



City of Santa Clara

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Agenda Report

18-1493

Agenda Date: 12/4/2018

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Action on Appointment of a Downtown Precise Plan Downtown Community Task Force (only four non-conflicted Councilmembers to participate)

BACKGROUND

On October 2, 2018 the City Council held a study session to discuss the proposed Downtown Precise Plan and to provide input on the project scope and the member composition of a Downtown Community Task Force (DCTF) that will inform the planning process. As part of the presentation, staff discussed a draft membership that included the following:

- Santa Clara University
- Old Quad Residents Association
- Reclaiming our Downtown
- Downtown Area Business Owner
- Downtown Area Resident
- Santa Clara Resident Outside of the Downtown
- Building Industry Association (BIA) Member

There were a number of speakers during the public comment that provided their perspective regarding the task force membership. The City Council also discussed additional perspectives for staff to consider prior to finalizing the staff recommendation including the following comments:

- Consider allowing organizations/groups to select their own member representation
- Consider a representative from the School District
- Consider a representative from the Historical and Landmarks Commission
- Consider a representative from the Architectural Review Commission

Since the study session, staff has reviewed the initial proposal, reviewed the Council perspectives, and coordinated with representatives of Santa Clara University, the Old Quad Residents Association, Reclaiming Our Downtown, and with the Historical and Landmarks Commission and the Cultural Commission to identify a list of specific candidates for the Task Force for Council approval.

Through this coordination a number of community members have been identified as having an interest in participation as a Task Force member. Consistent with the recommendation staff had made at the Study Session to limit the Task Force to 8-9 members, potential participants also encouraged staff to limit size of the Task Force to 10 or fewer members with a diversity of backgrounds and interests and to carefully select people who are willing to work cooperatively to achieve a realistic plan that will allow redevelopment of the Downtown to move forward in the near term. To avoid conflicts of interest, staff also was informed that none of the current Downtown area business owners would be able to participate as Task Force members.

DISCUSSION

Community engagement is an integral part of the Downtown Precise Plan process to produce a final plan that is supported by the community and various stakeholders in Santa Clara, and that provides a clear vision for the ongoing development of the area over the next 20 to 30 years. Staff is recommending that the Downtown Community Task Force (DCTF) be advisory and non-voting, and be time limited to the duration of the Precise Plan process. The DCTF meetings will be formally noticed and open to the public. The purpose and mission of the Task Force is to provide input and help guide the process through:

- High-level strategic thinking on the direction of the plan at key points in the project;
- Review, interpretation, and guidance on the results of the public workshops and other engagement activities; and
- Recommendations on the vision, land use, circulation, and key policy topics for the project area.

Recognizing that a potentially large number of community members will want to help shape the Precise Plan the planning process will include opportunities for any interested community member to participate through community meetings, workshops, on-line surveys and public hearings. The Task Force meetings will also be public and include opportunities for public input.

The DCTF will be facilitated by City staff. The DCTF will meet approximately five times during the planning process. The topics of each of these meetings are proposed as follows:

- Meeting #1: Review and provide input on the urban design consultant Request for Proposals (RFP); introduce the planning process
- Meeting #2: Review background material and existing conditions; identify opportunities and constraints
- Meeting #3: Review the financial analysis, potential plan scenarios, and determine guiding principles
- Meeting #4: Review the and provide input on the Plan framework - land use, circulation, urban design
- Meeting #5: Review and provide input on the draft Plan document

As discussed at the Study Session, and further suggested by community members, staff encourages a Task Force size that is manageable and allows the group to have more in depth discussions of key topics while also completing the Plan process in a timely manner. It is also important for there to be agreement on the manageable size so that members do not feel as if the DCTF is weighted favoring one perspective or interest over the other participants. Staff recommends nine residents and stakeholders within the community to serve on the DCTF and there has been agreement with the backgrounds/representation at this level. The member list below takes into consideration the community comments and Council feedback and represents a balanced group of the multiple stakeholders in the Downtown:

- Adam Thompson - Representative of Old Quad Residents Association (OQRA)
- Dan Ondrasek - Representative of Reclaiming Our Downtown (ROD)
- Butch Coyne - Representative of Santa Clara University, Director of SCU Presents, Santa Clara University's performing arts center

- Santa Clara University Students
 - David Warne, SCU Associated Student Government (ASG)
 - Soli Cayetano, SCU Planning Student
- Ana Vargas-Smith - Representative of the Historical and Landmarks Commission
- Debra von Huene - Representative of the Cultural Commission
- Rob Mayer - Architect and Santa Clara resident
- Mathew Reed - member of El Camino Real Citizen Advisory Committee, Santa Clara District 2 resident and representative of SV@Home (advocates for affordable housing)

Staff is recommending these nine individuals based upon input received at the City Council study session and subsequently through communications with representatives of the key community stakeholder groups. The proposed Task Force would include one representative of each of the three most prominent stakeholders, OQRA, ROD, and SCU. Community members have also expressed on several occasions the importance of including a student representative on the Task Force and so staff asked SCU administration to help identify a student participant. SCU returned two names, one who was selected by the student government and one recommended by SCU faculty. The second, Soli Cayetano, was also a participant in the recent placemaking workshop at Mission Branch Library where she made a positive contribution. Both students are in their Junior year at SCU so that their participation can continue if necessary beyond the current school year. Community members have expressed support for including two student representatives on the Task Force.

Following input from the study session, staff asked the Historical and Landmarks Commission to identify a representative, resulting in their nomination of Ana Vargas-Smith. As Ana is also a core member of ROD, she is already well invested in the community-based effort to revitalize the Downtown. It was also suggested at the study session that the Task Force should include a representative of the City's architectural review process. Rob Mayer is a local architect who could meet this objective and his addition to the Task Force was supported by both OQRA and ROD. Finally, it was suggested at the study session and further enforced by community members that the Task Force should include representatives who live in other parts of the City and who have a demonstrated ability to work collaboratively in a Task Force type group. For this reason staff is recommending Debra von Huene and Mathew Reed. Debra has been an active participant in past placemaking activities, lives in Council District 4, and is the chair and an experienced member of the Cultural Commission. Mathew Reed lives in Council District 2 and has demonstrated a collaborative approach through his participation on the El Camino Real Citizen Advisory Committee, as well as being a representative of a local non-profit affordable housing organization, SV@Home.

Increases or changes to the DCTF should be accompanied with the same level of agreement that was achieved at the nine participant level. While the Council may consider changes to the composition and size of the DCTF, it is important to consider the importance of agreement and consensus with the size, as achieved with the nine participants.

The Task Force process will also be supplemented with separate focus groups for potential developers and other representatives of the community to make sure that their input is available to the Task Force and informs the planning process. Input from this group will inform the Project Team and contribute to the development of the Plan. In addition, there will also be a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for staff and outside agencies, and the School District will be invited to participate.

The Task Force Members will be required to file a Statement of Economic Interest Form 700 upon appointment. The Political Reform Act prohibits a public official from participating in governmental decisions in which he or she has a financial interest that may be materially affected. To help identify potential conflicts of interest, the law requires officials to file Statement of Economic Interest Form 700. Agencies must ensure that their public officials (designated board and commission members, employees, and consultants) file the forms and disclose their interests on or before the statutory deadline.

Staff is seeking concurrence from the City Council to convene the Downtown Community Task Force with the aforementioned list of representatives.

As an initial task the Task Force will be asked to review and provide input during the first weeks of December on the work scope of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to support the planning effort with the intent that the RFP be released by the City prior to the end of the calendar year. If the Council identifies additional members for the Task Force, staff would recommend starting the process as scheduled and invite any additional Task Force members to participate as they are ready.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This is an information report only and no action is being taken by the City Council and no environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") is required at this time. The Downtown Precise Plan will undergo environmental review and an environmental document will be brought to the City Council at the time when the Council considers the Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the City for appointing the Downtown Precise Plan Downtown Community Task Force other than administrative staff time and expense.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the Finance Department.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Appoint a Downtown Community Task Force to support the preparation of the Downtown Precise Plan.

Reviewed by: Andrew Crabtree, Community Development Director

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Precise Plan RFP Schedule

2. Precise Plan Timeline Schedule