

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

For the Agenda of:
January 31, 2006
Timed: 9:30 A.M.

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Planning and Community Development
Economic Development Department and Intergovernmental Affairs

Subject: Report Back On Funding To Assist Private Development And To Prepare
Corridor Plans For The North Watt Avenue, Central Fair Oaks Boulevard, And
Florin Road Corridors

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Overview

The Planning and Economic Development Departments recommend that \$100,000 from the Economic Development Fund be used to create multi-disciplinary teams that can trouble-shoot issues surrounding achieving appropriate private sector development in the near-term in the North Watt Avenue, Central Fair Oaks Boulevard and Florin Road corridors, and, if funding permits, along other General Plan target corridor areas. Planning further recommends the initiation of more deliberative and detailed long-range planning efforts for the three corridor areas of North Watt Avenue, Central Fair Oaks Boulevard and Florin Road.

Recommendations

1. Develop an interdepartmental team of staff and consultants to facilitate or trouble-shoot private sector development in the North Watt Avenue, Central Fair Oaks Boulevard and Florin Road corridors, and, if funding permits, along other General Plan target corridor areas.
2. Initiate corridor planning for North Watt Avenue, Central Fair Oaks Boulevard and Florin Road.

Measures/Evaluation

The Corridor Conditions and Opportunities Assessment indicates that the three corridors recommended for planning efforts have 638 acres of new development potential and 5 million square feet of existing buildings with potential for revitalization.

Fiscal Impact

The Economic Development Fund will contribute \$100,000 to coordinate appropriate private sector development in certain corridors. In addition, \$1.5 million over three years from Planning's general fund allocations will be used to prepare three corridor plans. Funding may be expanded from grants (e.g. submittal of a \$250,000 SACOG grant proposal) and redevelopment funds (\$150,000 currently estimated). Total funding is estimated at \$2.85 million including contributions from indirect staff time. It is anticipated that additional tax revenues will be captured within Sacramento County as corridors are revitalized.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Planning Department's update of the County General Plan, a strategy has been developed to promote revitalization of older County communities, focused primarily on existing commercial corridors. Also, as part of the General Plan update, this focus on corridor planning has been embraced as one of several strategies to implement SACOG's regional Blueprint objectives. SACOG's Blueprint Preferred Scenario, and the related work about to be undertaken on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, calls for a greater percentage of regional employment, retail and housing development to occur in mixed-use configurations within and contiguous to the existing urban footprint, including that of Sacramento County.

Various corridors have been studied in the Blueprint Scenario and by County Planning, Transportation and Economic Development. County Planning studied in some detail 13 corridors in a September 2004 report entitled *Corridor Conditions and Opportunities Assessment* with an additional 6 potential corridors identified as not-yet-studied.

At the Board hearing of December 6, 2005, the Board of Supervisors considered approaches and issues surrounding a newly funded Corridor Specific Planning program. At that hearing, staff presented an evaluation of three top corridors including North Watt Avenue, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Florin Road and suggested that the Board of Supervisors select one area for preparation of a detailed corridor specific plan. Staff focused on areas with some level of current public activities, where those on-going funds, staffing and projects could be used to build from. Planning also focused on corridors with higher levels of opportunity for mixed-use commercial retail and housing opportunities. At that hearing, the Board indicated their desire to explore planning for all three corridors rather than selecting only one plan area. Subsequent to the hearing, planning staff met with the County Executives' office to discuss funding. At this meeting, it became known that, in addition to the funding available in the 2005-06 fiscal year, additional funding would be made for the following two fiscal years, thereby allowing for concurrent planning for the three corridor areas.

DISCUSSION:

At the December 6, 2005 Board hearing, members commented on concerns about the issue of on-going development within the various corridors and the desire to see more immediate results. Therefore, staff of Planning and Economic Development have identified a near-term approach to address on-going market driven private development in the three corridors identified for the preparation of corridor plans. The concept is that a team of staff would be identified from a variety of Departments such as Planning, Neighborhood Services, Economic Development along with other Municipal Services Agency Departments such as Building Inspection, Land Development and Site Improvement Review (LD&SIR), DERA, Transportation, Water Quality, or Water Resources. This team would be available to trouble shoot challenges in permitting appropriate and desirable private sector development within the three commercial corridors, and as funding allows, in other targeted corridors throughout the County. These funds may be used for either staff costs or consultant services as necessary to facilitate desirable mixed-use or other appropriate development within the planning areas.

Planning also recommends a longer-term approach to initiate concurrent planning for three corridor areas. Prior reports on the corridor planning program have provided general information on the types of activities and schedule that would be anticipated to prepare a full Specific Plan as shown in Attachments A-1 and A-2. We recommend that further scoping of each of these projects include:

- § *North Watt Avenue:* Assuming a successful outcome to the SACOG grant submittal, we suggest that the Watt Avenue corridor planning effort seek to encompass the full range of activities anticipated in a corridor specific plan. This would include interactive public outreach; a market analysis; an overall corridor land use strategy; creation of nodes of development in addition to that planned at Freedom Park Drive; zoning including a form-based approach; and finally, a more detailed plan for infrastructure and services including any financing strategies.
- § *Fair Oaks Boulevard:* For the Fair Oaks Boulevard corridor, we suggest the scope of work build from the work done on the Carmichael Community Action Plan and a pending consultant report on the Fair Oaks Boulevard concept plan. The focus of this effort is suggested to be on: expanding the concept plan depending on the boundaries of the corridor area; marketing strategies; appropriate implementing zoning and design guidelines for targeted areas along the corridor; and coordination with the planned roadway improvement project.
- § *Florin Road:* For the Florin Road corridor, we suggest the scope of work include preparation of a concept plan for the entire corridor; prioritizing completion of detailed planning for the Old Florin Town area which may occur concurrently with preparation of the concept plan; and then, based on recommendations of the concept plan, developing implementing zoning and design guidelines for other areas along the corridor.

We recognize that developing detailed project cost estimates are challenging in that we have yet to engage with consultants in refining a scope of work for each corridor along with the associated costs. However, as indicated in prior reports, Planning's past experience in the development of detailed specific plans for large greenfield areas typically included significant and costly components for infrastructure and service planning and associated financing plans. These planning efforts ranged in costs from \$800,000 to \$2 million. Admittedly, these corridor plans may differ and we have selected areas that have some level of prior County efforts upon which to build. Therefore, we note that more detailed scoping will occur upon the initiation of each corridor plan taking into account the needs of that particular corridor as well as the status of prior County efforts which may have addressed components in the generic work program.

Staffing of the corridor plans. We anticipate the creation of multi-disciplinary teams led by staff from the following departments and agencies:

- § *Planning:* includes program oversight, project and consultant management, and contribution by a range of planners to staff large community outreach workshops or charettes.
- § *Economic Development:* includes participation in all three plans as well as project management of one of the corridor plans.

- § Transportation: includes staffing of each of the corridor plans.
- § Neighborhood Services: assumes participation by each of the Service Area Managers for three of the four areas with corridor plans.
- § Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (if within a redevelopment area): assumes participation in the team by the applicable redevelopment planner for the area.

Other departments and agencies will also be requested to participate including service providers, Regional Transit, Municipal Services Agency Departments and others as appropriate. Both Planning and Transportation Departments have indicated the need for direct funding to staff the planning efforts.

Measures/Evaluation:

The purpose of preparing corridor plans is to facilitate private development of employment, retail and housing along corridors within the County. Targets for each corridor will be established as part of the Plan with input from citizens and business owners. The Board indicated their intent is not to establish minimum targets in the context of the General Plan update. However, information taken from the Corridor Conditions and Opportunities Assessment would indicate that the three corridors of North Watt Avenue, Fair Oaks Boulevard and Florin Road have 638 acres of new development potential and 5 million square feet of existing buildings with potential for revitalization.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

The Economic Development Fund would contribute \$100,000 for a near-term strategy to facilitate appropriate private development in the targeted corridors. These funds might be used either to support staff efforts or to engage in consultant assistance.

Sources of funds for the corridor program include: a three year \$1.5 million general fund allocation; use of related Planning general fund allocation (\$100,000 for Old Florin Town); grants projected at \$250,000; and redevelopment agency funding at \$150,000. In addition, we have attempted to include the costs of indirect staff time contributions, although these are only rough projections, estimated at \$750,000. This results in a total anticipated project cost of \$2.75 million to prepare three corridor plans. Attachment A-3 summarizes this information.

Regarding the grant funding, Planning is preparing a grant proposal to SACOG for \$250,000 for the North Watt Corridor Plan. In addition, SHRA has indicated the availability of \$100,000 to assist in preparing land use zoning for the North Watt Corridor. Finally, it is also assumed that \$50,000 may be available in the Florin Road area from the Florin redevelopment area.

It is a key objective of the program to attract additional financially positive development from this program including employment and retail uses. In the long term, while County funds will be used to prepare the plans, it is anticipated that additional tax revenues will be captured within Sacramento County as corridors are revitalized.

CONCLUSION:

This report recommends a near-term strategy to identify funding for staff and consultant efforts to work with private development interests to achieve immediate results for attracting appropriate development in the targeted corridors throughout the County.

In addition, we recommend the initiation of corridor planning for the North Watt Avenue, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Florin Road areas. Multi-disciplinary teams of staff from Economic Development, Neighborhood Services, Planning, Transportation and, where applicable, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency will work along with specialized consultants.

Planning staff will work to establish a detailed scope of work for each corridor plan including more precise boundaries for each planning area taking into account direction from Board members. Planning will return to the Board with consultant contracts outlining the approach and studies to be undertaken.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:

ROBERT SHERRY, Director
Planning and Community Development

TERRY SCHUTTEN
County Executive

By: _____
Cheryl Creson, Administrator
Municipal Services Agency

Attachments: A-1 Generic Corridor Specific Plan Scope of Work
A-2 Schedule for a Generic Corridor Specific Plan
A-3 Cost Projections, Sources of Funding and Potential Staffing Levels for the Commercial Corridor Program