



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: EDENVALE/GREAT OAKS SNI
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT

DATE: September 11, 2008

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 2
SNI AREA: Edenvale/Great Oaks

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission voted 7-0-0 to recommend that the City Council:

Consider the Environmental Impact Report in accordance with CEQA, and

- 1) Accept the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* as the renewed community vision for the future of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area; and
- 2) Encourage Edenvale/Great Oaks area residents, property owners, and community members to continue to dedicate their time, energy, and resources towards achievement of the Plan and this Amendment in continuing with their community-building activities.

OUTCOME

City Council acceptance of the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate support to the Edenvale/Great Oaks Strong Neighborhoods Initiative community that Council, City staff and Agency staff will continue to partner with the neighborhood to achieve its renewed goals and support the newly developed Top Ten Action Agenda.

BACKGROUND

On September 10, 2008, three members of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) – including Elizabeth Lopez, Vice-President of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC; Yasmin Rios, Co-Secretary of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC; and Judy Purrington, Co-Secretary of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC – spoke to the Planning Commission and requested support of the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*. In their presentations, they all mentioned that the previously accepted SNI Plan has improved the quality of life in the neighborhood and has greatly improved their community.

Moreover, Ms. Lopez expressed her strong support for the *Plan Amendment*. She stated that, “the *Plan Amendment* represents our ongoing vision to improve the neighborhood. We had over 120

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residents that participated in the process at workshops held in March, April, and May. We are about to accomplish our tenth priority from the original list, and the reason we have been so successful is because of the commitment of the neighborhood and our collaboration with City staff. We look forward to our ongoing partnership with the City as we work on completing the next ten priorities.”

Ms. Rios also expressed her support for the *Plan Amendment* and stated that, “this *Plan Amendment* represents the future of our neighborhood. We worked really hard to come up with these Top Ten priorities that will improve our neighborhood. We plan to continue to work with our neighborhood and the City of San José in making these next ten priorities happen for our neighborhood.”

Finally, Ms. Purrington stated that, “the Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood is starting on the tenth priority project, and we have worked diligently with City staff to complete nine out of ten of our previous priority projects. As such, we were all very excited about the process of preparing a *Plan Amendment* and about creating many new exciting opportunities to continue to work on the many needs to improve the Edenvale/Great Oaks neighborhood.” She reiterated that there is a strong commitment of the entire community for acceptance of this proposed *Plan Amendment*.

No one spoke in opposition to the proposed *Plan Amendment*.

The Planning Commission then closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Zito expressed a hardy congratulation to all the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition members that participated in the *Plan Amendment*. Moreover, He pointed out that, although there were only three community members that spoke briefly at the public hearing on behalf of the *Plan Amendment*, this does not diminish all the work that has been accomplished in this community. He stated that it is important to recognize all the work they have completed, including nine out of their ten priorities, with the tenth one well under way.

Commissioner Kalra expressed his thanks to all the Edenvale/Great Oaks community members for a job very well done, and noted special thanks to Israel Leal, Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC President, Laura Rios, Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC Co-Treasurer, and David Sommers, Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI NAC Co-Treasurer – since they were not able to attend this public hearing due to work conflicts – and to Jose Villarreal, San José Redevelopment Agency staff, Greg Cajina, San José City Manager’s Office staff, and to the many other involved church and school leaders that were involved in taking ownership of the community. He acknowledged that they have a lot to do, but expressed confidence that they will continue to check off priority projects from the list and make great progress due to their strong drive and partnership approach.

Commissioner Platten thanked the community members for attending the hearing and for bringing forward a very strong, well written, and consistent *Plan Amendment* document.

Commissioner Jensen expressed her heart-felt congratulation to the community and staff at the hearing, and commended that she knows how difficult it is to accomplish nine out of ten priority projects, including: two neighborhood association neighborhood centers, a community garden, a skate park, tree plantings, traffic calming improvements, pedestrian improvements, street lighting improvements, and ADA corner ramp improvements. She noted that they had many challenging projects to accomplish and that they have done an incredible and remarkable job to date.

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A motion was then made by Commissioner Kalra to recommend that Council accept of proposed *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*. The Commission voted 7-0-0 to recommend to the City Council to accept this *Plan Amendment*.

ANALYSIS

The proposed *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* is consistent with and a natural extension of the SNI *Edenvale/Great Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Update* that was accepted by City Council on December 4, 2001, and with the original *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Revitalization Plan* that was accepted by City Council in April 2000. This *Plan Amendment* allows the community to continue to implement the vision for the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

All subsequent, individual Strong Neighborhoods Initiative *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* action items will be brought to City Council for consideration before implementation.

POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Not applicable.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

- Criteria 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criteria 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- Criteria 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

Although this item does not meet any of the above criteria, staff followed a similar approach to public outreach as in the 2001 *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan* process. Over a period of several months, from March 2008 to May 2008, there were three large community workshops held for this process that included extensive community outreach, including Spanish and Vietnamese translation, and several small focus group discussions held with youth, parent, resident, religious, and educational groups, and several Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) meetings held to build interest and participation in the Renewing the Action Agenda process and creation of the *Plan Amendment*. All residents within the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area were notified by mail about the community meetings. In addition, a steering committee of neighborhood stakeholders led an outreach process that included door-to-door flyer distribution, email and phone reminders to community members that regularly attend NAC meetings, placing poster and informational tables at key neighborhood locations and events, additional flyer

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distribution via the three schools located in the SNI Planning Area and at the Branham Branch Library, and via other small group presentations. Staff has also been available to respond to questions from the public.

COORDINATION

The preparation of the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* was coordinated with the District 2 Council Offices, the City Manager's Office, and various Departments and Agencies, including the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; San José Redevelopment Agency; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Department of Transportation; and the San José Police Department.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

Not applicable.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable at this time.

BUDGET REFERENCE

Not applicable.

CEQA

SNI Program EIR, Resolution No. 71045, was adopted by City Council on June 11, 2002. The proposed activity is within the scope of the SNI program EIR. The proposed action is for the City to acknowledge the community's vision for improvement within the identified SNI neighborhood area, as expressed in the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*, and more specifically in the "Top Ten" priority list. However, by acknowledging the community's vision and amended "Top Ten" list of improvements, the City is not taking an action that commits the City to the implementation of the community's identified improvements. When specific development projects are formally proposed as either public or private actions, they will be subject to environmental review to identify potential significant project-specific impacts.



For JOSEPH HORWEDEL, SECRETARY
Planning Commission

For questions please contact Principal Planner, Andrew Crabtree at 535-7893.



PC AGENDA: 9/10/08
ITEM: 3.a.

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: John Weis
Norberto Dueñas

**SUBJECT: EDENVALE/GREAT OAKS SNI
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT**

DATE: August 9, 2008

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 2
SNI AREA: Edenvale/Great Oaks

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City and Redevelopment Agency staff recommend that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council:

- (a) Accept the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) *Edenvale/Great Oaks Improvement Plan Amendment* as the renewed Community vision for the future of the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area; and,
- (b) Encourage Edenvale/Great Oaks area residents, property owners and community members to continue to dedicate their time, energy and resources towards the *Plan Amendment* while continuing current community-building activities.

OUTCOME

City Council acceptance of the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate to the Edenvale/Great Oaks Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Community that Council, City staff and Agency staff will continue to support and partner with the neighborhood to achieve their renewed goals and to complete the newly developed Top Ten Action Agenda.

BACKGROUND

Renewing the Action Agenda. Since 2006, the 19 Strong Neighborhoods have been renewing their "Top Ten" lists and creating updated Action Agendas. The Renewed Action Agenda focuses the dedication and vision of neighborhood leaders and the resources of the City and Redevelopment Agency in a clear, balanced, and mutually agreed upon set of priorities.

Each of these neighborhood priorities should meet three foundational criteria:

1. **Important to neighborhoods.** This means that there are a significant number of people who are ready to take action to be part of the solution.
2. **Something a City/Local Government can and should do well.** The priority must be reasonably within the sphere of influence of the City or partner organization. Preference should be given to priorities that clearly play to strengths.
3. **Transformative.** The priority should have a significant positive effect on the surrounding neighborhood.

To be effective, it is crucial that each Action Agenda be focused exclusively on priorities that will transform neighborhoods and that the City and Redevelopment Agency can achieve. In addition to meeting the three foundational criteria, the priorities in each Action Agenda should address a balanced mix of the following four categories: Neighborhood Action, Services or Social Issues, Capital Projects and Transformative Opportunities.

Renewing the Action Agenda (RAA) produces both a new "Top Ten" list, and serves to renew neighborhood enthusiasm and leadership. Through this process, each neighborhood is encouraged to examine the organizational capacity of its Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) and the overall community. The intent is to deepen the organizational capacity of the NAC and to create a network of interconnected neighborhood leaders as the Renewing the Action Agenda process unfolds.

Renewing the Action Agenda and renewing neighborhood leadership are interconnected and interdependent. Implementing a "Top Ten" list requires effective neighborhood leadership. Strong leadership develops through the experience of action, balanced with reflection. The mix of four categories provides the opportunity for a variety of leadership styles and approaches. The intent is to build a broader and more diverse leadership network with an emphasis on action.

Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area. Located approximately seven miles southeast of downtown San José, the Edenvale/Great Oaks SNI Planning Area is comprised of two distinct but similar neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are bounded by Coyote Road to the north, U.S. 101 to the east, Blossom Hill Road and Monterey Road to the south, and Rahway Drive to Roeder Road, including Caroline Davis Intermediate School, to the west. The Edenvale and Great Oaks neighborhoods not only share a comparable mix of land uses and similar resident populations, they also face many of the same challenges. Together, the adjacent neighborhoods encompass approximately 440 acres of land located within Council District 2. There are a total of 3,149 households in the Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood, and the average household size is 3.92 residents.

The Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood has a suburban character and consists primarily of single-family homes, duplexes and apartments. In the southeastern corner of the neighborhood there is also a mobile home park located between U.S. 101 and the Monterey Road. Two neighborhood elementary schools, Edenvale Elementary School and Stipe Elementary School, are located within the Plan Area.

Caroline Davis Intermediate School is also located within the neighborhood. The neighborhood contains one public park, the 12-acre Great Oaks Park, as well as the recently completed Discovery Community Garden. The neighborhood's new skatepark is located within Great Oaks Park.

Although the neighborhood is largely residential, the area does contain some commercial and retail uses. These uses are concentrated along the Monterey Road and southern portion of Roeder Drive. Built in the 1950s and 1960s, the Edenvale Shopping Center is the area's largest commercial development. The Edenvale Center contains restaurants and other neighborhood-serving retail, as well as the Christ the King Catholic Church. The Redevelopment Agency and the property owners have signed an Owner Participation Agreement whereby the Agency and owners are funding parking lot improvements, which include paving, lighting and landscaping. Work on the project began in August 2008. Since the SNI program launched, 4,000 square feet of new retail space has been constructed in the Edenvale/Great Oaks neighborhood.

ANALYSIS

Edenvale/Great Oaks Planning Process and Participation

The RAA process was conducted through three community workshops and various small group discussions were held with youth, parent, resident, religious, and educational groups to help build interest in participating and obtaining input on potential priorities.

A steering committee of neighborhood residents and stakeholders was formed to guide the process and develop an outreach strategy. In order to build awareness about the upcoming RAA workshops large posters were placed in the windows of the local merchants announcing the workshops and the opportunity to get involved. In addition, surveys were conducted and informational tables were set-up at the library, church, neighborhood supermarket, and school events. A network of street captains and volunteers was used to deliver flyers door to door for each workshop. In addition, the three neighborhood schools included information about the workshops in their weekly school packet. The neighborhood church included the workshop information in its weekly bulletin. Finally, the email and phone database were used as a reminder of the upcoming workshops.

The first community workshop was held on March 12, 2008. It opened with a presentation on the neighborhood's accomplishments (nine of the ten existing priorities are complete with the tenth well underway) and introduction to the City Council-approved selection criteria and framework categories set-forth to guide the Action Agenda renewal process. Participants were asked to discuss their vision and goals for the future of the neighborhood, as well as any issues they believe should be included in the new "Top Ten" priority list. The community feedback strongly reaffirmed the vision and goals established in the original plan, which are safety and crime reduction; service delivery; community engagement; traffic, circulation, and parking; recreation, youth and family services; and beautification and community identity.

The second community workshop was held on April 9, 2008. For those participants new to the process, the presentation included an overview of the material presented at the first workshop, as well as a summary of the vision and goals discussion and the preliminary list of community-identified priorities. Participants were given a list of all the priorities identified in the first workshop and asked

to prioritize the issues and consider which should be included in the new Top Ten list. A representative from each table presented their group's ideas for additional priorities to the larger group and further discussed how the priority would address a need in the neighborhood. After the large group discussion, community members were given five "sticker dots" to vote for their top five priorities. The "dot voting exercise" provided a clear indication of the issues the community considered vital to improving the neighborhood.

The third and final community workshop was held on May 17, 2008 and began with an overview of the two previous workshops, followed by a presentation of the results from the voting exercise. The preliminary results indicated twelve potential items for the new Top Ten list. In order to narrow the list down to the community's "Top Ten" most important issues, the group reviewed and discussed the twelve priorities. Representatives from various City departments and agencies took part in the discussion to offer additional details, address community concerns and answer questions. Specifically, Jeremy Shoffner, the Recreation Supervisor for Citywide Aquatics (addressed Priority 5); Rudy Navarro, the Facility Reuse Project Manager for the City of San José (Priority 6); and Lieutenant Frank Aviles of the Southern Division for the San José Police Department (Priority 9), addressed the group.

During the discussion, community members suggested specific action items for each priority and volunteered to help implement them. Community volunteers signed up for each priority to help ensure community input and support moving forward. At the end of the workshop, community members voted once again and established the new "Top Ten" list.

Renewed "Top Ten" Priority Actions

The "Top Ten" Priority Actions listed below are ranked in order of importance as identified by the Community as having the greatest potential for positive impact:

1. Address Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Issues
2. Establish Regular Neighborhood Clean-Up Events
3. Provide Free or Low-Cost Health Clinic and Services
4. Build the Edenvale Community Center
5. Build a Community Pool
6. Re-Open the Edenvale Youth and Family Center
7. Establish Educational Programs and Career Services
8. Install Security Cameras in Neighborhood
9. Increase Police Presence and Response
10. Trim Trees

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) is a partnership between the San José Redevelopment Agency, the City of San José, San José residents and business owners. The goal of the SNI is to improve neighborhood conditions, enhance community safety, facilitate community services and strengthen neighborhood associations. The renewal of the Edenvale/Great Oaks Action Agenda will assist in meeting neighborhood development goals.

City Council accepted the original *Strong Neighborhood Initiative Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan* in December 2001. The SNI Neighborhood Improvement Plan is downloadable and available for review online at: <http://www.strongneighborhoods.org/edenvale06.asp>. All subsequent and individual *Strong Neighborhood Initiative Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* action items will be brought to City Council for consideration before implementation.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The public participation process fostered active community involvement and engaged community members who participated in past planning efforts as well as those residents who have previously been unable to do so. The community workshops offered multiple opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and develop a sense of ownership in developing the new "Top Ten" list. All of the community workshops were open to the public and included Spanish and Vietnamese translation services, as well as childcare and refreshments for attendees.

A steering committee of neighborhood stakeholders led the outreach process which included door-to-door flyer distribution, email and phone reminders, placing poster and informational tables at key neighborhood locations and events, flyer distribution via the three schools, and small group presentations.

COORDINATION

The preparation of the *Edenvale Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* was coordinated with the District 2 Council Office, various City departments and agencies, including Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Transportation; and the San José Police Department. On August 31, 2008, SNI staff reviewed the draft *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* with the neighborhood steering committee to receive input and comments.

CEQA

The SNI Program EIR, Resolution No. 71045, was adopted by City Council on June 11, 2002. The proposed activity is within the scope of the SNI Program EIR. The proposed action is for the City to acknowledge the Community's vision for improvement within the identified SNI neighborhood area, as expressed in the *Edenvale/Great Oaks Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*, and more specifically in the updated "Top Ten" priority list. However, by acknowledging the Community's

vision and amended "Top Ten" list of improvements, the City is not taking an action that commits the City to the implementation of the Community's identified improvements. When specific development projects are formally proposed as either public or private actions, they will be subject to environmental review to identify potential significant project-specific impacts.



NORBERTO DUEÑAS
Deputy City Manager



JOHN WEIS
Assistant Executive Director