

Car Free Streets: California Avenue Ramona Street

City of Palo Alto

April 2023

Fukuji Architecture & Planning
Fehr and Peers



California Avenue



Ramona Street

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Outreach Findings
 - Cal Ave
 - Ramona Street
 - Feedback
3. Two Project Approach
 - Demonstration Projects
 - Upcoming Study topics
 - Feedback
4. Next Steps

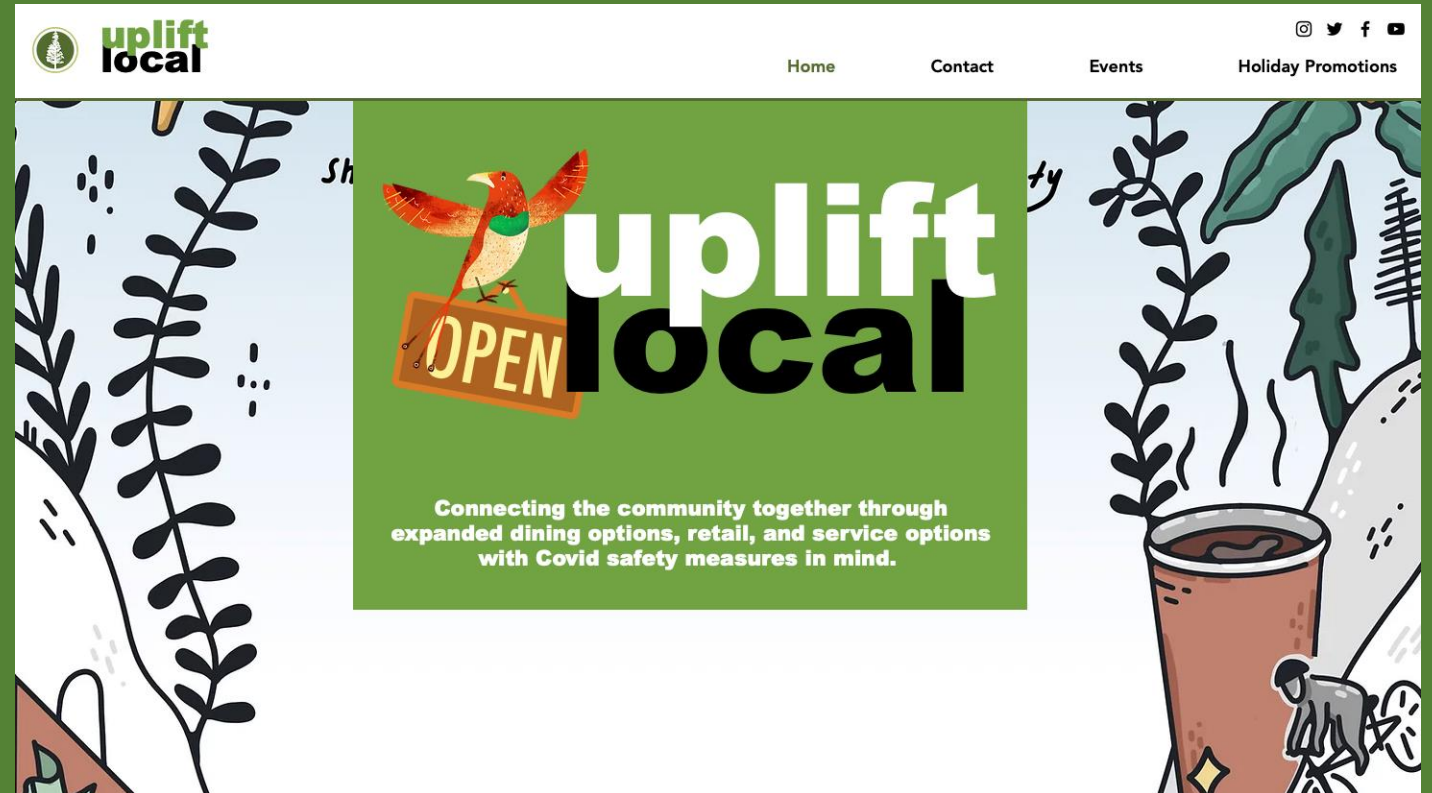
Meeting Objectives

- Validate outreach findings
- Receive feedback on:
 - Demonstration projects
 - Upcoming study topics

Car Free Streets: California Avenue & Ramona Street

City Council effort to:

- Enhance community experience and economic vibrancy of Palo Alto
- Engage community, businesses & property owners
- Advance interim and permanent street configurations



Community & Stakeholder Outreach

- Project Website
- 12 Interviews
 - Local businesses, property owners & managers, non-profit leaders, Chamber of Commerce, elected officials, developers
- 3 Focus Groups 11/17 – 12/1
 - Ramona Street Business Owners
 - California Avenue Business Owners
 - Chairpersons of City Commissions
- 12/7/22 Community Workshop - 60 attendees
- Online Community Survey - 356 responses!



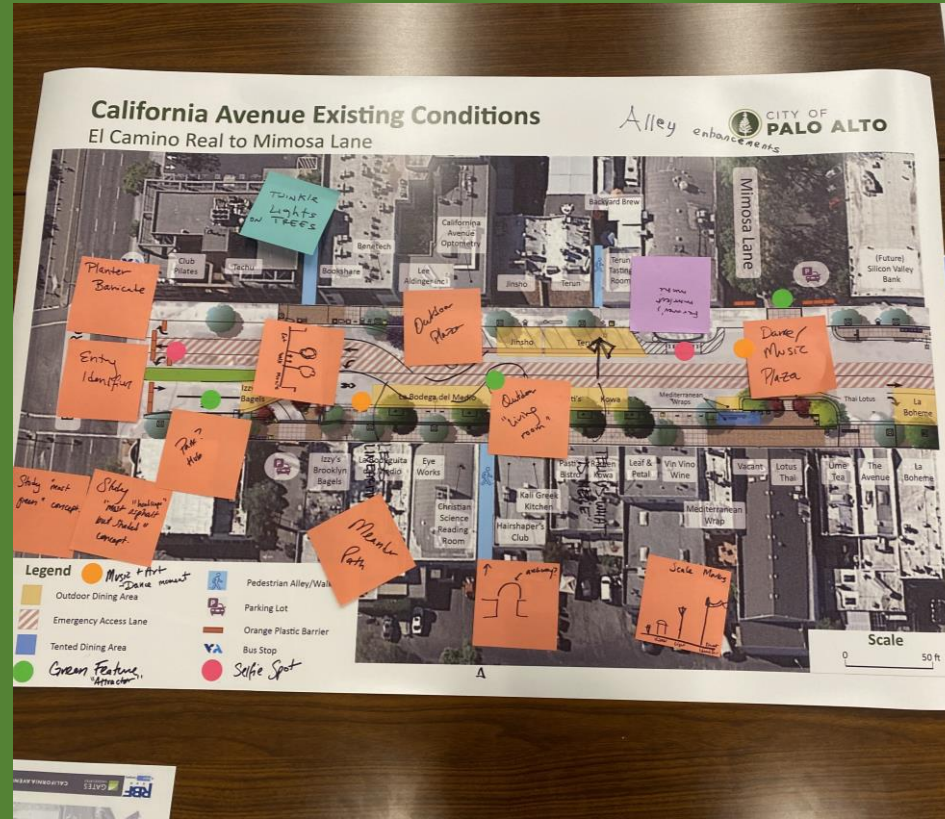
Cal Ave Business Owners



Community Workshop

Outreach Meetings

Identifying Opportunities, Concerns, and Priorities for Cal Ave and Ramona Street



Ramona Street Priorities

- Shape a vibrant, urban public space ●●●
- Maintain character and scale of historic district ●●●
- Foster public life with places to meet, socialize and sit outdoors ●●●●●
- Improve visual quality of street improvements
PRIORITIZE QUALITY DESIGN AESTHETIC ●●●●●
- Introduce planting and street trees that complement historic buildings and storefronts ●●
- Ensure inviting, customer friendly access and visibility to local businesses ●
- Create a pedestrian precinct that slows or diverts vehicles ●●●●●
- Improve wayfinding and signage ●●●●●
- Create an outdoor dining destination ●●●●●
- Other: _____

California Avenue

Outreach Findings

What brings you to Cal Ave?

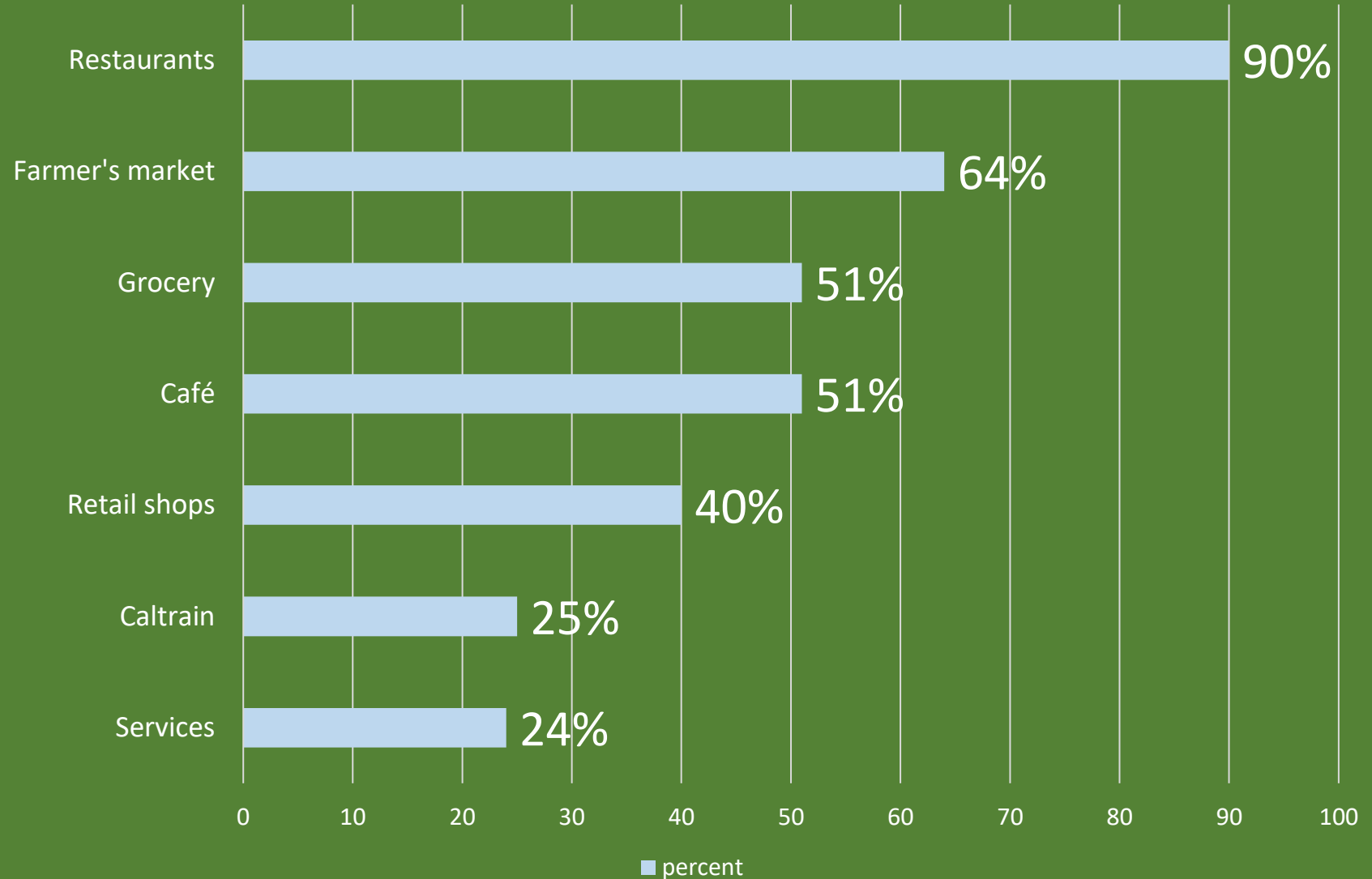
Online Survey



Restaurants



Farmer's Market



What concerns you about Cal Ave?

Online Survey



California Hotel



Former Bank



What would you like to see on Cal Ave?

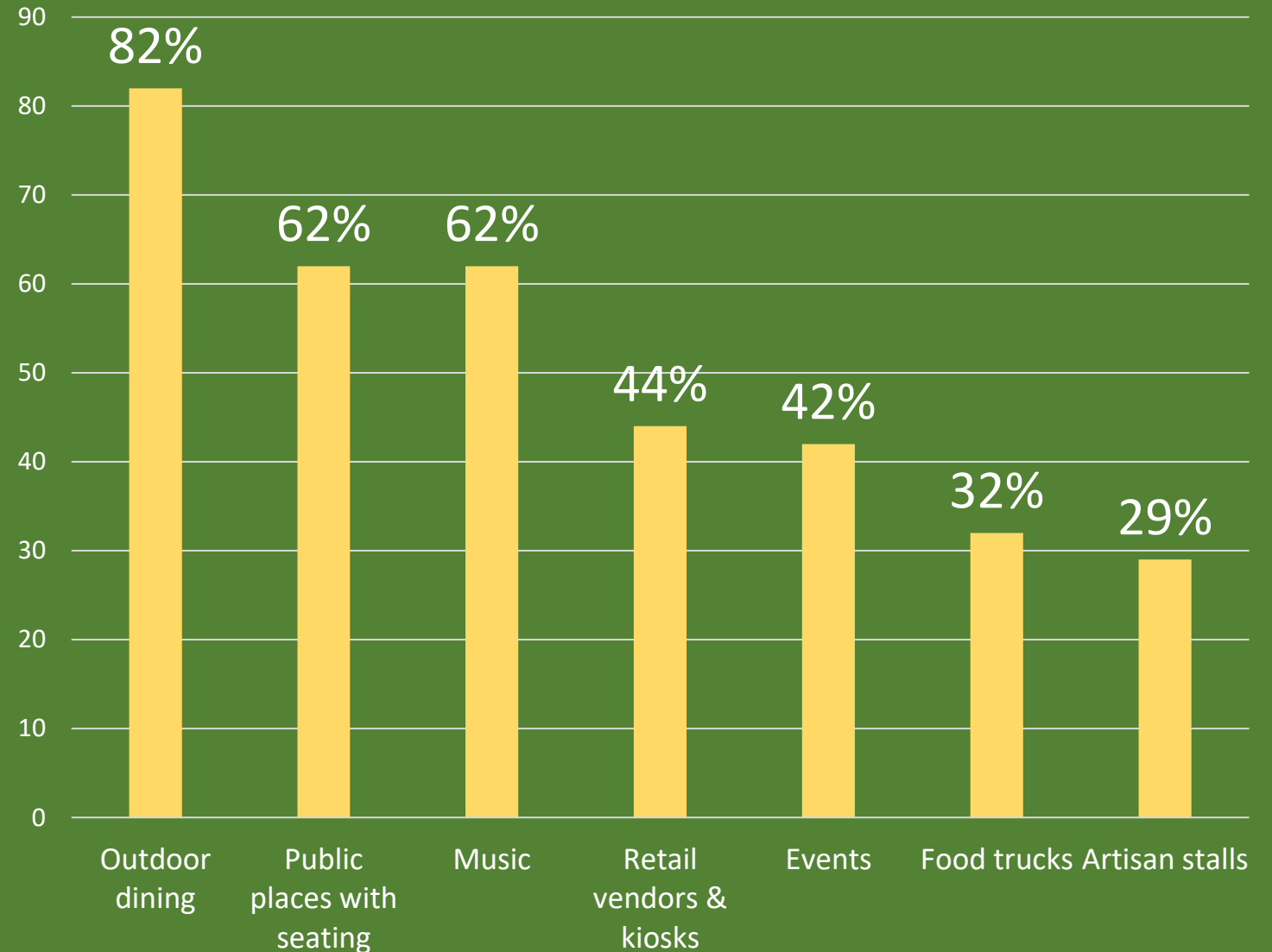
Online Survey



Outdoor Dining



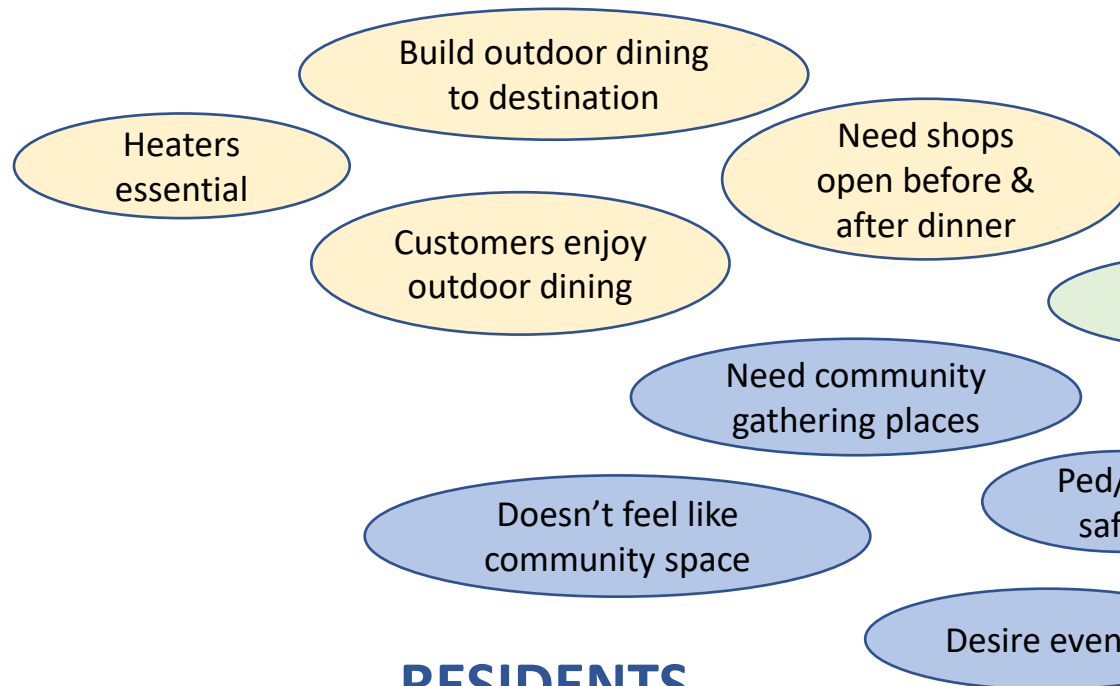
Public Spaces with Seating & Music



Cal Ave – Perspectives on Street Closure

RESTAURANTEURS

“Outdoor dining saved our business”

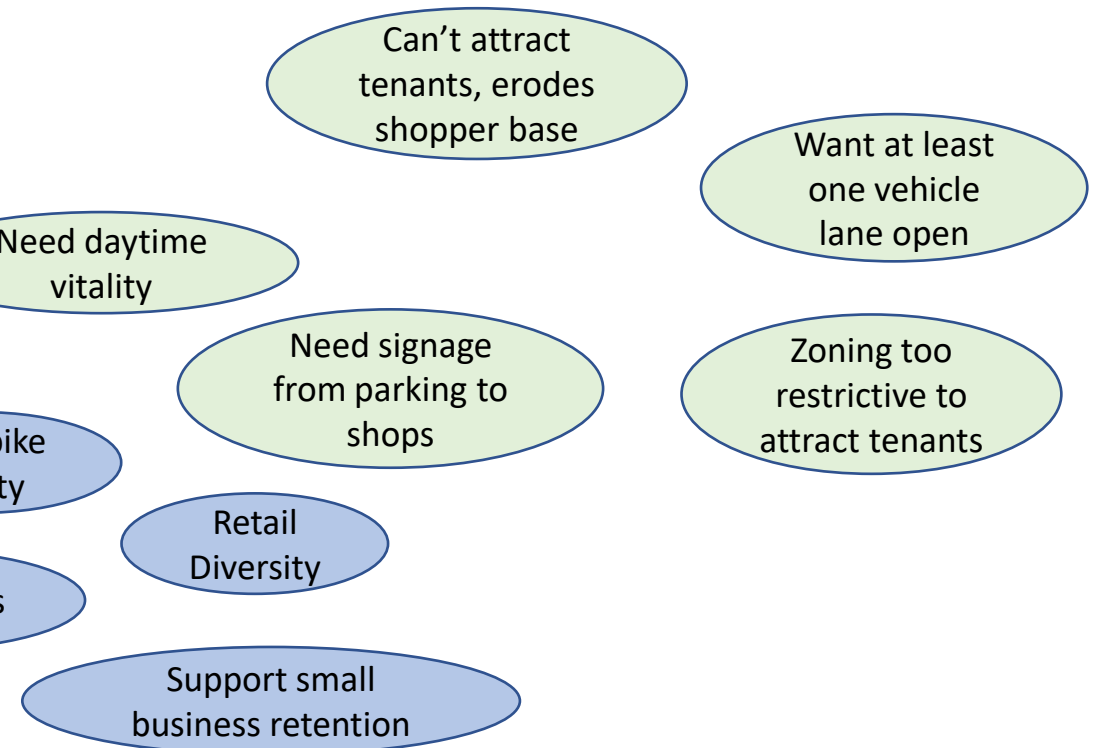


RESIDENTS

“Close street permanently”

RETAILERS

“We're at high risk to further impacts with permanent closure”



Cal Ave Assets



- Historic Main Street
- Walkable
- 90-foot ROW
- Recent streetscape improvements & parking structure

- Farmer's Market
- Higher density & mixed-use
- Regional transit
- Pedestrian connections from parking
- Public art

Cal Ave Challenges



No aesthetics



Vacancies



Retail invisibility



Ped/bike conflicts



Disorganized



Not inviting



Divided



Underutilized

Ramona Street

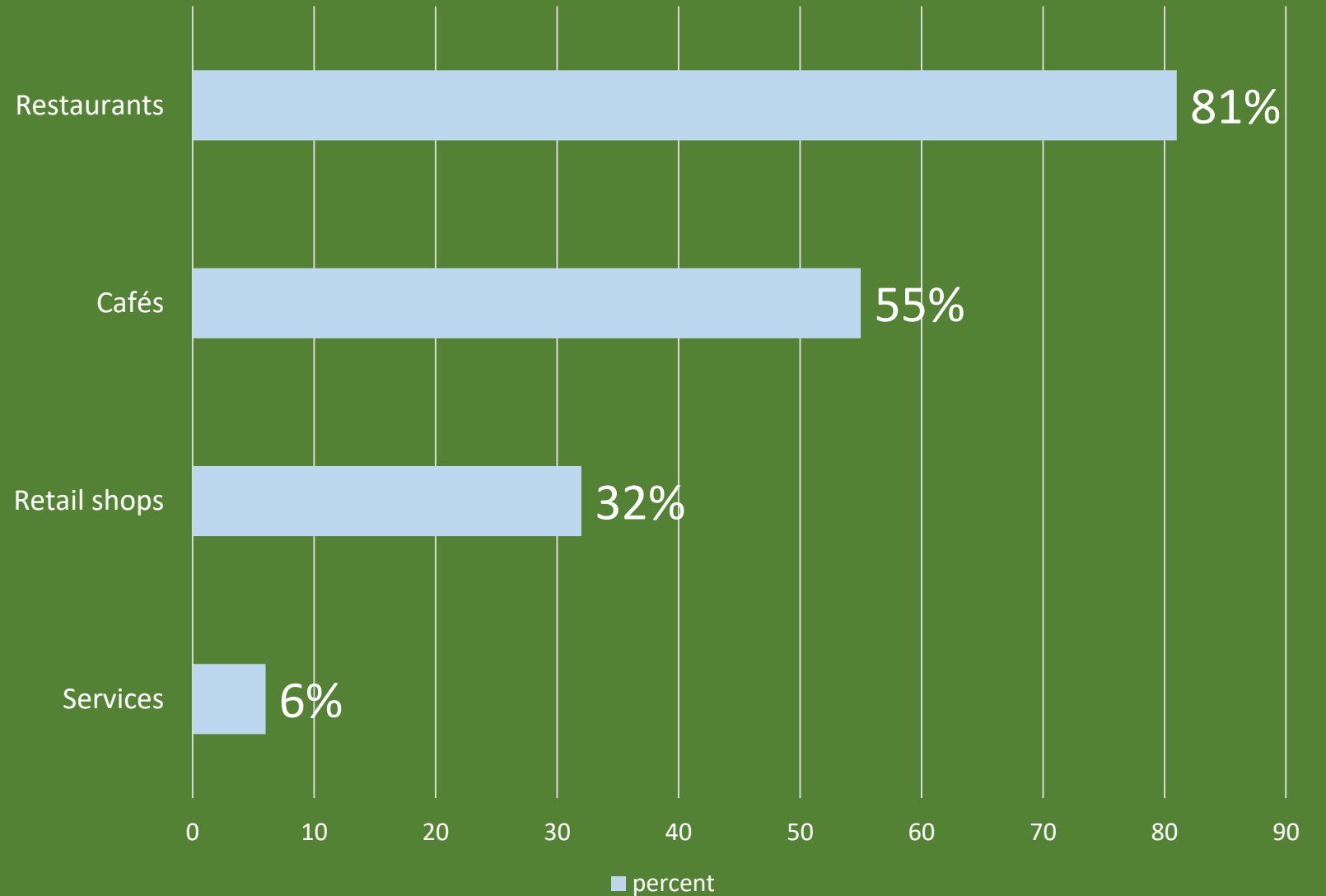
Outreach Findings

What brings you to Ramona Street?

Online Survey



Restaurants

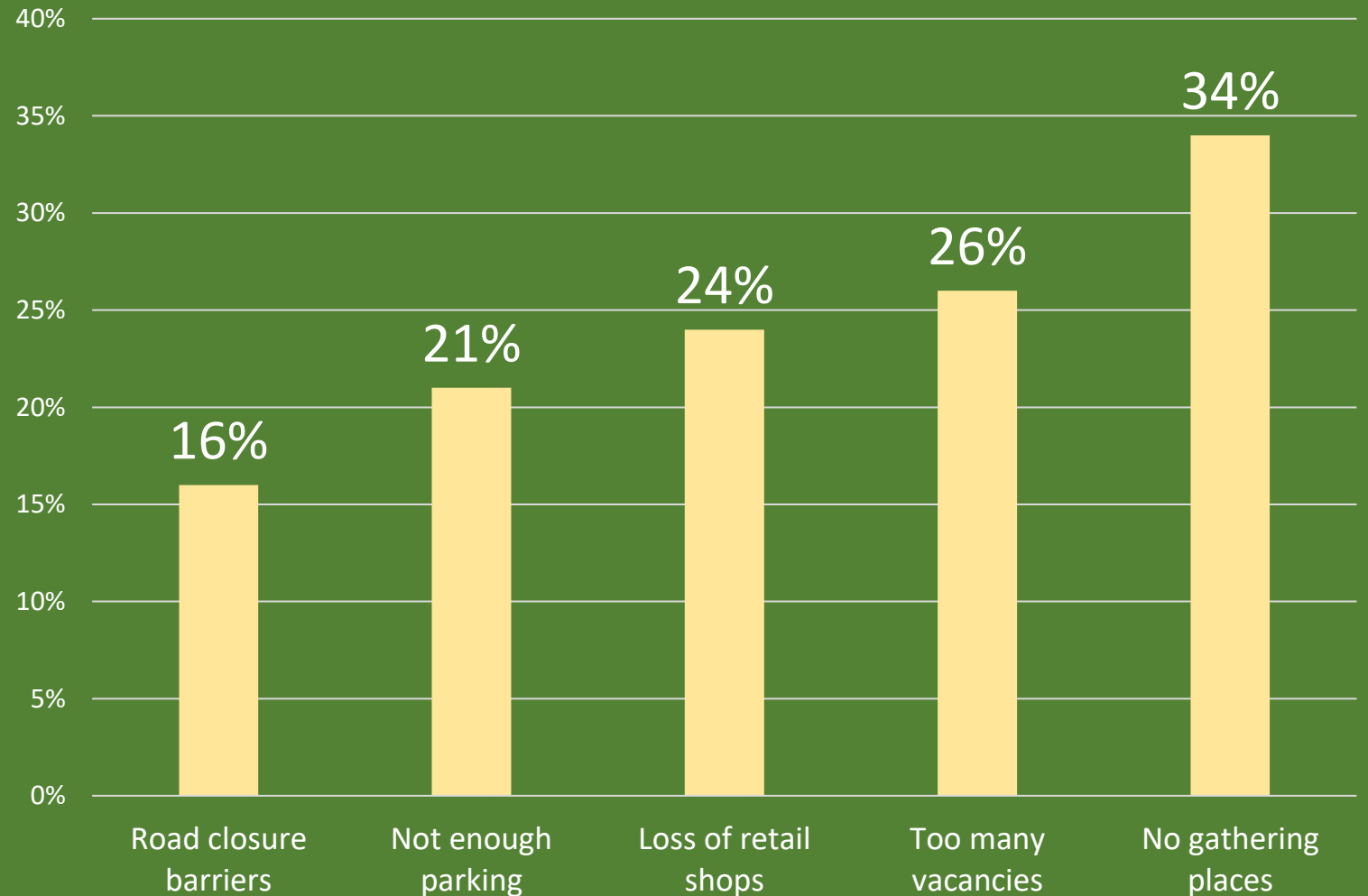


What concerns you about Ramona Street?

Online Survey



No gathering places

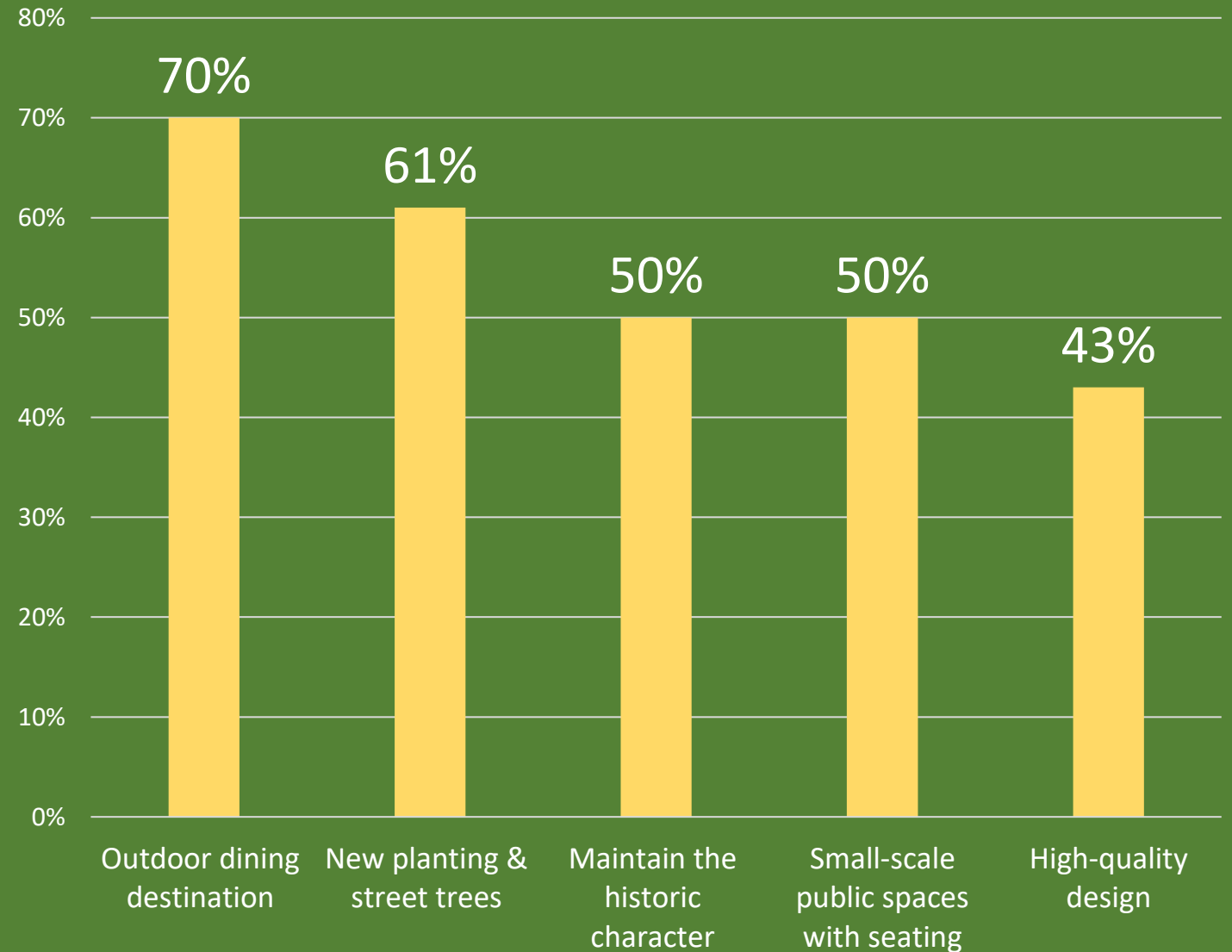


What would you like to see on Ramona Street?

Online Survey



Outdoor Dining Destination



Business Owner Perspectives

- Customers love street closure, supports business
- Temporary situation is not visually attractive
- Emergency lane divides street, limits creating public space
- Need aesthetic standards for improvements
- Willing to invest long-term if City commits to permanent street closure



Feedback Ground Rules

Give everyone a chance to contribute

Share by "raising your virtual hand"

When called on unmute yourself

If having a technical problem, contact Ozzy Arce at
Ozzy.Arce@CityofPaloAlto.org

Cal Ave & Ramona Street Feedback

Community Outreach

- Did we capture the high-priority opportunities and concerns?
- Any gaps?

Two Project Approach

Initiating immediate and near-term change to Cal Ave

Demonstration
Projects

Upcoming Study
as directed by
City Council

Demonstration Projects

Install removable bollards

Flexible community spaces

Ground plane public art

Wayfinding and signage

Demonstration Projects – Removable Bollards

Replacing barriers to create safe and inviting public spaces on Cal Ave & Ramona Street



Contemporary removable bollards for Cal Ave



Traditional removable bollards for Ramona Street

Demonstration Projects – Flexible Spaces

Activating public spaces on Cal Ave and Ramona Street



Outdoor living rooms



*Seating for
Individuals and small groups*



Space for events and games

Demonstration Projects – Ground Plane Art

Creating public art on Cal Ave



Commissioned Artists, Community Members and City Staff Mural – Fort Collins, Colorado

Demonstration Projects – Wayfinding & Signage

Communicating walking route information to Cal Ave and Ramona Street destinations



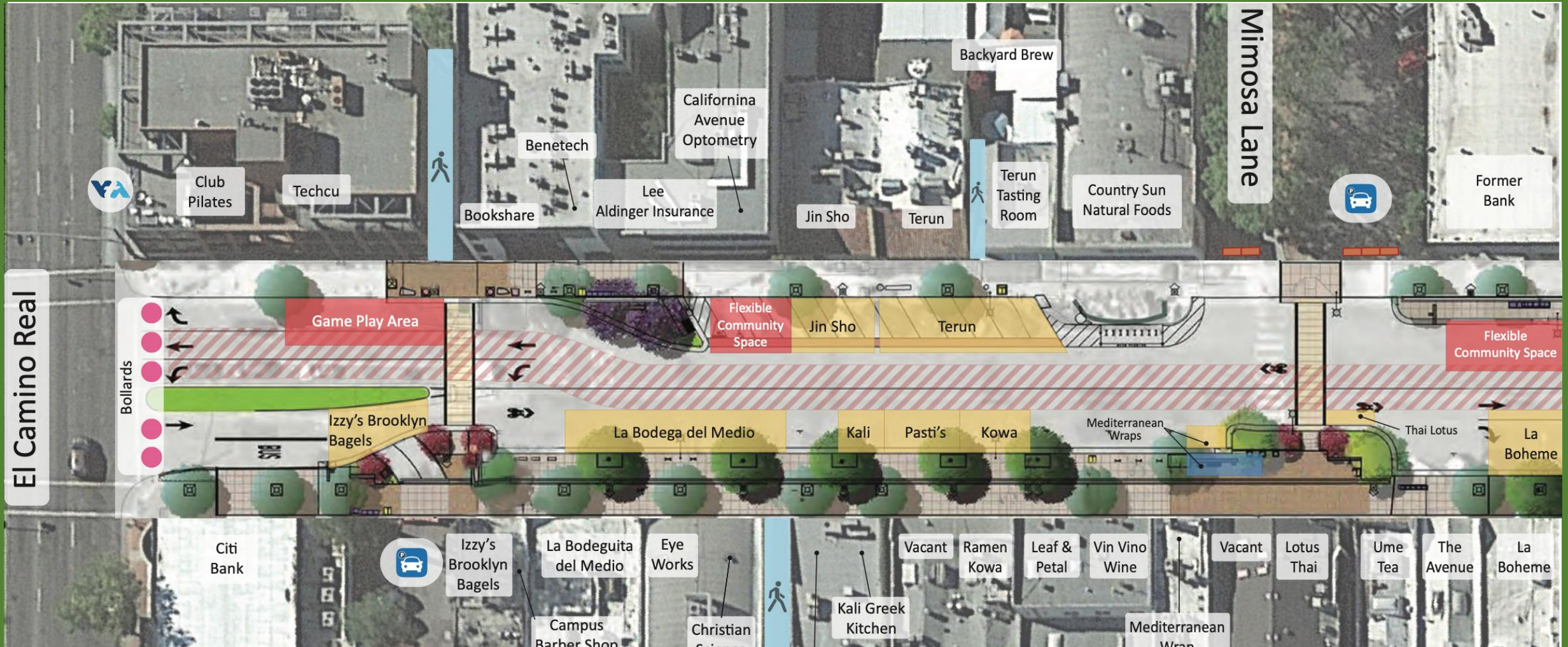
Walking Distance



Directional Signs to Destinations

Cal Ave - Demonstration Project Locations

El Camino Real to Mimosa Lane



Cal Ave - Demonstration Project Locations

Mimosa Lane to Birch Street



Ramona Street - Demonstration Project Locations

University Avenue to Hamilton Avenue



Upcoming Study Topics

Upcoming Study Topics

Alternatives Analysis & Implementation Plan

- Streetscape design & amenities
- Circulation
- Design guidelines for private outdoor dining and public areas
- Fee/pricing for use of Right-of-Way
- Parking strategies
- Historic resources
- Signage
- Legislative options
- Equity & accessibility
- Partnership building

Cal Avenue & Ramona Street Feedback

Demonstration Projects

- Feedback on the demonstration projects?
- Thoughts on the proposed locations?
- Feedback on additional locations for demonstration projects?

Upcoming Studies

- What are the highest priority topics for City Council consideration?

Next Steps

1. Implement demonstration projects this summer!
2. Release the Scope of Work/RFP for the Alternatives Analysis study, as directed by Council
3. Council approval of contract for the Alternatives Analysis study once a preferred consultant is identified

For More Information

Project Website: CityofPaloAlto.org/CarFreeStreets

Project Contact: Ozzy Arce, Senior Transportation Planner
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