MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Terry Blount, AICP, Planning Manager

DATE: August 23, 2011

RE: Downtown Matters! Making it Happen, Making it Real!

The City has been hosting a series of workshops and tours designed to "refresh" the vision for Downtown Martinez. This series is part of the General Plan Update process and will identify the choices, trade-offs, priorities, and strategic actions required for the Downtown to prosper in the 21st Century. It was organized in response to the large number of comments received about Downtown during the first round of community outreach for the Update conducted last fall. The community feels that Downtown is important and that making it a more successful gathering place and commercial center should be a top priority.

The series was kicked off with a tour of Downtown Redwood City June 17th. Two workshops were then held June 22nd and 29th. The first workshop focused on examples of suburban downtowns that were in decline and have been revitalized. The second took a look at the new realities that we face in the 21st Century. The second tour, to Livermore and Lodi, took place July 16th. The theme of the third workshop, held July 19th, was the art and science of placemaking.

The primary purpose underlying the effort is to reach out to the community and the pertinent stakeholders to hear their thoughts and ideas on how to help transform Downtown from being a place with "so much potential" to the community destination that it can be.

TOUR OF DOWNTOWN REDWOOD CITY

The kick-off event was a tour to Redwood City, a city whose Downtown has been dramatically transformed in the last decade. It has some similarities to Martinez in that it is a county seat, it was incorporated around the same time and was a center of commerce and transportation early on, and its Downtown had been in decline for

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decades as core businesses moved out to surrounding shopping centers.

The tour began in the City's Council Chambers where Dan Zack, Downtown Revitalization Coordinator for the City, gave a presentation on the transformation of Downtown. The group then proceeded outside to visit a number of key places Downtown where major changes have occurred. The tour group visited an affordable multi-family housing project adjacent to City Hall, a number of rehabilitated commercial structures, a newer, single-block retail structure that houses a large, multiplex theater, and the centerpiece of Downtown, Courthouse Square. The group asked a number of questions and made comparisons to the City of Martinez. The final part of the tour involved listening to live music in the Square, part of the City's summer arts programming.

Key points and observations:

- Precise Plan (similar to a specific plan but more general) was developed that involved an intensive community participation process to guide Downtown revitalization;
- City Council fully behind vision articulated in the Plan;

- Key downtown property, the Fox Theater, had an owner willing to make a significant investment in upgrading their property and making it a regional entertainment venue;
- Opportunity to create a central Downtown gathering place, Courthouse Square, was taken advantage of;
- Significant investment by the City in the public realm (streetscape improvements, public parking garage, and Courthouse Square); and
- City assigned specific staff to oversee the effort.

The observations of one of the tour participants are attached (see Attachment 1).

WORKSHOP #1 – TRANSFORMING SUBURBAN DOWNTOWNS

The first workshop featured Dan Zack, Downtown Revitalization Coordinator, Redwood City; Greg Tung, Principal, Freedman, Tung + Suzaki, urban designers; and Susan Moeller, former Redevelopment Director of Redwood City and Cathedral City and consultant to Martinez for the "Downtown Matters!" workshop and tour series. The presentations highlighted specific revitalization successes in a number of cities in addition to Redwood City, and featured both large and small scale improvements, public and private.

The workshop highlighted the importance of the public realm in creating a sense of place, catalyst projects, maintaining the historic integrity of a downtown with compatible new development, and incentives for both private investment and activity-generating uses and was supported by a discussion of key principles to stimulate and guide positive change. Success in Downtown Redwood City was achieved where there was a shared vision that was big, bold and compelling, a champion, political will, the ability to broker opportunities, and a focus on creating a great place rather than just building projects.

WORKSHOP #2 – NEW REALITIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The second workshop encouraged the community to prepare for the significant changes that will be coming our way in the years ahead—and that will greatly impact our lives and those of our children and future generations. The presenters were Don Weden, a 34-year veteran with Santa Clara County Planning, recently retired; and Matt Vandersluis, Senior Field Representative with Greenbelt Alliance for the East Bay.

Demographic, economic, and environmental trends all indicate challenges for

communities in terms of mobility, continuing and expanding competition for resources, housing options and economic viability, and sustainability. Both presenters emphasized the importance of communities setting aside differences to identify and implement strategies to become "intelligently more urban" and plan for "livable, green, urban neighborhoods" within existing boundaries that provide desirable and convenient alternatives for those young and old who would prefer (or may need) places to live that are not dependent on owning an automobile and that are more sustainable for the environment.

Handouts from the workshop are attached (see Attachments 2 and 3).

TOUR OF DOWNTOWN LIVERMORE AND DOWNTOWN LODI

Downtown Livermore

The second outing included a visit to the Downtowns of Livermore and Lodi. At both locations a tour was conducted and a presentation made. Key points and observations regarding Livermore and its Downtown include:

- Change began in the 1950s, but the real success has only occurred in the last eight or nine years.
- There was no "magic," but there was a method.
- Being real about your community, its economics, and what can be supported is critical. The City did an economic study nine years ago, which said they had too much commercial, more housing was needed. The commercial focus was then shifted to dining, entertainment, and specialty shops. It was a difficult reality for the community to accept —had to get over what would not be and realize there was no rational reuse at 30-40 cents per square foot.
- Parking is important but what is more important is people's experience of desirable places (e.g. people flock to good places where parking may be difficult—they go because they like the place for other reasons).
- Early successes are important.
- Visioning process is key—revealed the importance of open space, which led to urban growth limits and the purchase of easements.
- Goal is about creating an emotional attachment to a place (e.g. safe, interesting, active, etc.).
- What is important in land use regulatory documents:
  - (1) standards, which are measurable;
  - (2) guidelines, recommended but not mandatory; and
  - (3) intent, i.e. what is trying to be accomplished.
- Having CHAMPIONS is important and must include key staff.
- "You get the development you demand!"

- Putting people on display so downtown looks alive, active, and busy is very important; outdoor dining does this, benches, and public gathering spaces, small and large.

Presenters were Marc Roberts, Community Development Director and Paul Spence, Planning Manager, both of the City of Livermore; and Rachael Snedecor, Executive Director of Downtown Livermore, Inc.

Downtown Lodi

Key points and observations regarding Lodi and its Downtown include:

- Meaningful capital improvements are possible WITHOUT a redevelopment district: Regional transportation funds were used for JOINT BENEFIT PROJECTS, such as a parking garage that could serve both a regional transit

center and Downtown commercial uses. Garage was instrumental in attracting a private developer to build a multi-screen movie theater.

- Construction of new "upmarket" housing at edge of downtown NOT necessary to attract local consumers: Downtown improvements can focus on the existing commercial and traditional mixed-use land uses. Waiting for more residents is not essential.
- City should focus on making capital improvements within the public sphere, to make the existing retail core more inviting to consumers and investors: Adding shade trees and wider sidewalks that are more conducive to outdoor dining encourages private improvements.
- Nonconventional "traffic slowing" improvements can help make the environment more inviting: Curb free "flex spaces" that are intentionally congested have worked to make side streets more inviting for restaurant uses and special events.
- Entertainment/eating drinking uses must dominate downtown uses. Let the ghosts of Woolworths and Penney's past go.

The sole presenter was Rad Bartlam, Lodi's City Manager.

WORKSHOP #3 – THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PLACEMAKING

This workshop featured Greg Tung, Principal, Freedman, Tung + Suzaki, urban designers. It started with an overview of terminology and key principles. The workshop participants then proceeded outside to tour Downtown, stopping at key points and intersections. At each stop the group was asked to determine what traits the location had. There were specific categories such as: *type of street or space, current activities, features, amenities/design matches place type?, visitor/user impression, ability to encourage private investment, and Martinez feel.* For example, under *visitor/user impression* the possible choices were: *welcoming, neutral, or unappealing.* The idea was to determine what worked and what didn't work at the key points and intersections.

The final part of the workshop consisted of a series of questions directed at the audience. They included:

- Do the important linkages and connections points Downtown work?
- For those that don't, what could make them better?
- Would better coordinated way finding (directional signage) help?
- How would you rate the on-street gathering spaces in general (e.g. the 500 block of Main Street)?

GATHERING SPACE: MAIN STREET PLAZA

Type:
- X Formal Public Plaza
- □ Facility Entry Plaza
- □ Town Green
- □ Flexible / Occasional Use Space

Current Activities:
- X Informal hangout
- X Food Service Activated
- □ "Outdoor Lobby" for a facility
- X Small Performance
- X Large Performance
- ? X Large Display (market, exhibit)
- X FARMER'S MARKET

Features:
- ? □ Adequate space for uses
- ~ □ Seating NEED MORE
- ~ □ Trees NEED MORE
- ~ □ Lighting NEED MORE
- X Events Power SPACE PLENTY
- X Restrooms
- ~ □ Nearby parking

Amenities / Design matches place type? (Quality + Quantity)
- □ Well done
- □ Good enough
- X No

Visitor / User Impression:
- □ Welcoming
- X Neutral
- □ Unappealing

Ability to encourage private investment (space quality relative to adjacent sites / bldgs)
- X Helps - space is better quality
- □ Neutral - about same quality
- □ The space drags it down

Martinez Feel:
- → □ Yes, the right look and feel
- → □ Generic – could be anywhere
- □ Out of character / poor fit

Overall Revitalization & Place Performance
- → □ Makes downtown great! LIMITED
- □ Doing about what it should
- □ Not doing enough

"IMPT. NEEDED"

The final workshop will be held Tuesday, September 20th at 6:30 pm at the Willows Cabaret Theatre. The workshop is entitled *Making it Happen: New Opportunities for Downtown Martinez*. At this workshop a list of strategic action items will be formulated to assist the City and its citizens, property and business owners, and other stakeholders with Making it Happen! Making it Real!

ATTACHMENTS

1. Redwood City Tour Notes-Harland Strickland
2. Winds of Change (January 2009)
3. City for All Ages Presentation-Key Points

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Although initially skeptical, I felt that the Redwood City tour was worthwhile, so I've gone to the trouble of transcribing my notes here. I've made corrections to the original version, but some errors and omissions undoubtedly remain – let me know. -Harlan

The tour was relatively well attended. I had a number of discussions with others in the tour, which was productive. It's a fair drive down to Redwood City and back, so not much wandering-around time was left after orientation, the guided tour, and dinner, but there was time to see a lot. We left around 2:00, got back home around 9:00

We were transported in a modern tour bus with overhead bins, air conditioning, a restroom and video monitors (which thankfully weren't used). There was an entourage of almost 30 people. Attendees had many reasons for participating, so I've created a set of categories and listed them in an order that to me represents decreasing tour-stakeholder order. A number of people fit into more than one category, so I've counted individuals only once in the highest-ranking category they fit into (i.e., a General Plan task force member who was also a merchant is listed only as a task force attendee). In decreasing tour-stakeholder order:

- Martinez staff - 3
- Redwood City staff - 2
- General Plan task force & family - 9
- MSM and/or merchant - 3
- Major downtown Martinez property owners/family - 2
- Newspaper reporter, Tri-Valley - 1
- Active Martinez volunteers (served on commissions, etc) - 7
- Others – 2
- Grand total - 29

Upon arrival, we walked through relatively new, 3-story low-income housing to the new City Hall for orientation.

Background - Redwood City, Martinez facts & figures:

- Population 2009 (est.) 77819 (about 2X Martinez)
- Historic - incorporated 1868 (Martinez 1876)
- Demographics - race: 44% non-Hispanic white; 11% Asian; 39% Hispanic/Latino any race (Martinez: 77%, 8%, 15%)
- Demographics - income: $31042 per-capita (Martinez $29701); 10% population below poverty line (Martinez 5%)
- Land area: 19.5 sq. mi. (about 1.5X Martinez)
- City sales tax revenues 2008-09: $11.6M (about 2X Martinez per-capita)
- City non-RDA property tax revenues 2008-09: $25.5M (about 2X Martinez per-capita)
- City outstanding debt 2008-09: $24.3M (Martinez $15.9M); long-term lease obligations: $129.6M (Martinez $13.7M)
- RDA income, 2008-09: $13.3M
- RDA total debt, 2008-09: $172M

Orientation - project summary:

- Major downtown revitalization effort started around 2002 to attack "Deadwood City" image and downtown business-district stagnation
- Focus has been on producing an enjoyable downtown experience and a sense of place at Courthouse Square - Courthouse Square as the symbolic heart of the city. The goal is people on the street with money in their pockets and low storefront vacancy rate. Restaurants and entertainment are closest to the square, with retail and art galleries further out, followed by housing (future hope)
- City used eminent domain, displacing a number of small businesses; city engaged in at least one major developer giveaway; project entailed much controversy and at least one lawsuit
- City paid for 2-story underground parking for 20-screen cineplex; garage requires constant pumping (water table only about 6' down)
- Cineplex building itself financed by developer - 2-city-block structure with a lot of retail space on the street around the perimeter; some vacancies
- City worked with owners to restore vintage theater (now used for music performances), and invested heavily in restoring historic courthouse (now a museum), which face each other across Courthouse Square in the center of the project. The square is the venue for regular concerts, and is the major focus of activity and pedestrian traffic
- Project finally seems to be tour-worthy, but still (except for low-income housing mentioned above) doesn't have much residential in and around project area - the next goal

- Enhanced rail interface to the project area is also in the planning stage

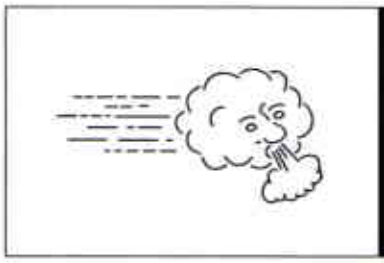
Orientation observations:

- $172M (not counting what future lease obligations gets them), with $13M annual income, is a lot to play with. Planning staff was understandably enthusiastic.
- Our Planning staff guides were not able to answer basic questions about sales tax revenue and its variations, neither in terms of project area vs outlying Redwood City, nor in terms of changing trends over time. However, I didn't come away with a cynical take on this. As is often the case, Planning staff is focused primarily on Building Stuff, not Making Stuff Work. Business district health in particular is quite complicated, and design and planning decisions are just part of it
- In terms applicable to Martinez (i.e., spending millions instead of hundreds of millions), it would have been very useful to have had some of their Economic Development (Making Stuff Work) staff at the orientation and on the tour. At the very end, a member of their City Council showed up, and I was able to talk with her for awhile - she had a much more holistic and real-world approach to their business climate, looking at marketing strategies and business selections, etc. instead of just at construction. I hope to contact her for further discussion in the future.
- There are two major shopping centers on the outskirts of Redwood City, where people do their routine shopping. The downtown project is not attempting to get that shopping back into the downtown, even though major traffic arterials flow through downtown Redwood City right next to the project. The focus is on entertainment and small-business/destination shopping. How things will shake out in the future as the buildings age and RDA funds dry up, is anyone's guess, but for now, it seems as if their city is happy to have an enjoyable and functional downtown, even if it isn't a huge money maker, which echoes Benicia's attitude towards its downtown.

Post-orientation project area notes and observations from walking tour and wandering around:

- Courthouse Square
    - Their city does have Economic Development staff that works at Making Stuff Work. As we were leaving, they were having one of their free Friday-evening concerts in the square - it was packed, but relaxed. People, children, pets. Wine & beer. I saw three uniformed police officers walking around, also relaxed and talking to visitors.
    - Planner felt that the cineplex "got the ball rolling," though Courthouse Square is the focus of the project. Cineplex only completed in 2006 (?)
    - City sells membership tickets for prime seating near the stage in Courthouse Square, but further away from the stage, seating's free.
    - Concerts every Friday, but other times as well. They make a point of always having something going on
    - Streets around square are narrow, and can be shut off for events by moving large concrete planters.
    - Sidewalk brickwork carried across large parts of some streets near the square make streets seem like a plaza, especially when blocked off
    - Several people mentioned 600 block of Court St in Martinez as offering similar possibilities to their Courthouse Square
    - According to planner, all-pedestrian streets don't work. Neither do full-traffic. Optimum is minimal traffic with nearby parking - drivers see what might be interesting, then park and walk less than block
    - Streets were narrowed and sidewalks widened in some places; sidewalk dining encouraged
    - 20 restaurants in project area around square - many with live entertainment
    - Several venues and a number of clubs feature live performance of some kind.
    - Many restaurants within earshot of the square.
    - The city always has a booth at the square staffed with a couple of people to answer questions and hand out brochures.
- Development policies
    - City worked to get major property owner buy-in, and to become developer friendly, while maintaining focus on historic preservation and design guidelines
    - Facade restoration
    - No blank walls
    - City has gone to height and form limits rather than units/acre limits
    - City has relaxed parking and open space requirements for new development
    - Not all URM is retrofitted
    - City implemented a Program EIR so individual property developments within the project area wouldn't have to do separate EIRs
    - Wasn't clear how much of the downtown these pro-developer policies referred to, or whether just in project area

- Miscellaneous
  - Parking varies from 25 cents/hr to 75 cents/hr, with tickets about $30. Free parking further away from project. According to the Gazette, they've instituted "Market-rate parking": see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Shoup
  - Natural endowments marketed: "Weather best, by government test!"
  - Court, jail are adjacent to downtown, but bail bond businesses are required to be on the second floor, with only modest signage
  - Many county offices have already left the downtown - didn't have a chance to ask about remaining juror foot traffic
  - Silicon Valley jobs are relatively close by. There are high-tech jobs for about half of Redwood City's workforce within the city limits
  - Phantom gallery program - exhibits move around downtown. Didn't have a chance to ask about vacancy policy (i.e., installing art until storefront filled again) or the number of art galleries (shuttles mentioned as available for shows)
  - Lights on buildings controlled in coordination with lights in streetscape - not sure exactly what was meant (pulsing lights?), but obviously major top-down planning to integrate streetscape with buildings



WINDS OF CHANGE:
Adapting Our Communities to the Changing Realities of the 21st Century

This is a summary of a presentation made by Don Weden, retired Principal Planner, Santa Clara County Planning at Mountain View City Hall on January 26, 2009 at an event sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Los Altos - Mountain View Area. Contact: w e d e n @ i x . n e t c o m . c o m

Most of the "Suggestions for Successful, Responsible Planning" included with this summary, were not specifically addressed in the January 26th presentation.

INTRODUCTION

1. We are entering a period in which we will be experiencing major new changes and challenges, much bigger than and very different from those we have been accustomed to dealing with
2. To enable our communities to thrive under the new conditions these changes and challenges will bring, we need to:
   a. Anticipate and understand the coming changes, and
   b. Prepare for them

SUMMARY

1. We face major changes and challenges in the coming years driven by the "winds of change" (i.e. major demographic, economic, and environmental conditions)
2. Meeting these challenges will require significant adaptations in our land use plans and policies
3. **How and where we house our future population will be of critical importance**
4. We need to plan to become intelligently more urban
5. Upcoming general plan reviews and housing element updates provide an opportunity to begin to make these necessary changes
6. Conventional planning approaches may be inadequate to deal with major changes
7. We will need to become better at building public support to overcome resistance to change (see attached supplement)

THE "WINDS OF CHANGE"

1. We face major changes and challenges in the coming years driven by the "winds of change" (i.e. major demographic, economic, and environmental conditions)
2. Many of these changes will be "structural" rather than "cyclical", meaning that we will need to adapt to them, rather than simply wait for conditions to return to "normal"
   a. When structural changes occur, conditions generally don't return to the previous "normal"
   b. Examples of structural change include the replacement of the horse and buggy by the automobile; replacement of the typewriter by word processors and computers

Note: Our economy is currently experiencing very challenging conditions. But as we plan the future of our communities, we must do so based on a belief that more prosperous times will eventually return. And with them, are likely to come a return of the rising energy costs and home prices we were experiencing just a relatively short time ago.

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   c. Global warming, for example, is bringing about a structural change in our climate

3. Among the major "winds of change" that will be significantly impacting our lives and our communities over the coming years are:
   a. Population growth
   b. The aging of the Baby Boom Generation
   c. Global warming
   d. Rising energy costs
   e. Rising food costs
   f. Global economic competition
   g. The potential for a major natural disaster
   h. Public health
   i. Water supply
4. While all of the diverse forces listed above may seem unrelated, they are linked by the fact that they will all be impacted – for better or for worse – by the cumulative impacts of the decisions our local governments make regarding how and where we house our future population
5. Among the changes and challenges we will be facing are:
   a. California's population is projected to grow over the next several decades by the equivalent of adding another City of Los Angeles every eight years (think "LA 8")
   b. Over the next 25 years, the Bay Area's population is projected to grow by the equivalent of adding two more San Jose's
   c. By 2030, one out of every five residents of the Bay Area will be age 65 or older – a significant percentage of whom will be non-drivers, in a region where there currently are relatively few viable alternatives to the automobile for most residents
   d. The era of cheap oil, which has been the foundation for our suburban land use patterns and lifestyles, is coming to an end
   e. Achieving California's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat global warming will require, among many other things, that we reduce total vehicle miles traveled below current levels – at the same time that our state's population is projected to increase significantly
   f. A variety of conditions may continue to force food prices upward

ADAPTING OUR COMMUNITIES

1. We will be facing major structural changes and challenges over the coming decades
2. These changes will require major adaptations by our local communities, and particularly in our land use plans and policies
3. Making some of these necessary adaptations may take many years to plan and implement
4. We need to get started as soon as possible in planning for these changes and implementing these revised plans
5. Being "built out" is not a legitimate excuse for communities not to make the necessary changes in their land use plans and policies
   a. Healthy, vibrant communities continue to change and evolve, long after all their vacant land has been developed
   b. We need to shift our focus from undeveloped land to reusable land – it's just another form of recycling that is critical to the long term sustainability of our communities

THE NEED TO BECOME INTELLIGENTLY MORE URBAN

1. We are at a critical transition point between being predominantly suburban communities to becoming somewhat more urban; we need to make the transition successfully and intelligently for our sake and for the sake of future generations
2. We need to plan to become intelligently more urban by:
   a. Focusing on livability – not just density
   b. Focusing on placemaking – not just planning

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c. Creating great neighborhoods – not just building good individual projects

d. Focusing higher densities – not scattering higher densities

e. Mixing compatible land uses – not separating land uses

f. Planning for people – not just planning for cars

g. Increasing housing and mobility choices – not limiting choices

h. Protecting and enhancing existing neighborhoods – not threatening existing neighborhoods

i. Putting traffic into its proper perspective – not letting it dominate decision making

j. Planning for diversity – not exclusivity

k. Allowing for community-by-community customization – not one-size-fits-all solutions

l. Making it easier to get good development approved – not treating all development proposals the same

3. A primary focus of becoming "intelligently more urban" needs to be the creation of livable, green, urban neighborhoods that are not only great places to live, but that help us meet the major economic, social, and environmental challenges we will be facing over the coming years and decades

4. Livable, green, urban neighborhoods are one of the key building blocks for creating sustainable communities. Each of the three basic components is equally important.

   a. The attributes of "livable" neighborhoods include, among other things, being:

      1. Convenient
      2. Safe
      3. Healthy
      4. Diverse
      5. Vibrant
      6. Nurturing

   b. The attributes of "green" neighborhoods include, among other things, being:

      1. Energy efficient
      2. Water efficient
      3. Waste/pollution minimizing
      4. Nature friendly
      5. Greenhouse gas reducing
      6. Sustainable

   c. The attributes of "urban" neighborhoods include, among other things, being:

      1. Higher density
      2. Mixed use
      3. Transit oriented
      4. Walkable and bikeable
      5. Synergistic

CONCLUSION

1. Through our planning and land use decisions, we are creating a legacy that will significantly impact the lives of future generations.

2. How will future generations judge the wisdom of the decisions we will be making as we update the Housing Elements of our cities' General Plans – and in some cases, revise the entire General Plans, or prepare specific plans for selected areas of the city?

A LETTER TO CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE

"Dear Children of the Future,

In 2009, we could foresee major demographic, economic, and environmental changes that would dramatically affect the world you would inherit from us.

Knowing that these changes were coming and would greatly affect your lives,
we chose to plan our city so that _____."

How would you complete the rest of this letter?

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SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL, RESPONSIBLE PLANNING

A Supplement to the "Winds of Change" Presentation

INTRODUCTION

1. Local land use planning has never been more critically important
2. The magnitude and nature of the changes and challenges we are beginning to experience, and will continue to experience over the coming decades, are unlike those we have had to address in the recent past
3. Conventional planning approaches may be inadequate to deal with the major changes that are rapidly coming our way
4. Planners face unprecedented challenges and the need for a great sense of urgency in creatively organizing and conducting their communities' planning activities to deal responsibly and successfully with these changes

SUGGESTIONS

1. To improve the potential for local planning activities to achieve responsible, successful outcomes, the following suggestions are offered:

   a. **Suggestion #1: Recognize the critical importance of upcoming planning opportunities**

      1. The planning and land use decisions made within the next few months – particularly through local housing element updates, general plan reviews, and specific plan preparations – will play a major role in determining whether or not our communities are adequately prepared for the major changes that are rapidly reshaping our world
      2. Once this current "window of opportunity" closes, it may be another decade or more before most communities will again review and significantly revise the plans they adopt – during which time the "winds of change" will have continued to blow and the challenges our communities face may have become even more difficult, if the plans we adopt now prove to be inadequate

   b. **Suggestion #2: Focus the community dialogue on future needs, not just current wants**

      1. Although, in theory, planning projects are supposed to be about the future, the reality is that many of them are essentially dialogues about the present that reflect current community wants, rather than future community needs
      2. In the past, when most changes were cyclical in nature (i.e. things would eventually return to "normal") and didn't require significant adaptations, the distinction between current wants and future needs was not necessarily very important. Consequently, it didn't particularly matter if the outcomes of many planning projects resulted in relatively minor, incremental changes, instead of major ones.
      3. But in a time of major structural changes (where conditions aren't going to return to "normal"), failure to base local planning on future needs rather than current wants can have serious negative consequences for the community.
      4. This distinction between the community's short term current wants and its long term future needs can also be quite relevant when it comes to the review of individual land development proposals. Often, for

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example, communities allow long term (and current) needs for more housing to be trumped by current wants to limit traffic, and, as a result, needed housing development is denied or substantially scaled down.

5. In a critical period when local communities are beginning to experience major structural changes, they need to be having serious, responsible community dialogues about how to adapt to changing conditions and meet future needs by becoming intelligently more urban for the benefit of both current and future generations.
6. Whether local planning projects become dialogues about current community wants or future community needs often depends on the first question that is put before the community as the planning project begins
   a. Planning projects that begin by asking the traditional question "How can we make our community a better place?" generally elicit and stimulate responses that reflect current wants, rather than future needs, and are usually a significant impediment to achieving changes of a scale and nature necessary to effectively address structural changes
   b. If we want our planning projects to focus the community dialogue on future needs, rather than current wants, in a time of major structural changes we should begin by asking questions such as: "How can we prepare our community to thrive under the coming changed conditions?"

c. Suggestion #3: Establish responsible success criteria

1. Traditionally, the criterion for determining the "success" of a land use planning project (e.g. a revision of a local general plan) has been quite low.
2. Often, planning projects have deemed successful if they simply produced a plan that:
   a. Was somehow considered better than the plan it replaced, or
   b. Would make the community "a better place."
3. In a world beginning to experience major structural changes, the bar needs to be set much higher to determine whether planning projects are successful.
4. The basic criterion that planning projects should now be expected to meet is:
   a "Does the new plan responsibly and effectively prepare the community to meet the major changes and challenges that are rapidly approaching?"
   b. If the revised plan doesn't pass that test, it does a disservice to the community's current and future residents.
5. In addition to the general criterion suggested above, there are other, more specific criteria that local land use plans should meet, including:
   a. Will the revised plan result in a net reduction of total vehicle miles traveled, below current levels, while accommodating the community's reasonable share of regional population growth?
   b. Will the revised plan significantly increase the percentage of the city's population that lives within

reasonable walking distance of a mid- or large-size grocery store?

6. All of the above criteria (and possibly more) should be established very early in the planning process, to guide the plan's preparation, and to be used in evaluating the success of the final draft plan before it is adopted.

d. Suggestion #4: Think big! Big challenges require big solutions

1. In times of major changes and big challenges, modest, incremental changes in land use – as typically occur during times of cyclical changes – are inadequate
2. To meet the serious, unprecedented changes that are rapidly coming our way, we need to plan for changes that are larger, more ambitious, and more imaginative than we might otherwise propose
3. The professional skills, leadership abilities, and imaginations of planners throughout the Bay Area are about to be put to a very critical test – one that may affect the economic, social, and environmental well-being of our local communities and the region for years and possibly even decades to come
4. This is a time when the words of Daniel Burnham are particularly relevant: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood . . . Make big plans, aim high in hope and work."

e. Suggestion #5: Build community support for change

a. Although we are about to experience major structural changes in the conditions impacting and shaping our communities, and will need to make significant adaptations in our land use plans and policies to prepare for and respond to these changing conditions, making these necessary adaptations will undoubtedly encounter resistance to change from within our communities

b. Whether resistance to change is simply an inherent characteristic within the human species, or whether it is a response to perceived threats to our individual self interest, it is a significant factor that needs to be addressed constructively as we prepare our communities for the changes and challenges that are rapidly approaching

c. Meeting our future needs will require more than simply proposing solutions (e.g. transit oriented development, affordable housing, etc.) to current and/or future problems – it will require overcoming or significantly reducing community resistance to changes in land use

d. Effectively and constructively reducing resistance to change needs to begin with an understanding of the basic reasons that people tend to resist changes in land use. Most often, it is because they don't see one or more of the following:

1. The need for change
2. The benefits of change (or the negative consequences of failing to change)
3. The potential for change (e.g. they perceive their city to be "built out," and therefore unchangeable)
4. The opportunity to influence change

e. Effective land use planning needs to responsibly and creatively address all of these reasons that people tend to resist change

f. Thinking in terms of a three-level "Why?, What?, Where and How?"

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pyramid can also provide useful insights for reducing resistance to change and establishing the supportive community attitudes necessary to achieve major changes in land use plans and policies

1. The top level of the pyramid is the "Why" level (i.e. Why do we need to change our community?)
2. The middle level is the "What?" level (i.e. What, in general, do we need to change in our community?)
3. The bottom level is the "How? and Where?" level (i.e. How and where, specifically, do we need to make changes in our community?)
4. The pyramid represents a hierarchy in which each level cannot be successfully achieved unless and until the question on the level above it has been successfully answered.
5. We may currently be spending too much time trying to get people to agree with us on the "What's" (reducing driving or making housing more affordable) and the "How's and Where's" (mixed-use, higher density development around transit stations) when most of the public hasn't yet accepted the fact that there is a significant need to change (i.e. the "Why's").
6. In order to move forward, it may be necessary to move back up the pyramid to the "Why?" level of the pyramid and create a critical mass of community understanding and acceptance of the need for change, before seeking approval for the "What's?" and the "Where's? and How's?".
7. A very important element of efforts to address the "Why?" level involves helping the community – and its local leaders – to see the critical links between our local housing policies and the major changes and challenges we are facing (including global warming, the aging of our population, the end of cheap oil, rising food prices, economic competitiveness, public safety, public health, etc.)
8. Unless and until we have made significant progress at the "Why?" level, it will be more difficult to achieve meaningful, lasting success at the "What?" and the "Where and How?" levels.

g. To overcome resistance to change, it may also be helpful to point out to community leaders and the community the potential negative consequences of failing to plan for change, including:

1. Future needs that will not be met
2. Unaddressed problems that may be more difficult and/or more expensive to solve in the future
3. Missed opportunities to improve the community
4. Reduction or loss of existing competitive economic advantages
5. Unplanned changes that will still occur – but without the benefits that planned change would have brought
6. Reduced quality of life for current and future residents
7. Unfulfilled obligations to others to address shared problems

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City for All Ages Presentation-Key Points (Don Weden)

1. Our population is becoming much older than it has ever been before, as the Baby Boom Generation ages.

2. By 2030, it is projected that about 1/4 of the adult population in Santa Clara County and San Mateo Counties will be over age 65. (I haven't had time to run the numbers for the other Bay Area counties, but I suspect it's not too much different in other counties -- the aging of our population is a nationwide phenomenon.)

3. Most of us share three basic goals as we get older: We want to remain (a) active, (b) independent, and (c) engaged with our family, friends, and community.

4. The land use patterns, housing options, and mobility options we currently have and will be developing in the coming years will play a significant role in affecting -- for better or for worse -- our growing senior population's ability to achieve those basic goals

5. A national study found that 1 out of 5 people over age 65 in the US does not drive an automobile. And AARP surveys have shown that many additional seniors have been forced to cut back on their driving as gas prices have risen.

6. The national study found that, compared to driving seniors, non-driving seniors make:

   (a) 12% fewer trips to the doctor -- not because they are healthier, but because it is more difficult for them to get to the doctor,

   (b) 59% fewer trips to local stores and restaurants, and

   (c) 65% fewer trips to social, family, or religious purposes.

7. In addition, the survey found that 1 out of 3 non-driving seniors who live in an urban setting goes for a walk on any given day, whereas only 1 out of 17 non-driving seniors living in a lower density setting goes for a walk on any given day -- generally because there are usually fewer useful or interesting destinations within convenient walking distance in most lower density suburban communities

8. Our land use patterns and our dependency on the automobile can and do play major roles in determining the quality of life -- and physical and mental health -- for many seniors -- particularly if they prefer not to drive, become unable to drive, or cannot afford to drive.

9. One of our major land use planning goals, as we prepare for this dramatic aging of our population, needs to be the creation of "senior-friendly" or "age friendly"

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neighborhoods and communities that enable seniors -- and people of all ages -- to live active, interesting, and productive lives without having to own an automobile.

10. Among the benefits of creating "senior-friendly" communities is that they will also:

    (a) benefit people of all ages -- e.g. making intersections safer for seniors to cross will also make them easier for school children and everyone else to cross,

    (b) result in communities that are more "climate-friendly" by enabling more people to meet their mobility needs without being dependent on the automobile -- thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions,

    (c) contribute to the health of our local economy by providing a wider array of housing choices for people of all ages -- including the younger workers we will need to replace Baby Boomers as they retire

    (d) improve overall public health by making walking and bicycling more viable alternatives to the automobile for many of the trips we currently need to make by car

11. To create senior-friendly communities (and climate-friendly, and more energy independent, and business- and workforce-friendly communities), we need to become "intelligently more urban" and plan for "livable, green, urban neighborhoods" within our existing communities that provide desirable and convenient alternatives for those who would prefer (or may need) places to live that aren't dependent on owning an automobile and that are more sustainable for our environment

12. With many cities around the region currently reviewing and revising their General Plans (which are the basic blueprint intended to guide their future growth and development), now is the ideal time for residents of the Bay Area who want to help create senior-friendly communities to get involved with their cities' land use planning processes.