



Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: WINSTON RHODES, AICP, PLANNING MANAGER

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF CHAPTERS 5 AND 6 OF THE DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN FOR SAN PABLO AVENUE, APPIAN WAY, AND PINOLE VALLEY ROAD

DATE: March 9, 2009

BACKGROUND

A specific plan can be thought of as a hybrid-planning document, which combines the goals and policy statements and implementation measures typically contained in a general plan with the development standards typically contained within a zoning ordinance. Specific plans are a mechanism to achieve a logical and orderly development pattern as well as to coordinate the provision of infrastructure and encourage economic development.

The draft Specific Plan was forwarded to the Planning Commission on January 23, 2009, prior to the January 26, 2009 meeting. At that time an overview of the document was provided. In order to facilitate a thorough review of the draft Specific Plan by the Steering Committee and members of the public, initial discussion of the draft document was scheduled to occur in three parts:

1) Chapter 1-4 on February 23, 2009, 2) Chapters 5 and 6 on March 9, 2009, and 3) Chapters 7-11 on March 23, 2009. This is the second of these three Steering Committee initial discussions to review the draft document, provide feedback, and initiate adjustments based on the feedback received. The Draft Specific Plan Update will be discussed further in April when wider stakeholder input is available for Steering Committee consideration.

DISCUSSION

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 relates to circulation issues. This is the first Chapter that includes both goals and policies for a Specific Plan topic. The Steering Committee should consider the format and clarity of the goals and policies since this text will provide long-term guidance during future project review. Staff recommends use of the term "Goals" rather than "Objectives" consistently through Section 5.2. Staff also recommends restructuring Section 5.2 to list relevant policies under the primary goal that they support to clarify how the community intends to strive to meet each goal. In addition, the Steering Committee should consider the inclusion of specific circulation actions under each policy to communicate the actions the City plans to take to implement the goals and policies within the Specific Plan. This approach could also help consolidate circulation implementation information within the Chapter rather than having readers shift

between this Chapter and the Implementation Chapter.

The content of Chapter 5 will be reviewed by the Traffic and Pedestrian Safety (TAPS) Committee and staff will forward the TAPS Committee feedback to the Steering Committee in April after the TAPS April 15th meeting. In addition, Public Works staff is examining the contents of the Chapter in detail to ensure that relevant implementation considerations are adequately addressed and text is clarified.

Section 5.3 includes text that requires further edits to enhance readability. Some of these edits for the Steering Committee to consider are as follows:

- Page 5.0-8. The last sentence of the third paragraph under the heading Major Arterial should be modified to delete the last four words “and access management techniques”.
- Page 5.0-8. The first sentence under the Minor Arterial heading should be revised and could read: “Minor arterials are intended to be medium speed (35 mph or less) roadways designed to carry both through and local auto traffic as well as facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel.”
- Page 5.0-9. The fifth paragraph should be revised to more clearly describe the portion of Pinole Valley Road that should be considered a minor arterial.
- Page 5.0-10. Paragraph two needs to be revised to make it more comprehensible.
- Page 5.0-10. The first sentence under the heading Collectors should be revised to read, “Collectors consist of either two or four travel lanes and sometimes include bike lanes and landscaped center medians. Collectors include sidewalks that may sometimes be buffered from travel lanes by on-street parking.
- Page 5.0-10. Delete the final sentence of this page.
- Page 5.0-11. The second to last sentence under the heading Local Streets should read “Local streets consist of two travel lanes and include on-street parking.”

The Steering Committee should consider including a discussion of Interstate 80 that bisects the Pinole Valley Road and Appian Way corridors and include text that distinguishes a Freeway/Expressway from a Major Arterial.

The Steering Committee should also consider recognizing other roadway types in Section 5.3 including private alleys or lanes that may be narrower than typical local streets and carry a very low volume of motorized vehicular traffic. This roadway type is important when communicating community expectations about circulation improvements for higher density single-use or mixed-use developments within corridors.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 relates to land use and development issues. This is the second Chapter that includes both goals and policies for a Specific Plan topic. As mentioned above, the Steering Committee should consider the format and clarity of the goals and policies since this text will provide long-term guidance during future project review. Staff recommends use of the term “Goals” rather than “Objectives” consistently through Section 6.2. Staff also recommends restructuring Section 6.2 to list relevant policies under the primary goal that they support to clarify how the community intends to strive to meet each goal. In addition, the Steering Committee should consider the inclusion of specific land use actions under each policy to communicate the actions the City plans to take to implement the goals and policies

within the Specific Plan. This approach could also help consolidate land use implementation information within the Chapter rather than having readers shift between this Chapter and the Implementation Chapter.

Sections 6.3 – 6.7 include land use district information and accompanying development standards for each of the three corridor areas included within the Specific Plan. The land use district information will be used to formulate projected development potential in terms of future dwelling units and non-residential square footage. These sections include content that relates to the key zoning issues for the Zoning Code Update included in Item H3. These key issues should be considered during the review of Chapter 6.

A land use issue that came up at the Steering Committee's February 23 meeting that warrants further consideration during review of Chapter 6 was the Residential Mixed Use (RMU) designation for properties including or abutting Duncan Canyon. Staff recommends that the properties designated RMU along the east side of Appian Way be excluded from the Specific Plan boundaries and that the appropriate land use designation for these properties be determined as part of the General Plan Update. Staff further recommends that all maps of the Specific Plan boundaries including Figure 6.6 be modified to reflect this change affecting the Appian Way corridor.

Staff received two public comment letters on the Specific Plan since the February 23 meeting (see Item I4). The Namack Management Inc. letter requested changes to the maximum height for the 1.92-acre opportunity site located at the southeast corner of Appian Way and Canyon Drive. Staff and the PMC Specific Plan team are requesting input from the Steering Committee on this request. An option to consider is to allow height increases above an identified height standard in conjunction with certain findings or based on specific performance standards (e.g., based upon proximity to Interstate 80, distance from existing residential units, solar orientation of a proposed building, and protection of designated view corridors, or if substantial community benefit could be derived by a particular development proposal).

RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends that the Commission acting as the Steering Committee receive public testimony on the contents of the draft Specific Plan, review draft Chapters 5-6 page by page, and provide feedback and direction to staff and the PMC Specific Plan consultant team on desired changes. Chapters 7-11 are scheduled for preliminary discussion on March 23, 2009. April 27, 2009 is scheduled to complete the preliminary review of the draft Specific Plan after receiving further stakeholder input. Additional information relating to Specific Plan implementation is scheduled for review in May.

ATTACHMENT

Draft Specific Plan Chapters 5 and 6 (provided previously under separate cover)

