



**To** | Gopika Nair, Associate Planner, City of Piedmont Planning & Building Department  
**From** | Niko Letunic, Principal  
**Date** | September 30, 2021  
**Subject** | Revising the public draft Piedmont Safer Streets plan based on the comments received

---

## Overview

The City released the public draft of the Piedmont Safer Streets plan on July 19, 2021 for review and comment by the public. The comment period was open for five weeks, until August 23, 2021. During that period, City staff received 46 emails and one phone call with comments. (A document with the contents of these emails and phone call is included here as Attachment 1 and has been posted on the “Documents” page of the project website: [PiedmontSaferStreets.org/documents](https://PiedmontSaferStreets.org/documents).) In addition, members of the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) provided comments on the draft plan at the committee’s meeting on July 22, 2021.

The emails, phone call and feedback from PBAC members contained 106 distinct comments (many of the emails contained multiple comments). We have summarized and listed the comments on a spreadsheet, and organized them into six categories, listed below. The spreadsheet is included here as Attachment 2.

- 1 Thirty-two comments about specific **intersections and crossings**, including about the locations proposed for street-crossing enhancements in Chapter 4 of the draft plan (“Recommended Projects”).
- 2 Fourteen comments regarding the **methodology used to prioritize** the locations for enhancements under Chapter 5 (“Prioritization and Implementation”).
- 3 Ten comments about **traffic calming**, mostly regarding specific locations for which commenters suggested or requested traffic calming measures.
- 4 Thirteen comments concerning the **designated citywide bikeway network** proposed in Chapter 4 as well as additional suggested bikeways.
- 5 Twenty-four comments with **miscellaneous suggestions**.
- 6 Thirteen comments **not requiring consideration** because they were more observational in nature rather than suggesting changes to the draft plan.

City staff values residents’ input and feedback highly, recognizing that Piedmonters are deeply engaged in their community and uniquely informed about local conditions, needs and potential solutions. Following the close of the comment period on the draft plan, the project team—consisting of City staff and the project consultant—held a conference call to review the comments received. More importantly, the team discussed how to revise the draft plan to incorporate the public’s comments as appropriate. The project team will present the revised plan to the PBAC at their upcoming meeting on October 7, 2021. The revised plan will subsequently also be presented to the Piedmont City Council for their review and final approval and adoption.

As discussed above, the public comments received on the draft plan were organized into six categories. The rest of this memorandum gives a general overview of how the draft plan has been revised to incorporate comments received under the first five categories. As mentioned earlier, comments under the sixth category were of an observational nature, so did not require further consideration.

### 1 Comments about specific intersections and crossings (32 comments)

The majority of these comments suggested additional intersections for crossing enhancements beyond the 22 locations identified in Chapter 4 of the draft plan. Most of the suggested locations are along the City's four main thoroughfares; these are listed below. Other intersections mentioned include Rose Avenue/Echo Avenue and La Salle Avenue/Lafayette Avenue/Woodland Way.

- Grand Avenue, including the intersections at Wildwood Avenue (actually located in Oakland), Fairview Avenue, Cambridge Way/Greenbank Avenue and Rose Avenue.
- Highland Avenue, including at Sheridan and Wildwood Avenues.
- Moraga Avenue, including at Highland, Mesa and Ramona Avenues.
- Oakland Avenue, including at Bonita, El Cerrito, Jerome, Latham, Sunnyside and the Linda Park path.

We have not revised the list of locations in the draft plan based on the comments received mainly because the City is already planning improvements at many of the locations suggested by the public (see page 14 of the draft plan for more information). As for the remaining suggested locations, it is not sufficiently clear that any of them is more need-worthy than the locations identified in the draft plan. However, to address two related comments from the public, the plan has been revised to: (i) mention the intersection improvements that are planned or underway (again, see page 14); and (ii) explain why some intersections not on the list received improvements before many intersections that are on the list. (see page 34).

### 2 Comments about the methodology to prioritize crossing enhancements (14 comments)

Chapter 5 outlined a methodology that was used to evaluate and score the 24 locations for street-crossing enhancements for purposes of prioritizing them further. Comments from the public regarding this topic mentioned that:

- The methodology favors the north/west half of the City and, as a result, there are no highest-priority projects in the south/east half.
- Past improvements have been highly concentrated in the north/west half, leaving the south/east half in need.
- Some of the highest-priority locations have already received attention so efforts should be shifted to other areas.
- Intersections with traffic lights should be de-prioritized because they are not as big of a traffic safety concern.
- The incidence of collisions should figure in the prioritization.

Further prioritizing the 24 locations has been the trickiest aspect of the Piedmont Safer Streets plan. In light of the comments received, the project team again reviewed the list of locations and the results of the evaluation and scoring exercise. Based on the rationale provided on page 53 of the draft plan, the project team proposes that the seven high-scoring intersections along Grand and Oakland Avenues be

considered of particularly high priority for purposes of the Piedmont Safer Streets plan. These intersections are:

- Grand Avenue / Greenbank Avenue
- Grand Avenue / Oakland Avenue
- Grand Avenue / Linda Avenue
- Oakland Avenue / Jerome Avenue
- Oakland Avenue / El Cerrito Avenue
- Oakland Avenue / Hillside Avenue
- Oakland Avenue / Highland Avenue

### 3 Comments about traffic calming (10 comments)

Almost all of these comments expressed an interest in traffic-calming measures on specific streets. Streets that were mentioned include Boulevard Way, El Cerrito Avenue, Grand Avenue, Moraga Avenue, Oakland Avenue, Olive Avenue and Wildwood Avenue.

The draft Piedmont Safer Streets plan acknowledges that speeding appears to be Piedmonters' top concern when it comes to traffic safety. However, the plan stops short of recommending traffic calming on specific streets; instead, the plan includes, as one of the top four recommended projects, the creation of a formal neighborhood traffic calming program through which residents could petition for traffic calming measures on particular streets. The reason for this approach is that traffic calming is most effective from a general traffic perspective, and more embraced by the community, if it is implemented strategically across a larger area rather than on a case-by-case basis.

To address two additional comments related to traffic calming (though not about specific streets), the plan has been revised to: (i) mention rumble strips as another potential low-cost traffic calming measure (see page 44 of the draft plan); and (ii) provide more justification for the recommended use of speed humps rather than speed bumps (page 55).

### 4 Comments about the citywide bikeway network (13 comments)

For the most part these comments suggested or requested "upgraded" bikeways (in the form of striped bike lanes or bike lanes physically separated from traffic) compared to what the plan proposes as part of the citywide bikeway network. Specific streets mentioned include Moraga Avenue, Oakland Avenue and Wildwood Avenue. While the Piedmont Safer Streets plan favors dedicated space for cyclists, most streets in Piedmont, including the ones mentioned above, are too narrow to incorporate bike lanes (unless a travel or parking lane were removed). To address an additional bikeway-related comment, the proposed bikeway network has been revised to incorporate the path through the Linda Avenue Park (see the revised list and maps of bikeways on pages 39–41 and 59 of the draft plan).

### 5 Comments with miscellaneous suggestions (24 comments)

Most of these were miscellaneous ideas, suggestions and recommendations that are either: (i) too specific and fine-grained for a citywide master plan like the Piedmont Safer Streets plan (for example, better striping of Upper Blair Avenue); or (ii) outside the scope of the plan (for example, more video surveillance

to deter crime). Those comments have been forwarded to City staff so that they may be considered separately from the Piedmont Safer Streets process.

The draft plan has been revised, however, to address other miscellaneous suggestions:

- Discuss the potential role of the Piedmont Unified School District in promoting a safe traffic environment for children (see page 14 of the draft plan).
- Mention the possibility of incorporating green infrastructure into traffic calming measures (page 44).
- Mention the value of public transit as a complement to walking and biking (page 51).
- Reference the possible use of federal funds directed to Piedmont as a result of the American Rescue Act (the Covid-19 stimulus package) to implement pedestrian, bicycle and traffic safety improvements (page 53).
- Discuss the role of the City's Capital Improvements Projects (CIP) process and CIP Review Committee in the implementation of pedestrian, bicycle and traffic safety improvements (page 53).
- Reiterate the need—originally articulated in the City's 2014 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan—for parking racks for bicycles and also scooters (page 58).

## Next steps

As mentioned near the beginning of this memorandum, the revised draft Piedmont Safer Streets plan—incorporating many of the public's comments—will be presented to the PBAC at their upcoming meeting on October 7, 2021. The PBAC will review the revisions made and will recommend a final draft of the plan to the City Council. The City Council will consider the final draft plan for approval and adoption at a regular Council meeting, likely in November 2021.