

## Reimagine Russell Boulevard Corridor Vision Plan

### Virtual Community Workshop #3 Summary

#### Project Overview

The City of Davis, UC Davis, and Yolo County are working on a joint planning and conceptual design effort to address a 3-mile stretch of Russell Boulevard from B Street to west to Road 98. The purpose of the project is to develop a comprehensive vision, including improvements to multimodal transportation facilities, stormwater infrastructure, and community landscape spaces. Serving as a vital east-west arterial route in the city of Davis and a primary western gateway to both the city and University, Russell Boulevard plays a critical role in the community's multimodal transportation network.



*Russell Boulevard street view*

The goal of the Russell Boulevard Corridor Vision Plan (“Reimagine Russell”) is to determine a comprehensive and community-based vision for the corridor. This vision will be supported by best practices in street design, landscape and gateway guidelines, and conceptual plans, informed by community input. Ultimately, the Plan will identify ways the city and University can address safety concerns and provide enhanced connections for the 8,000 cyclists, 20,000 vehicles, and 13,000 transit riders that travel along the boulevard on a typical weekday. This Project is part of a long-range transportation planning effort to develop vision and guiding document to safely accommodate future community members.

#### Workshop Overview

The third Reimagine Russell Boulevard community workshop was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. The goal of the workshop was to recap where we’ve been, provide an update on the concept alternatives, and share the placemaking and urban design concepts for Russell Boulevard. Previous engagement included Community Steering Committee workshops held on April 27, 2021 and January 31, 2022, two community workshops held on April 28, 2021 and October 6, 2021, as well as two online surveys that were available from April 29, 2021 through May 13, 2021 and October 10, 2021 through November 12, 2021.



*Russell Boulevard project study area*

City of Davis staff, UC Davis staff, and project team members began with a general project overview, engagement process to date, and overall corridor vision, before presenting updates to the overall corridor concept, and ideas for placemaking, urban design and green infrastructure. The project team then facilitated small group discussions to get reactions from community members. During the small group discussions participants had the opportunity to ask questions about the design concepts updates and then comment on the placemaking, urban design and green infrastructure concepts. The meeting concluded with summaries of each of the small group discussions and the next steps towards refining the concepts and finalizing the Russell Boulevard Corridor Vision Plan.

To view the presentation slides and a recording of the meeting, please access the PDF and video posted to the project website: [www.reimaginerussell.com](http://www.reimaginerussell.com).

### Workshop Format

Due to the current pandemic and necessary safety precautions, the meeting was conducted virtually. Roughly 167 community members registered for the meeting, with approximately 78 participants attending and participating in the workshop.

The meeting was organized into five sections:

1. Project background and schedule
2. Summary of engagement activities and corridor vision
3. Updates to the design concepts cross-sections and plans
4. Comprehensive presentation on placemaking, urban design, and green infrastructure, including design goals and themes, site walk of locations along the corridor, and a corridor streetscape palette



*Screenshot of the Virtual Workshop presentation*

- Interactive small group activity to answer questions and gather feedback from participants about the design concepts updates, and the placemaking and urban design, with results summarized for the larger group

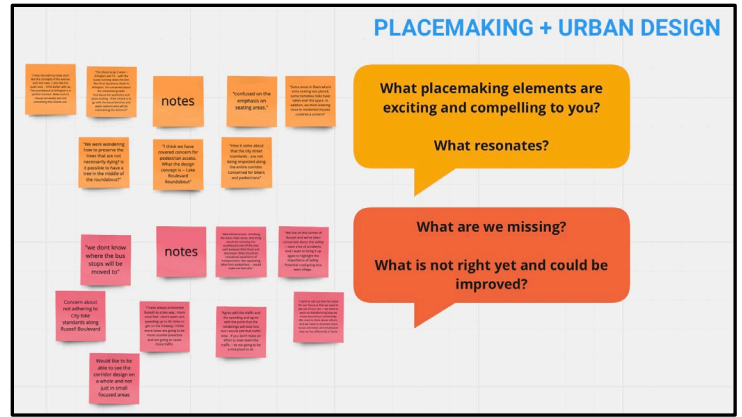
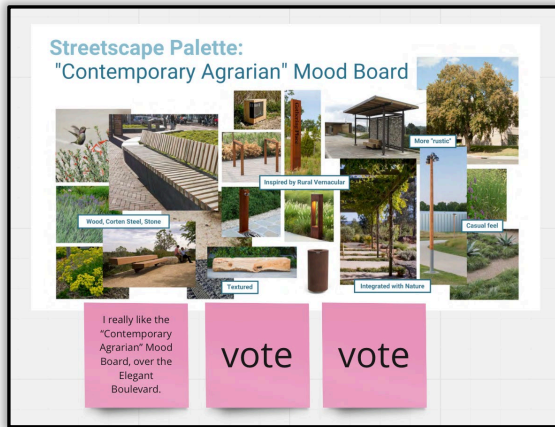
Project staff facilitated the small group activity using plans, perspective sketches and images that were shown during the presentation and took notes in MIRO, a digital collaboration tool. This allowed participants to see comments from other participants in their group, respond to what they heard during the presentation, and add new information to the conversation. There were four small groups comprised of 15-20 participants that were moderated by a group facilitator and note-taker. Facilitators asked a series of questions during the 35-minute small group activity. The questions were:

Discussion Question	Input Category
Any additional feedback?	Concept
What resonates? What is exciting and compelling to you? What are we missing? What is not right yet and could be improved?	Impressions on what folks saw and heard about placemaking and urban design
Feedback on the Site Walk sketches	“Site Walk” Location Vignettes
Feedback on the landscape, planting, materials and furnishing options	Streetscape Palette “Mood Boards”
Discussion	Final thoughts and questions

### Summary of Key Themes

The following provides a summary of key themes that emerged during the small group activity in the workshop from each small group.

The screenshot displays a digital workspace for reviewing design concepts. On the left, there is a 'CONCEPT UPDATES' section with a blue speech bubble asking 'Any additional feedback?' and a 'notes' section with three blue sticky notes. The main workspace is filled with various panels, each representing a different street segment or intersection. These panels include perspective drawings, site plans, and text boxes containing feedback or notes. Key locations shown include Russell Boulevard segments, the intersection of B Street and A Street near Toomey Field, Anderson and LaRue, the 113 Overpass and Ramps, and the Arlington Roundabout. The text in the notes and panels discusses design details like landscaping, materials, and traffic flow.



Miro Boards featuring feedback from the small group activity

### Group 1

Balancing different users and uses throughout the corridor was an overarching theme of the discussion in Group 1.

Participants were excited about:

- Improving the corridor aesthetically and functionally

Participants voiced concerns about:

- The size and scale of the gathering spaces.
- The presence of both on street bike lanes and a side path

### Group 2

Group 2 focused most of their time on the concept updates and discussing the multimodal aspects of the corridor.

Participants expressed excitement about:

- Closing the southbound SR-113 interchange
- The multimodal accommodations, though expressed desire for wider on-street bike lanes and separate provisions for e-bikes
- The Arlington roundabout
- The Cactus Corner roundabout
- The agrarian landscape/hardscape palette was preferred
- Incorporating native trees and plantings throughout the corridor

Participants voiced concerns about:

- The narrow bike lanes between B and A street and encouraged staff to consider ways to meet the City's bike lane standards
- Mixing e-bikes with standard bikes in bike lanes and side paths

### Group 3

The Group 3 discussion focused on mobility elements and motor vehicle traffic.

Participants expressed excitement about:

- The proposed tree canopy and how it would bring back the character of the Avenue of the Trees
- A corridor concept should speak to climate resiliency and be something the community would be proud of
- The Arlington roundabout
- The group was split on the contemporary agrarian and the elegant boulevard mood boards and could see blending the two

Participants voiced concerns about:

- Future traffic impacts
- Concerns about drawing people to the corridor, particularly near the residential areas
- The amount of seating and congregation and whether that could be supported along Russell Boulevard

### Group 4:

Group 4 focused most of the discussion on the multimodal design and concept updates.

Participants expressed excitement about:

- Advancing bicycling and walking experience within the corridor
- Pushing this project to be visionary, especially as it relates to climate resiliency
- Laying the groundwork for the trees and landscape to thrive and last
- The contemporary agrarian mood board though it was raised that both make sense over the course of a 3-mile corridor that goes from agrarian to elegant

Participants voiced concerns about:

- The vision isn't visionary enough, particularly when it comes to multimodal design
- Discussion on the 113 overpass and how to make it both safe and efficient for all modes
- Carefully consideration to right sizing and properly locating the social areas and amenities that support an accessible boulevard without creating extra maintenance

The workshop concluded by City staff communicating where we are in the process and next steps. This effort, Reimagine Russell Boulevard, is a long-range corridor visioning effort focused on conceptual designs to enhance the multimodal elements and the experience of the corridor. The concepts developed through this effort would be considered for further development if City Council, UC Davis, and/or Yolo County (the appropriate body for the issue) approve future funding to pursue a particular concept.

The final outcomes of this effort will be Russell Boulevard Corridor Vision Plan document and supporting illustrative graphics and appendices, including an illustrative concept graphic that shows potential future changes throughout the three-mile corridor. In Spring of 2022, the Corridor Vision Plan and corridor concept with go to City Council for approval.

### Workshop Notification

Below is a summary of the efforts to build awareness about the City of Davis and UC Davis' Reimagine Russell Boulevard Project and notify Davis community members about the first workshop. 179 community members registered for the virtual community meeting on Tuesday, February 8, 2021, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

As with the first two community workshops, a variety of publicity approaches were employed to raise awareness about the project and this second virtual workshop. This included a media release that was sent to more than twenty local news sources, including print, TV, radio and media outlets. Direct emails to more than 1,400 community members who have participated in past community inclusive Davis land-use or transportation-related projects. Social media strategies include a Facebook advertisement to Facebook users within a fifteen-mile radius of Davis, and the City of Davis posted the awareness graphic on their Facebook and Twitter.

Beyond digital awareness techniques, approximately 32 H-stake signs (lawn signs) were placed around Davis at key activity centers including on campus at UC Davis and along Russell Boulevard. The lawn signs included the project website and a QR code to encourage those who saw them to visit the project website and sign up for the virtual community meeting. In addition, project messaging was posted at the 20 most used Unitrans bus stops to raise awareness on the effort.



*Reimagine Russell Boulevard Awareness Graphic*