

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: SPARTAN KEYES SNI
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT

DATE: November 10, 2008

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 3 & 7
SNI AREA: Spartan Keyes

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission voted 5-0-1, Commissioner Platten absent, to recommend that the City Council:

- Consider the Environmental Impact Report in accordance with CEQA, and
- 1) Accept the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* as the renewed community vision for the future of the Spartan Keyes SNI Planning Area; and
 - 2) Encourage Spartan Keyes 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 community-building activities.

OUTCOME

City Council acceptance of the *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate support for the Spartan Keyes 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

At the November 5, 2008 Planning Commission hearing, members of the Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) spoke in support of their renewed Top Ten list and asked for the Commission's support for the *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment (NIPA)*. Julian Peeples, current Co-Chair to the Spartan Keyes NAC, stated that this

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document has been the effort of hundreds of community members, that the vision and goals of the document truly reflect their desires and that they are energetic and eager to work for them. He also acknowledged the SNI staff and especially the community itself for all their help. Rita Torres, Co-Chair to the Spartan Keyes NAC, spoke about how she personally has been an active participant for eight years now, has lived here for over 20 years in the neighborhood, and has seen incredible transformation in the community. She stated the changes are visible in the facade improvements, new developments, and home improvements in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Zito asked Ms. Torres to illuminate what she thought the three most important accomplishments that the Spartan Keyes NAC had done in the last six years. Ms. Torres responded that the first would be the unity of the neighborhood, because the Neighborhood Improvement Plan has brought the neighbors together. She stated the second accomplishment would be the traffic calming, since some traffic is like a freeway through Spartan Keyes because of the one-way streets, and that traffic spills over onto the residential streets in between. She noted some traffic calming devices, such as speed bumps and bulb-outs, have helped keep vehicles on the major streets, and that the prohibition of trucks during certain hours has helped make it so that residents can sleep well at night. Ms. Torres stated that the third accomplishment is beautification, highlighting that a park was built at Bestor Art Park, where artists have donated art features, and a partnership with a developer created the Art Ark Common House Gallery and related artist housing. She explained that the development helped create a nice environment for a strong relationship with the art community and the Spartan Keyes residents and gave examples of the contributions from the foundry and San José State University. She also commented that the neighborhood just had their first art festival and is currently planning a day of daffodil planting, and that the overall beautification makes for a more pedestrian feel of residential and commercial areas, which are lacking in this part of the city. She mentioned that the area historically was an industrial area and an addition to the City, and that she is hoping to keep the industrial transformation going with more restaurants and higher neighbor-serving businesses. She further noted that change is coming to the country and change is coming to Spartan Keyes. Chairman Zito commented that it is exciting to hear these improvements, especially considering that he and Commissioner Campos were on the Planning Commission since the adoption of their first Neighborhood Improvement Plan. Commissioner Kamkar acknowledged Rudy Rodriguez, a Spartan Keyes member in the audience, from the Small Business Development Commission.

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

The Planning Commission then closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Jenson congratulated the neighbors on their accomplishments, such as the beautiful freeway transition treatments from South 7th and Virginia Streets, and the joint Coyote Creek Trail Master Plan completion that also runs through the adjoining Five Wounds Brookwood Terrace NAC, 13th Street NAC, and the University NAC. She also congratulated and acknowledged the new goals, such as for the continued arts promotion in the community and more traffic calming. She also stated she was excited to continue the joint NAC work to complete the Coyote Creek Trail. Commissioner Do commented that he likes the neighborhood, that there is great potential for transformation with the availability of mixed industrial, housing use and

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conversions, and that the area to him could potentially look like Fourth Street in Berkeley with all the shops, artists and different housing types. He also asked staff if there is any city effort for master planning the community's design. Staff mentioned that the Martha Gardens Specific Plan for the west side of Spartan Keyes and the City's General Plan are available.

The Commission then voted 5-0-1 (Commissioner Platten absent) to recommend that the City Council accept the *Plan Amendment*.

ANALYSIS

The proposed *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* is consistent with and a natural extension of the original Strong Neighborhoods Initiative *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan*, which was accepted by City Council on June 18, 2002. The *Plan Amendment* allows the community to continue to implement the vision for the Spartan Keyes SNI Planning Area. Further analysis is presented in the October 8, 2008 staff report (attached).

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Subsequent, individual Strong Neighborhoods Initiative *Spartan Keyes 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)**

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Although this item does not meet any of the above criteria, staff followed a similar approach to public outreach as in the 2002 *Spartan Keys Neighborhood Improvement Plan* process. Between January 2008 and September 2008, staff conducted several NAC meetings, two community workshops and numerous discussions with a wide range of stakeholders for the Renewing the Action Agenda process with extensive community outreach. All residents within the Spartan Keys 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 Spartan Keys SNI NAC and community meetings.

COORDINATION

The preparation of the SNI *Spartan Keys Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* was coordinated with the District 3 Council Office, District 7 Council Office and various city departments, including the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Department of Transportation; Department of Public Works; San José Police Department; City Manager's Office; and the San José Redevelopment Agency.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

Not applicable.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable at this time.

BUDGET REFERENCE

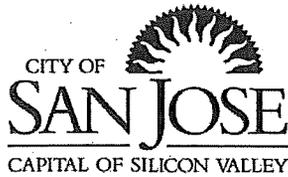
Not applicable.

CEQA

Resolution No. 71045.


for JOSEPH HORWEDEL, SECRETARY
Planning Commission

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



Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: John Weis
Norberto Dueñas

**SUBJECT: SPARTAN KEYES SNI
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT**

DATE: October 8, 2008

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 3&7
SNI AREA: Spartan Keyes

RECOMMENDATION

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

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

OUTCOME

City Council acceptance of the *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate to the Spartan Keyes 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.

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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.
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 focus 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 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 only 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.

Spartan Keyes SNI Planning Area:

The Spartan Keyes SNI Area is located approximately one mile southeast of Downtown San José and half a mile south of San José State University (SJSU). The area is bounded by Interstate 280 (I-280) to the north; the Hollywood Avenue block, East Humboldt Street, and East Alma Avenue to the south; Senter Road to the east; and South 1st Street to the west. The Spartan Keyes SNI Planning area is within Council Districts 3 and 7.

The Spartan Keyes SNI Area is a mixed neighborhood of single-family homes, duplexes, multi-family apartments, condominiums, artists' studios, numerous commercial establishments, and many industrial businesses. Several north-south streets in the Spartan Keyes SNI Planning Area function as major cross-town routes, as do two east-west streets including Keyes Street, the main commercial corridor; Martha Street, the main east-west route north of Keyes Street; and the short stretch of East Alma Avenue, along the southern border.

There are several public and quasi-public facilities in the area. SJSU has several facilities within the Spartan Keyes SNI Planning Area, including the SJSU Foundry, Spartan Stadium, Koret Center, Spartan Field, Blethen Field, and Bud Winter Field. The neighborhood's first park, Bestor Art Park,

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and the adjacent Art Ark Common House Gallery are recently opened community facilities. The gallery is a focal point for the neighborhood's growing arts community. The Vietnamese Seventh - Day Adventist church is located on South 2nd Street just north of Keyes Street. Additionally, Coyote Creek runs through the Story Road Landfill site (now closed) in the northwest portion of the area. Kelley Park, Washington Elementary School, Lowell Elementary School, Biblioteca Latinoamericana, Washington United Youth Center, San José Municipal Stadium, and Shark's Ice at San José Hockey Rink lie just outside the boundaries of the Spartan Keyes SNI Area.

ANALYSIS

Spartan Keyes Planning Process and Participation

The RAA community planning process was conducted for the Spartan Keyes SNI Area between January 2008 and September 2008. This involved several Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) meetings, two community workshops, and numerous discussions with a wide range of stakeholders. Extensive outreach was conducted throughout the Spartan Keyes SNI Area during the RAA community planning process. All NAC meetings related to the RAA process were announced in the local neighborhood newsletter. Outreach for the two community workshops included a mailer to every household in the Spartan Keyes SNI Area, e-mails and letters sent to residents on the mailing list, canvassing of homes throughout the area, and reminder phone calls made to the residents who regularly attend NAC meetings. Following the completion of the two community workshops, which took place on April 19, 2008 and June 7, 2008, leaders from the NAC worked closely with City staff and consultants to produce the 2008 *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*, a plan which reflects the vision and goals of the community.

To begin the process, two Spartan Keyes NAC meetings were held in which the Coalition reviewed and discussed the accomplishments of the original Top Ten Priority Action Items. There was discussion regarding neighborhood priorities and decisions were made as to which projects were complete, partially complete, in progress, incomplete or not feasible. The Spartan Keyes NAC then moved into the next phase of the RAA Process, which included reviewing the original Top Ten Priority Action Items with the larger Spartan Keyes SNI Area at the first community workshop.

The first community workshop was held on April 19, 2008, at the Leininger Community Center in Kelley Park. Forty people attended the workshop facilitated by Public Vision Research (PVR) consultant. After a short presentation to orient residents to the RAA planning process, progress on the top priorities from the 2002 Neighborhood Improvement Plan was reviewed and confirmed with community members. As part of this process, new community vision and goals were identified. The Spartan Keyes community worked hard to incorporate current goals with the emerging needs of the neighborhood. As a result of this conversation and workshop, a list of 42 new potential action items was created.

The second community workshop was held on June 7, 2008 at the Art Ark Common House Gallery and also facilitated by PVR. The list of 42 new potential action items was reviewed, discussed and prioritized. At the end of the second community workshop, the Spartan Keyes NAC had a new list of Top Ten priority action items. Following the second community workshop, SNI staff, various City department staff and other involved entities reviewed the proposed Top Ten priority list with the goal

of developing feasibility information. The *Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* document was then drafted in partnership with the community, which included updated vision and goals and a detailed strategic action plan.

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. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions listed below are ranked in order of importance as identified by the community:

1. Redevelop the American Can Company property into a park, plaza, café, community/arts center, and various housing types including artist studios.
2. Implement traffic calming strategies throughout the neighborhood.
3. Create a neighborhood center with classes for adults and kids to mingle. Increase services to children and increase the involvement of Spartan Keyes residents in youth-based programs.
4. Work with City staff to evaluate General Plan land use designations, in particular, review high density housing designations in the lower-density established neighborhoods, where appropriate.
5. Construct Coyote Creek Trail within the Spartan Keyes neighborhood.
6. Improve safety in the neighborhood.
7. Provide more code enforcement in the neighborhood, targeting blight created by abandoned houses and vehicles.
8. Provide a new neighborhood park. In particular, explore utilizing the land to the west and south of the Cash & Carry lot for a park.
9. Attract businesses that meet the needs of residents, including a café with outdoor seating, grocery store, convenience store, drug store, and a post office.
10. Explore and, if possible, improve the condition of the alleyways.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative 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 Spartan Keyes Action Agenda will assist in meeting this goal of neighborhood development.

The City Council accepted the original *Strong Neighborhood Initiative Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan* in May 2002. The original Plan is downloadable and available for review online at: http://www.strongneighborhoods.org/Plans_06/SpartankeyesPlan.pdf. All subsequent, individual *Strong Neighborhood Initiative Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* action items will be brought to Council for consideration before implementation.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Several Spartan Keys Neighborhood Action Coalition meetings and two larger community workshops were held for the Renewing the Action Agenda process with extensive community outreach. All residents within the Spartan Keys 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 reminders, and made reminder phone calls to community members that regularly attend Spartan Keys NAC and community meetings.

COORDINATION

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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 *Spartan Keys 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