



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Planning Commission

**SUBJECT:** HOFFMAN/VIA MONTE SNI  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN AMENDMENT

**DATE:** April 27, 2009

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**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 10  
**SNI AREA:** Hoffman/Via Monte

## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission voted 6-0-1 (Cahan absent) to recommend that the City Council:

Consider the Environmental Impact Report in accordance with CEQA, and

- 1) Accept the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* as the renewed community vision for the future of the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Planning Area; and
- 2) Encourage Hoffman/Via Monte 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 *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* will demonstrate support to the Hoffman/Via Monte Strong Neighborhoods Initiative community that Council, City 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 April 22, 2009, three members of the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) – including Laura Mungia, Co-Chair of the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI NAC; Carmen Navarro Hoffman/Via Monte resident and Youth Leader; and Brenda Perales, a second Hoffman/Via Monte resident and Youth Leader – spoke to the Planning Commission and requested support of the *Hoffman/Via Monte 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. Each speaker indicated that there is a strong commitment from the youth and the entire community for acceptance of this proposed *Plan Amendment*. Each speaker asked for the City's continued support of Hoffman/Via Monte's renewed Top-Ten Action Agenda as documented in the *Plan Amendment*.

Moreover, Ms. Mungia expressed her strong support for the *Plan Amendment*. She highlighted some of the important accomplishments that have been achieved with the original neighborhood improvement plan, including: (1) alleyway improvement projects that included reconstruction of extremely deteriorated alleyways and new fencing; (2) addressing blight issues and curbing illegal dumping with a proactive Code Enforcement Program; and (3) the re-establishment of a neighborhood watch program with the expert assistance of Hoffman/Via Monte Community Activity Worker Monica Limas, since the neighborhood residents continue to be very concerned with crime and safety issues throughout the neighborhood. Ms. Mungia indicated that this community now has new needs, including Hoffman/Via Monte's number one new Top-Ten Priority, a new neighborhood center, to serve as a landmark in the community and to build pride of ownership and pride in the neighborhood itself. Ms. Mungia concluded by stating that, "We look forward to our ongoing partnership with the City as we work on completing the next ten priorities. We hope that our new goals and dreams become realities and we truly appreciate the City's support in achieving them."

Ms. Navarro also expressed her support for the *Plan Amendment* and stated that, "as a Junior at Pioneer High School and a resident of the Hoffman/Via Monte neighborhood, I am here not only on behalf of my community, but I am here representing the voice of the Hoffman/Via Monte youth and young adults." She indicated that the Hoffman/Via Monte youth were very proactive in providing valuable input during the community meetings that were held to develop the *Plan Amendment*. She described some of the new Top-Ten priorities that are important to her and other youth in this neighborhood, including: (1) establishing recreation programs that provide and promote healthy lifestyles; (2) establishing resident training classes to help youth and young adults develop valuable life-skills; and (3) building a new Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Center in the neighborhood to host recreation programs and resident training classes, which truly represents the needs and desires of the Hoffman/Via Monte youth.

Finally, Ms. Perales, a sophomore at Pioneer High School and a resident of the Hoffman/Via Monte neighborhood, stated that, like Carmen Navarro, she was speaking on behalf of all Hoffman/Via Monte youth, and young adults. Ms. Perales indicated that she wished to highlight some of the other new priorities that are important to the youth and the entire community within the *Plan Amendment*. She stated a top priority is increasing police presence to keep the youth and the neighborhood safe. To further this point, she stated that, "through the community-policing process, our neighborhood has enjoyed a great working relationship with Captain Edwards, Lieutenant Bowen and their staff and we look forward to continuing this strong, collaborative relationship". Ms. Perales then highlighted that, continuing on the theme of neighborhood safety, the Plan Amendment included improving neighborhood lighting to enhance safety and security throughout the neighborhood, and also improving the Chris Hotts Park with a

basketball court, a group picnic area, and a new seating area so teens have a place to go and have something to do in an environment that is welcoming to teens and adults alike.

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

The Planning Commission closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Jensen congratulated all the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) members that participated in the *Plan Amendment* and, in particular, she congratulated the three youth and NAC representatives that spoke at the public hearing. Moreover, she pointed out that she was impressed by the number of difficult priorities the NAC has been able to accomplish to date, including fixing streets and alleyways, lighting, dumping and landscaping issues, and neighborhood clean-ups – all of which she stated that she knows are very difficult because she lives in an SNI neighborhood area. Commissioner Jensen noted that some of the new priorities that the NAC has identified are carry-over items to continue the good work needed in the neighborhood and that this neighborhood approach is important. Commissioner Jensen also noted she is a neighbor of Community Activity Worker Monica Limas and she knows first-hand how hard Ms. Limas works. She expressed her congratulations to Ms. Limas for working so diligently and successfully with the Hoffman/Via Monte neighborhood.

Commissioner Campos expressed his thanks and congratulations to the Hoffman/Via Monte community members for all of their hard work. He indicated that he drove through the neighborhood recently and, while he recognizes the NAC still has a lot of work ahead, he was very impressed with the huge changes and improvements that the NAC has made to date, particularly around the issue of addressing and eliminating graffiti, as compared to his past visits to the neighborhood. Commissioner Campos asked staff to clarify if the two parcels with the vacant buildings at the corner of Gallup Drive and Mesa Drive are the site of the proposed future neighborhood center, and any construction schedule. Staff confirmed the location as the proposed future neighborhood center, already acquired by the Redevelopment Agency. Staff stated the Agency is working to begin design of the neighborhood center, to conduct community outreach to develop the programmatic spaces for the new facility, and that construction could potentially begin next year. Commissioner Campos also asked staff to clarify if future alleyway improvements would require enclosing the existing trash receptacles in alleyways. Staff confirmed that new alleyway improvements would be required to meet the City's current trash receptacle and dumpster enclosure standards. Commissioner Campos then noted the proposed future neighborhood center was well located at one of the gateways into the neighborhood, and he congratulated the neighborhood and staff on selecting this location.

Commissioner Zito congratulated the youth and NAC members for attending the hearing, for their ongoing hard work and dedication in the neighborhood, and for bringing forward the *Plan Amendment*. He noted that, typically, it is older San José community members and property owners who attend these hearings to represent the SNI neighborhoods, and that he recognized how important it was to see the youth come forward and give time and dedication to the community as our future leaders. He congratulated them again on this accomplishment.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Jensen to recommend that Council accept the proposed *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*. Commissioner Kamkar seconded the motion. The Commission voted 6-0-1 (Commissioner Cahan absent) to recommend to the City Council to accept this *Plan Amendment*.

### **ANALYSIS**

The proposed *Hoffman/Via Monte Improvement Plan Amendment* is consistent with, and an extension of, the original SNI *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan* that was accepted by City Council in April 2002. This *Plan Amendment* allows the community to continue to implement the vision for the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Planning Area.

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

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

### **POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

Not applicable.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

- Criterion 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criterion 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)**
- Criterion 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 2002 SNI *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan* process. Between October 2007 and May 2008, several community meetings along with two facilitator-led community workshops were held for this process that included extensive community outreach, several stakeholder and engaged community member discussions held with youth, property owners, parents, residents, religious, and educational groups, and several

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Date: April 27, 2009

**Subject: Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment**

Page 5

Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Neighborhood Action Coalition (NAC) meetings to build interest and participation in the Renewing the Action Agenda process and creation of the *Plan Amendment*. All residents within the Hoffman/Via Monte SNI Planning Area were notified by mail about the community meetings. In addition, a steering committee of neighborhood stakeholders led an active outreach process that included door-to-door flyer distribution, email and phone reminders to community members that regularly attend NAC meetings, flyers posted at the high school located in the SNI Planning Area and at the nearby Vineland Branch Library, and via other small group presentations. All community meetings were open to the public and included Spanish translation, childcare, and refreshments for attendees. Staff has also been available to respond to questions from the public.

### **COORDINATION**

The preparation of the *Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* was coordinated with the District 10 Council Office, 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; Housing Department; and the San José Police Department.

### **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 Project Manager, Juan Borelli at 535-7709.