



# CONNECTMENLO

menlo park land use & mobility update

## Focus Group #2: Transportation Summary

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*Focus Group #2 Transportation was conducted on October 16th 2014 (6 – 8 pm) in the Oak Room at the Arrillaga Family Recreation Center, 600 Alma Street, Menlo Park.*

### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

Jim Bigelow, Chamber of Commerce  
Bernardo Huerta  
Harold Schapelhouman, Menlo Park Fire Chief  
Rex Ianson, Menlo Park Fire Protection District  
Bianca Walser  
Maeve Johnston, San Mateo County Health  
Peter Ojany  
Vicky Robledo  
Maya Perkins  
Fran Dehn, Chamber of Commerce President

### **CITY STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager  
Deanna Chow, Senior Planner  
Charlie Knox, PlaceWorks  
Eric Panzer, PlaceWorks  
Jessica Alba, Nelson\Nygaard

## MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting was to hear participants' ideas about transportation and traffic management in the M-2 Area, the Belle Haven neighborhood, and Menlo Park as a whole. The focus group began with a presentation by Charlie Knox, of PlaceWorks, and Jessica Alba, of Nelson\Nygaard. The presentation included review of transportation and traffic issues in Menlo Park; explained key concepts in the assessment and management of both congestion and alternative forms of transportation; and discussed transportation opportunities in Menlo Park. Key concepts included:

- Management of potential employment and traffic increases in the M-2 Area.
- Capacity issues on key routes into and out of Menlo Park.
- Roadway Level-of-Service concepts and their relation to economic and urban vibrancy, as well as recent changes to the assessment of Level of Service.
- Induced demand and latent demand.
- Roadway types and hierarchies.

See the project website for a copy of this presentation: [www.menlopark.org/connectmenlo](http://www.menlopark.org/connectmenlo)

## FOCUS GROUP #2 SUMMARY

### COMMENTS

Focus group participants were then asked to consider the following topics:

- Issues and opportunities specific to the M-2 Area
- Citywide transportation issues

All participants were given chances to speak, with no time limits. Participants provided their comments roughly in the order in which they were seated, with participants occasionally asking questions of one other or responding to the comments of another participant. Although not every point that was made is included below, the following bullet points encapsulate the major themes or ideas discussed by one or more participants at Focus Group #2.

- **North-south connectivity across Menlo Park can be challenging.**
  - Emergency response is hampered by congestion and frequently has to go against traffic flow.
  - Cross-town access to amenities and services is limited or made inconvenient.
  - Creating connections across Highway 101 is a priority to improve connectivity.
- **Menlo Park should seek to promote alternative and active transportation.**
  - Active transportation options encourage physical activity and healthier lifestyles.
  - Transportation alternatives of all types have the potential to alleviate traffic congestion.
- **Menlo Park should seek to prevent increases to congestion.**
  - Formation of transportation management associations (TMAs) could be used to reduce/limit vehicle trips, especially work-related trips.
- **Menlo Park should take advantage of opportunities related to the Dumbarton Rail Corridor.**
  - A connection to Caltrain could offer opportunities for transit access to the Facebook campus and could help support transit oriented development in the M-2 Area.
  - Creation of a bicycle/pedestrian path and emergency access route along the Dumbarton railroad tracks could provide important connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and emergency services.
  - Additional connections across Dumbarton rail right of way would serve to improve connectivity.
  - Advantages and disadvantages of bus vs. rail along the Dumbarton corridor should be carefully considered, including tensions between cost, convenience, and viability of additional crossings.
- **Menlo Park should consider managing parking for new employment uses.**
  - Limiting employee parking is a potential approach for limiting commute-related vehicle trips.
  - Parking allowances could be integrated into development agreements.
- **ConnectMenlo process should explore transportation issues more deeply.**
  - Project should include additional public workshops or discussions related to transportation.

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## FOCUS GROUP #2 SUMMARY

- Project should consider holding joint session that includes regional transportation decision makers.
- **Menlo Park should consider the regional and economic implications of transportation.**
  - Menlo Park should collaborate more closely with neighboring cities to create more integrated and comprehensive transportation system.
  - Having good transportation alternatives and convenient access between home, work, and amenities is important to retaining high-quality employers and workers.
- **Menlo Park should adopt a broad, forward-thinking perspective to improve transportation system.**
  - Menlo Park should consider new roadway classification system to emphasize non-automotive transportation modes.
  - Menlo Park should increase emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle safety.
  - Menlo Park should consider direct impacts of transportation improvements upon the environment.
  - Menlo Park should seek currently available and novel sources of funding for transportation improvements.