

MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA
SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING
EL MAR DRIVE PROJECT DESIGN
September 22, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Chris Vincent called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Also present via teleconference were Vice Mayor Alfred “Buz” Oldaker, Commissioner Edmund Malkoon, Commissioner Elliot Sokolow, Commissioner Randy Strauss, Town Manager Bill Vance, Assistant to the Town Manager Neysa Herrera, Municipal Services Director Ken Rubach, Development Services Director Linda Connors, Jay Flynn, Town Engineer, Human Resources Manager Lisa Slagle, Special Projects Coordinator Debbie Hime, Jeff Suiter, EDSA, Public Information Officer Steve d’Oliveira, and Town Clerk Tedra Allen.

At this time Mayor Vincent opened public comment.

Town Clerk Tedra Allen read the following public comments:

- Carolann Sharkey, resident, requested that the project’s bike lane be constructed on the median side in order to separate cyclists from pedestrians
- Tracey Plunkett, resident, stated that she supported Option 3, which includes two lanes of traffic; she was not in favor of separate bike lanes or a wider median
- Tom Mulroy, resident, was in favor of one lane in each direction
- Dan and Vivian Darnell, residents, spoke in favor of one lane in each direction, and noted that 71% of respondents to a recent online survey also supported this option
- Barbara Cole, resident, opposed many of the components proposed in Plan B, and felt there should be a moratorium on further design offerings until Jarvis Hall has reopened and members of the public may speak in person
- Peggy Mohler, resident, recommended that El Mar Drive continue to include two lanes and that bicycles share the roadway with cars
- Resident, stated there should be stop signs at all beach portals, including the El Prado portal, as well as bike lanes and a 15 mile per hour speed limit in the subject area
- Jim Humphrey, resident, expressed concern with deliveries to commercial businesses, hotels, and condominiums on El Mar Drive, and proposed four lanes and pull-off areas along the length of the roadway
- Jeff Yocom, resident, spoke in favor of Option 2, with one traffic lane and bike and pedestrian lanes, and recommended a 15 mile per hour speed limit with stop signs at all intersections, including beach portals

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

- Tom Burtness, regular visitor, felt the current proposals are too simplistic; he suggested a 10 ft. lane in each direction with 100% tree canopy and a multi-use path, as well as dog park and splash pad segments
- Stuart Dodd, resident, requested that the project include two lanes without a bike lane and with improved drainage, backout parking, swale restoration, and a wider sidewalk with a pedestrian buffer
- Megan P. Slade, resident, proposed center median pull-outs for unloading, sidewalk barriers and delineators, street trees, and center median landscaping; she asked that drainage issues near the Oriana Condominium be addressed
- Bill Smith, resident, recommended inclusion of the widths of the existing sidewalk and median in the designs, and felt wider bike lanes could be shared with moving vehicles to move around parked delivery vehicles
- Hughes Guenette, resident, stated that he and other Oriana residents were in favor of Option 2
- Sally Musser, resident, requested that the El Mar median remain as is, and that sidewalks be improved with colored pavers
- Ryan Hanrahan, resident, recommended improving the condition of sidewalks and swales and enhancing the landscape median instead of providing a dedicated bike lane; he felt the roadway should maintain its existing footprint
- Penny Dodd, resident, requested that the design keep two traffic lanes on either side of the median and that the median be maintained as well, with no dedicated bike lane
- Kevin J. Mahoney, resident, opposed any changes to the El Mar median, recommended sidewalk improvements, and did not feel dedicated bike lanes were necessary
- Margaret and Andrew Winiarczyk, residents, recommended keeping El Mar Drive as green and parking-free as possible
- Rita Lippman, resident, asked that the median be maintained at full size, and advised against four lanes of traffic
- Karen Blake, resident, proposed angled parking so cyclists can be seen by drivers exiting backout parking
- Joan, Leisure Mar Condo, resident, felt El Mar Drive should be left as is, with the focus instead on upgrades to sidewalks, lighting, drainage, and swales; she did not want the median changed, and recommended lowering traffic speeds
- Cynthia Mattia, resident, questioned the number of bicycle/pedestrian/vehicular accidents occurring on El Mar Drive and was not in favor of the “road diet” concept; she was in favor of sidewalk/curb, drainage, and lighting improvements

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

- Bill McGarrity, resident, preferred to retain the current design of El Mar Drive with improvements to swales, drainage, pavement, and sidewalks, and additional lighting and landscaping
- Arthur Franczak, resident, spoke in favor of green space
- Janet and Wayne Thompson, residents, asked that the ocean view from El Mar Drive be preserved, felt vehicle pull-outs should be at least 100 ft. from stop signs, and suggested the second lane be used to increase sidewalk space and add a bike lane
- Diana Kugler, resident, recommended maintaining two traffic lanes in each direction, with the lane closest to the median open for mixed use; she also spoke in favor of improved sidewalks, lighting, drainage, swales, and traffic calming devices
- Bridget Brandt, resident, felt lighting should be added to residential streets
- John Bouton, Windjammer, recommended support of Option 1
- Paul Novak, High Noon Resort, El Mar should be two full lanes north and south

The following individuals also provided public comment:

- A resident, proposed leaving the El Mar Drive design primarily “as is,” making only repairs and omitting dedicated bike lanes altogether
- Paul Novak, High Noon Resort, did not feel a bike lane was needed, but spoke in favor of wider sidewalks, maintaining two lanes in each direction, and maintaining the full median
- Cristie Furth, resident, suggested that the existing 5 ft. sidewalk, curbing, and swale be repaired, and that the existing median be preserved

With no other individuals wishing to speak, Mayor Vincent closed public comment.

The Commission took a brief recess from 7:39 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

Mayor Vincent emphasized that no vote will be taken at tonight’s meeting. He recognized the work provided by Town consultant EDSA as well as by Town Engineer Jay Flynn on this project, as well as the significant volume of public input.

Mayor Vincent noted that the individuals who live along El Mar Drive and its adjacent neighborhoods will be the most affected by the proposed project. The Commission has met with these and other stakeholders, and requested that the design team address their concerns. EDSA has come back with three options that meet all required professional standards and guidelines governing the Town’s roadways.

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

Jeff Suiter, representing EDSA, recalled that the design scope of the project's request for proposal (RFP) included the following:

- Improved drainage
- Vehicular pavement enhancement
- Pedestrian/sidewalk enhancements
- Pedestrian/vehicular lighting
- Landscape improvements throughout the corridor

Other opportunities for which funding may or may not be available included preparation for the possible undergrounding of utilities.

Since the last presentation before the Commission, EDSA has held additional meetings with residents, Commissioners, stakeholders, and others. Based on feedback from these parties, they have developed three options:

- Previous "one-way" plan that maximized median green space
- Alternate plan with options for hard surface placement
- Four-lane plan

Mr. Suiter explained that the project is required to meet a number of design standards and Codes, including Florida Statute Chapter 316.10.3, which prohibits any promotion of pedestrians walking in a roadway.

At present, El Mar Drive has an 80 ft. right-of-way, much of which is governed by an inter-local agreement with Broward County. There are 5 ft. sidewalks on either side of the road and two traffic lanes in either direction, with a total of 25 ft. of paved surface. The average width of the median is approximately 20 ft. Under current Code, a 6 ft. clear sidewalk is required by Broward County standards.

Because over 80% of El Mar Drive includes backout parking, which is now a grandfathered use, State Statutes require a "clear" or "recovery zone" of 6 ft. that can serve as a gutter or a bike lane. When the two 10 ft. lanes are added back into this equation, the result is a 9 ft. median, which is significantly smaller than the current median.

Mr. Suiter further explained that the clear or recovery zone also improves safety for pedestrians. Because most of the roadway does not allow for curb-and-gutter design,

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

the design team cannot promote placing a bicycle lane on the far side of the lane(s), as this would offer no protection to pedestrians.

Mr. Suiter showed visuals of the three options, explaining that the team was asked to decide whether to create a pedestrian-friendly or a more vehicle-oriented design. El Mar Drive is classified within Broward County as a minor collector road.

Option 1 includes the following:

- Maximum median of 22 ft.
- Pull-outs in median with 16 ft. width
- 12 ft. travel lanes
- Clear recovery zone/bike lane of 6 ft., including a 2 ft. valley gutter and 4 ft. lane
- 9 ft. sidewalk, including existing Florida Power and Light (FPL) poles

Option 2:

- Reduce median to 18 ft. to offset allocation of the clear recovery zone
- 8 ft. bicycle lane

Option 3:

- 8 ft. sidewalk with FPL poles
- Clear 6 ft. recovery zone on either side for backout parking
- Two 10 ft. travel lanes in either direction
- 8 ft. median

Mr. Suiter reviewed additional details of the three options, noting that EDSA has worked with businesses and owners along El Mar Drive to identify the best possible locations for pull-outs for delivery trucks. If the Town selects Options 1 or 2, which have one lane in either direction, the pull-outs would only accommodate smaller delivery trucks. The two-lane option would continue to operate similarly to how the roadway works today.

Additional study may be needed to identify the commercial areas that are served by tractor-trailers. The team has identified a total of 19 pull-outs, which constitute less than 10% of the overall length of El Mar Drive.

Mr. Suiter noted that some existing parallel parking spaces have been identified alongside businesses on El Mar Drive. He pointed out that there is a public parking lot to the north of the roadway, where beachgoers and others may park. The areas south and north of Commercial Boulevard have typically been used as delivery areas for

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

businesses on El Mar Drive. Because of this, many delivery trucks have to move their goods a long way from where they have parked, which requires the trucks to be parked for significant time. Some businesses in these areas have suggested that a consolidated commercial zone be established for these trucks.

While there has been interest from residents in placing sidewalks next to the median to rather than next to residents/businesses, Mr. Suiter reiterated that Broward County Code requires a safe path for pedestrians on the roadway's exteriors. The design cannot promote jaywalking of pedestrians to an interior sidewalk, nor can it legally support omission of a clear recovery zone.

Mr. Suiter reiterated that EDSA recommends Option 1, which has one lane, for the following reasons:

- It promotes and preserves green space through the existing median
- It offers greater pedestrian safety

Mayor Vincent observed that all three options follow required design and industry standards, public safety needs, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, while also addressing the concerns of residents and stakeholders. He emphasized that compromise will be a part of any option selected. The Town also has a fourth option of not moving forward with the project and making no changes.

Town Manager Bill Vance noted that the condition of sidewalks on El Mar Drive will be addressed, as they may contribute to pedestrian activity in the street.

Commissioner Sokolow asked how much improvement to El Mar Drive would be necessary to reach the threshold at which it must be brought fully up to current Code. Town Engineer Jay Flynn estimated that making drainage improvements would keep the roadway beneath the percentage triggering a full upgrade. Other changes, such as installation of turtle lighting and undergrounding of utilities, would likely reach the 50% threshold at which an upgrade would be required.

Commissioner Sokolow also addressed comments made in recent weeks, stating that there are no plans to "pave the median" or "turn El Mar Drive into a parking lot." He also felt it is likely that Option 1 in particular would provide more rather than less green space along the roadway. He concluded that almost all of the public providing input expressed interest in wider sidewalks, improved drainage and lighting, and preservation of the median.

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

Mayor Vincent emphasized that the greatest common denominator among public feedback has been substantial preservation of the median, which limits the number of design options.

Commissioner Malkoon asked if bike lanes are necessary to the project. Mr. Suiter replied that these are not required: the clear recovery zone may double as a bike lane, but would not be designated as such. Bikes would be able to continue to commingle with traffic on the road, and a stripe would still be used to mark the clear recovery zone.

Town Engineer Flynn further addressed Commissioner Sokolow's concern regarding the extent of changes, pointing out that sidewalks would need to have at least 6 ft. clearance according to the standard. The replacement of sidewalks would contribute to the design of the full roadway.

Commissioner Malkoon also requested additional information on the F curb. Town Engineer Flynn explained that this piece of curbing is 6 in. wide and 6 in. tall, with an 18 in. gutter to channel drainage water to the catch basin. This slows deterioration of the roadway.

Commissioner Malkoon asked if redevelopment of sites along El Mar Drive, such as the former Holiday Inn/FDG site, would require those properties to build to the standard set for the roadway. Development Services Director Linda Connors confirmed this.

Town Manager Vance noted that there has been speculation that lack of a bike lane would disqualify the Town from certain investments of Broward County transportation surtax dollars. He emphasized that this is not the case.

Vice Mayor Oldaker also addressed curbing on the median, asking if it is possible to proceed without curbs so the median is similar to swales. Town Engineer Flynn advised that he would not recommend this, as Code currently requires curbing adjacent to landscaping even in parking lots. The median constitutes approximately one mile of roadway with landscaping that would be protected by a curb.

Commissioner Strauss asked if the project team has considered projected speed limits for the three options. Mr. Suiter stated that the team's traffic engineer has not yet made these projections. He confirmed that there are minimum and maximum parameters for the proposed designs, and that traffic calming measures are also possible.

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

Captain Tom Palmer of the Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) addressed the suggestion that the speed limit on El Mar Drive be limited to 15 miles per hour, advising that this is not an option under Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) rules. Very low speeds such as this are reserved for special hazards, such as school zones. The current speed limit on El Mar Drive is 25 miles per hour.

Mayor Vincent requested clarification of how changes in density to vacant properties on El Mar Drive might affect their ability to redevelop as legal nonconforming uses. Development Services Director Connors replied that while she could not speak to their redevelopment at this time, these sites would be permitted 25 units per acre for condominiums or apartments and 50 units per acre for hotels, which would likely contribute to a reduction in vehicular traffic to and from the properties.

Vice Mayor Oldaker asked how the Town might initiate a request for speed bumps, pointing out that public approval of these calming measures is required. Town Engineer Flynn explained that rather than speed bumps, a more likely option would be tabletop intersections at stop conditions.

Commissioner Strauss noted that a number of survey respondents did not live or work on El Mar Drive, and asked if it would be possible to consider making this distinction when taking survey results into account. Special Projects Coordinator Debbie Hime recalled that the survey did not ask respondents to provide address or residency information.

Mayor Vincent asked how much of the 8 ft. median proposed in Option 3 could be widened while retaining two travel lanes. Mr. Suiter reiterated that a 7.5 ft. sidewalk is required in order to provide at least 6 ft. clearance; narrowing this distance and making changes to the curbing might gain another 2 ft. maximum for the median.

Mayor Vincent advised that until Jarvis Hall has been reopened for public meetings and more individuals can provide input, no decision would be made by the Commission on the options presented tonight. Vice Mayor Oldaker agreed that there is no need to rush toward a decision, and the Commissioners should review the options and hear more from the community.

Commissioner Strauss asked if there are any time constraints that might affect the project, particularly with regard to the availability of Broward County surtax funding.

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Project
September 22, 2020

Town Manager Vance replied that the Town is successfully positioned to receive \$2 million in surtax funding for the project; however, if there is significant delay, there is currently no inter-local agreement guaranteeing the Town use of surtax funds.

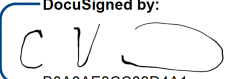
Commissioner Sokolow recommended scheduling further public input after October 1, 2020, after the Governor's Emergency Order prohibiting public meetings has expired. Mayor Vincent noted, however, that it is possible the County may act to take restrictive action if the Governor's Order is lifted. Town Attorney Susan Trevarthen stated that at present, it is not known what action may be taken at what level; in any case, the Town will have the ability to make some choice on how to proceed.

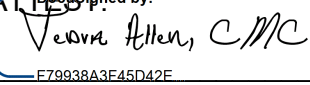
Town Clerk Allen read the following public comment:

- Paul Novak, resident, recommended that the roadway retain two full lanes; a bike lane is unnecessary; sidewalks should be improved and widened to discourage foot traffic in the roadway; parking should not be permitted on the sides of the median

Mayor Vincent emphasized again the importance of selecting one of the three options presented at tonight's meeting, as well as the requirement to bring construction up to Code if a certain threshold is reached. Town Engineer Flynn advised that full sidewalk repairs alone would require bringing this feature up to Code, which would mean widening the sidewalks to 7.5 ft. This, in turn, could place the sidewalk too close to the roadway for industry standards.

With no other business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

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Mayor Chris Vincent

ATTEST:
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Town Clerk Tedra Allen

10/19/2020

Date

Public Comment
Special Town Commission Meeting
El Mar Drive Design
September 22, 2020

Carolann Sharkey, resident

Please consider putting the bike lane on the median side in order to:

1. Separate the wheels from walkers
2. It would be easier to see the bikers when Pulling a car out. Some of the bikers really move fast.
3. Pedestrians would also be safer from walking out into the bike lane

Tracey Plunkett, resident

First, thank you all for your time and commitment to researching this very important project to improve our fabulous town. After having reviewed all of the design concepts, I am most inclined to support Study Condition #3 with two lanes of traffic. I believe reducing to one lane would be very obstructive and cause El Mar Drive to feel cramped. I actually do NOT feel we need a bike lane down El Mar Drive. Cyclists take a full lane anyway, and they will continue to do so through town. I would prefer that the space designated for the bike lane proposed in Option #3 be used to widen the sidewalk further (or some combination of an extended sidewalk and a buffer between back-out parking). I don't feel the necessity to widen the median any more than is designated in Option #3 currently as it is adequate to provide vegetation, shade and a place for people to walk their dogs. With no other use for the median, I prefer any extra space be allocated to giving our sidewalks as much real estate as possible. Two full lanes of traffic and a generous sidewalk gives the Town everything it needs, including the ability to allow for event parking on the street in the future.

In reality, for the most part, El Mar does function well in its current basic design. With enhanced, wider and uniform sidewalks, back-out parking definitions and addition of lighting and proper curbs/drainage, I think the use and aesthetic of El Mar Drive can reach its full potential.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address and partake in this discussion

Tom Mulroy – Plunge Beach Resort

I am 100% for one lane in each direction. It would drastically change El Mar to make it more intimate and walkable, with more of a neighborhood, Residential feel to a what is a commercial corridor. That is exactly what this Town is about. Also should be safer for the street walkers.

Dan & Vivian Darnell - Residents

Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and Commissioners:

By this time, I'm sure you have gotten lots of comments on the El Mar redesign. We are very much in favor of the 1-lane each way approach. We think it is excellent for most of the users and about as good a compromise as you will ever get. You probably already know that many people walk or jog in the street on El Mar instead of the sidewalk. The exercisers feel safer in the road than on the sidewalk and the bicyclists don't feel safe at all as they don't have any choice other than to contend with cars. If you keep the 4-lane approach, you won't be able to do much to help either the walkers, exercisers, or bicyclists. You won't be able to have nice, wide sidewalks with attractive and sun screening landscaping. And, you won't have a bike lane to make both drivers and bicyclists happy. The hotels/motels and restaurants should get a say, but they shouldn't have a veto right over everyone else.

1) The negative feedback is normal as it is always the people who don't like something that speak up. But, the positive people have already spoken in the EDSA survey with almost 250 responses:

71% support one lane of traffic each way

84% support a dedicated bike lane

61% use El Mar primarily for walking or jogging

2) If you add a 2nd traffic lane, you have to take away 24 feet of sidewalk, bike lane, and/or landscaping which residents have overwhelmingly said they want.

3) Change is hard and no one likes to do it. We like the way we have always done things, so the fact that the hotels/motels don't like it was very predictable. The design allows for deliveries and the exact location of the delivery cutouts will be determined by the hotels/motels. While they won't like it at first, after a few months, everyone will have figured it out and things will be normal again.

Not only that, if the commissioners ask for a 4 lane El Mar, then that sends EDSA back to the drawing board to almost start from scratch, delaying the project for months, and ignoring what the residents have clearly said they want.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE EDSA 1-LANE DESIGN FOR EL MAR.

Barbara Cole, resident

Mayor, Commissioners-

After seeing the updated design for Plan A including the missing pullouts from the original design shows that Cristie Furth was correct in pointing that out.

Unfortunately, it is just a small refinement that still does not lend enough credence to the overall issues that still need to be addressed before this commission advises on how to proceed.

The removal of in the update of 'pedestrian - friendly ' from Plan A but leaving in ' vehicular- circulation' for Plan B still tips the scales by using these narratives as is often seen with ballot referendums resulting in outcomes based on fear.

Plan B still shows an 8 foot median with the rest of the unwanted components the stakeholders do not want.

Why would any narrowing of the median be in play? Our last failed design included the walkway down the center of the median which no one wanted. Not just because no one would use it but that it would take away from the grassy medians. To scale back the medians from each side is just doing the same damage!

What it comes down to is there needs to be a Plan C offered up showing 2 lanes, same size median, wider sidewalk, no bike lane etc...

El Mar Drive is a Town owned street situated in a neighborhood and it should be treated as such- just as any other neighborhood projects are based on the input of those who live there.

A grant for unwanted bike lanes with the 2 million dollar surtax after we walked away from 2 million dollars FDOT was to provide should not ram this project through to begin in April or May!

Moratoriums have been observed in the past and there should be a moratorium put forth until season is here and Jarvis Hall is open for the people to speak directly to the dais once we are in receipt of Plan C.

There is a long and honored history of people coming to Jarvis Hall to speak out on major issues from the height limits, term limits, reinstating the VFD, the downtown pavilion and removal of an administration. El Mar Drive is no different.

To those who tout the old timers vs the newcomers it is my opinion those new to town would welcome the opportunity to have their say as well which is another unique aspect of why LBTS is a Town and not a city.

Commissioners, please consider how you want to be remembered when we look back on what transpired for El Mar Drive.

Thank you,

Peggy Mohler, resident

Please keep El mar two lanes and make what we have beautiful- updated sidewalks, lights, Two lanes. Where families and friends can continue to ride bikes side by side each other and not cramped in a bike path and share the street with the cars.' works the way it is.

new side \walks - new lights - new drains and repave the road.

Resident

Hoping all is well and wanting to succinctly state my comments sent for the 9/22 meeting below, in order of importance (to me).

1. Stop signs at each beach portal. I believe the only portal without a stop sign is El Prado, where pedestrians are concealed from traffic by greenery in the median. This portal is where more pedestrians cross El Mar to get to the beach than any other portal.

2. One car lane each way. In the new normal, social distancing is here to stay, and more room for pedestrians is essential.
 3. Bike lane.
 4. 15 mph speed limit. I've seen cars doing in excess of 50 mph in the stretch from El Prado to Washingtonia. A stop sign at El Prado might help that but probably not.
- Thank you for all you do, and I'm excited to see the improvements coming.

Jim Humphrey, resident

Awesome job on the proposals!!!!!!

Personally, I feel Elmar does not merit 2 lanes of traffic. But what concerns me is the daily deliveries to the establishments near commercial, or deliveries to condo's along the way. If there is only one lane, I can see the bike lane being blocked by trucks already. Maybe a couple hundred yards of four lanes either side of Commercial, and dedicated pull off areas along the entire length of Elmar.

Another concern is the 18' for parking. The longest Chevy pick up is 21' 5". the longest Ford pickup is 20' 7". Add a trailer hitch, and these vehicles are well into the sidewalk.

Trust me, I still have scars on my shin to prover this fact.

Please do not eliminate the median. That is what gives Elmar it's charm.

Thank you,

Jeff Yocom, resident

Thank you for putting the time into this initiative, and soliciting feedback. My initial comments on the design were to eliminate all non-essential automotive traffic from El Mar. unless you live or have a business on that road there is really no need to drive on it. Secondly, I know that is not feasible, so I love Option 2, the single lane with bike and pedestrian lanes. May I plead with the committee to also reduce (and enforce) the speed limit to 15 mph? Stop signs at every intersection, especially at the beach portals, would be a great idea too. There are stop signs at many of the portals, but not the big one, El Prado, where many park across the street to go to the beach. I say this only because of all the foot (2 and 4 legged) and bike traffic on the road. Just now, coming home from El Prado park with my dog I almost got run over by not one, but two cars doing at least 40 mph down the street. A great example would be Front Beach Road in Pompano Beach, where traffic gets by and people know they can't put the pedal to the metal. Make it known that the primary use of this road is not driving. Make it road people aren't fearing for their or their dog's lives walking or riding down. We already have the Commercial speedway.

Tom Burtness, resident

Greetings!

I am a Consulting Engineer and I have participated in the planning and engineering of dozens of streetscape projects during my career. LBTS has been my home away from home for the past 60 years having stayed at the Villa Serena and Sandy Shoes at El Mar and El Prado starting when I was 4 years old. To this day, I still miss Murphy burgers and Trott's Corner! I was staying at the Villa Serena when Hurricane Cleo came through in 1964. Nowadays, my wife and I spend about 10 weeks a year in LBTS. I am a runner and I have run the length of El Mar hundreds of times, so I am very familiar with El Mar Drive!

I have been reviewing the proposals for the streetscape project and I have been taken aback by how simplistic and uninspired the initial concepts are. Boring is too mild a word to use to describe them. I thought this was supposed to be an inviting greenspace to enhance the pedestrian and multi-use enjoyment of "Main Street LTBS." These proposals are no different in look or feel from what we now have. The purpose of investing in public infrastructure is to increase private investment to improve real estate values and rentals, boosting the entire economy. What is needed is something bold and inviting, not another plain-jane regular street. The proposed designs won't encourage destination tourism in the least, nor enhance the pedestrian experience leading from the Ocean-side rentals and condos to the Commercial Blvd merchant center.

Here's my suggestion: 4' sidewalk, 4' one-way bike path, 2' valley curb, and one 10' lane in each direction. That leaves 40' of R.O.W. down the center for planting a 100% tree canopy (shade allows for all-day use: El Mar can get very hot between 10 and 4) over a luxuriously planted greenspace with a 12' to 14' wide serpentine multi-use path running the entire length with numerous benches in bump-outs for conversational gatherings, artificial turf activity areas, mini-dog parks, mini playgrounds, and a couple of mini splash parks for kids (of any age!), all warmly illuminated with pedestrian scale decorative lighting for inviting nighttime enjoyment. To get really creative, make the entire lane segment serpentine as well, with wider park-like sections at the portals.

That will transform "Main Street LBTS!"

Thank you for your consideration,

Stuart Dodd, resident

Dear All,

As a former commissioner I realize how difficult it is to even satisfy some of the people some of the time.

Can I ask you please consider the following on El Mar Drive.

- 1) Maintain two full lanes but reduce from 10 feet to 9 feet if you think necessary. El Mar works because of the balance between automobiles, trucks, deliveries, bicycles and pedestrians that insist on walking down the road (Me included!). Please throw out the idea of one lane and a bike lane and throw out the idea we need a 2 foot wide curb on the medium reducing the 20 feet medium down to a small 8 feet wide grass strip with a few small shrubs as we aren't allow anything that passes as a tree.

- 2) The sidewalk (pavement in the U.K.!) looks beautiful and works well in front of the Minto development – there is a good curb edge and the area drains well. This could be the model for any areas on El Mar where there isn't "Back-out parking".
- 3) Where there is back-out parking the swale badly needs restoration and re-sloping for drainage. If the town engineer won't sign off on making the side walk one foot wider and using the saving in lane width to achieve this then just regrade and repair as a maintenance issue. Jay doesn't have to sign off on bringing up to new D.O.T. standards as we are only repairing existing. We lost that extra foot with the huge FPL poles making the side walk very narrow in places. If Jay could sign off on an extra foot on the sidewalk and moving the road edge marking to create a 4 foot buffer between pedestrians and cars that would be ideal. If he can't then just maintain the existing and put the money in the town coffers for other projects.

Megan P. Slade, Oriana at Lauderdale by the Sea

Good Afternoon –

Having been asked to share some of our experiences as the only property that sits adjacent to the one lane section of El Mar Drive, I offer the following:

- Appreciating the center medians would have pull offs for stopping/unloading in your earlier design would be most useful as long as they account for the size of the tractor trailer trucks for food & beverage deliveries. Our proximity to the Square certainly has created quite a many parking issues with these delivery vehicles as some tend to park on the Oriana side, rolling over the plant material that is lining the street, up onto the sidewalk, blocking the flow of traffic, etc. Also, would that include a more prevalent role for the parking enforcement to ensure these are only being used for the loading/unloading purposes at least during business hours ??
- Sidewalk barriers / delineators: Now, while I do not believe establishing barrier designs as one would do for a concert is feasible nor would it be attractive for the Town, providing some sort of greater separation / barrier from edge of road would be beneficial for pedestrian traffic. Having witnessed vehicles drive around along the inside, over the rocks/plants, extremely close to the sidewalk is cause for alarm. The one saving grace for Oriana and an idea that warrants consideration is sidewalk street trees. These optically large deterrents truly help to keep vehicles in the one lane more often than not. I know you have designs for a v-curb in this area but we do not find that to be a major deterrent for escaping the designated lane.
- We are quite sure you have wonderful design plans for the center median landscaping; One we would hope would include the installation of much better Florida grade 1 trees, certainly better than the poorly structured Green Buttonwoods that currently front Oriana. It would be wonderful to see some Gumbo Limbos (both trunk and canopy have positive visual aesthetics as well as being wind & salt tolerant) planted as the structure of that tree canopy would positively affect better structural growth as well as canopy balance for the Oak sidewalk trees in front of Oriana. Not to mention the Gumbo is often referred to as the Tourist Tree; a little kitschy but nonetheless. 😊 And can the Town please budget to hire certified tree contractors (Certified Arborist would be nice) to maintain the trees from inception so that the structure of the trees and the balance of the canopies is respected.

The most important comment & concern would be that of drainage. I will be reaching out to Ken under separate cover for a meeting, however, we currently have a very serious drainage issue at Oriana that requires relief. Granted, the slope down from crown to the Condo lobby front doors is egregious (can't believe that got through for a CO on the build) however, the Town also appears to have installed a curb* (or permitted one to be installed), but only on the east side of the median which only further promotes that all of the roadway water travels down to the Oriana front doors; the height of the grassy median in our most southern part of the Oriana corridor is not helping either. *Important to note that the curbing is included in both of the median designs currently under review.

Last week, I met with Mark Dachsteiner (Baxter & Woodman) re: any thoughts or plans yet to the drainage considerations. While just by eye sight he could recognize that we do have issues with water movement away from the property & buildings, he stated that the drainage portion of the El Mar Project is still pending final conceptual selection – which we can appreciate. Even with your Study Condition 3 ... I can't imagine any scenario would provide Oriana with a two lane frontage which brings us back to the drainage and need for consideration & remedy.

I have forwarded onto the Oriana members the Town link to review your current Study Conditions and requested they provide comment.

Thank you for listening and on behalf of Oriana, we appreciate your considerations.

Bill Smith, resident

It looks like you are taking an existing beautiful median and gutting it to add bike lanes. You need two traffic lanes as commercial vehicles (trucks) will be parked for maintenance for condos, deliveries of furniture, restaurant supplies and can be there for extended periods of time. Especially closer to center / el mar, commercial square.

I know you are working hard to come up with design but appears as a step backwards to me.

It might be helpful for reference to include the widths of the existing sidewalk and existing median. When trucks are parked for deliveries if the wider bike lane can be shared with moving vehicles to get around the parked delivery vehicles that would allow keeping a generous width to the landscaped median. Good luck.

Hugues Guenette, resident

We live at the Oriana Complex in LBTS. We have looked at the proposed plan options and we love option #2. The width of the median is better for people who have dogs. The wider median will also allow for larger trees and more green space. The one car lane option will make the street a bit quieter. The bike and pedestrian lanes proposed are great as there are massive amount of people taking walks or biking on El Mar, especially in the morning. Currently walkers already take one of the car lanes anyway when it is really busy. I assume that if you went with option #3 they would still use a car lane so we would be back to a pseudo option #2! Thanks for keeping us up to date !

Keep up the good work !

Sally Musser, resident of Lauderdale by the Sea.

I walk El Mar EVERY morning, (Hurricane Watch or not!)

Please leave the Median AS IS , we need ALL 22' to stay intact.

Please just make the following improvements which will make El Mar AMAAAAAZING:

- 1)Sidewalks: Terrazzo Muave-Colored Pavers (see Galt Ocean Mile sidewalks)
- 2)Colored/Brick paver detail from the sidewalk to the street to go up and down both sides of El Mar
- 3)Colored Paver streets

This plan is much cheaper than Plan A , we can save hard earned taxpayer \$\$, at the same time, it will make El Mar so beautiful!

Thank you!

Ryan Hanrahan, resident

Dear Mayor Vincent, Vice Mayor Oldaker and Commissioners Malkoon, Strauss & Sokolow,

I've been vocal in the opposition of recent design proposals by sending in public comments at last month's town meeting, emailing all of you directly on 09-01-2020 and the design team on 09-11-2020.

Sadly these designs seem based solely on what they interpret as a "major" need for a dedicated bike lane due to an online survey VS improving the poor sidewalk and swale conditions as well as enhancing the landscaped medians which were the original intentions of this project and has been for years. Traveling El Mar daily there is minimal leisurely bike traffic along El Mar at any given time of the day that doesn't interfere with vehicular traffic. The proposed designs only seem to cause more issues than benefits when eliminating one traffic lane requiring the use of pull-offs for commercial semi-trucks the length of El Mar and delivery zones during certain morning hours in the heart of our downtown all to accommodate a dedicated bike lane instead of continuing the use of secondary traffic lanes and implementing an official multi-use lane for bikers.

I also feel eliminating traffic lanes will cause traffic issues in high-season when vehicular usage is substantially higher. As we also know there be future development of the Old Holiday Inn & Villa Caprice site and FDG Central site equating to 300-400+ units thus permanently increasing future vehicle traffic along El Mar.

The most recently proposed options 2 and 3 listed below seem just as bad as the original design falling short of the overall needs and functionality for El Mar Dr. It almost seems as it sets up to give us a choice of the lesser of three poor options forcing a dedicated bike lane without listening to us actual residents.

Option 2: Offers 18' median with one 10' traffic lane and massive oversized 8' bike lane for a total of 18' roadway with 9' sidewalks (we currently only have 4' sidewalks in poor condition that are rarely used). This design still requires pull-offs that will at minimum eat

into at minimum 9' of the 18' median width for stretches of 40-60' in length for commercial semi-trucks at various locations the duration of El Mar.

Option 3: Offers a tiny 8' median with two 10' traffic lanes and still an additional 4' bike lane for a total of 24' roadway with 8' sidewalks. Of course nobody wants only 8' of green median. This seems excessive proposing dedicated bike lanes when it can easily have the 2nd outside traffic lane used as a "Multi-Use" bike lane as currently used along the majority of El Mar. Keeping two traffic lanes (using outside lanes as multi-use bike lanes), eliminating the 4' dedicated bike lane and only reducing the sidewalks by 1' to 7' we could have the same exact median width proposed in Option 2. This option 3 seems poorly designed with minimal green median thus trying to convince people that Option 2 is the better of two more bad options in addition to the original proposal.

Unfortunately, these recent designs seem to cause more problems that can't be overcome without big sacrifices to El Mar opposed to just improving the existing footprint how it has already been done recently in certain portions that work perfectly fine. Below is the option I have referenced and proposed to the design team as well as town commission that has gone all but ignored.

Option 4: Keep It Simple and improve the existing footprint of El Mar Dr.

The most logical and least invasive design could easily replicate what we currently have in front of Villas by the Seas condominiums at 4510 - 4511 El Mar Dr and 4444 - 4445 El Mar Dr (photo exhibit attached) with curbed sidewalks as well as The El Mar Boutique Hotel at 4433 El Mar Dr that has pull-out parking (photo exhibit attached). This was ignored in my public comments by all town commission and design team during the last town meeting regarding El Mar. This still allows us to greatly enhance the existing landscaped medians as well as widen and improve the sidewalks just like in these examples above that greatly improve El Mar while allowing it to work the way it has successfully done for decades.

Penny Dodd, resident

I'm not as involved with the day to day affairs of the Lauderdale by the sea commission as Stuart is but I do regularly walk El Mar drive. I'm asking you as a regular user, please please keep two lanes of traffic on either side of the median and please DO keep the beautiful median the same width it is today.

We don't need or want one lane and a bike lane. El Mar has been safely enjoyed and used as it is today for many, many years. It is not difficult for the bikes to use the second lane currently used by pedestrians, dog walkers, joggers and everyone else. PLEASE keep the two lanes as they are and just improve the sidewalks and the broken bits between the edge of the sidewalk and the white line in the road. Don't spend millions trying to improve something that already works well. "If it aint broke don't fix it." As stated above the only areas that need a fix are the existing broken areas.

Kevin J. Mahoney, resident

Dear El Mar Design Team

Every other morning around 7:30 AM I run the length of El Mar and back, and then repeat that run. I run, or more accurately jog, on the grass as I have spinal stenosis and should not run on pavement. As I jog I think and pray, inspired by the beautiful trees, shrubs, and flowering bushes I pass along the way and awed by the views of the ocean as the sun rises. Each day I greet many of the same people walking, running, cycling, working, walking their dogs; we are a mini-community. It is with this lens that I oppose any tampering with the median strip on El Mar. Just put this issue to a vote of town residents and I think most would agree. We do NOT want more traffic; so why would we want more spots for paid parking and cutouts for trucks? Better sidewalks would be great, but remember that as long as the effects of Covid19 last people will want to maintain social distance and many will continue to walk in the street. Why do we need separate bike lanes on El Mar as the traffic is not, and should not be, significant. Where we need bike lanes is on busy streets like A1A. That is what Ft Lauderdale has done just south of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea.

If you really want to make El Mar even more attractive get rid of the ugly concrete poles with wires dangling spoiling the view at both ends of El Mar. Somehow the City got that wiring underground near Commercial Blvd. Why not do the same for the rest of El Mar? Thank you for listening.

Margaret and Andrew Winiarczyk

Commissioners and Mayor

We have been in LBTS for 18 years, as a business owners and residents.

The attraction was immediate, when we arrived to this beautiful small town with all the amenities of a city nearby. Just as the beach, the pier, and low height buildings, one of the special assets, to center of this town, is El Mar drive. It is a road but also so much more: a scenic walk, bike ride and a leisure drive. Please keep it as green and parking /car free as possible.

Rita Lippman, resident

Hello, Thank you for considering my input. El Mar is a beautiful street. It's one of our greatest assets in enhancing the walk ability of the town. It should not be used as a thoroughfare for traffic. Ocean Drive, Rt A1A is for cars. El Mar is for walking and enjoying ocean views. Please do not cut down on the size of the median. The median is important to the overall attractiveness of the street. It can be planted with more vegetation and palm trees. Please do not take this away. Commercial Blvd at the ocean is a great asset to the community. That area was well planned. It's now an inviting place to walk and sit to enjoy the charm of our town. Please put the same thought and consideration into El Mar. We do not need four lanes of traffic and a thin median. This plan will destroy the street. I urge you to maintain the ambiance we are fortunate to have now. I fell in love with this town the first time I saw it. That was over thirty years ago. I still feel that joy every time I walk down El Mar to Commercial. That is why I own a home in Lauderdale by the Sea. There's no other place like it. Please keep it that way. Thank you

Karen Blake, resident

Please consider angling the parking for safety reasons--so that bicyclists can be seen easily by drivers as they back out. It may also reduce the size of the right-of-way needed for parking. Thank you!

Be well.

Joan, Leisure Mar Condominium

My comment is to leave El Mar AS IS, focus on upgrades to sidewalks and swales, drainage, lighting and most especially slowing the traffic down. DO NOT touch the median. As is, LBTS does not have much green space, ironic since we are a small beach town that pride ourselves on our beaches and natural surroundings, all have been taken over by parking spaces. Now the little greenery we have to enjoy, you are going to take away. No, unacceptable. The trucks and such only park very early in the AM for deliveries and only in the downtown area. Why are you going to put parking areas in the rest of El Mar? This does not beautify our town. I don't want a parking garage right in front of where I live.

The key here is to make El Mar a natural space for us all to walk, bike, run, and walk our dogs, stroll with our children. What needs to be done is to make El Mar safe. Decreasing the amount of cars that speed and do not stop at stop signs or for pedestrians walking/crossing. That is where you need to concentrate your efforts, money and time before someone gets runned over. Leave El Mar alone, leave our median alone, do not mess with something that works and it is enjoyed by all, residents like me and our guests. Thank you.

Cynthia Mattia, Leisure Mar

I am writing to you in response to the Town Special Meeting scheduled for September 22nd. I urge you to consider that urban planners want to shape how El Mar residents live their lives; discouraging automobile and increasing parking, pedestrian and bicycle traffic under the premise of safety. So, I question the number of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian accidents that have occurred on El Mar and the need for increased parking. I question the possibility of increased traffic congestion with a two lane north south traffic pattern with El Mar residents and hotel occupants backing out onto a one lane traffic pattern. Extending the sidewalk and establishing a bike lane appear to be sound advancements. However, I question the safety of residents and hotel occupants having to back out of said parking places over wider sidewalks and bike lanes. I find the vast majority of bicyclists not obeying road rules. I question the delay and impact of emergency response and fire vehicles accessing a two lane north/south road during any emergency situation. I question how the traffic will be rerouted if an emergency occurs without turn-a-round access or an additional lane for traffic by-pass or to accommodate additional emergency vehicles and personnel. Table top landscape placement at intersections may also impede emergency response. I question the need for pull offs outside of the

Commercial/El Mar intersection. There is extreme infrequency of delivery trucks unloading outside of the restaurant areas. I question the need for increased parking on El Mar (pull offs after delivery hours). One El Mar resident opined that it seems like the El Mar beautification plan “paves over paradise and puts up a parking lot”. I have to completely agree. It is concerning that these “road diet” concepts do not statistically increase green space either in the median or at the sidewalk on El Mar. Adapave (tree pit areas outlined in the proposals) is traditionally used in urban areas to increase a green presence in a concrete jungle. Adapave tree pits impede sidewalk space especially if your goal is to widen pedestrian walkways. I question the goal of the Town Council to urbanize the area and lose the “beachside” feel. I question the impact of construction on the area for El Mar residents and hotel occupants. Although the Town has adequate funds to cover any supposed improvements, a strong financial reserve is needed in these unprecedented times. Therefore, I question the benefit of the proposed road diet plan(s) and ask the Town Commission to reconsider the redesign of El Mar. Let’s strive to keep our beachside town, a beachside town! Nevertheless, there are improvements that can be made to El Mar without changing the charm of the area. The sidewalks need to be uniform throughout including the curbing. Uneven sidewalks and curbs of differing heights force pedestrians to use roadways. The risk of falls can be life threatening to senior citizens. Attractive turtle friendly lighting should also be considered. Road and sidewalk drainage needs to be addressed. Lastly, feasibility studies are needed to consider the installation and maintenance of underground utilities. Let’s improve on El Mar not urbanize it. Aside from the goal of increasing town and local business revenue, increasing tourism and thus visitors has it’s own set of potentially negative consequences. Those consequences may include increase crime, litter, and most importantly a change in the culture of the area. Let’s improve El Mar but preserve it’s unique culture.

Bill McGarrity, resident

Of all the various proposals for improving El Mar, I think there is an obvious option that is superior: Keep the current design and make improvements to further enhance the current charm we all enjoy. Specifically, repair the swales/drainage, sidewalks and paving. Add more lighting and enhance the landscaping in the beautiful wide median. I believe this approach would gain a strong consensus from all the stakeholders.”
Thanks!

Arthur Franczak,

Dear Commissioners,

I was working at Westminster, London, for a Member of Parliament. It was a Friday afternoon, meaning that all Members of Parliament, including mine, were gone for the weekend. So I was making decisions. I was in charge of correspondence. So no-brainer something about smoking in movies glorifying smoking came up. How can anybody be against complaint about glorifying smoking in movies? It turns out that many or some of this MP's constituents were Yorkshire smokers. But I wrote something intelligent about product placement in movies and against smoking. I almost got in trouble. Everybody in the office got a lecture on Monday, and it was aimed solely at me stepping out beyond my role. But it was OK because, I guess, I was OK. Also I have no idea who crafted the

message but perhaps they are just constituents such as I. Everybody has a voice, and it is democracy, and let the winning argument rule. I am very serious about green space.

Janet and Wayne Thompson, resident

The Commission policies state: Preserve/Protect LBTS appearance, visual character and culture. Maintain/ expand ocean views. After many years, my husband and I returned to LBTS. We purchased a condo on El Mar Drive. We enjoy riding bikes, local restaurants, walking and the view from our balcony. We definitely don't want our view to be commercial vehicles parked in the street. If your plan passes, we think pull offs along El Mar Drive should be at least 100 feet from stop signs, community parks and beach entrances. Service vehicle /commercial parking should be limited. We are against additional public parking along El Mar Drive. If the median is only reduced minimally, and the city uses existing 2nd street lane to increase sidewalk space and add a bike lane, then the plan might have the potential to be positive. Thank you for your consideration.

Diana Kugler, resident

Good evening Mayor, Commissioners and Town Manager,
Regarding the El Mar Drive project, I recommend that we keep two lanes each direction, ideally lane closest to median as a mixed use product to deter vehicular traffic. No cut outs Make sidewalks 8 ft Delete the bike lane Add the extra footage from bike lane and sidewalk that was planned for 9' to the median Upgrade sidewalks, swales, drainage, lighting and please, please put traffic calming elements in to slow down vehicular traffic. Bicycles can legally ride in vehicular lanes and they do, in packs many across. If they want a bike lane, they can go to A1A. You all of you know that El Mar is very special to the people of this town. You may not like it and you may not want to say it, but you know that bicycle riders will ride many across and pedestrians with and without dogs will walk in the lane closest to the median. That all contributes to the charm of this great town. Keep it simple, don't reinvent the wheel.

Brigitte Brandt, resident

Good evening

Maybe you should invest on our streets instead of always concentrate on el mar drive!
We the resident need lights!

John Boutin, Windjammer

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Commissioners,

As the current owner of a family business located on El Mar Drive since 1978, I hereby present to you my opinion as to the correct decision regarding the El Mar Design Streetscape project. In the interest of brevity and of "getting to the point", I will start with my conclusion as to what I believe is the best choice for the design project.

Conclusion:

Professionals were hired to present to the Town a design choice based on their excellent reputation, experience, extensive knowledge of code requirements, understanding of our existing conditions and abilities for gathering and evaluation of valuable input from our

community. The decision to hire this design team was because it was concluded that they would do the best job for our Town. I respect and trust the Commissioners for their decision in hiring this firm.

The firm presented their recommended design known as Option 1.

I would ask that the Commission please support and approve their recommended design as it convincingly addresses all of the essential requirements for the project based on the all of the factual data and most importantly the citizen input. It is the logical and best choice.

For Consideration:

It has been my business experience that when experienced and relevant professionals are hired for complicated and multifaceted projects which are outside the realm of the abilities of lay people to fully comprehend the intricacies and subtleties of a project, it is best to follow their advice. Not following their advice somewhat negates the decision to hire them in the first place.

It is my understanding that instead of approving their recommendation, "circumstances" dictated that they be asked to present two revisions of their recommendation making the decision more opaque. Therefore with this email I present my thoughts in arriving at my conclusion which is based on the following quote.

"The data speaks for itself. I respect everyone's opinion, but we make our decisions based on facts, not opinions." Carol Todd

My conclusion is based on what I consider to be the most important physical and community input data garnered and presented in the extensive Initial Concepts Draft of August 11, 2020

https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.67/sbw.bd2.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020.08.11_Commission-Meeting_EI-Mar-Concept-DRAFT_FINAL.pdf

Physical Factual data:

- El Mar Drive needs to be redesigned
 - o Check
- El Mar is 80 feet wide
 - o Option 1 efficiently utilizes the defined area.
- FDOT code requires sidewalks be at minimum 6 feet of unobstructed width
 - o Option 1 brings our sidewalks to 9+ feet.
- Current sidewalks are 5 feet and have utility poles on them obstructing pedestrian traffic
 - o Option 1 would discourage the illegal practice of walking and jogging in traffic lanes and reduces the danger to pedestrians from back out parking.
 - o Consider that walkers and joggers do not walk or jog in the street along Fort Lauderdale beach. Why? The sidewalk is wide enough to accommodate all.

- Code requires that areas where there is no sidewalk curb, there must be a 6 foot buffer zone between the sidewalk and the traffic lane.
- o Option one provides for the code required 6 foot buffer.
- A majority of El Mar properties have back out parking requiring the 6 foot buffer zone
- o Option 1 gives us a 6 foot dedicated bike lane which serves as the buffer zone.
- Annual average traffic on El Mar Drive from Palm Ave to Pine Ave is only 1200 vehicles per day.
- o The traffic study confirms that one lane is more than enough and it would also discourage its use as a bypass, further reducing the vehicular traffic
- o Option 1 provides for a 12 foot vehicular traffic lane providing for a safe driving experience

Community Input factual data:

- 61% use El Mar primarily for walking and jogging and 70.8% want wider sidewalks
- o Option 1 provides for 9 foot sidewalks thus following the majority of the respondents wishes
- 72% prefer bike traffic separated from pedestrian traffic and 84% want a dedicated bike lane
- o Option 1 separates bike traffic from pedestrian traffic and provides for the safety of a dedicated bike lane, again in response to the majority
- 70.5% say one lane in each direction is adequate for efficient traffic flow
- o Option 1 follows majority opinion
- 58.2% want landscape enhancements
- o Option 1 increases the size of the median thereby allowing for more and better landscaping
- 63% want tree planting on both sides of the street
- o Option 1 does allow for the planting of trees on both sides of the street

I wish to express my sincere gratitude for accepting to have Lauderdale-By-The-Sea be the “master of their domain” so to speak by going it alone. I know that this was not an easy decision and so now it is time to give the go ahead. I am confident that you, our governing body, will make the correct decision for all.

Cristie and Marc Furth, resident (531 words)

Dear Commissioners and Town Manager, Bill Vance;

Lauderdale by the Sea has 3 unique features that define its beloved character. 1. The low-rise height limit 2.The downtown village situated directly at the beach and 3.The original El Mar Drive scenic beachfront showcasing our charming boutique resort area. Major changes to any of these key 3 areas must be carefully considered by Town Officials and scrutinized by citizens so as not to downgrade our proud heritage as a beautiful seaside oasis.

The EDSA Designers say the designs are based on surveys but if actually implemented both plans would irrevocably change the beautiful, open and spacious El Mar Drive residents and visitors have loved for decades.

The one-lane plan slices up the El Mars beautiful green median with multitudes of asphalt cut-outs for truck deliveries (19 at last count). It was also stated at both the hotel and condo zoom meetings that, after delivery hours, these truck delivery parking areas could be utilized for car parking spaces at the discretion of Town Officials (essentially a vote of 3 Commissioners could convert those truck delivery zones into little beachfront parking lots). So, if you are an El Mar resident or pedestrian user...what is to like about the one-lane plan? Sorry, to say... Nothing.

When citizens complained that they were only given the one-lane plan to consider designers came up with the two-lane plan. The two-lane plan is a much better fit for El Mar's unique ambiance except for one major problem. The plan cuts the green median down from 20+ feet to 8 feet. The rumor going around town is that by adding so much concrete and asphalt and cutting the median down to 8 ft. they could make the one-lane plan look like the better alternative.

Unfortunately, both plans play major havoc on El Mar's landscaped median, a Lauderdale by the Sea landmark as El Mar Drive was the Town's very first road. The one-lane plan turns the median and our front yard into a truck parking area and the two-lane plan shrinks the median into a skinny Commercial Blvd. style green strip. We would have happily given our support to a type of plan that addresses how to safely utilize more of El Mar for pedestrian activities and not simply confine everyone to a sidewalk. Using the inside lane of El Mar as a dedicated and protected multi-use zone for pedestrians and occasional truck deliveries was always the logical idea. But, perhaps, at this point 'leave well enough alone' is the best philosophy and just fix what needs fixing.

Lastly, as a strong proponent for El Mar improvements over the decades we could not have been more disappointed with this entire process. Because of Covid we have not been able to meet with Designers and discuss options together as a community. This major Town project is being decided in the dead of summer when people are away. We have asked every Commissioner to please, please come over to El Mar, meet with a few of our neighbors and stakeholders and, so far, only 3 have responded and to them we say thank you for respecting their constituents and hopefully representing them.

Alfred Tychsen

It is with some concern I hear of plans to alter the median on El Mar Drive. I am respectfully asking you to please ask the City council to leave the median as it is. The whole area is very beautiful and any change would destroy the looks and the feel of the area. I thank you for your help.

Respectfully,

Alfred B. Tychsen, an avid walker on the street.

Cristie & Marc Furth, residents
Good Evening Commissioners

Please consider the hardships Lauderdale by the Sea businesses and residents have endured since Covid 10 hit us in March. Many of us have had little or no income and

hopes of a quick rebound have not panned out. We have all had to cut back, some using up their savings to pay bills, taxes and insurance, some facing eviction and food insecurity. Please be mindful, as we all must, to keep taxes and spending to a minimum during these trying times.

Another topic is the reopening of Jarvis Hall for Commission Meetings. It is time. Commissioners need to interact with Citizens over important community issues. If participants follow proper CDC protocols and limit attendance there is no reason not to reinstate in-person Commission meetings immediately, especially for an extremely important meeting set for next Tuesday, Sept. 22 when the Commission may vote to proceed with an El Mar Design plan.

The El Mar decision could affect the ambiance of Lauderdale by the Sea forever. Two plans have been designed and presented for comment on the Town website. However, I found that the most controversial aspect of the one lane plan had been omitted. The pull-out parking lots for trucks had been removed from landscaped median. Also, no mention of median truck pull outs was listed in either the narrative or legend. This omission appeared to make the one lane rendering more appealing than it really is so I'm glad this will soon be remedied and viewers will get accurate information on which to base comments. Bottom line; Lets keep the El Mar plan simple;

1. Preserve our beautiful, wide median
2. Replace our broken sidewalks and swales
3. Add lighting