



PC AGENDA: 10/8/08  
ITEM: 3.a.

## Memorandum

**TO:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** John Weis  
Norberto Dueñas

**SUBJECT:** K.O.N.A. SNI  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN AMENDMENT

**DATE:** September 25, 2008

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS:** 7 and 8  
**SNI AREA:** K.O.N.A.

### RECOMMENDATION

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

- (a) Accept the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) *King Ocala Neighborhood Area (K.O.N.A.) Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* as the renewed community vision for the future of the K.O.N.A. SNI Planning Area; and,
- (b) Encourage K.O.N.A. area residents, property owners and community members to continue to dedicate their time, energy and resources towards the *Plan* and this *Amendment* while continuing with their current community-building activities.

### OUTCOME

City Council acceptance of the *K.O.N.A. Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate to the K.O.N.A. 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 significant numbers of people who are ready to take action to be part of the solution.

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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.** Done well, 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 these three foundational criteria, the priorities in each Action Agenda should be a balanced mix of the following categories: Neighborhood Action, Services or Social Issues and Capital Projects.

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 only develops through the experience of action, balanced with reflection. The mix of 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.

**K.O.N.A. SNI Planning Area.** The K.O.N.A. SNI Planning Area is located southeast of downtown and is bounded by Highway 101 to the west, Tully Road to the south, Story Road to the north and the eastern boundary stretches from Story Road down King Road to Ocala Avenue and then to Reid-Hillview Airport between Ocala Avenue and Tully Road.

The K.O.N.A. Neighborhood is predominately residential with most retail and commercial establishments located on King, Tully and Story Roads. The neighborhood is approximately 695 acres with a population of roughly 17,000 residents. Sixty-eight percent of neighborhood residents identify themselves as Latino and twenty-three percent as Asian. The median household income in K.O.N.A. is approximately \$77,000, which is higher than all but one other SNI neighborhood, but still well below the city-wide median of nearly \$90,000.

There are substantial community assets in K.O.N.A., including good access to transit and freeways, the newly renovated Welch Park, the Boys & Girls Club, a vital business district with neighborhood-serving stores and services, faith-based organizations and active community organizations, five public school campuses, one private school campus, and proximity to the regional Eastridge Mall and Lake Cunningham Park.

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### ANALYSIS

#### K.O.N.A. Planning Process and Participation

The K.O.N.A. SNI neighborhood has completed the Renewing the Action Agenda Process. The renewal process included a series of two community workshops, one Neighborhood Action Coalition retreat and two NAC meetings held over a period of six months from in March 2007 through August 2007. Outreach for these community meetings included two mailers sent to every property in the K.O.N.A. SNI area, e-mails and flyers sent to residents on the mailing list and reminder phone calls made to the residents that regularly attend the NAC meetings.

On March 19, 2007, the K.O.N.A. SNI NAC reviewed and discussed the accomplishments of the original Top Ten priority list. On May 19, 2007, the NAC held a retreat to discuss its priorities and decisions were made as to which projects were deemed not feasible, in progress and complete, or partially complete. From there, the NAC moved into the next phase of the renewal process, reviewing the original Top Ten with the larger K.O.N.A. community at the June 18, 2007, NAC meeting. The meeting covered the purpose and goals of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, the proposed renewal process and a review of the existing Top Ten priorities and projects for the K.O.N.A. Neighborhood. The NAC came to consensus as to which Top Ten goals had been met and which project elements still needed to be completed. Also on the agenda for the meeting was to brainstorm new and proposed priorities for the amended Top Ten list. The K.O.N.A. community worked diligently to incorporate current goals with the emerging needs of the community. Community members were asked to focus on a variety of project types including: *neighborhood action priorities*, which are projects that can be implemented during the planning process or within the first year; *service delivery projects*, which are projects that maintain and improve services for the neighborhood (i.e. cleaner residential streets, rehabilitated housing, community policing, etc.); and *capital projects and transformative projects*, which are projects that neither the community nor the City is really sure are possible, but if accomplished, would move the neighborhoods significantly closer to their vision. In addition, community members were asked to consider whether proposed projects were important to the whole neighborhood (or a significant part), whether they were transformative, and whether the City could and should have a role in project implementation. With that backdrop, neighbors brainstormed ideas for future projects.

At the July 16, 2007, K.O.N.A. SNI NAC meeting, the neighborhood reviewed the new proposed Top Ten priority list. At that meeting, they engaged in a "dot voting" exercise in which each neighbor was given ten sticker dots to vote for their individual top priorities. At the end of the meeting, the K.O.N.A. neighborhood had a prioritized Top Ten list. At its August 20, 2007, NAC Meeting, the NAC revisited and finalized its new Top Ten list.

Strong Neighborhoods Initiative staff and City department staff reviewed the new and proposed Top Ten priority list with the goal of developing feasibility information. The community members then reviewed the staff's work regarding definition and feasibility. Decisions were made collaboratively by City staff and the K.O.N.A. NAC to redefine projects or drop projects based on feasibility, cost and schedule information. The community-wide vision was reaffirmed and the vision served to help define a new Top Ten list of project themes and priority projects.

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### **Renewed "Top Ten" Priority Actions**

The "Top Ten" Priority Actions represent the short list of revised priority actions that the community selected as having the greatest potential for positive impact in the K.O.N.A. SNI Area. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions listed below are ranked in order of importance as identified by the community:

1. Evaluate neighborhood traffic complaints and address them with appropriate traffic calming measures.
2. Implement crime prevention and public safety programs.
3. Implement a comprehensive strategy to reduce bulky waste.
4. Address security and aesthetic improvements at the various retail centers while continuing with the Tropicana Shopping Center improvements.
5. Build partnerships with local schools to improve the appearance and facilities at school sites.
6. Promote affordable housing programs and improve the appearance of residential areas by maximizing use of Housing Department's Rehabilitation Program for single-family homes.
7. Establish a K.O.N.A. community facility that serves as a neighborhood center.
8. Repair broken and cracked sidewalks, curbs and gutters.
9. Install street trees and explore remnant parcels as landscaping opportunities to improve the appearance of the K.O.N.A SNI Area.
10. Increase K.O.N.A. youth afterschool and summer program participation in existing and new programs.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative is a partnership between the Redevelopment Agency, the City of San José, San José residents and business owners. The goals of the SNI are to improve neighborhood conditions, enhance community safety, facilitate community services and strengthen neighborhood associations. The renewal of the K.O.N.A. Action Agenda will assist in meeting these goals.

The City Council accepted the original *Strong Neighborhoods Initiative K.O.N.A. Neighborhood Improvement Plan* in February 2002. The original SNI Neighborhood Improvement Plan is downloadable and available for review online at:

[http://www.strongneighborhoods.org/Plans\\_06/KONAPlan.pdf](http://www.strongneighborhoods.org/Plans_06/KONAPlan.pdf)

All subsequent, individual *Strong Neighborhoods Initiative K.O.N.A. Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* action items will be brought to Council for consideration before implementation.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

In 2007 and 2008, staff conducted a series of five meetings for the Renewing the Action Agenda process with extensive community outreach. All residents within the K.O.N.A. SNI Planning Area were notified by mail about the Renewing the Action Agenda process and were invited to attend the meetings. In addition, staff sent out letters to residents on the mailing list, sent e-mails to neighborhood associations for distribution to their members, walked door-to-door with reminder flyers, and made reminder phone calls to community members that regularly attend the K.O.N.A. NAC and community meetings.

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COORDINATION

The preparation of the *SNI K.O.N.A. Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* was coordinated with the District 7 and District 8 Council Offices and various city departments, including Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Transportation; Public Works; Environmental Services; and the San José Police Department.

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 *SNI K.O.N.A. 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.



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**USE OF A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN EIR  
FOR THE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE PROGRAM IN SAN JOSE**

Pursuant to Section 15180 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of San Jose has determined that the project described below is pursuant to or in furtherance of a Redevelopment Plan and does not involve new significant effects beyond those analyzed in the Final Redevelopment Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) cited below. Therefore, the City of San Jose can take action on the project as being within the scope of the Redevelopment Plan and the Final EIR.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative King Ocala Neighborhood Area (K.O.N.A.) Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment consists primarily of 10 priority actions and an action matrix for property bounded by Highway 101 to the west, Tully Road to the south, Story Road to the north and the eastern boundary stretches from Story Road down King Road to Ocala Avenue and then to Reid-Hillview Airport between Ocala Avenue and Tully Road. The designated Redevelopment Area makes up the entire Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Area in K.O.N.A. In general, the Redevelopment Area is predominantly residential with most retail and commercial establishments located on King, Tully and Story Roads. Community assets abound in K.O.N.A., including good access to transit and freeways; a newly renovated Welch Park, the Boys and Girls Club, a vital business district with neighborhood serving stores and services, faith-based organizations, active community organizations, five public schools, one private school, and proximity to the regional Eastridge Mall and Lake Cunningham Park. The purpose of this project is to update the existing neighborhood improvement plan, renew a prioritized "top ten" list and create an action agenda as many previously adopted priority action items have been completed.

Council Districts 7 & 8.

County Assessor's Parcel Numbers: Various

The environmental impacts of this project were addressed by a Final EIR entitled, "Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Program," and findings were adopted by City Council Resolution No. 71045 on June 11, 2002. Specifically, the following impacts were reviewed and found to be adequately considered by the EIR:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic and Circulation                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Soils and Geology              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Services                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Biotics                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual and Aesthetic Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Airport Considerations         | <input type="checkbox"/> Microclimate                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Relocation Issues              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Storm Drainage       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation               | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services and Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Policy       |  |

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 K.O.N.A. 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.

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9/9/08  
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