

ALPINE ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY PROJECT MEETING

Summary of Community Meeting

Thursday January 21, 2016

The San Mateo County Public Works Department hosted a community meeting on January 21, 2016, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. to discuss the Alpine Road Corridor Study Project. The meeting was held at the Woodland School, 360 La Cuesta Drive in Portola Valley. Over 100 community members attended the meeting.

County staff Joe Lococo, Deputy Director Road Services; Diana Shu, Road Operations Manager; and Hanieh Houshmandi, Associate Civil Engineer, attended the meeting. Adam Dankberg, Kimley-Horn Project Manager; Corbin Skerit and Alex Zabyszny, Kimley-Horn Traffic Engineers; and Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies Community Outreach lead, represented the project team. There were also two representatives from the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in attendance at the meeting: Matt Otterby and Captain Mike Maskarich, Area Commander. The CHP helped staff one of the stations and made a report out along with the project team members. Director of public works of Town of Portola Valley Howard Young and a member of the traffic committee of town of Portola Valley were also in attendance. Representatives from Calfire also attended the meeting.

This was the project team's first meeting with the community. The County held a meeting in February 2015 with the community, prior to selection of the consultant project team, to capture input for identifying the project need and to assist the development of the scope of the services for this project. The purpose of this community meeting was to get input and priorities from the community on corridor needs and concerns. Due to the limited right-of-way, trades offs will be necessary and this meeting's purpose was to learn from the community where their preferences were and where the issues and challenges are most prominent.

Meeting Summary

The meeting started at 7:00 p.m. In addition to the personnel there to answer questions and present information, around seventy five (75) members of the public attended. Ninety percent (90%) of those in attendance at the start of the meeting indicated they received the mailed meeting notice. The County website was mentioned by one person. About 10% said an e-blast was how they found out about the meeting. Nextdoor was acknowledged as another way attendees found out about the meeting from 25% of the attendees. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the attendees indicated they were "neighbors" to the project area. Few of the attendees indicated they biked along the route. Twenty percent (20%) said they attended the community meeting in February 2015.

After a brief introduction by the County's Deputy Director Road Services, the Kimley Horn project manager spoke to a brief power point presentation. The presentation was given to orient the attendees to the purpose of the project,

some previous community feedback, project objectives, proposed evaluation criteria and the existing conditions.

To close the presentation, the Kimley Horn Project Manager presented the process and a schedule of next steps. During and after the presentation many questions, suggestions and opinions were offered to the staff and project team. The comments and responses offered during the meeting are captured below in the order they were given.

The meeting format also included forty (40) minutes of time for attendees to give additional input at four separate stations. That input has been captured in photos and text at the end of this meeting summary. One station asked for information about how and when the attendees use Alpine Road in the study area and included a map that enabled attendees to indicate where they lived. A second station included a dot exercise to rank priorities for the corridor including safety, traffic flow, bicycle and pedestrian movements. Another station had a map of the area and comments, suggestions and issues were posted by attendees using sticky notes. A final station included an exercise to give feedback on some potential solutions for the corridor including photo examples of various improvements.

At the very end of the meeting, the facilitator convened the attendees and each station lead reported out on the themes that were coming through from the feedback at the individual stations.

This meeting summary also includes a transcript of the meeting comment cards that were handed in at the meeting. They are listed at the end of the table below:

Comment/Question	Response
Where on the website will the PowerPoint be posted?	In the Public Work's Department section.
Will there also be an email contact we can use for communication?	Yes, Hanieh Houshmandi, Associate Civil Engineer is the County Project Manager and can be reached at hhoushmandi@smcgov.org
Can there be an on-line survey as well?	Yes, a survey has been setup on-line at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/alpinecomments
Is there a Stanford University Representative at this meeting tonight?	They were invited. (No one indicated they were representing Stanford when the audience was asked)
What does "west" mean?	West is the direction toward Ladera.

Comment/Question	Response
Is 36 bicycles an hour a lot?	Yes, during a weekday peak hour for this type of road it is.
How is bike data captured? Do the 100's of bikers at a time get counted?	We have a person go out to the site and make live counts. The large groups would only be counted if they were seen.
Can the speed signage be changed to white and enforceable—it is only yellow/advisory now? We want the CHP to be able to write tickets. This needs to be enforceable.	That can be looked at.
Traffic congestion has gone up significantly in the last three years. Getting around is a log jam. When is your data from?	Traffic counts were collected in October 2016. Some comparison was made to 2011 counts and we found moderate increases in some cases. We can bring this information to our next meeting in May.
Do you coordinate with Palo Alto?	We are looking at the traffic patterns in the context of the whole area. This team has also done work at Page Mill and 280 and is familiar with the issues. There is no formal meeting with the City of Palo Alto as part of this effort, this is a County of San Mateo process and jurisdiction.
I walk to the Stanford Dish area five days a week using the pedestrian path, at the end of the current path there is a barrier which ends in an unsafe manner and juts out into the roadway. I have almost been hit by cars in this location and typically am an arm's length from the cars. Maintenance is also an issue as the weeds have been allowed to grow up which also causes the pedestrians to have to get closer to cars. There is poison oak out on the path. The area between Bishop and Piers needs attention.	Thank you we can look into these issues.

Comment/Question	Response
How is this project being coordinated with the proposed creek repairs? PG&E repairs? It's a mess.	County Public Works staff is aware and coordinating on all of these projects. We are looking for compatibility between the projects.
Cars that park for the Dish also push pedestrians into the roadway. The signs are inconsistent.	Thank you. We can look into these issues.
If the County does redo the pedestrian path and it keeps it level with the roadway and there is no barrier, then cars will continue to use it as a "shoulder" and drive on it during the rush hour peak periods. Add a guardrail.	Comment noted.

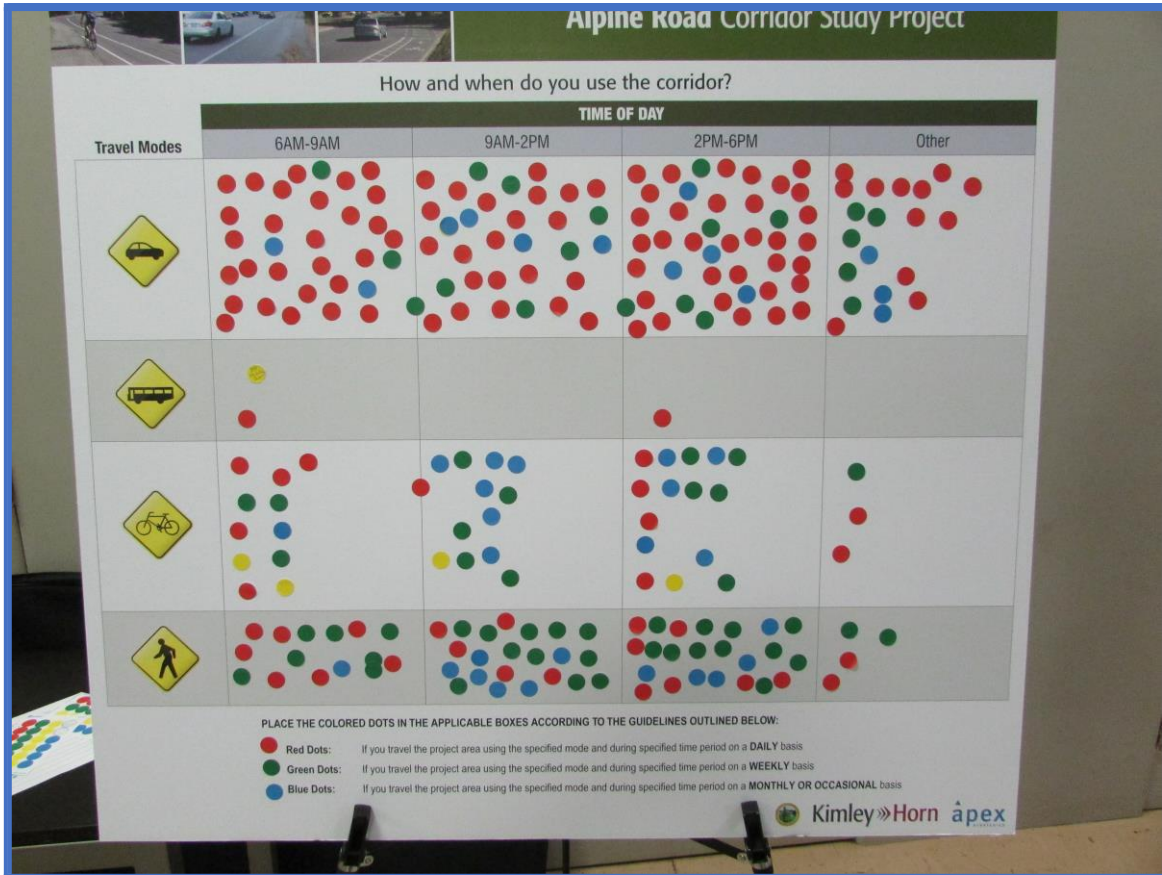
Station Report Out
Station #1: Characteristics
<p data-bbox="248 1299 1256 1331">Good representation tonight from Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres.</p> <p data-bbox="248 1371 1357 1476">Many attendees indicated they are commuters and use Alpine Road every day. No bus usage. There are more pedestrian users than the team would have expected.</p> <p data-bbox="248 1518 1268 1623">The people here tonight indicated they bike as recreational users not commuters (a community member wondered if there would be more bike commuters if it was safer).</p>
Station #2: Priorities
<p data-bbox="248 1713 1268 1776">Attendees want to prioritize improving side street access to Alpine Road, pedestrian improvements and access, and slow down speeders.</p> <p data-bbox="248 1818 1390 1881">Although not categories on the board, other priorities include: easy access, future transit accessibility and % of trucks</p>

Station #3: Corridor Information and Needs
Lots of improvements were suggested, there are many sticky notes to catalogue. A number of comments were provided regarding modifying or not modifying the intersections of Alpine Road with La Mesa and La Cuesta. There is concern for fixing sight distance issues. There were a lot of suggestions in the freeway interchange area, including looking at a roundabout. Access to side streets was also identified as issues to be addressed.
Station #3b CHP Report:
Attendees expressed frustration with the amount and frequency of enforcement on speeding. However, CHP wrote 211 tickets in 2015 in this project area and gave another 26 warnings. Parking is also a frustration. Perhaps the community should consider advocating for a tow away zone to increase the penalty for illegal parking near the Stanford Dish Trail access.
Station 4: Types of Improvements
The roundabouts and traffic signals were either loved or hated there was little in between opinion expressed at this station. There is a desire for providing Class 1 bike path facilities. Active feedback message signs are popular with the attendees as a possible deterrent to speeding.
Comment Cards
I think this is too brief for residents to review and respond to complex issues. Responding to images of improvements rather than site specific plans means little.
Stanford is a major contributor to the problem. They need to be involved. Example: Stagger shift hours at Stanford Hospital.

Board/Station Summaries

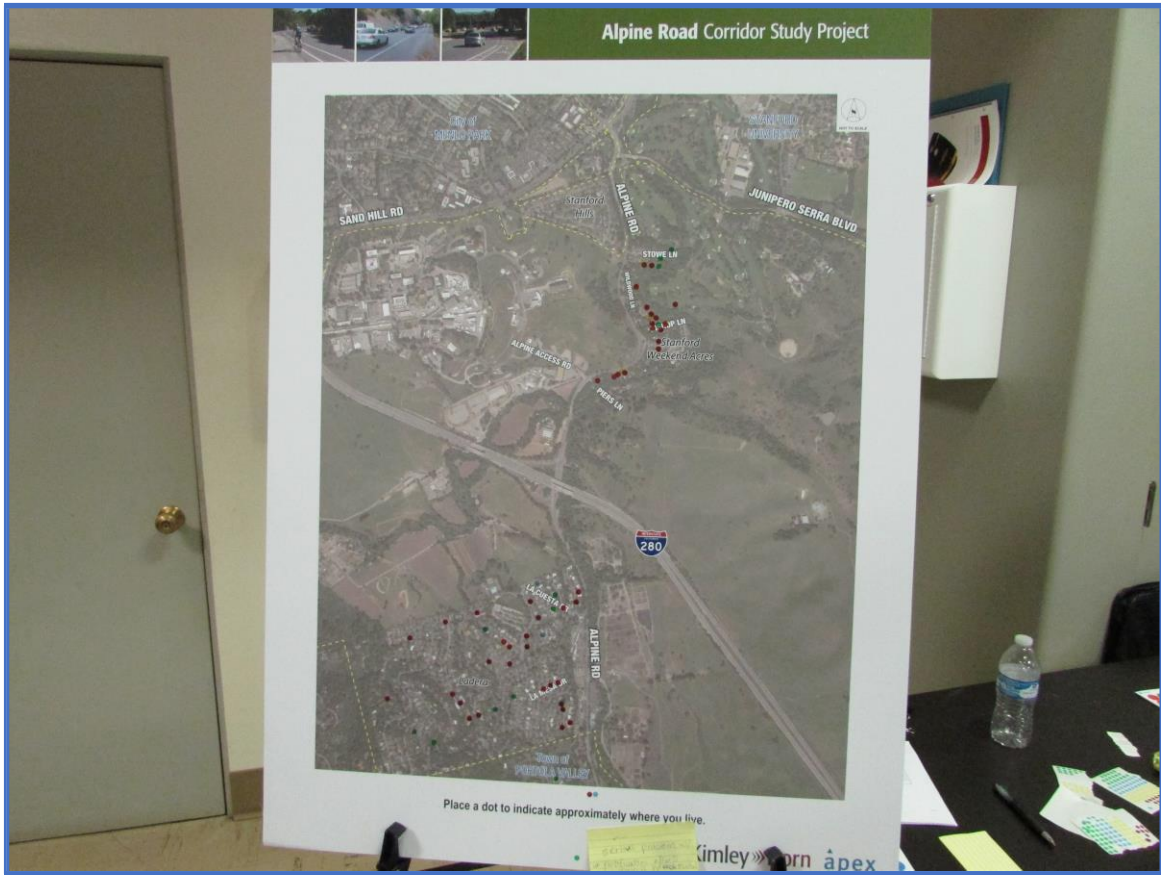
How & When Do You Use Alpine Rd

- Overwhelming majority use Alpine throughout all periods and drive
- Second most common was pedestrians
- Third most common was bicyclists
- Very few attendees used transit as transit service is limited



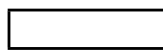
Where Do You Live


- Ladera – 37
- Portola Valley – 4
- Stanford Weekend Acres – 25



Priorities

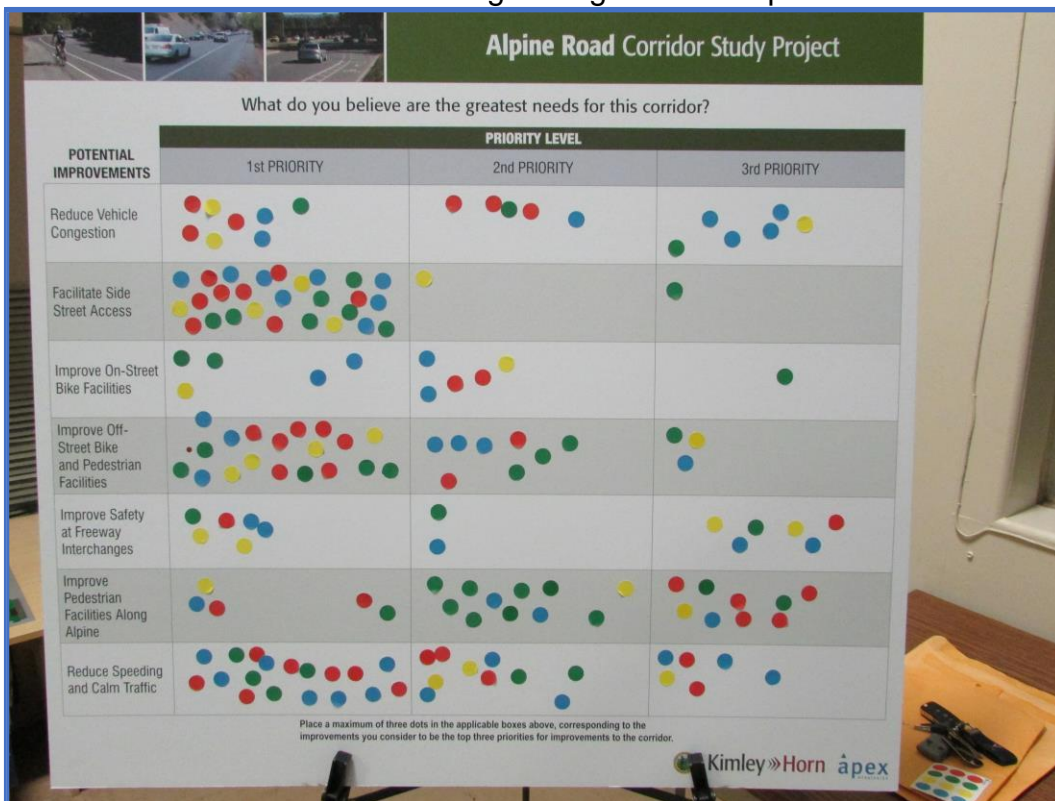
Potential Improvements	1st	2nd	3rd
Reduce Vehicle Congestion	9	12	19
Facilitate Side Street Access	31	2	3
Improve On-Street Bike Facilities	7	12	3
Improve Off-Street Bike and Pedestrian	20	19	9
Improve Safety at Freeway Interchanges	7	5	19
Improve Pedestrian Facilities Along Alpine	6	26	28
Reduce Speeding and Calm Traffic	20	24	19

 Lowest 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Priority

 Highest 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Priority

- The three largest clusters of concern were facilitating side-street access, improving pedestrian/bike facilities (mainly off of Alpine), and reduce speeding and calm traffic
- Emergency vehicle access should be considered on such a tight corridor
- Access to and from the trail should be considered as there is not

- adequate sidewalks or bike paths (on many extents) otherwise
- Pedestrian safety is a major concern with the narrow roadway
- Speeding is a major problem especially for side-street egress (sight distance and gap concerns)
- Alpine being a “truck route” is a concern for one resident
- Consider future transit use along Alpine Road
- Many residents did not like the idea of signals
- Narrow on-street bike lanes, especially near hilly topography is a major concern, vehicles often veer into bike lanes
 - Particularly noted at Bishop Lane, vehicles veer into the bike lanes when vehicles are egressing from Bishop



Corridor Constraints and Needs

- La Mesa / La Cuesta
 - Left turns out are extremely hazardous.
 - Pedestrian crosswalk lighting is inadequate.
 - Woodland pickup/drop-off periods causes backups and is dangerous for school buses making lefts.
 - Vehicular conditions (as above) degrades bike/pedestrian safety. Better facilities for those users are needed.
 - Many support roundabouts or stop lights for traffic control here, about 10% oppose them.
 - Speeding is a constant issue
 - Many comments on the Shell station traffic circulation and vehicular compliance to signage there.

- I-280 SB Off-Ramps
 - Better warning (flashing yellow) of approaching stop sign is needed.
- I-280 NB Off-Ramps
 - Numerous comments on the low rate of stop sign compliance here for bikes and vehicles.
 - Many support roundabouts or traffic signal
 - Some note that recent improvements at stop sign (larger signage, roadway dots) has significantly reduced stop sign violations and improved safety
- Piers Lane/Alpine Access Road
 - Numerous comments on the parking issue at Piers Ln due to the Dish.
 - Comments on speeding.
 - Comments on bikes and peds being separate from both each other and the roadway here.
- Bishop Lane
 - Access from Bishop Lane is difficult during the peak hours.
- Wildwood Lane / Stowe Lane
 - Access issues going into and out of Stowe and Wildwood.
 - Only moderate support for traffic signal or roundabouts.
 - Several comments on pedestrian facility improvements needed here.
- Junipero Serra & Sand Hill Road
 - Two comments on the poor signal synchronization.
 - Crosswalks are needed here.
 - Emergency vehicle access along the mainline should be considered.
 - Trucks should not be allowed on Alpine when they have Sand Hill.
 - Stanford should be part of the larger project dialogue here.

East of I-280



West of I-280



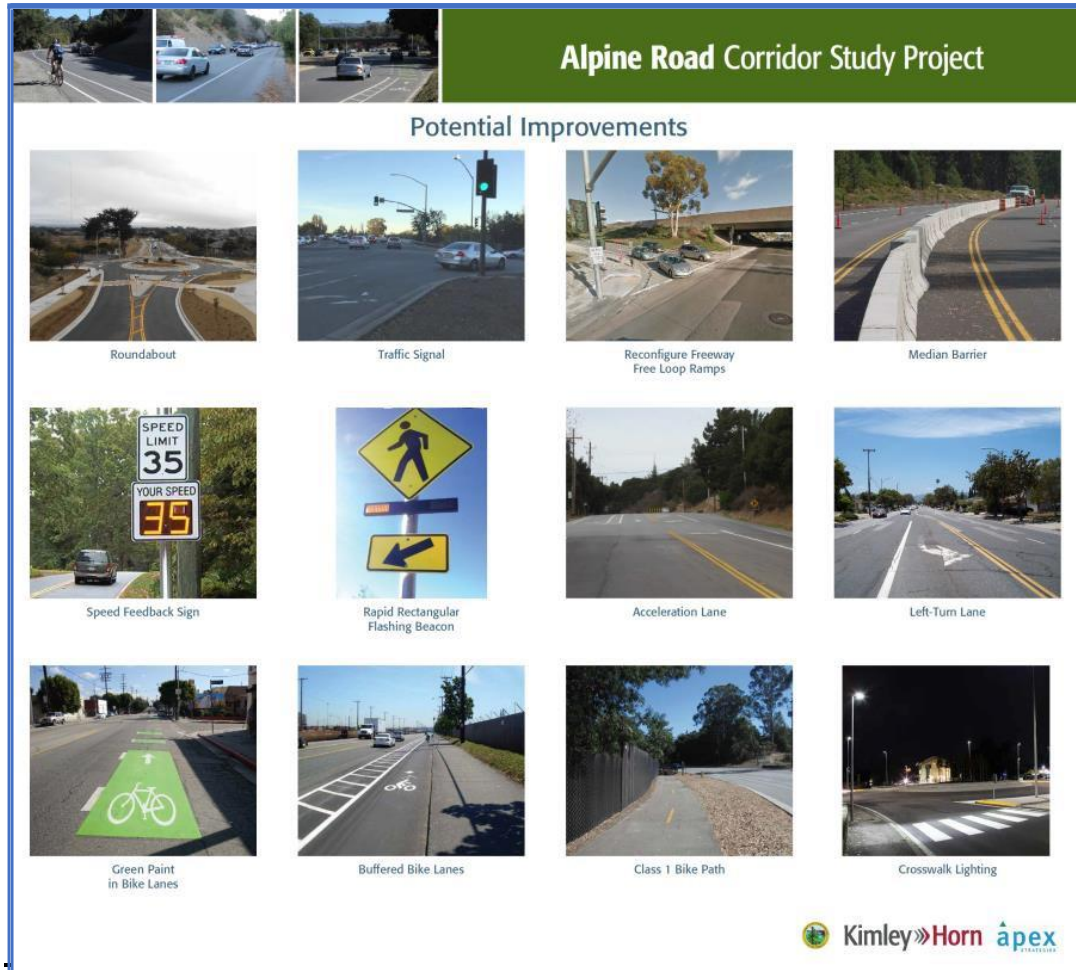
Desirable Improvements Survey Board

The paper surveys were compiled and generalized comments for each improvement type are below:

- **Roundabout** – Opinions were split roughly 50/50 on supporting roundabouts on Alpine Road
 - In-Support: they generally wanted them at Piers Lane, La Cuesta Drive, La Mesa Drive, and at the I-280 interchange ramps. Attendees mentioned the need for them to accommodate larger vehicles, like trucks and buses, and their primary means of supporting it is they believe it would slow down traffic and provide safer intersection access.
 - Opposed: they generally believed that they simply would not work for the driving behavior types that use the corridor.
 - A few members of the public expressed a concern that a roundabout would not provide frequent enough gaps of sufficient length in the traffic stream for them to turn into and out of the side streets.
- **Traffic Signal** – Opinions were split roughly 75/25 on support/opposed to signals.
 - In-Support: they saw them being good fits at La Cuesta Drive, La Mesa Drive and I-280. They believe that it would provide safer intersection access, particularly at I-280, and would provide breaks in traffic.
 - Opposed: they saw them as being useless and not a good fit for the “rural” characteristic of the corridor. They specifically did not want signals at Bishop Lane.
- **Reconfiguration of Freeway Loop Ramps** – Opinions were moderately in support, while a majority of attendees did not understand exactly how it would help corridor operations.
 - Once the improvement was described, the opinions split between individuals who liked the potential safety benefits and those who felt that it would add more delay to their travel times.
- **Median Barrier** – Most people were opposed to this assuming that the barrier would create more accidents and head-on collisions. The one attendee in support thought it would work for the winding portion of Alpine Road.
 - Some individuals though that it was “ugly.”
- **Speed Feedback Sign** – Opinions were generally split 90/10 for/against.
 - In support: they believe they’ve needed it for years at multiple locations along the corridor, especially at La Mesa Drive in Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres.
 - Opposed: they believe that they’re not needed and will be useless.
 - Two individuals asked if there was a quantifiable benefit associated with Speed Feedback Signs and what would be the specific characteristics of locations where these signs would be the most beneficial.
- **RRFB** – Opinions were split 20/80 for/against.
 - In support: they believe anything is better than the status













quo for pedestrian safety and is needed at La Mesa Drive and La Cuesta Drive.

- Opposed: they do not want flashing lights and think they are useless.
- Several people asked about operation of RRFBs.
- **Acceleration Lane** – Opinions generally in support of as they believed they'd help for side street access, particularly at La Cuesta Drive, La Mesa Drive, and Piers Lane.
 - One individual said that he uses acceleration lanes and has little trouble accessing Alpine Road from the side street. He expressed frustration that so many people do not know how to use acceleration lanes causing unnecessary delays to themselves and others.
- **Left-Turn Lane** – Unanimous support, particularly for side-street access.
 - There were few questions about this improvement.
- **Green Paint Bike Lanes** – Essentially unanimous support. One attendee indicated that they are not good enough for school-aged children, however.
 - There were few questions about this improvement.
- **Buffered Bike Lanes** – Unanimous support with the caveat that there is room for them.
 - There were few questions about this improvement.
- **Class I Bike Path** – All agreed except two attendees. Most people saw this as being better for school-aged children and strollers. They emphasized the need to have them maintained as well. The two in disagreement thought they were low priority and that they could be dangerous because of side-street access.
 - Several members of the public were concerned with pedestrian safety in relation to fast moving bicyclists. They felt a bike path may exacerbate the situation.
- **Crosswalk Lighting** – Opinions were split 50/50.
 - In Support – Thought they would be good at La Cuesta Drive and La Mesa Drive to slow down motorists.
 - Opposed – Thought they were not sufficient improvements and that it may still feel too unsafe to cross at night. Two attendees simply wanted full signals for crossing. One attendee only supported in-pavement lighting.
 - Several people associated this improvement with in-pavement lights.



Alpine Road Corridor Study Project

Potential Improvements

			
Roundabout	Traffic Signal	Reconfigure Freeway Free Loop Ramps	Median Barrier
			
Speed Feedback Sign	Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon	Acceleration Lane	Left-Turn Lane
			
Green Paint in Bike Lanes	Buffered Bike Lanes	Class 1 Bike Path	Crosswalk Lighting

Kimley»Horn apex

SurveyMonkey & E-mailed Input

SurveyMonkey Responses

- Most respondents replied within one week after the meeting and there were a total of 146 responses received.
- In the PM peak period 91 percent drove the corridor. 27 percent biked on the corridor, at least occasionally, and 24 percent walked on the corridor, at least occasionally. On a daily basis in the PM peak, 73 percent said they drove, three percent took transit, three percent walked, and 2 percent biked.
- Common themes from the responses are summarized below:
 - Access to the multi-use trail should be more apparent and the trail should be maintained
 - Overflow parking at the Dish is a major issue for users of the corridor; parking laws need to be strictly enforced or parking eliminated
 - The all-way stop control at the I-280 ramps allows cyclists to feel safer given the slower vehicular speeds, installing a signal would

- cause increased vehicular speeds
 - I-280 ramps should also be “squared up” to allow better sight distances between cyclists and motorists
 - A few respondents indicated support for a roundabout solution
- A variety of opinions were provided on how to make the I-280 intersections safer, but consensus is that it could be improved for stop sign compliance and sight distances between cyclists and motorists
- It is difficult to find gaps to turn from La Cuesta/La Mesa Drive intersections for all modes of travel
 - A school bus stop at La Cuesta Drive introduces children as pedestrians at this intersection
- Getting into/out of side-street stop-controlled intersections (e.g., Piers Lane and Stowe Lane) is difficult, especially for left turns
- There is too much signage entering Ladera and at the shopping center, causing driver confusion
- Stanford should be contacted and brought into the discussion along with Santa Clara County, Menlo Park, and Palo Alto.
 - Sandhill Road and Page Mill Road are both over-capacity.
- There is congestion at the Junipero Serra Boulevard intersection in the morning and going towards I-280 in the evening.
- Widening of Alpine Road would be desirable, especially along the eastern extents of the corridor
- Lack of crosswalks preclude a bus stop location on Alpine Road especially near Stanford Weekend Acres

- Emergency vehicle access, oversized construction trucks, and horse trailers/farm equipment should be considered given the congestion.

E-mail Responses (items beyond those already noted above)

- Number of accidents shown were vastly under the amount of actual accidents occurring along the corridor.
- Speed limit along Alpine Rd is too high and there are inconsistencies in the speed limits along the corridor.
 - Lower the speed limit to a consistent 30 MPH
- Corridor is over-capacity.
- There is a constant problem of cars colliding with the Bishop Lane guard rail.
- The turn radius for the WBL turn at Alpine Road / Junipero Serra Boulevard is too short and trucks often off-track into the brick median and encroach into the conflicting lanes
- More law enforcement presence is needed along the corridor
- Ramp metering at the freeway interchange should be considered
- Inter-jurisdictional coordination is needed for this project as well as coordination with other stakeholders (e.g., Caltrans, Stanford, etc).
- The number of cyclists using Alpine Road at all times should be considered, not just during the peak hours. There are often “pelotons” involving 50-100 cyclists.
- There should be greater consideration for the “Dish” back entrance.
- U-turns at Buck Estate and Stowe Lane are a constant problem.
- It is dangerous for cyclists making a southbound left turn at Alpine Rd and Junipero Serra given the middle shared southbound through-left turn lane.
- Motorcycles often use bike lane
- Vehicles crossing double yellow centerline to overtake buses and trucks
- The trail along Alpine Rd may not be ADA compliant and is often filled with debris. Flooding may also be a problem on some extents such as the portion under the cantilevered section.
- Cyclists use the path at high speeds
- Need for traffic signals to be able to turn out of Bishop Lane and Stowe Lane
- The left-turn from Junipero Serra Boulevard to Alpine Road is dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians given the lack of ped/bike facilities at the intersection
- Traffic light actuation needs to be checked at Junipero Serra Boulevard & Alpine Road
- The newly installed fence by the new golf green at the corner of Alpine Road /Junipero Serra Boulevard blocks the line of sight for cyclists and eliminates the prior existing safety zone for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Red curb paint could be used as a solution for truck access at Wildwood Lane

- Many accidents appear to occur at the southern end of the corridor where the visibility is poor
- Pedestrian surface crossing at Junipero Serra Boulevard is needed
- There is an urgent need for illuminated pedestrian signs and blinking lights in the crosswalk on the road at La Mesa and La Cuesta Drives.
- When riding a bike west from Junipero Serra to Ladera the bike path going west feels very narrow especially by the big curve just before reaching the back entrance to SLAC. Cars tend to hug the curve and the bike lane is narrow. Small rocks often fall downhill into the bike lane so bike riders cannot hug the hill.

Photos from Meeting







