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## City making streets safe for all



PALMDALE - City officials are inviting residents, business people and others to an open house on Palmdale's "Complete Streets" planning effort, which is aimed at designing streets that are safe for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.

The open house at which people can ask questions and offer ideas on how to improve local streets will take place from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Dec. 6 in the Chimbole Cultural Center, 38350 Sierra Highway.

"'Complete Streets' are defined as streets for everyone," said Transportation/Special Projects Manager Mike Behen. "They are designed and operated to accommodate all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation."

The "Complete Streets" concept is being promoted by state and federal governments to get people out of their cars and look at different transportation modes, and Palmdale has a grant to help with its planning, Behen said.

Proposals for street design will be incorporated into the General Plan, the city's basic "blueprint" for development, and will be used to guide future street work.

"We are trying to be proactive," Behen said.

The "Complete Streets" effort is part of an "Active Transportation Program Plan" that will update the Bicycle and Trails sections of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Element of the General Plan; update the Bicycle Transportation Plan; revise the Circulation Element of the General Plan; and revise the Suggested Route to School Plan.

Attendees at the Dec. 6 open house will have the opportunity to participate in interactive exercises and provide their input on transportation issues, opportunities and potential solutions, Behen said.

"We're encouraging our community to bring us their thoughts, questions and ideas on how to improve our streets for everyone in the community," Behen said.

The proposals that result from the effort will be the subject of future public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

One street project that is being done in accord with the concepts is work completing Avenue R between Sierra Highway and 25th Street East. In much of that stretch, youngsters walking to school must walk on a dirt road shoulder adjoining a traffic lane, he said.

Now under design and environmental studies, the project is expected to give Avenue R bicycle lands and sidewalks and retain two lanes of traffic in each direction, Behen said.

For details, contact Behen at (661) 267-5337 or mbehen@cityofpalmdale.org.

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