The closest relationships are with Yahualica and Shimonoseki.
- A delegation from Shimonoseki visited in August, involving eight junior high school students who participated in various activities.
- The city is looking for host families for future exchanges.
- Exchanges with Japan were paused due to COVID-19 but are expected to resume.

- Isola Delle Femmine delegations visit one to two times a year, while exchanges with Pohang have been minimal.

10. Safety concerns in the Garcia industrial area

- Issues include parking enforcement, code enforcement, and criminal activities.
- The area around Freedom Garcia Corner has been a focus, with efforts to manage unhoused individuals and problematic tenants.
- The city works with property management groups to address issues, but private property enforcement can be slow.
- The city is reviewing zoning regulations to ensure industrial areas are used appropriately.
- Residents are encouraged to report safety concerns to the police, either through 911 for emergencies or non-emergency numbers (925-646-2441) for other issues.

11. Challenges faced by small minority-owned businesses in accessing government contracting opportunities.

- All capital improvement projects go out to bid through a request for proposal (RFP) process.
- There is a question and answer meeting during the bid process for clarifications.
- For smaller projects, interested parties are encouraged to email their information and preferences.
- Bidding opportunities are published in newspapers and on the City of Pittsburg website.
- The city encourages local businesses to work with them and provides information on grants that require contracting with minority-owned businesses.

12. Police staffing levels and daily patrol numbers.

- The city is allotted 88 total sworn officers but is currently 11 under that number.
- There are 9 recruits in the police academy, with 6 more starting in November.
- It takes about a year from hiring to having an independent police officer on the street.
- Daily patrol averages 20 plus officers, with additional officers for traffic, mental health, and retail enforcement.

13. Requirements and process for joining the Police Academy.

- The hiring process includes physical agility tests, background checks, polygraph, medical and psychological evaluations.
- There is no maximum age limit; candidates must meet physical and educational requirements.
- The minimum education requirement is a high school diploma.

- The police academy training lasts six months and includes academics, physical training, and various skills training.

14. Impact of corporate decisions on local retail businesses.

- Corporate decisions, such as those made by Target, can affect local store operations.
- Despite efforts to reduce theft, Target closed its Pittsburg store due to lease and investment considerations.
- The city remains in contact with Target for potential future opportunities.

15. Status of the fish house and fish market project

- The project was approved several years ago. The property owner, who also owns Fisherman's Catch, had to redo plans after losing their contractor and architect.
- Deadlines were given to the owner, and currently, trenching for plumbing and infrastructure is underway.
- The new establishment will be a sit-down restaurant with a fish market inside, unlike Fisherman's Catch, which is primarily a to-go place.

16. Plan to fix West 10th Street and Willow Pass

- West 10th Street and Willow Pass are arterial roads, and fixing them is a long-term project.
- Currently, there is no funding for major repairs, but minor repairs can be done by staff. Major repairs would require external contracts.

17. Completion of the road to the library and parking lot

- The road will be reopened when the Courtyard by Marriott opens, expected by the end of November.
- The closure was due to construction, and it will be reopened once all fencing and equipment are removed.

18. Development of an interactive map for street repair zones

- The IT department and GIS are working on an interactive map to show street repair zones.
- A webpage with public works information is being developed, and a city-wide performance dashboard is available for viewing minor road repairs and maintenance stats.

19. Status of the old Mansville property and POSCO property

- The city does not own the property North or South of the old Mansville property. The south side has a proposed residential development.
- The development is in early stages, undergoing environmental review and remediation to ensure safety before proceeding.

20. City's crisis response and diversion with police officers

- The city has been exploring crisis response for over 10 years. The county's A3 initiative is being integrated, with a MET team and clinician working on mental health issues.

- Calls are triaged by priority, with A3 handling lower-priority cases and the sheriff's office handling higher-priority cases involving weapons or threats.

21. Efforts to attract businesses back to the city

- The city is working with the police department and planning to make shopping centers more attractive through environmental design and flexibility in business models.
- Retail Strategies has been hired to recruit businesses by analyzing city demographics and demands, attending trade shows, and connecting with potential businesses.

22. Abandoned car parked for over three months at the corner of Crestview and Leland.

- The parking enforcement team will be sent to investigate the area this week.
- Residents are encouraged to use the app to report such issues for quicker resolution.

23. Illegal car activities, including donuts and sideshows, occurring in the area.

- The issue is regional and has been ongoing since COVID-19.
- A new task force is being discussed to address these issues on weekends.
- Residents are encouraged to provide video evidence to help identify and seize involved vehicles.

24. Return of the Farmers Market.

- The goal is to bring back the Farmers Market by tying it to other events to ensure a sufficient influx of people.
- Discussions are ongoing to find creative ways to achieve this.

25. Request for a crossing light at Crestview for safety reasons.

- The Crestview project is funded by various grants, and there might be leftover funds to add a crossing light.
- The traffic engineer will assess the intersection to determine the necessity.

26. Concerns about motorcycles and dirt bikes on the De Anza Trail.

- The De Anza Trail is under the jurisdiction of East Bay Regional Parks.
- The traffic enforcement unit will be informed to patrol the trail.
- East Bay Regional Parks will be notified to increase their presence on the trail.

27. Announcement of a workshop by PACT on special education.

- The workshop will be held on Thursday over Zoom, taught by attorneys and legal staff from Disability Rights California.
- The workshop aims to educate parents on accessing special education services for their children.

