



Memorandum

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor Ron Gonzales
Councilmembers Campos
and Yeager

SUBJECT: Evergreen Visioning Project/
Smart Growth Strategy Task Force

DATE: May 13, 2005

Approved

Date

5/13/05

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Council adopt the steps outlined in our April 29, 2005, memo (attached), consistent with Council direction on April 19, 2005, to move the Evergreen Visioning Project forward with clear direction to have a final product returned to Council for approval by April 2006.

In addition to the items outlined in our April 29 memo, we recommend the Council direct the City Manager to:

1. Schedule a half-day study session to be held within three weeks of the adoption of this memo.
2. Prepare an agenda and all necessary background materials for the Study Session using the April 29 memo as a guide for the necessary policy discussions and include a role for stakeholder participation.

DISCUSSION

After deferring this item from the May 3, 2005, City Council Agenda, Mayor Gonzales with Councilmembers Campos and Yeager continued discussions with stakeholders, including current members of Councilmember Cortese's Evergreen Visioning Project advisory committee.

We greatly appreciate the valuable input provided by the committee members, and they raised many issues that staff should incorporate into the upcoming study session such as transit-oriented development, home ownership versus renting, and livability effects. After the Council discusses the major policy issues at the study session, the restructured task force will be in a better position to focus its efforts efficiently and involve the larger community in a public decision-making process.

Many residents and businesses have already been deeply involved in the EVP planning process through the current advisory committee, and their work has provided a very good foundation for the next phase of planning that will now include the broader community. Because of their experience and familiarity with Evergreen neighborhood issues, we hope the current EVP group will continue its advisory role to Councilmember Cortese.

Some members of the current EVP committee have suggested that it should continue to be the only group advising the full City Council on this matter. We disagree, for the reasons outlined in our previous memo. As we have done with downtown master plans and many specific plans, the Evergreen Visioning Process should involve a broader community-based group that reflects a comprehensive range of interests and affected areas.

A balanced task force should certainly include members from the current EVP committee. In addition, it should also include people who represent other affected neighborhoods and citywide policy concerns that have been identified through the EVP process.

CONCLUSION

This is an excellent opportunity to create a visionary framework that reflects the best collaborative efforts of our city. By focusing on solutions that draw upon the solid work already done, we believe the efforts of Councilmember Cortese's Evergreen Visioning Project advisory committee and our recommended broader task force with other stakeholder representatives will lead to a creative and practical plan. Our mutual goal is to create a plan that will have the support of the City Council and the public that will benefit both the residents of the Evergreen area and the overall community.