

# WHY THE CURVE?

Since before Buellton became a city in 1993, residents have voiced their desire for the town to preserve its rural small town character.

When the City of Buellton adopted its *2025 General Plan* it stated that its primary goal was "preserving the rural small town character of the City." Another goal was to "revitalize the Avenue (of Flags) as an identifiable downtown, the physical and social center of Buellton, and an inviting place for visitors and residents alike."

Shortly after the City developed and adopted *Community Design Guidelines* and formed a Redevelopment Agency. Concurrently, the *Buellton Improvement Project* was established with the "overriding goal to eliminate blighting influences and promote revitalization."

In 2002 the City contracted with the *California Association for Local Economic Development* (CALED) to "provide the community with advice on options for further developing local economic vitality." Among its recommendations was to "invest in obtaining consensus on the vision for the Avenue of Flags."

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After studying the above mentioned reports and plans, Peggy, Judi and Dan focused on how best to achieve those stated goals, which led them to realize to do so required:

- reducing the number of lanes and calming traffic on the Avenue of Flags;
- increasing parking opportunities and pedestrian safety;
- creating an identifiable downtown with a "village" atmosphere that includes an intimate streetscape for "gathering, shopping and strolling;"
- a destination focus that includes civic, commercial and residential uses;
- a passive park and walking/biking trails.

They spent one-year developing and refining their plan after many conversations with elected officials, business leaders, and local citizens.

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Key elements of the Brierton/Brierton/Stauffer plan include:



**Reducing the roadway to two (2) curving lanes to calm traffic, promote a pedestrian-friendly downtown, and make better use of current medians and right-of-ways.**

*"As long as the Avenue remains highway-scale, rather than human-scale, the Avenue will never have an intimate feel that encourages shopping, strolling and serves as a community gathering place," Judi Stauffer*

- Sell, trade or repurpose city-owned property for new commercial lots, public parking lots, a Town Square complex, green belts, and two roundabouts to calm traffic and create an entrance to the downtown shopping district.**

*"The two already re-landscaped medians have not resulted in the "usable community space" that was envisioned as space to hold community events for several reasons. For one thing, they are narrow and isolated. For another, they are difficult to access safely without crosswalks. It has also proven to be difficult to create a community focus that attracts residents and visitors to the Avenue of Flags while the City of Buellton has been reluctant to make an investment on the Avenue. Peggy Brierton*

*"Our plan calls for a Town Square complex that could include a new Library/Life-Long Learning Center, Community Art Gallery and meeting rooms as well as moving the Post Office to the downtown. The type of focus the City creates on the Avenue will be an influencing factor for the kinds of private enterprises that are attracted to the downtown area." Judi Stauffer*

*"While new Libraries and reconfiguring roadways can be expensive, the City is a major land owner in the downtown area by virtue of the existing roadways and medians. Selling, trading or repurposing this city owned land can substantially influence revitalization and reduce the cost of implementing the plan. It can also create more parking options that are absolutely necessary to the downtown district's success as a shopping area and create more useable green belts for events." Dan Brierton*

- Create a passive park at the site of the former Buellton Zoo and along Zaca Creek with bike/walk trails.**

*"The bike/walk trails could extend to Riverview Park and the Santa Ynez Botanic Gardens creating an off-road alternative transportation route from neighborhoods on the southwest side of town to the downtown area." Peggy Brierton*

- Add two new street east of the Avenue of Flags.**

*"By broadening the downtown business district more street frontage would be added to commercial properties. The addition of these two new streets would also make the passive park along Zaca Creek an integral part of the downtown district and offer more opportunities*

*to hold community events such as a Farmer's Market, arts/crafts markets, etc. It would also create a "natural" parade route for civic functions."* Judi Stauffer



**Establish a pedestrian bridge over Hwy. 101.**

*"This would create a safe alternative route that connects the east side neighborhoods of Buellton to the downtown area as well as schools. It would also create a safe walking route for visitors staying at the hotels along McMurray Road, thereby eliminating some car traffic."*

Peggy Brierton