

Heart of Fairfield Implementation Plan Update

July 20, 2021

ONGOING PHASE

Objective 1. Encourage Appropriate Development

Action 1.2	Implement HOF Plan zoning requirements to facilitate mixed-use urban development.
Update	<p>In early January, the City received formal authorization from the State of California for funding through the Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) program. This will provide \$500,000 to the City for three projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A study to investigate options for relocating the existing PG&E substation located south of the County Probation Office in the Heart of Fairfield. The two-acre site would be an excellent opportunity for new housing within ½ mile of the Suisun-Fairfield train station.• Development of design prototypes for key Heart of Fairfield sites. The goal is to design a “shovel ready” project that can be shopped to developer partners interested in building in downtown Fairfield• Funding for the preparation of the City’s Housing Element update. <p>The City also initiated the planning program funded by the state under the SB2 grant (\$300,000). Key activities funded by this program include updated studies of infrastructure and traffic analysis for development in the Heart of Fairfield. The Public Works Department is the lead on this effort, and engineering consultant Fehr and Peers has already begun their analysis.</p>
Upcoming:	Staff will choose a consultant to complete a ministerial approval process, which is to be completed approximately nine months after a consultant is chosen.

Action 1.5	Facilitate new development by providing funding for utility upgrades.
Update	<p>Rule 20A Webster and Empire Street Utility Undergrounding Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In August, council adopted Ordinance 2020-12, which created the Webster and Empire Street Underground Utility District (District) in the Heart of Fairfield. Creation of the District resulted in an order to underground all poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used for electrical and communication services.• In December, council authorized execution of an agreement with a design firm to facilitate the implementation of the project.• Amendment 1 is in progress and the scope has been expanded to the alleyways between Madison, Empire, Webster, and Texas Street.
Upcoming:	Conduct design work and continue to engage the utility companies (PG&E, AT&T, Comcast).

Objective 4. Targeting Economic Development

Action 4.1	Expand the City's business and property owner outreach efforts with a new focus on the Heart of Fairfield.
Update	<p>Staff continued to publish the Downtown Pulse, a monthly newsletter to communicate City programs and projects to downtown business and property owners. Staff established a business visitation program to further relationships with, and to better understand the needs of, downtown business owners.</p> <p>Staff contracted with Gates + Associates to create conceptual design plans for the 700, 800, 900, and 1,000 block of Texas Street.</p> <p>Staff have contracted with Debi Tavey to become the downtown coordinator for the businesses located in the Heart of Fairfield. She is slated to begin in July 2021 and provide business support, event coordination, and marketing.</p>
Upcoming:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff will continue to release the Downtown Pulse and to track its progress with the Customer Relationship Management software.• Two community meetings are slated to gather input for different design ideas, such as landscaping, lighting, seating, and furnishings and other outdoor elements.

Objective 5. Diversifying Housing

Action 5.2	Implement HOF zoning requirements to facilitate mixed-use, live-work, and other innovative housing types.
Update	<p>1600 Woolner Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City negotiated and approved a disposition and development agreement for Catalyst Site 1, located at 1600 Woolner Avenue. The project seeks to develop 168 multifamily rental housing units in a 3-story building. All of the project units will be affordable rental housing for households at or below 30%, 50, 60% and 80% of area median income.• The developer submitted the application for 4% Tax Credit and Bonds but did not receive the tax credit allocation. They are exploring an alternative financing plan.
Upcoming:	Staff will continue to work with the developer and offer flexibility to find a financing structure to get the project funded.

Objective 6. Supporting Institutions

Action 6.2	Continue to fund the Fairfield Main Street Association.
Update	The City currently has no contract with the Fairfield Mainstreet Association. Staff led a series of meetings in April, May, and June that focused on identifying the expenditures of the Parking and Business Improvement Area (PBIA) funds. Participants elected to expand services for regular sidewalk cleaning, direct a portion to the downtown coordinator contract, and secondary improvements such as tree service and parking lot light improvements.
Upcoming:	Staff will proceed with procuring services to be paid for with the PBIA funds.

SHORT-TERM PHASE

Objective 1. Creating a Vibrant Downtown Core

Action 1.1	Work with local businesses and the Fairfield Main Street Association to develop a program which includes special evening events and activity during after-work hours.
Update	The Farmers' Market is currently active, and staff have contracted with Pacific Coast to operate the weekly event in downtown Fairfield. Staff have developed a program that permits existing downtown businesses to set up a booth at no cost.
Upcoming:	Staff will work with the downtown coordinator to initiate several small, frequent evening events.

Action 1.4	Work with the Fairfield Main Street Association, interested businesses, and/or property owners to develop temporary or permanent parklets that can provide space for outdoor restaurant seating.
Update	Design and materials have been procured. Parklets have not been installed as the two downtown businesses that elected to participate in the beginning and have since opted out of the parklet program.
Upcoming:	Staff are currently working on alternatives to the original parklet concept and strategizing on how to market them.

Objective 2. Facilitating and Incentivizing the Development on "Catalyst" Sites

Action 2.4	Prepare updated Nexus Study to determine appropriate fees in plan area.
Update	Staff contracted with EPS and Coastland Civil Engineers to conduct a review of development impact fees citywide. The review includes changes in the current fee structure to separate infill fees from various citywide impact fees and identify any fees the city can legally and equitably remove from infill development. The goal is to create incentive for infill development in HOF by reducing financial burden.

Upcoming:	Originally planned for winter of FY20-21, the engineering study is delayed with updated timeline planned for Fall 2021 presentation of administrative draft of fee update to council for consideration.
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Objective 4. Establishing a Stronger Brand and Identity

Action 4.2	Work with Solano County, Caltrans, and private property owners to develop a program for the acquisition and installation of high-impact public art.
Update	<p>Public Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On April 20, 2021, council approved the Economic Development Strategic Plan that included funding public art and murals. Staff have identified two placement sites and have initiated the Art in Public Spaces Pilot at 935 Texas Street as the first installation of public art in downtown Fairfield. The mural project is slated to finish by July 31, 2021. Additionally, staff have obtained the easement for the second placement site. Staff is working on an Art in Public Places program, which will identify ideal sites for public art and appropriate outreach efforts.
Upcoming:	Staff will draft and introduce the Public Art Initiative: a resolution that will program the funds for public art, outline the strategy, and establish a local arts agency, or public arts commission.

Objective 5. Improving Key Streetscapes and Safety

Action 5.1	Incorporate Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan streetscape concepts.
Update	<p>HOF Street Bollard Improvement Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The removable bollards have been constructed and installed . The bollards are currently being used to support the Farmers' Market and may now be open to future events in downtown. <p>Staff contracted with Gates + Associates to create conceptual design plans for streetscape improvements the 700, 800, 900, and 1,000 block of Texas Street. Two community meetings are slated to gather input for different design ideas, such as landscaping, lighting, seating, furnishings, and other outdoor elements.</p>
Upcoming:	Execute a contract with the streetscape consultant and begin construction in Q4 2021.

Action 5.3	Identify and address property maintenance issues.
Update	Staff reached out to business and property owners to help with code violations.
Upcoming:	Staff will continue to support property and business owners in their efforts to address existing violations.

	Staff will make additional revisions to the REAP program to provide small dollar amount matching funds to address property maintenance issues.
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Action 5.5	Prioritize implementation of the West Texas Gateway Project.
Update	Construction began for the new gateway project and Fairfield Transportation Center slip ramp.
Upcoming:	Staff anticipates completion of the project in Q4 of 2021, weather permitting.

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 Street.
Update	On February 8, 2021, the California Transportation Commission announced the that the West Texas Complete Streets project is recommended to receive \$10.9 million in Active Transportation Program Cycle 5 grant funding. With this recent announcement, city staff, and its consultant are preparing an implementation schedule for the design, utility relocation, and right-of-way phases of the project.
Upcoming:	Construction for the complete streets project is tentatively scheduled for summer 2024.