



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Joseph Horwedel

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: March 9, 2010

Approved

Date

3/9/10

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 3 & 6
SNI AREAS: University Neighborhoods,
Thirteenth Street and Five Wounds
Brookwood Terrace

SUBJECT: COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AUTHORIZING THE PLANNING DIRECTOR TO SUBMIT TWO CALTRANS GRANT APPLICATIONS, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE AGREEMENTS WITH CALTRANS IF THE GRANTS ARE AWARDED TO THE CITY.

RECOMMENDATION

Support the City of San Jose's application to Caltrans for its Community-Based Transportation Planning and Environmental Justice Grants and adopt the following two resolutions:

1. Authorize the Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (PBCE) to file an application on behalf of the City of San Jose to compete for the Caltrans Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to develop an urban corridor plan for South Bascom Avenue and Southwest Expressway, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute all contracts and related documents required for the acceptance of the grant by the City of San Jose, and as may be required by Caltrans for the completion of the grant funded projects.
2. Authorize the Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (PBCE) to file an application on behalf of the City of San Jose to compete for the Caltrans Environmental Justice Grant in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to develop an

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urban corridor plan for East Santa Clara Street, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute all contracts and related documents required for the acceptance of the grant by the City of San Jose, and as may be required by Caltrans for the completion of the grant funded projects.

OUTCOME

City Council approval of the recommended actions will authorize the Director of PBCE to submit applications to Caltrans for the 2010 Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant and Environmental Justice Grant, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute grant agreements and related documents with Caltrans. Two projects are being submitted to Caltrans for the grant funding, both of which would result in the development of focused urban corridor plans to help create vibrant, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented and environmentally sustainable urban corridors along Bascom Avenue and Southwest Expressway, and along East Santa Clara Street, and would encourage economic development in those areas. The Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant is proposed to fund the planning effort along South Bascom and Southwest Expressway and the Environmental Justice Grant is proposed to fund the East Santa Clara effort. Staff are proposing to apply for \$250,000 for each of the two grants; the maximum amount that will be awarded for each grant is \$300,000.

BACKGROUND

The current Envision San Jose 2040 process is a major update of the City's General Plan, and key elements of the future plan alternatives focus new growth in Downtown, North San Jose, along transportation corridors and near transit stations. Many of these areas are already identified in the current San Jose 2020 General Plan and would benefit from a more focused planning process in coordination with area stakeholders to guide new development.

Significant planning has recently occurred in North San Jose, and opportunities for additional planning exist in the other portions of the City. In light of current challenges in the availability of City funding for area planning activities, staff is exploring outside funding sources for such planning.

One possible funding source is from Caltrans, which is seeking applications for two grants due on April 1, 2010, with awards to be given in the summer of 2010. Staff proposes to apply for these grants for locations in central and southwest San Jose:

- The Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant to fund the development of an urban corridor plan for the South Bascom Avenue and Southwest Expressway area.

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- The Environmental Justice Grant to fund an urban corridor plan for the East Santa Clara Street area.

Of all of the potential opportunities for planning efforts in San Jose, these two specific locations were chosen because:

- Vasona Light Rail serves the Southwest Expressway and Bus Rapid Transit is planned for East Santa Clara Street;
- Significant new development and reuse opportunities exist that would support the Valley Transportation Agency's existing and planned transit investments in these areas;
- The San Jose 2020 General Plan contains goals, policies, and planned development capacity to facilitate new development in these areas;
- There is high community interest in planning efforts for these areas, demonstrated by results to date of an online survey for the General Plan Update (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=H4yxJlZLcFOISGgsvBSpDIQaHUa0jUD7vJgYkNfyibU=&>);
- The East Santa Clara effort would leverage the work underway to rezone Alum Rock Avenue to facilitate mixed use, economic development, and other investment in the corridor; and
- Both planning areas have great potential to become vibrant pedestrian oriented urban places that enhance the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhoods by integrating a mix of uses including retail, food markets, offices, public services, housing, places of worship, public parks and plazas.

Background information for each proposed planning area is provided below.

South Bascom Avenue and Southwest Expressway Urban Corridor – Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant

The proposed planning area for the Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant includes the area generally along both sides of South Bascom Avenue from West San Carlos to Southwest Expressway and the area primarily along the south side of Southwest Expressway between Interstate 280 and Bascom Avenue. Most of the properties along Bascom Avenue, a wide six-lane arterial, contain auto-oriented, single-story commercial properties built between the late 1940's and the mid 1970's and are currently planned for commercial uses. While the South Bascom Avenue corridor is not designated a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Corridor in the San Jose 2020 General Plan and no Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail service is planned by VTA along this corridor, the northern portion of the proposed planning area is adjacent to the planned BRT line along West San

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Carlos Street and the southern portion is adjacent to the Vasona Light Rail Corridor and the Bascom Station.

Southwest Expressway is a four-lane arterial parallel to the Vasona Light Rail Line and is adjacent to two light rail stations. This Expressway is already designated as a TOD Corridor in the San Jose 2020 General Plan and is planned for a mix of high density residential and commercial uses on the south side, and a mix of medium low, medium and medium high density, and transit oriented residential on the north side. The existing development generally reflects the General Plan, and includes a large, relatively old shopping center and a significant number of two-story garden apartments and four-plexes built in the 1960's.

During the Envision San Jose 2040 planning process, both South Bascom Avenue and the Southwest Expressway were identified by the community and by the Envision San Jose 2040 Task Force as future pedestrian and transit oriented mixed-use urban corridors which should be planned for some amount of job and/or residential housing growth. A preferred plan for the amount and type of growth capacity will be identified in the next few months in the Envision San Jose 2040 planning process.

East Santa Clara Street Urban Corridor - Environmental Justice Grant

The proposed planning area for East Santa Clara Street includes the stretch between 4th Street and US Highway 101. This area includes a small portion of the Downtown Core and a portion of several Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Areas: 13th Street, Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace and University Neighborhoods. The East Santa Clara Street corridor is designated in the San Jose 2020 General Plan as a Neighborhood Business District, and given that the area is planned for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and is adjacent to two planned BART stations, is also designated as a Transit Oriented Development Corridor. Existing land uses include a mix of single-family dwellings, small scale apartments, one and two story commercial office and retail buildings, and a number of public/quasi public community serving uses. The corridor also contains some larger properties that present key opportunities. The current General Plan generally reflects the existing uses, although some higher density residential uses are planned.

Similarly to South Bascom Avenue and Southwest Expressway, East Santa Clara Street was identified through the Envision San Jose 2040 process as a corridor that should be enhanced as a pedestrian and transit oriented mixed-use urban corridor. This corridor was also identified as a location which should be planned for some amount of job and/or residential housing growth, in part as a means to create a great and vibrant place to serve surrounding neighborhoods.

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ANALYSIS

If Caltrans awards grant funds for these proposals, the City would have the opportunity to develop a policy and zoning ordinance framework to create vibrant mixed-use and pedestrian and transit oriented corridors along South Bascom and Southwest Expressway, and also along East Santa Clara Street. The scope of policy and ordinance development would depend on whether the City is awarded one or both of the grants. These efforts would also further the draft Vision and growth strategies that have been developed in the Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Update process. In addition, any plans developed through the Caltrans grants could be a model for future urban village and corridor planning efforts throughout San Jose. The South Bascom and Southwest Expressway urban corridor plan could provide a model for retrofit of suburban auto-oriented commercial areas in San Jose, and an East Santa Clara plan could provide a model for enhancing older, more fine-grained transportation corridors with predominantly small lots, historic buildings and a wide diversity of land uses.

The proposed planning efforts would be conducted in close collaboration with stakeholders from the respective planning areas and would establish land use and urban design policies and a zoning ordinance framework to help achieve a common vision in each corridor. The planning process would also establish development policies and identify capital/streetscape improvements to promote healthy living by encouraging walking and bicycling, and would identify opportunities to improve access to parks and recreation facilities, and to healthy food choices. If funding is obtained for the proposed East Santa Clara planning effort, it would also provide an opportunity to consider how to integrate surrounding land uses, new development and bike and pedestrian improvements with the Valley Transportation Authority's planned Bus Rapid Transit project. If funded, both efforts would establish strategies and policies to ensure that new development would enhance the surrounding established neighborhoods and contribute towards the positive identity of these communities.

The successful acquisition of the Caltrans grants will enable the City to further achieve the goals of the existing San Jose 2020 General Plan and will provide funding to further develop strategies that will help achieve the proposed Vision and goals of the Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan. Ongoing exploration of similar funding opportunities will be key in assisting the City to continue to support long range area planning in the near future and capitalize on the staff skills and resources in the City's Planning Division, after the completion of the Envision San Jose 2040 planning process in 2011.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

If the City is awarded one of both of these grants, staff will bring any required appropriation actions to the City Council as necessary.

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As additional outside funding opportunities become available, other locations in San Jose will be considered for future planning activities consistent with the existing General Plan and the direction of the General Plan Update.

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)**

The proposed council action does not meet any of the above criteria; however this memorandum will be posted on the City Council's Agenda website prior to the March 23, 2010, Council Meeting.

COORDINATION

The preparation of this memorandum and the proposed resolution was coordinated with the Department of Transportation and the City Attorney.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

The projects proposed to be funded by the Caltrans grants are consistent with the applicable General Plan policies and Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Plans.

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COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

The Guidelines for the Caltrans grant applications require that the City provide a 10% match, with up to one quarter of the match being met through in-kind services including City staff time. Staff is pursuing a portion of the match with other third party funding sources. If these sources do not come through, the grant application will be withdrawn. Staff is not requesting new General Fund support for this effort.

BUDGET REFERENCE

Not Applicable

CEQA

Not a Project.


JOSEPH HORWEDEL, DIRECTOR
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

For questions please contact Michael Brilliot at 408-535-7831.