

Central Avenue Comments from the Virtual Open House (October 5-20, 2020)

Question	Response	Response Date
Do you have any comments on roundabouts as part of the Central Avenue Project?		
	The proposed roundabouts are a great solution for this stretch of roadway. I think the design does a good job of balancing needs of drivers, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. On top of that, they will be an aesthetic improvement for our City!	2020-10-06 17:28:49
	The roundabout seems like a solid way to fix a rather tricky intersection. It also leaves the opportunity for some nice greenery in a vast expanse of asphalt.	2020-10-06 22:56:03
	Love roundabouts .. letlls make this happen.. saves time, money and improves safety..	2020-10-08 17:36:08
	While I am a fan of roundabouts, I am concerned that GPS navigation assistance tools such as Waze and Google Maps may direct drivers around these intersections to non-arterial streets. These navigation assistance apps are already diverting drivers (especially delivery trucks and app-based ride services) from Webster, 8th Street, Grand, and Sherman down residential streets such as Bay, St. Charles, & Morton. This could be mitigated by adding additional traffic calming measures on these residential streets such as speed bumps which are used effectively to calm traffic throughout Alameda County and elsewhere as these streets are used as a short-cut through from Lincoln > Central/Encinal > Otis.	2020-10-08 20:56:22
	I am not in favor of roundabouts. They are not good for pedestrians and I've experienced frustrated drivers behaving quite badly. I come from a community that tried to use them and had to take them out. Much of the rest of the project is positive.	2020-10-13 18:31:37
	We do not like the idea of southside of Sherman being one direction. That would keep us from making right hand turns on Encinal or Central; prevents us from getting to the tube from south side Sherman, we would have to go around the corner.	2020-10-13 23:54:31
	If the proposed roundabout goes through how many parking spaces are lost for the total of the intersection, Sherman, Central and Encinal?	2020-10-13 23:55:07
	Who is maintaining the greenery around the proposed roundabout? If it is Caltrans, they are not known for keeping up on their landscaping.	2020-10-13 23:55:49
	If we make no changes to the Sherman St/ Encinal roundabout are we grandfathered in for the parking?	2020-10-13 23:57:19
	Those 3 intersections will be awesome places for roundabouts. The one at Main, and the one at Central/Sherman/Encinal will be huge improvements all day, every day, because these intersections don't really make any sense currently - particularly if you are turning left onto Sherman from Central. The one at Encinal High will be helpful during drop-off and pick-up times. (But even better will be the bike lanes so there are fewer cars and more cyclists.) My only concern would be to make it easy for pedestrians. Currently, if you are at the corner of Central/Encinal and Sherman St, on the corner closest to San Antonio and Bay Streets, if you want to cross the street, you have to first cross Sherman (one light cycle), then cross Encinal to the gas station (another light cycle), then cross Central (another light cycle), then cross Sherman again (another light cycle). Eliminating the light cycles will be a big benefit; hopefully pedestrians will also be able to traverse this in a different way than this crazy way of crossing the street 4 times in order to cross 1 street. This is a real scenario, if you want to go to the AC Transit bus stop on Santa Clara, or to the Mastick Senior Center, or to the businesses on Lincoln Ave, or to the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park. It's surprising that the existing conditions are not causing more crashes; this will be a big improvement.	2020-10-15 00:33:14
	This is great, I love the roundabouts. When rolling these out, I would encourage the city to launch a public information campaign to educate us on how to drive on roundabouts, what the rules are, who gets the right of way, etc. Additionally, a public education campaign should go to cyclists, especially kids who cycle, on how to watch for cars at intersections in roundabouts. Alameda will be much more on board with these changes if you do enough community engagement to show it won't be that much of a change in driving habits!	2020-10-15 23:35:37
	I really do love this overall proposal. However the round about at Sherman makes me hesitate. As an avid cyclist who uses sherman (theoretically a bike route) this intersection feels compromised by the proposed configuration. Please consider another improvement.	2020-10-16 03:27:01

Question	Response	Response Date
	<p>I live on the 1300 block of Sherman, and I have a number of objections to the roundabout.</p> <p>(1) I see that parking will be reduced as a result. This neighborhood is already short on parking, and reducing the number of parking spots we have will NOT help--especially because we have a number of houses which do not have driveways/garages and need street parking.</p> <p>(2) Fire engines and ambulances often use Central to cross down. How are they going to do this if there is a roundabout here?</p> <p>(3) Making the 1300 block of Sherman a one-way street is illogical. This is a busy street in both directions. By making it one-way, you force everyone on this street (and anyone who needs to use this street to travel) to go all the way around the block any time they need to go to the north side of the island/leave the neighborhood. This increases commute/travel time & increases traffic in other parts of the neighborhood (because there's only one route to travel instead of two)--both of which will increase car emissions and negatively impact the environment.</p> <p>(finishing a comment I already made--it was too long)</p> <p>(4) How long will construction take? Where will construction equipment go? This seems like a large project that will take a lot of time. I'm concerned about losing parking during construction & the noise of construction.</p> <p>(5) It seems like a way to force a bike lane in the area. I'm not against bike lanes, but it seems like there must be a way to add a bike lane without adding a roundabout. Not many bicyclists travel in their neighborhood anyway (I go walking around here a lot and rarely see bicyclists), so it seems unnecessary to prioritize them over drivers, who outnumber the bicyclists in this area by a lot.</p> <p>(6) I keep seeing the phrase "road diet" on the site. Does this mean you're trying to force people to drive less by changing the road? I find this to be illogical AND ableist, ageist, and classist. We all already have cars; we're not going to get rid of cars because the roads change. Not everyone can afford to stop driving/drive less. Not everyone is physically able to drive less, especially the elderly (of which there are many in my neighborhood). And many NEED to drive to get to work, etc.</p>	2020-10-17 00:25:25
	<p>1) Looking at the Sherman/Central/Encinal roundabout, it seems that the block of Sherman (closest to San Antonio) is going to be one-way. As a resident of the 1300 block of Sherman, this would be hugely inconvenient.</p> <p>Can you please comment on the flow of traffic for the different points of the roundabout.</p> <p>2) At the roundabouts, will pedestrians have the ability to signal they're crossing, or is it painted lines only? As a pedestrian walking from 1300 block of Sherman to the bus stop on Santa Clara, I want a safe way to cross the road.</p>	2020-10-17 00:25:41
	<p>- What are the plans for our parking needs during the construction phase as I am sure it will take months to complete and they will be appropriating parking for construction vehicles and equipment? In a time of daily car break ins in Alameda removing an expensive vehicle from an owners sight (including home surveillance cameras) is setting Sherman St residents up for vehicle damage and theft.</p> <p>- It looks like a lot of parking will be eliminated for the project. It indicates parking removed from Sherman St., Encinal, and Central. The entire point of the gas station will not have parking any longer as well as the apartments on Central and Sherman and Condos on Sherman and Encinal north side of the intersection. This will compress our already stained parking situation in the neighborhood.</p> <p>- maybe to control traffic on the 1300 block of Sherman you put in traffic bumps....typically cars speed down Sherman to make the light to cross Central and continue down Sherman. This would deter speeders (very dangerous) and maybe even reroute traffic because it would no longer be a unimpeded direct shot down Sherman and through the Central Ave intersection</p> <p>- Currently the light to cross over Central from either direction of Sherman Street is way too short, it causes people to speed to make the lights...maybe just increase the amount of time for that traffic light</p>	2020-10-18 17:23:34
	<p>please provide as many roundabouts as possible.</p>	2020-10-19 20:31:36
		2020-10-21 02:46:45

Question	Response	Response Date
Do you have any comments on the design?		
	I'm confused on the bike path transition at the Pacific/Main roundabout. It appears to be a 2-way path on one side of the street that changes to 1-way on opposite sides. I would prefer to maintain the 2-way protected path to Appezato if possible	2020-10-05 15:56:41
	On the CDM Smith diagrams provided, the diagram being difficult to read, and the legend on the upper right does not appear to designate saved/preserved/existing parking. Are you able to clarify if the blueish areas are saved/preserved parking or not, and it appears that the suggestions to the City via all of the meetings attended, notations made to Andrew and Gail via WABA meetings and City Hall meetings, and all of the meetings with CDM Smith, that at least the first stall at Webster and Central heading west on Central Ave could be saved yet seems to be noted as eliminated even though other first stalls in the city have have signage noting times available to park, or other notifications such as height limits for that stall/s. Your assistance would be appreciated in clarification and the preservation of business parking.	2020-10-05 17:48:26
	Thank You So Much For Giving Us A View Of The Upcoming Projects. I Certainly Appreciate That. With Warm Regards Michael John Torrey mjohnrtorrey54@yahoo.com	2020-10-05 21:39:51
	Overall, I think the proposed design represents a great improvement over the existing condition of the roadway. I would like to know why the 2-way bikeway does not extend past eighth street? It seems like a better option than the 1-way bike lanes, if feasible, it would be great to extend the bikeway along the entire roadway.	2020-10-06 17:32:06
	Hi there, I'm an Alameda resident and biker. I love the gist of this project! My major feedback is that I would love to see the parking lanes sitting inside the bike lanes. That is, going from sidewalk to the center of the street it would be: bike lane, parking lane, driving lane. I recently had the chance to see this configuration in Montreal, Quebec, and it worked remarkably well while keeping cyclists even safer. Thanks!	2020-10-06 22:18:57
	Perhaps it's too early in the conversation, but the intersection at Central & 8th is very dangerous for pedestrians. Will these changes include changes to the lights? A right turn arrow will help move more traffic through that intersection safely and can give pedestrians a safer way to cross 8th.	2020-10-06 22:57:28
	I am in favor of the "road diet" that creates 2 lanes of traffic plus a center turn lane AS LONG AS the parking lanes remain. I do believe it will cause congestion for traffic that uses Alameda as a short cut to San Leandro and may drop more traffic into the interior streets. Webster and Park are a mess and need to be redesigned. I now avoid businesses on those streets due to the horrible traffic so I believe it has had the opposite effect to what was intended. I do not support roundabouts, they are dangerous for pedestrians and do not actually slow traffic rather they create challenges for older drivers who may be slower to merge and for younger drivers who may be overly brave.	2020-10-13 18:36:23
	Love the focus on safety for all road users, especially the vulnerable bicyclists and pedestrians. Thank you for educating us on the value of roundabouts and road diets. Very informative and engaging presentation. Great work -- you are making Alameda a very special place. Keep up the great work!	2020-10-13 23:48:29
	Why is it taking so long? If it is cost can some portions (speed and accident prone) get started faster. The noise and abusive driving is being recorded and archived to hopefully help catch traffic violators.	2020-10-14 01:13:34
	I really like it! Please get it done!	2020-10-15 00:36:22
	How have you accounted for the movers and their trucks (moving vans taking up a lane for the apartments between Webster and Encinal High School)?	2020-10-16 00:59:07
	What will be the effect on those who have to exit from Crown Drive onto Central?	2020-10-16 01:04:18

Question	Response	Response Date
	I am an avid cyclist and have two young boys who ride to school. This will be a huge huge huge improvement over our current rides on the sidewalks, where we feel guilty passing walkers and joggers. I look forward to my boys having a safer and more bike friendly route to schools, parks, the beach and the ferry. This may not be perfect, but it is a great step in the right direction. Go planners go!	2020-10-16 03:23:07
	These boards really are too small and difficult to read to be able to give detailed feedback.	2020-10-20 00:50:47
	The images are too small to be able to see the detail and provide feedback. You should be able to zoom to the drawings or should have put a smaller segment to view.	2020-10-20 06:49:16
	thank you for the additional pedestrian crosswalks along central avenue!	2020-10-20 17:44:58
	Roundabouts: As the videos suggest roundabouts work only when the flow of traffic allows a vehicle to enter the roundabout. When traffic becomes so heavy that there is no room room for vehicles to safely enter the roundabouts collisions occur. Two lane roundabouts present an exiting issue, when exiting from an inside lane, crossing the outside lane is necessary. This is dangerous if outside lane vehicle do not yield. Also, if traffic is heavy enough, unacceptable backup occurs at the roundabout entry points. General: complexity increases collisions especially for drivers who are not familiar with our roads.	2020-10-20 17:55:19
	I am in favor!	2020-10-20 19:38:42
	I've seen the proposed roundabout design for the Sherman/Encinal/Central intersection. I'm very familiar with roundabouts, as they were common where I grew up, but they were used most frequently at intersections with little or no pedestrian activity (often in areas with no sidewalks). I live on Sherman and my family walks or bikes through this intersection on a near daily basis and twice a day when school is in session. Vehicular accidents have not been nearly as common at this intersection as at Sherman/Santa Clara (prior to installation of a stop sign), nor is the light phasing or vehicular routing particularly confusing, so I'm not clear why a roundabout is proposed.	2020-10-20 22:37:42
	My main concern relates to pedestrian crossings. I'm particularly interested in whether pedestrian signalization will be added to the Sherman/Encinal/Central intersection since this is a dedicated Safe Routes to School crossing. Under existing conditions, there is no ped signal and the light phasing is too short for pedestrians along Sherman to cross the entire intersection (i.e., to cross both Central and Encinal). I am not certain that the new roundabout design will make ped crossings safer, given that there will not be a signal for cars to stop. One has only to try crossing Encinal at Benton or Paru to know that cars do not all stop for pedestrians. That is the precise reason AUSD employs a crossing guard at Paru during school drop off and pick up hours.	
	If a roundabout design is not ultimately implemented, it is critical that a ped signal be added and that the vehicular signal phasing be adjusted so that pedestrians along Sherman can safely cross both Central and Encinal in one phase. This intersection has been the subject of previous correspondence with both Caltrans and the City of Alameda due to safety concerns.	

Expected Project Impacts

The anticipated project impacts appear to be positive in nature.	2020-10-06 17:20:10
I cause traffic along this route. I drop off my kids at schools on the West End. Although I am a confident cyclist and am comfortable with the idea of my kids cycling to school, there is no route that I would feel comfortable taking, let alone having them take. By having the bike lane and 2-way cycletrack, I will be one less vehicle on the road, and they will be able to have the confidence and fitness that comes from being able to get to their schools on their own. As a motorist, I really like the center turn lane. This is generally where the most problems are along this route.	2020-10-15 00:23:55
I'll finally be comfortable (a) having my kids bike to school and (b) biking to the ferry.	2020-10-15 00:36:01

Question	Response	Response Date
	<p>I live on the 1300 block of Sherman. Changing this block of Sherman to be a one-way street will directly impact my ability to go to and from work every morning, go get groceries, etc--it will force me to spend more time driving (and thus negatively impact the environment!) by forcing me to drive all the way around the block to leave or return to my house. This is simply too busy a street to make it one-way.</p> <p>I'm concerned about decreased parking, both during construction and after construction. It is already hard enough to find parking on this street; reducing parking will only make the problem worse.</p> <p>I also fear that having a roundabout here will actually increase car accidents, as people around here are not used to driving in roundabouts and, as I mentioned before, this intersection is already confusing enough.</p>	2020-10-16 23:57:18
	<p>A roundabout will cause congestion, accidents, and inconvenience to me and to everyone who lives on the 1330 block of Sherman Street. Sherman Street is a thoroughfare for people going north to south across the island and is heavily traveled especially in the mornings. Nearby apartment and condo dwellers will come down our street and take up all of our street parking. I will have to drive out of my way to get to church, to work, etc. Cutting lanes on Central will make my commute to work outside of Alameda even longer than it is now and I will have to go out of my way when I go anywhere since my block will become a one way street. What are you thinking?????</p>	2020-10-21 08:07:09

Other Questions or Concerns

How will bicycle safety be protected before, during, and after roundabouts?	2020-10-05 23:31:07
It can be very difficult to cross Central or turn left onto Central, because the visibility is poor due to parked cars close to the corners. So, it is necessary to go out into the traffic lane, just to see if there is cross traffic. Hopefully the combination of the road diet and some parking removal will make it safer to drive across Central or turn left onto Central. Oakland has been doing some innovative quick-build projects, with paint and simple bollard-like posts. Can't we do this in Alameda to make this happen faster?	2020-10-15 00:23:55
Get this done faster!	2020-10-15 00:36:01
Please don't do this, it doesn't make any sense. If you want to add a bike lane, just add a bike lane, but don't build an unnecessary roundabout, get rid of parking in a neighborhood that doesn't have enough already, and make street changes that will negatively impact traffic and the environment.	2020-10-16 23:57:18
Fantastic work! I really hope that the community input is positive and not over-run with the anti-change people.	2020-10-17 04:17:26
We're paying attention and we vote.	2020-10-20 17:42:57
Who is coming up with this stuff? I don't remember voting for any of these drastic traffic changes in Alameda. Who is behind this? All you're doing is creating more congestion as developers take over the island. The vast majority of people have to drive and you are making our lives harder with your stupid "road diet." STOP. We don't need your meddling and nearby businesses are struggling already - they don't need you messing up their storefronts and parking spaces. I'm sure you can find a much better use for this money which belongs to taxpayers.	2020-10-21 08:07:09

Project Components

The proposed design makes a lot of sense. It will improve safety for pedestrians by reducing auto speeds and the number of traffic lanes to cross at intersections; provide a more inviting and safer environment for bicyclists; and, benefit neighbors by create a more appropriate street design for a largely residential and mixed-use retail (in parts) area. In particular, I really like the traffic circles, I think they are the perfect solution for this application.	2020-10-06 17:20:10
Super-excited about the roundabouts to fix crazy intersections like Sherman/Encinal/Central; and for the road diet especially the bike lanes and center turn lane (which will make it much easier to drive, as well as bike, along the road). This has been proven to work on other streets in Alameda, such as Broadway.	2020-10-15 00:23:55

Question	Response	Response Date
	<p>This will be so much better!</p> <p>The bike lanes, 2-way cycletrack, and road diet will make it so that my kids can bike to school, which means that my car will not be in the way. The center turn lane and bike lanes will make it much easier to drive. The roundabouts will fix crazy intersections. Can't wait for this to happen!</p>	2020-10-15 00:36:01
	<p>To make our bike infrastructure as safe and possible and encourage people to bike, Alameda should strive to put fully protected bike lanes throughout the island wherever possible. On the Central Ave project, all bike lanes should be placed between parked cars and the sidewalk (mimicking the excellent bike lane on Shoreline). This should be a city-wide rule unless there are specific circumstances which prevent a fully protected lane.</p>	2020-10-15 23:29:41
	<p>A roundabout at Encinal/Sherman/Central seems unnecessary. This intersection has a lot going on already and I think a roundabout will only make it more confusing.</p>	2020-10-16 23:57:18
	<p>I *love* this! The intersections for the roundabouts are ones I drive through regularly and these are much needed improvements! There are so many kids using these areas between Kiddie Kampus, Nea, ACLC, AoA, Encinal HS, Paden, and anyone going to Franklin Park. It's always been strange that these intersections were so huge.</p>	2020-10-17 04:17:26
	<p>A buffer should be put between the Class 2 bike lanes and traffic where possible. A Class 2 bike lane does not provide sufficient comfort for many riders. Consider putting the parking away from the curb in order to create a protected bikeway.</p>	2020-10-20 06:51:45
	<p>What problem is the City trying to solve by creating a roundabout at the Sherman-Central-Encinal confluence? If "road diet" is the the major problem, you should rethink the whole project because it's age-ist, able-ist, and income-ist at the very least. Only those in this neighborhood with economic means to avoid driving will be able to do so - the rest will have to live with the unfortunate consequences of fewer lanes to drive on and watching daily as drivers get into accidents at what is sure to be an even more confusing intersection than it already is. And why are the bicyclists getting to take over and dictate how Alamedans get around?! Quit pandering to the a squeaky minority of Alamedans and do projects that benefit all or at least the majority of us.</p>	2020-10-20 17:42:57
	<p>I live on Central Ave and I support this project</p>	2020-10-20 19:39:21
	<p>DO NOT put a round about at Sherman and Central and DO NOT make any part of Sherman a one way street. Stop ruining streets with bicycle lanes like you did at the beach at South Shore. Stop privileging the young and the abled to the detriment of older and differently abled people. This is an island and too many condos are being built and there is too much traffic already and insufficient public transportation for people to get to jobs or medical care off of the island. We don't need fewer streets to make the crowding worse. You are ruining Alameda. I live on Sherman close to Central and Encinal and I am a handicapped senior. My family has been in Alameda since World War II. Stop ruining it so that a few selfish, condescending newbies can feel good about themselves.</p>	2020-10-21 08:07:09

Schedule

Go, go, go!	2020-10-06 17:20:10
I participated in the public process many years ago, and it looks like this is at least 2 years away. This is too slow! It's mostly paint. Can't we do this faster?	2020-10-15 00:23:55
Be more like OakDOT - get this done faster! Seems like perfection is getting in the way of progress.	2020-10-15 00:36:01
How long will construction take? This seems like a BIG project that will take a long time, causing increased noise and traffic in the neighborhood.	2020-10-16 23:57:18

Participation in Virtual Open House

Over 800 people are estimated to have visited the Virtual Open House.
The below chart shows which days had the most "snaps" or clicks within the Virtual Open House portal.

