

Heart of Fairfield Implementation Plan Update

September 15, 2020

ONGOING PHASE

Objective 1. Encourage Appropriate Development

Action 1.1	Expand and implement the Façade Improvement Program
Update	Council renewed the program, approved modifications expanding eligible uses, and authorized \$150,000 budget for fiscal year 2020/2021. Program revised as The Heart of Fairfield Revitalization & Enhancement Assistance Program (REAP) – “ <i>REAP the benefits, REAP the rewards!</i> ” Revisions to the program expands eligible improvements and make process improvements to provide for better utilization of the Program.
Upcoming:	Staff will continue to develop application process, timelines, and marketing strategy for future implementation of program.

Action 1.5	Facilitate new development by providing funding for utility upgrades
Update	In July, Council adopted an ordinance forming an Underground Utility District, which includes the right-of-way and portions of the adjacent properties along Webster Street from Kentucky to Delaware Streets and Empire Street from Great Jones Street to Union Avenue.
Upcoming:	The City is taking the lead on the design of the project and intends on hiring a qualified engineering firm to complete this effort. Staff anticipates presenting the consultant services agreement in October 2020 for Council consideration.

Objective 5. Diversifying Housing

Action 5.2	Implement HOF zoning requirements to facilitate mixed-use, live-work, and other innovative housing types
Update	The City negotiated and approved a Disposition and Development Agreement for Catalyst Site 1, located at 1600 Woolner Avenue. The project seeks to develop 162 multifamily rental housing units in a 3-story building. The project covenants guarantee 10 units of affordable rental housing for households at or below 80% area median income.
Upcoming:	Sale of the property is currently in escrow.

SHORT-TERM PHASE

Objective 3. Increasing the Mix of Uses in the Plan Area

Action 3.1	Implement zoning requirements to facilitate mixed-use urban development
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Update	On May 19, 2020, City Council approved amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to allow several uses not permitted in the plan area as an incentive to utilize vacant storefronts. These amendments also included waiving the requirement for conditional use permits for some uses, including bars and live entertainment.
Upcoming:	Staff is currently working with a property owner interested in converting existing second-floor office space into residential units. Applications for this project are expected within the next month.

Objective 4. Establishing a Stronger Brand and Identity

Action 4.3	Work with FMSA to develop decorative banner program for Texas & W. Texas
Update	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2019, the City initiated the Heart of Fairfield Gateways and Branding Study to strengthen the key gateways to the Heart of Fairfield and the City. The resulting program will include signage, public art, hardscape improvements, and landscaping enhancements all tied to a stronger brand identity for the City and the Heart of Fairfield. 2. After a successful pilot project, the City purchased and is in the process of installing 18 additional decorative banners on existing streetlight poles along W. Texas Street.
Upcoming:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff presented Council with preliminary designs for the Gateways and Branding Study at the July 21, 2020 meeting. At that meeting, Council provided feedback on design and implementation, and directed staff to return with an update, which has been scheduled for the October 20, 2020 meeting. 2. In July, the City installed 18 additional decorative banners on the existing streetlight poles along Texas Street from Madison to Pennsylvania Avenues.

Objective 5. Improving Key Streetscapes and Safety

Action 5.1	Incorporate HOF plan streetscape concepts
Update	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The City implemented a pilot tree lighting project between Madison and Jefferson Streets. The replaced dilapidated lights with commercial grade lighting designed for year-round display. Completed in November 2019, staff is monitoring the project for future expansion down Texas Street. 2. The City programmed replacement of 50+ decorative post-top streetlights with energy efficient LED fixtures. The chosen streetlights on Texas, between Pennsylvania Avenue and Jefferson Street are the same poles with banner signs installed. Staff is also looking at upgrading the decorative streetlights at the intersections. Delivery of the new LED lights were delayed due to limited resources and are scheduled to arrive in September 2020. 3. The City is undertaking a focused transportation study that will analyze the parking supply and circulation network within downtown Fairfield. The study, which conducted a kick-off meeting August, will build on the past Heart of Fairfield Plan efforts to provide long-range planning strategies for capital improvement investments for core roadways within the downtown area.

Upcoming:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff will continue to monitor tree lights for proper operation and potential longevity in anticipation of more tree lights in the future. 2. Staff anticipates installation of the LED lights to be completed upon arrival Fall 2020. 3. Conduct a public stakeholders meeting in winter 2020 to discuss initial development concepts.
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Action 5.3	Identify and address property maintenance issues
Update	City staff identified several properties in the Heart of Fairfield plan area with maintenance issues ranging from trash and debris to graffiti and prohibited uses. The Code Enforcement Department began enforcement actions to address code violations in the plan area, with focus on the downtown core.
Upcoming:	Staff will continue to support code enforcement actions by working with property and business owners to address existing violations.

Objective 6. Enhancing Freeway Commercial Area/Gateway

Action 6.1	Work with STA and Caltrans to implement Gateway concepts
Update	Since March 2019, Staff has worked with our consulting engineer, Solano Transportation Authority, and CalTrans to enhance the West Texas Gateway Project. The project will improve efficiency of access to the Fairfield Transportation Center and improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. The project is estimated at \$3.2 million. The project has taken longer than anticipated due to challenges in obtaining CalTrans approvals for modification to the I-80 on/off ramps.
Upcoming:	The project has experienced a delay due to the pandemic and staffing turnover at Caltrans. Pending State approval anticipate bid advertisement in Fall 2020.

Objective 8. Improving Allan Witt Park

Action 8.1	Complete and implement Allan Witt Park Master Plan
Update	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In July, Council awarded a construction contract to start the major renovation work at Allan Witt Park. The initial projects include the skate park improvements and construction of a new dog park. The \$3.47 million invest to the park are intended to create significant changes in areas of the park where undesirable activities are occurring, and create new, positive, community-oriented spaces. 2. In July, Council awarded a construction contract to reconstruct a portion of the Fairfield Sports Center at Allan Witt Park damaged by the 2017 fire. The project also includes additional storage space, establishing two new all-gender restrooms, and ADA upgrades to the facility
Upcoming:	Construction is anticipated to commence in September on these two projects.

LONG-TERM PHASE

Objective 1. Transforming West Texas Street into an Urban Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial Corridor

Action 1.4	Implement in phases the long-term road diet concepts for W. Texas
Update	The City is actively pursuing Active Transportation Program and Highway Safety Improvement Program state grant funding to implement complete street improvements on W. Texas Street between Beck and Pennsylvania Avenues. The proposed project reduces lanes from 5 to 3 with dedicated bike lanes, on-street parking, and landscaped center medians. In addition to pursuing grant funding, staff is exploring opportunities to utilize AB1600 development impact fee funds as a possible revenue source to construct improvements.
Upcoming:	The Active Transportation Program grant application is due on September 15. The Highway Safety Improvement Program grant application is due on October 19.