

1000 FRIENDS OF FRESNO

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June 2011

Meeting the Challenges of the Future with Citizens Involvement

Dear Interested Citizens:

We all benefit when our community does well. The Fresno area has a lot to offer in the way of entertainment, services and eating establishments, which are owned by local merchants who deserve our support. They are the backbone of our community, providing the jobs and supporting the charities that are so important to our economy.

A very good example would be the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra. General Manger Don Reinhold and his able assistant, Susan Adams, have been extremely helpful in supporting our "Music Mentoring Club", which gives at-risk individuals a chance to change their lives and look to a better future.

So let's all pull together and make this a more successful community.

-Bob Dwyer

CITIZEN SUPPORT FOR PRESERVING FULTON MALL

When the city official overseeing the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan process met with the Downtown Fresno Coalition in December 2009, I obtained from him a promise that if I compiled a record of past expressions of public support for preserving Fulton Mall as a pedestrian-only space, he would convey the information to the Community Advisory Committee that would be making recommendations regarding what to do about the Mall. I provided the memo below to be passed on to the committee before they met on October 19, 2010 to make their decision. When I spoke to the committee that evening, I learned that they had not been given copies.

---Ray McKnight

To: Fulton Corridor Specific Plan Community
Advisory Committee
From: Ray McKnight, Chair, Downtown Fresno
Coalition

The Fulton Corridor Specific Plan process has been conceived and conducted without due attention to past expressions of public opinion regarding the Mall. Long before this process was begun, there already existed a great deal of evidence of public support for maintaining the Fulton Mall as a pedestrian-only space. The first strong manifestation of this public support came in reaction to the plan submitted by ELS Architecture and Urban Design to the City Council sitting as the Fresno Redevelopment Agency Board in 2002. The ELS plan proposed to

return two-way vehicular traffic to the full length of the Mall ("Fulton Street Revitalization," February 2002). It is very important to point out that ELS began its work with explicit instructions to return traffic to the Mall as part of its plan. Evidence for this claim may be found in documents concerned with the Fulton Mall study. For example, a Report to the Redevelopment Agency from Marlene Murphey, Redevelopment Administrator, dated December 5, 2000, calls for the issuance of "Two Request for Qualifications." The second sentence begins, "In order to properly design the Fulton Mall **including the introduction of limited vehicle traffic. . .**" [emphasis added]

At a meeting of Fresno's City Council sitting as the RDA board on May 21, 2002, the Council chamber was filled with citizens who overwhelmingly showed opposition to the plan. Our notes from that meeting suggest there were eight citizens speaking in favor of traffic on the mall and thirty-five speaking in opposition to traffic on the Mall. A letter supporting traffic on the Mall was presented signed by eleven Mall merchants. A petition was presented signed by ninety-three merchants opposing traffic on the Mall. Before that meeting a statement of opposition to putting traffic on the Mall signed by several dozen citizens was printed in *The Fresno Bee*. The Council voted to accept the plan as a report but chose not to act on it otherwise. In other words, the plan was shelved.

In March 2006 the City Council voted to have city staff conduct a Fulton Mall Study as suggested by a Council Member who has been one of the most vocal proponents

for returning the Mall to vehicular traffic. A series of public meetings were scheduled to allow public expressions of what should be done about the Mall. The public was also invited to submit written suggestions by email and regular mail. At least one member of the Downtown Fresno Coalition was present to observe what transpired at each of the public meetings. At every one of these meetings nearly all comments that had anything to do with the issue of returning vehicular traffic to the Mall were against doing so. The team of facilitators who conducted the public meetings submitted in their report on the meetings a list of seven "general themes that emerged during the community meetings." Number one on the list was "No traffic on the Mall."

We have also examined copies of all written comments submitted by the public for the Fulton Mall Study by email and regular mail. Among the comments that in any way deal with the issue of traffic on the mall, opposition to the idea outnumbers support for it by a wide margin. The report from the team of facilitators was turned over to an appointed committee, almost entirely composed of city officials, which in turn submitted the final report of the Fulton Mall Study to the City Council in October 2006. This committee stated that the question of whether or not to open the Mall to traffic "remains an open issue." The Fulton Mall Study, not able, as we suspect, to counter public support for preserving the Mall, was quietly shelved.

More evidence of the considerable support for keeping traffic off the Mall continues to emerge, as found in the creation of the "Save-the-Mall" Facebook page. Begun this year, the page now has in excess of 1000 followers, and examination of the contributions to the page reveals an overwhelming support for preserving the Mall. The administrators of the Facebook page called for a gathering of Mall supporters at the clock tower on the Mall on July 31, and at that gathering approximately one hundred and twenty participants wrote letters in support of placing the Mall on the National Register of Historic Places. Added to fifteen or more letters written in support of the National Register listing since the nomination effort was begun, we can confidently state that there is solid support for preserving Fulton Mall.

Fulton Mall is deserving of preservation as a pedestrian-only space because that is what the citizens of Fresno want. **They** are the stakeholders.



Downtown Fresno offers a world of culinary delights that reflect the incredible diversity of our community. From Armenian shish kebab to authentic Mexican cuisine, Downtown Fresno offers something for everyone. Stop by one of our friendly restaurants and enjoy a bite to eat and experience the taste of Downtown Fresno.

Fresno Chile Festival

On June 18, 2011 celebrating our own Fresno chiles! This Festival is a complete celebration of what's HOT in Fresno. There will be HOT food, HOT music, and HOT times. Come be a part of the first ever Fresno Chile Festival! From 11:00 am to 7:00 pm, on the Fulton Mall between Fresno & Tulare Streets.



PLANT AND CLEAN

2nd Saturday of every month

All parks in Fresno are suffering from lack of maintenance, and several rounds of City budget cuts which have reduced a Fulton Mall staff of 7 to only 2 workers for all of Downtown Fresno. Join the Downtown Crew in providing landscape maintenance to let the City staff concentrate on trash pickup and collection.



Bring your family, your friends, your co-workers. Bring your energy and your tools (trowel, hoe or rake, clippers or pruning shears, push broom or yard-style dustpan. Trash bags and gloves provided.

Saturdays, at 9AM to 11:30AM. Meet at the Clock Tower (Fulton and Mariposa Malls). Parking is available in Garages 4 and 8

More information at <http://downtownfresno.org/plant-and-clean.html>

Contact info: Jan Minami (559) 490-9966 ext 11

4th Annual Holiday Gifts for Kids

We are gearing up for 2011. Santa Claus needs help from the community to provide toys, fresh fruit and candy to young children in southwest Fresno. Santa welcomes elves to help bring joy to the lives of children ages 1 – 12.

Over 1500 needy children received gifts last year. Unfortunately, we did not have enough to for

everyone that came. So lets get on the ball and not disappoint these young children. Please call 291-2261 to donate gifts or volunteer your time now as a committee member. With your help we can make 2011 better then last year.



**MUSIC MENTORING CLUB
IS STILL GOING STRONG**

1000 Friends of Fresno "Music Mentoring Club" was started to provide at risk students with a reward for good to excellent grades and behavior in school. One of our goals is to provide our students with exposure to as much of the positive effects of Mentoring, Music, Arts and Drama as possible. We strive to make possible positive events and experiences that our students would never otherwise have the opportunity to see, to learn about, to experience. Our focus is clear; we want to actually show our young men and women that there's a whole new world of infinite enjoyable events, positive activities and enlightenment opportunities that they too can partake of and in.

Please do not hesitate to contact Donald Anderson (Program Director) at 559-408-1416 or Bob Dwyer at 559-291-2264, if you have functions or events which we might further expose our students to positive experiences.

S.H.A.R.E.S. Cards

Thank you for using your S.H.A.R.E.S. Cards. 1000 Friends of Fresno received \$116.00 this last quarter from your purchases at Save Mart and FoodMaxx. **Keep on using them.** We still have cards available, just give us a call (559 291-2261) and we will drop one in the mail. Remember 1000 Friends of Fresno receives a small percentage from Save Mart/FoodMaxx each time you use your card.

| SUMMER WATERING SCHEDULE | |
|--|---|
| MARCH 2 – NOVEMBER 30 | |
| ODD NUMBERED ADDRESSES <small>(ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, 9)</small> TUESDAY, THURSDAY & SATURDAY | EVEN NUMBERED ADDRESSES <small>(ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, 8)</small> WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY & SUNDAY |
| NO WATERING BETWEEN 6 A.M. AND 7 P.M. | |
| NO WATERING ON MONDAYS | |

OUR NEWSLETTERS ARE NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL IN PDF FORMAT.

Please e-mail 1000friends@sbcglobal.net to be put on the e-mailing list. This will help cut down on our postage expenses. Your addresses will not be shared with anyone.

Newsletter will be published Quarterly. We would appreciate help with copying, folding and stapling. Call or e-mail if you would like to help.

We are accepting articles for publication. Please e-mail or mail your articles to us.

- Dianna K. Stansell, Administrator



I want to help improve our quality of life in Fresno County. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution.

- \$10
 \$50
 \$200
 \$1000
 \$25
 \$100
 \$500
 Other

Name: _____

Phone: (Day) _____

Address: _____

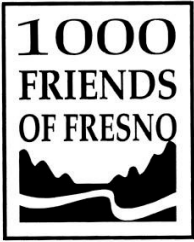
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(Fax) _____

City/State/Zip _____ (E-mail) _____

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT *1000 Friends of Fresno is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization.*
All donations are fully tax-deductible.

Please send this form with your check or money order to: 1000 Friends of Fresno, 4781 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726, (559) 291-2261, Fax (559) 291-4991



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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2011 Comcast
Movies in the Park
at Eaton Plaza
(FRESNO & 'N' NEAR THE WATER TOWER AND FRESNO POLICE HEADQUARTERS)

ADMISSION ONLY \$1
 FOR SELECTED G or PG FILMS

• 10 A.M. •

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

WILL ROGERS INSTITUTE
 PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE WILL ROGERS INSTITUTE