

**MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 16, 2020**

Mayor Cardenas called the meeting to order at 6:02 p. m. Roll call was taken.

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra (via teleconference)

Councilmembers Absent: Rodriquez

City Staff Present: City Manager/City Clerk Davis, City Attorney Cross, City Planner Marple, Public Works Director Dominguez, Police Chief Alcaraz, Finance Director Uyeda, Deputy City Clerk Burrola

Discuss Proposed Traffic Improvements on Merced Street Business Corridor and Fresno Street (Donny Wright Park area)

City Engineer Peters said this is for open discussion for possibilities for traffic improvements for Merced Street corridor and Fresno Street, Donny Wright Park area. Mr. Peters, said citizens have voiced their concerns regarding issues with vehicles speeding on Fresno Street. He said speed bumps and four-way stops are not something they would want to be placed on this type of street classification. Four-way stops have been discussed in past meetings, but placing a four-way stop would only cause traffic issues. Mr. Peters said there are other traffic techniques that can be used such as construction of curb extensions (bulb outs) studies have shown that traffic tends to slow down if the roadway is narrowed down, this will also provide safety to pedestrians crossing the street.

Councilmember Kazarian said he would like to see more evidence on the effectiveness of curb extensions. He has been contacted by residents and they are interested in having speed bumps placed in the area. Mr. Peters suggested putting in speed tables; they differ from a speed bump in that they are longer and flatter and allow traffic to continue at a reasonable speed without too much jarring or discomfort. He said these are more effective when used in conjunction with the curb extensions. Councilmember Kazarian said he is more comfortable with that approach and this may also satisfy the concerns of the residents. Mayor Cardenas said he is in favor of having speed tables installed instead of the stop signs or speed bumps.

City Engineer Peters continued with discussion on proposed traffic improvements on Merced Street Business Corridor. He said this item has been discussed at prior meetings and the purpose of this discussion is to further determine what possible solutions can be implemented. He said with more developments more traffic growth is anticipated. Mr. Peters said in prior meetings discussion of the possibility of having a roundabout and traffic signals was not a good idea to place at 10th and Merced Street. Looking at other opportunities is to create a connection to Merced Street that could take traffic coming in from the sides and integrate that traffic into the Merced Street corridor as efficiently as possible. At the moment 9th and Merced is a two-way stop, which has its limitations, the more traffic on Merced Street the fewer gaps for those wanting to turn onto Merced Street. This will cause more back up on and the only way to prevent this is to place a four-

way stop. The corridor has closely spaced intersections so putting in a four way stop has the ability to impact adjacent intersections, which would create corridor issues.

Other option would be to place a traffic signal but the most effective option in terms of capacity, safety, long term operation, and maintenance would be to place a roundabout. This would allow traffic to access on either side of Merced Street; it's the midway point between Highway 99 and Golden State Boulevard. There are other improvements that can be done to the corridor, there have been discussions about traffic signals in the past and that has not been ruled out. Mr. Peters said he is currently working with Caltrans to do analysis at Adams Avenue and SR 99 to find a solution for that location and is discussing 10th and Merced Street with Caltrans as a side to that area. Caltrans opposes the traffic signals at 10th and Merced because it would queue back into the freeway ramp. Their concern is that if there's a red light on Merced Street that traffic will back up blocking the ramps which will start backing up the mainlines of the freeway. If it gets to the point where there are difficulties making the left turn caused by backups on 10th Street medians could be placed in the roadway to preserve the left turns into La Quinta hotel and the Starbucks property from the freeway. At this point all of these options are suggested ideas to discuss and see what is best for this area.

Councilmember Parra said it was not too long ago that this discussion was brought up to place traffic signs in the area leading to different directions when the new Valley Children's' clinic was being built. Mr. Parra said with the traffic signal he agreed to have a roundabout only for the sole purpose of a U-turn. He said as far as a signal light, and it being within the City, Caltrans has issues placing one there, but on 10th street making a left going back onto the freeway as long as you have that short turn the buildup could be mitigated on Manning Avenue. Councilmember Parra expressed that he would like the original direction from the Council to take place. Councilmember Kazarian expressed his support for roundabouts that are properly placed but being so close to the future proposed roundabouts for Caltrans would be too close and would not be doable. By moving it over to 9th Street might solve the issue and will possibly tie in nicely with the Golden State Corridor improvement project. City Engineer Peters said there is a highway safety grant to do a corridor study; the first phase would be to come up with a concept, even though not everyone is in full agreement, if this may be heading in the right direction than this concept would be continued performing traffic analysis and provide and would be submitted to the Council for adoption, this would assist to seek funding with clear direction from the Council prior to submitting the grant application. A discussion took place on the concept for traffic improvements and what other strategies it would take to control the flow of traffic. The consensus of the Council is to work with Caltrans, include the stakeholders and discuss further and move forward with the corridor study for more than one option and bring it back to the Council for action.

Approve Cooperative Agreement between Fresno County Fire Protection District and the City of Fowler

City Manager Davis said this is an annual agreement for the fire protection district's emergency dispatch services.

Councilmember Kazarian made a motion to approve Cooperative Agreement between Fresno County Fire Protection District and the City of Fowler, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hammer. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Rodriquez.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hammer made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Kazarian to adjourn. The motion carried by roll call vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.