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# Memorandum

**TO:** Steering Committee Members

**FROM:** Winston Rhodes, AICP, Planning Manager

**SUBJECT:** Draft Three Corridors Specific Plan and Zoning Code Update Workshop

**DATE:** September 13, 2010

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## Background

The May 2010 Draft Three Corridor Specific Plan and July 2010 Draft Zoning Code Update document has been publicly available since July 7. The documents provide specific policies and detailed regulations to help guide future development through 2030 within the San Pablo Avenue, Pinole Valley Road, and Appian Way corridors as well as the balance of the City outside the Specific Plan boundaries.

The Specific Plan was drafted in late 2008 and reviewed by the Steering Committee during the first half of 2009. The document has evolved based on ongoing stakeholder input and direction from the Steering Committee as different General Plan Elements were drafted and reviewed in 2009 and earlier this year. The Zoning Code Update was prepared earlier this year and reflects input from the City Attorney, a four person Subcommittee, and past Steering Committee review. The existing Zoning Code is referred to on a daily basis and has been developed in an iterative fashion over several decades. Both the draft Specific Plan and Zoning Code are required to be consistent with the General Plan.

## Specific Plan

During the preparation of the Specific Plan the City has received several requests from affected property owners. Below is a summary of these requests with recent related correspondence included as Attachment F.

### North Side of San Pablo Avenue Between Roble and Pinon Avenues

Ms. Monica Shaw has expressed an ongoing desire to modify the Specific Plan land use designation for the north side of San Pablo Avenue between Roble and Pinon Avenues to enable her to start a group home for special needs individuals in the future utilizing her current residence. Her request is to change the proposed designation from Commercial Mixed Use (CMU) to Residential Mixed Use (RMU) to make it easier to obtain financing for the project. In the past, she has been asked to approach other property owners to see if there is consensus among nearby property owners for this change. She has discussed this change with adjacent property owners and staff has received correspondence from several property owners (Ms. Elizabeth Anthony, Ms. Cervantes, and Mr. and Mrs. Bettencourt)

supporting this change for 1400 -1588 San Pablo Avenue area. Staff seeks further direction from the Steering Committee regarding whether to add this change to the Specific Plan Addendum of changes.

John Street Neighborhood and Bartels Property

The City has received input from several property owners within the John Street neighborhood about the desire to retain the existing land use pattern over time. At the previous General Plan Workshop there was support from the neighborhood representatives in attendance as well as the Steering Committee to make the following land use changes:

- 1) Modify the Specific Plan boundaries to exclude the block between Rafaela and Samuel Street west of John Street and all properties east of John Street;
- 2) Change the Bartels property from Residential Mixed Use (RMU) and Medium Density Residential (MDR) to an Open Space land use designation and zoning to better reflect existing conditions and property access concerns; and
- 3) Change the proposed Medium Density Residential (MDR) Specific Plan Land Use to a Suburban Residential General Plan land use designation and zoning in order to protect the single family

The City received a letter on September 7, 2010 (see Attachment F5) signed by 28 residents formally requesting the above changes. Staff is seeking confirmation from the Steering Committee regarding adding these changes to the Specific Plan Addendum of changes.

Quinan Street

City staff has been in contact with Mr. Nyle Seabright, a property owner and resident of Quinan Street, regarding several Specific Plan concerns. He has written two comment letters on the Draft EIR that included concerns about recognizing and protecting the existing land use pattern of Quinan Street. He has requested that the properties designated as Medium Density Residential be planned for Residential Mixed Use (RMU) to reflect the existing mix of single family homes and small businesses in converted residences along the block. In addition to the land use change, Mr. Seabright is concerned about allowing building heights over 35 feet and having larger setbacks and building intensity within the Old Town Sub Area of the Specific Plan near Quinan. Thus far, Mr. Seabright has been the only resident of Quinan to raise these concerns. It should be noted that proposed height requirements are in place to try to ensure compatibility between existing development and future development proposed over 35' within the Old Town Subarea (see pages 6.0-21 to 6.0-23 and 6.0-37 to 6.0-39). Proposed height and setback requirements are intended to provide flexibility and attract investment to the Old Town area on several vacant sites and provide parameters to guide new development proposals to invigorate the Old Town while protecting its historic character. Staff is seeking direction from the Steering Committee regarding height and setback requirements within the San Pablo Avenue portion of the Old Town Subarea.

San Pablo Avenue Narrowing

The proposed narrowing of San Pablo Avenue represents one of the most substantial changes included within the Draft Specific Plan. It was proposed to address safety concerns, encourage multiple travel modes within the Old Town, as well as spur economic development in response to high speed bypass

traffic through the historic heart of the City. It was also identified as a possibility based on the available right-of way and existing operating characteristics of the portion of San Pablo Avenue within the City's Old Town. The narrowing concept has evolved since late 2008. In order to address concerns about emergency access and accommodating service deliveries, the narrowing idea was refined from two thru lanes with center medians to three lanes (two through lanes and one turn lane). The Steering Committee and Council previously authorized the concept to be studied as part of the proposed project. This aspect of the Specific Plan was discussed with the Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Committee on August 18, 2010. The Committee voted to support the policy direction of both the Circulation Element of the General Plan and the Three Corridors Specific Plan including the proposed narrowing of San Pablo Avenue. The City did receive several comment letters on the Draft EIR that addressed the narrowing issue from the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC), the City of Hercules, and Contra Costa County. Responses to the letters are under preparation and the letters as well as the responses will be included in the Final EIR and made available later this month.

*Bus Terminals and Parking in Office Industrial Mixed Use*

The City received correspondence from West Contra Costa Transit Authority (WestCAT) advising of a future need for space for fleet expansion. The Transit Authority has requested that truck and bus terminals as well as parking facilities be allowable uses in the Office Industrial Mixed Use zone. Staff recommends and the Transit Authority has agreed that these uses be conditionally permitted in order to allow for Planning Commission review of screening and landscaping adequacy of proposed sites in the future.

**Zoning Code Update**

The Hearing Draft Zoning Code Update document was most recently discussed with the Subcommittee on August 18, 2010 and a summary of the meeting notes is attached (see Attachment D). The addendum of changes (see Attachment E) reflects input received as well as additional changes where Steering Committee input is needed. Two new portions of the Zoning Code for review are the Integrated Development Chapter and Old Town Parking Section. The Integrated Development Chapter was prepared to provide guidance for future development proposed on multiple contiguous parcels where vertical or horizontal mixed use may occur. The Old Town Parking Section is intended to identify when further parking assessments are needed and manage the available public parking supply over time.

*Duncan Canyon Property*

The Duncan Canyon property includes steep hillside terrain, sensitive natural resources, and limited access options which make future public service delivery very challenging. The proposed zoning for most of the property is Rural with a maximum of one dwelling unit per acre. The property owner has requested (see Attachment F1) that the area be zoned R-1 which would allow up to 10 units /acre. The Duncan Canyon area includes several narrow deep properties with frontage on Appian Way. After extensive discussion the Subcommittee directed staff to utilize a 270 foot elevation line to demarcate which portions of the properties that front on Appian Way and abut Duncan Canyon would be included within the Specific Plan with a Residential Mixed Use zoning and which portions would be outside the Specific Plan and have proposed Rural zoning.

This workshop is being held to review previous Specific Plan and Zoning issues identified by the public and Steering Committee members and provide an opportunity for the public and Steering Committee to review these issues and others that may require further attention prior to bringing the draft Specific Plan and Zoning Code forward for Steering Commission action later this month. Any needed changes directed by the Steering Committee will be included as part of an addendum to the documents prior to scheduled action on the project.

### Attachments:

- A. May 2010 Draft Three Corridors Specific Plan (previously provided)
- B. July 2010 Draft Zoning Code Update (previously provided)
- C. Maps Displaying John Street Neighborhood Change Requests
- D. August 18, 2010 Zoning Subcommittee Meeting Summary Notes
- E. Draft Zoning Code Addendum of Changes
- F. Correspondence received on Draft Specific Plan and Zoning Code Update March 2010 to Present
  - 1. March 29, 2010 Kellebrew Letter
  - 2. August 3, 2010 Anthony Letter
  - 3. August 31, 2010 Shaw Letter
  - 4. September 2, 2010 WESTCAT Letter
  - 5. September 7, 2010 Samuel, John, and Rafaela Streets Neighborhood Letter
  - 6. September 8, 2010 Nyle Seabright Email