



## MEETING NOTES

### IRVINGTON COMMUNITY MEETING

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**Date + Time** Wednesday, January 16, 2019 | 7:00 - 8:30pm

**Location** Fremont Main Library - 2400 Stevenson Blvd

**Meeting Purpose:**

- *City Council directed informational meeting with the Irvington Community to provide an overview of the Irvington Community Plan and to provide an update on new State legislation that affects local planning efforts*
- *Gather general input from members of the community*

### AGENDA ITEMS

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1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Presentation on the General Plan/ Irvington Community Plan**
3. **Participant Question and Answer/ Discussion Session**
4. **Closing Remarks**
5. **Adjourn**

### ATTENDANCE

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**City Staff:**

Dan Schoenholz, *Community Development Director*

Kristie Wheeler, *Planning Manager*

Wayne Morris, *Interim Deputy Community Development Director*

Sean Washington, *Police Captain*

Wayland Li, *Senior Planner*

Hans Larsen, *Public Works Director*

Noe Veloso, *Principal Transportation Engineer*

Kimberly Petersen, *Chief of Police*

**Consultant Team:**

Barry Miller, *Barry Miller Consulting* – Presenter

Dave Javid, *Plan to Place* – Meeting Facilitator

**General public:** 51 members of the community signed-in at the meeting

# PRESENTATION

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The following is a summary of the presentation:

- What is a General Plan?
  - All cities and counties in California are required to adopt a General Plan
  - Creates the legal framework for planning Fremont's future
  - Reflects local values, aspirations, and priorities
  - Guides growth, development, and conservation decisions
  - Coordinates transportation, infrastructure, and services with expected growth
  - Framework for future City actions, programs and initiatives
  - Opportunity for community dialogue on the future
  - Required Elements: Housing, Land Use Safety, Mobility, Conservation
- Fremont General Plan
  - Long-term (20 year) vision for the city
  - Includes Optional Elements: Sustainability, Public Facilities, Economic Development, Community Plans, Community Character, Parks and Recreation, Implementation
  - Themes of the Fremont General Plan
    - A sustainable community
    - Becoming strategically more urban
    - It's not just about cars
    - A well-designed urban landscape
    - A diversified local economy
    - An inclusive community
    - Enhanced parks and open space
    - Vibrant centers
    - Community life
- How was the General Plan prepared?
  - Five-year process (2006-2011)
  - Exhibit at Fremont's 50th anniversary
  - Volunteers developed outreach plan and served as liaisons
  - Multiple rounds of Community Workshops
  - Focused meetings with local organizations
  - Citywide survey
  - Targeted issue forums (housing, climate change, etc.)
  - Planning Commission & Council study sessions and hearings
  - Underpinned by technical studies and EIR
- State Mandates
  - Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

- Fremont is required by state law to show that it can meet its “fair share” of the Bay Area’s housing needs. Fair share is determined by several factors, including size of city, job growth, available land
    - Fremont’s “assignment” for 2015-2022 is 5,455 homes (1,714 very low income units, 926 low income units, 978 moderate income units, 1,837 above moderate income units)
  - State Mandate: SB 375
    - Cities must grow in a way that supports the state’s climate change goals
    - Less greenhouse gas = Less fossil fuel = Less driving
    - Growth around rapid transit = fewer auto trips
    - Mixing land uses, housing near jobs = shorter trips
    - Cities expected to focus their growth near transit ( “Priority Development Areas”)
- Irvington Community Plan
  - Irvington is one of 11 Community Plan Areas in the General Plan
  - Foundation is the Irvington Concept Plan (2005), which presented a 20-year vision for Irvington
  - “Irvington will be a walkable neighborhood with shopping and dining opportunities available to both local residents and the larger community. The heart of Irvington is the Five Corners. The historic character, commercial opportunities and pedestrian scale of the Five Corners area will provide the impetus for future development throughout Irvington.”
  - Irvington Community Plan Goals
    - Strengthen the historic heart of Irvington
    - Maintain a distinct identity for Irvington that reflects its history and cultural diversity
    - Attract unique shopping, dining, and neighborhood services
    - Establish clear, walkable connections between BART and Five Corners
    - Manage parking in a way that supports businesses, BART, and local transit
    - Provide a well designed pedestrian and bicycle network, which connects neighborhoods, open spaces, commercial areas, transit
    - Promote transit-oriented development around the new BART Station
    - Transform underperforming shopping centers into vibrant new mixed use projects
    - Improve the appearance of streets, neighborhoods, and business districts—especially Grimmer and Fremont Boulevards
  - Irvington Community Plan Focus Areas: Town Center, BART Station Area, Grimmer Boulevard, Fremont Boulevard
- New State Legislation
  - **SB 35** – Streamlines housing approval for projects near transit if they meet certain criteria. Limits local government discretion.
  - **AB 678, SB 167, AB 1515** - Strengthened the Housing Accountability Act. Makes it very difficult to deny a project that is consistent with the General Plan.
  - **AB 1397, SB 166** – Cities can’t downzone potential housing sites or approve projects that are less dense than what zoning allows.
  - **AB 2923** – Allows BART to supersede local zoning to facilitate high density housing on land they own (e.g., parking lots, etc).
  - **SB 50 (proposed)** – Eliminates low density zoning near transit. Would allow 4-5 story buildings in most transit-rich locations.
  - Housing production continues to be among the State’s highest priorities

## DISCUSSION NOTES

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The following is a summary of the input received during the question and answer discussion. Staff generally responded to the questions raised by the audience. As appropriate, these responses are noted in parentheses below.

- How much of the Irvington BART station area is covered by Senate Bill (SB) 35? Is Irvington covered by SB 35 even though the BART station isn't there yet? *(City staff response: Yes)*
- Are the mix of jobs and housing currently in balance? How does Fremont compare to other cities? *(City staff response: Fremont is more balanced than many other bay area cities. However, jobs have been growing at a faster rate than housing, bringing Fremont closer to the regional average and creating greater imbalance)*
- Housing is geared to tech workers at market-rate. Also need family and workforce housing.
- Does half mile radius apply to bus as well as BART (for SB 50 applicability)? *(City staff response: Yes, but this is one of the points of debate on SB50, since bus routes could change after buildings are approved).*
- Cut-through traffic is a problem *(City staff response: The Mobility Action Plan will outline strategies to address cut-through traffic.)*
- Grimmer Boulevard looks terrible *(City staff response: Grimmer Boulevard improvements are a listed project in the City's Capitol Improvement Program.)*
- A new off ramp on I-680 at Grimmer Boulevard would alleviate traffic *(City staff response: Spacing of off-ramps on Interstate Highways are subject to state/federal standards. City has limited purview.)*
- *(City staff update on Irvington BART - Start of construction is anticipated in 2022, and the station is anticipated to be completed in 2026.)*
- Fremont's parks are not adequate for growing population
- Recreational facilities (e.g., tennis and bowling) are needed in Irvington. *(City staff response: Cloverleaf Bowl building has been designated as eligible for listing on Fremont Historic Register, but City can't dictate that the building continues to be used for bowling. City's Community Services Department is exploring an agreement with FUSD/Irvington High School to make the tennis courts at IHS available to the public during non-school hours. Contact Deputy Community Services Director Kim Beranek at [kberanek@fremont.gov](mailto:kberanek@fremont.gov) with questions).*
- The City has gerrymandered its Planning Area boundaries, such that the area east of Irvington BART gets a free pass and all the housing burden is placed on the west side of the tracks. Need to redraw the planning boundary. *(City staff response: More housing growth will occur west of the tracks because the area to the east is single family residential and has limited potential for change. Most of the proposed high density is to the south of the Irvington BART Station, along Osgood Road).*
- Don't redevelop the Monument Shopping Center—it is valuable for mom and pop stores. Need to preserve local businesses. Already have a lot of condos, etc. The 2005 Irvington Concept Plan called for better restaurants and we still don't have any.

- Three-story townhouses on Union Street (near Fremont Cabinets) are out of scale with adjacent low-density. Need better compatibility. Should not have tall buildings next to single family homes. *(City staff response: Design guidelines have been recently improved to better address neighborhood compatibility.)*
- Four of the eight "mixed-use" areas on the General Plan Land Use Map are in Irvington. This designation allows 65-foot buildings. Two are near schools. Don't allow 65-foot buildings next to schools or low density residential.
- Osgood Corridor needs a master plan, lots of hodge-podge high-rises with their own access and parking lots, this creates traffic hazards. *(City staff response: The Irvington BART Station Area Plan is being prepared to better address this)*
- Is there enough Public Safety staff to deal with the demands of all the new residents? *(City staff response: the Police Department currently has many vacant officer positions due to retirements and is working diligently to fill those. We recognize that we will need to increase the size of the police force as population grows; the challenge is recruiting and hiring enough qualified officers. This is a high priority for us.*
- With transit-oriented development (TOD) plans, how many total units are planned? How much will be affordable? *(City staff response: where affordable housing is included on-site, current requirement is about 13% affordable. Developers also have the option of paying a fee to support affordable housing at an off-site location under the current ordinance.)*
- Our live-work hasn't worked. Can we require decent businesses and ensure adequate parking?
- Irvington has taken more than its fair share of affordable housing, We need to spread it around. *(City staff described recent affordable developments in other parts of Fremont)*
- Affordable housing is needed. My adult kids can't move out of the house because housing is too expensive. Multi-generational households create a parking problem. What's being built will lead to crowded schools. Traffic is terrible.
- Prehistoric resources in Irvington (sabercats, mastadons) create an opportunity for identity / branding. *(City staff response: State Senator Wieckowski is pursuing State funding for a paleontology museum in Irvington as part of the proposed I-680 Sabercat Bridge and Trail project).*
- Alameda County Water District (ACWD) rates are going up due to water shortage. Do we have a choice if State says we must build? Where will the water come from? *(City staff response: ACWD updates their Urban Water Management Plan every few years. They base projections on the General Plans of cities in their service area. Their Plan shows sufficient water supplies to meet projected growth.)*
- New residents aren't shopping in Fremont.
- Demographic shift is underway. Our tech population is growing. Can we capture start-ups in our older shopping centers? Entrepreneurs need space, and these centers offer opportunities.

The following input was received on the comment cards on the back of the meeting agendas.

*"I feel this meeting was very informative. However, I came with a sense of hope for our future and left without it. I was born in Niles three fourths of a century ago and have seen many changes over the years. Tonight I feel lonely sadness for my city. I see congestion, ugly housing areas, and loss of our identity as a great place to live. So many people I have known are leaving Fremont. These are the people that helped create this city."*

*"I can't believe being across the street from a fault line be helpful or safe.*

*Why not have developers be mandated / required to have to build a school with the housing they want to build.*

*What happens in tech / Silicon Valley tanks like it did before, and the economy fails. What happens to the building growing?*

*How much money does the city get from all these developers?*

*Still do not see a need for a BART station in Irvington. Use the money on other stations and security."*

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*"Would like to see the Monument shopping center redeveloped to a newer and nicer shopping center including restaurants and nice stores."*

*"There should be more effort made to re-develop the shopping centers near the Irvington Center Core (e.g., Monument, etc.). Redevelopment agencies are gone - need other means, don't ignore this issue."*

The following input was provided to staff by a resident that was unable to attend the meeting.

- The palm trees lining Fremont Boulevard in Irvington are not being well maintained. It's an unfair burden to require property owners to maintain the palm trees located in front of their property.

