COUNCIL AGENDA: 12-14-04
ITEM: 12.5

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Stephen M. Haase

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: December 1, 2004

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 10

SUBJECT: **GP04-10-02 and GPT04-10-02: City Council initiated General Plan amendment and associated Text amendment proposal to remove the Minor Arterial (80-106 ft. ROW) Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation on Winfield Boulevard from Coleman Road to Almaden Expressway and change this segment of Winfield Boulevard to a local street, and to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of McAbee Road from a Four-Lane Major Collector to a Two-Lane Major Collector between Almaden Expressway and Camden Avenue. The associated General Plan Text amendment request would revise Appendix E of the General Plan Text to be consistent with the proposed amendment to the Land Use/Transportation Diagram.**

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission voted 7-0-0 to recommend adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment and associated Text amendment to remove the Minor Arterial (80-106 ft. ROW) Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation on Winfield Boulevard from Coleman Road to Almaden Expressway and change this segment of Winfield Boulevard to a local street, and to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of McAbee Road from a Four-Lane Major Collector to a Two-Lane Major Collector between Almaden Expressway and Camden Avenue. The associated General Plan Text amendment request would revise Appendix E of the General Plan Text to be consistent with the proposed amendment to the Land Use/Transportation Diagram.

BACKGROUND

On November 29, 2004, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider the proposed General Plan amendment and associated Text amendment.

ANALYSIS

Public Testimony

Public testimony was heard from 18 members of the public including 17 people in support of the amendment and one person in opposition.

Those in support of the amendment mentioned the negative effects to their quality of life that they believed would occur if the proposed General Plan amendment were not approved and the future bridge connection on Winfield Boulevard and four lanes on McAbee Road were constructed. The negative effects they discussed include the following:

1. Compromised safety of area residents and their children;
2. Noise, traffic, aesthetic, and biotics impacts to Almaden Lake Park and the Los Alamitos Creek Trail; and
3. The potential for Almaden Lake Park to be surrounded on all four sides with traffic.

Those in support of the proposed General Plan amendment also noted the following points:

1. The time saved at traffic signals would, in the speakers' opinion, be negligible;
2. This item was considered in 1994 and should now be removed from the General Plan; and
3. The City has made recent improvements to Almaden Lake Park and to McAbee Road that would need to be removed if the bridge were to be built or McAbee Road were to be widened to four lanes.

One person spoke in opposition to the proposed amendment and pointed out that the staff report, although not making a recommendation, includes more reasons to deny, rather than approve, the amendment.

The Planning Commission then closed the public hearing.

The Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation (DOT) responded to questions from the Commission regarding traffic delays and safety. He indicated that there would be some traffic relief in the Almaden Expressway corridor if the Winfield Boulevard extension were to be built, but there would be an increase in traffic on Winfield Boulevard and at the intersection of Winfield Boulevard, McAbee Road, and Almaden Expressway. In regard to safety, the future design of signalized intersections would be to city standards.

Commissioner James asked how the bridge would support future development in Coyote Valley. The Deputy Director of DOT responded that there are current planning efforts for land use changes in the Coyote Valley and there is a potential that with development there will be more traffic in and out of Coyote Valley. There is a planned connection from Almaden Expressway into Coyote Valley and to the degree that Winfield Boulevard provides more capacity to Almaden Expressway to Coyote Valley, it may provide some benefit. However, at this point the details for development and traffic projections are not complete.

The Commission then voted 7-0-0 to recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed General Plan amendment and associated Text amendment.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The property owners and tenants within a 1000-foot radius of the amendment site were sent a newsletter regarding the two community meetings that were held on October 6 and 7, 2004 to discuss the proposed General Plan amendment. Approximately ten people spoke on the item during the two community meetings. In general, the comments were in support of the proposal for the General Plan amendment and no additional traffic on Winfield Boulevard.

Notices were also sent for a Public Scoping Meeting for the Environmental Impact Report on July 29, 2004, and the notice of availability of the Draft EIR was also published in the San Jose Mercury News. Approximately twenty people attended the Public Scoping Meeting, and were generally in support of the proposal for the General Plan amendment. However, several members of the public did express disagreement with the proposal due to concerns about additional traffic on other roadway segments in the City's transportation network.

DOT and Planning staff made a presentation to the Almaden Valley Community Association (AVCA) meeting on November 8, 2004. At the Board meeting that followed, the AVCA Board voted 5 to 1 in favor of not changing the General Plan in regard to the proposed amendment. However, many community members were concerned about the widening of McAbee and questioned whether it would be necessary if the Bridge were built, assuming that there would be no increase in traffic on McAbee with the Bridge in place.

The owners and tenants also received a notice regarding the public hearings to be held on the EIR and subject amendment before the Planning Commission on November 29th and December 14th. In addition, the community can be kept informed about the status of amendments on the Department's web site, which contains information on the Environmental Review and General Plan processes, each proposed amendment, EIR status and documents, staff reports, and hearing schedule.

COORDINATION

The review of this General Plan amendment was coordinated with the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, Department of Transportation, the Environmental Services Department, the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the City Attorney, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and Pacific Gas and Electric.

CEQA

The *Winfield Boulevard and McAbee Road General Plan Amendment* Environmental Impact Report was certified by the Planning Commission on November 29, 2004.

for STEPHEN M. HAASE, SECRETARY
Planning Commission