



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: February 12, 2007
Staff Report #: 07-022

Agenda Item #: B1

STUDY SESSION: Consideration of and Possible Direction on a Council Goal Related to Economic Development and Land Use Issues Along the El Camino Real Corridor/Santa Cruz Avenue Area.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council provide direction to staff regarding the Council Goal related to economic development and land use issues along the El Camino Real Corridor/Santa Cruz Avenue Area.

BACKGROUND

At its retreat of January 6, 2007, the City Council identified a number of goals it wished to focus on in the coming one to two years. One of the identified goals was *El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue Economic Development and Land Use*.

At its meeting of January 23, 2007, the Council reviewed expanded descriptions of the goals that had been identified at the retreat, including a goal statement, summary of existing efforts, suggested approach for achieving the goal and next steps. Specific to the El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue goal, Council supported a recommendation by staff for a special Council session on February 12, 2007 to allow for further discussion of the goal. In addition, the Council also identified a desire to discuss the El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue goal in relationship to the M-2 goal. An excerpt of the January 23, 2007 staff report relative to the El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue goal and the M-2 goal is included as Attachment A.

ANALYSIS

El Camino Real has long served as both a nucleus of commercial activity and a regional transportation route. Santa Cruz Avenue is the heart of the downtown, providing commercial activity, local services, and community gathering places. The two areas intersect to create the core of retail and community activity in Menlo Park. A map of the potential study area is included as Attachment B.

The City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance reflect the commercial nature of the area in goal and policy statements as well as in land use designations and development

rules. Although the City's land use planning documents have long supported the commercial nature of the area, there have been a number of studies and planning initiatives over the years that have further defined the community's vision for the area, some resulting in changes in land uses and/or development standards. An annotated bibliography of these past and ongoing studies is provided in Attachment C. Some of the more recent studies would be able to be incorporated into a newly focused work effort.

Goal Statement

The January 23, 2007 Council staff report identified the following goal statement for the El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue area:

Adopt a Specific Plan for the El Camino Real Corridor and Santa Cruz Avenue downtown to increase economic vitality and guide land use development and transportation and other infrastructure proposals.

At the January 23 meeting, the Council affirmed that the goal is one of its highest priorities. During the Council discussion, some differences of opinion surfaced regarding the focus of the goal. The February 12 study session is an opportunity for the Council to clarify the intent and focus of the goal and related work effort. As such, staff did not conduct outreach to promote awareness of the meeting as stated in the *Next Steps* section of the goal discussion in the January 23 staff report. Staff will conduct the outreach upon Council clarification of the goal statement.

Based on the Council discussion on January 23, 2007, staff has re-evaluated an approach to defining a goal for El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue by refining the scope of the goal in order to facilitate efficient and cost effective decision-making. As contemplated in the January 23, 2007 staff report, but not explicitly stated, the first step in developing a Specific Plan would be to conduct extensive outreach through a community visioning process. Instead of this critical component being considered a step, the Council may wish to consider it as the goal as reflected in the following modifications to the goal statement:

~~Adopt~~ Create a ~~Specific~~ Plan for the El Camino Real Corridor and Santa Cruz Avenue downtown to identify a vision for the area and establish strategies for increase-increasing economic vitality and guide-guiding decisions on land use ~~development~~ and transportation ~~and other infrastructure~~ proposals.

The Council will be better informed to determine appropriate next steps upon the conclusion of the visioning process and could determine that the preparation of a Specific Plan is appropriate or perhaps other tools would be more appropriate. The benefit of this alternative approach is that many of the unknowns related to scope and consultant costs will be able to be addressed at the end of a community visioning process. For example, if the vision for what the corridor and area should look like and

function as 20 years from now is consistent with the allowable development under the current General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, then the time and cost to make any minor refinements to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to assist in the implementation of the vision would be relatively minimal. If the vision for the corridor and area involve a transformation that is beyond what is contemplated in the current General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, then the time and cost associated with the more substantial changes would be more extensive in order to conduct the necessary environmental review. A constructive community visioning process that includes input from all members of the affected community, including residents, business owners and property owners is critical to a successful overall process.

Redefining the goal statement to focus on the creation of a vision would enable the Council to also re-evaluate the importance of implementing the vision in relationship to other economic development and land use issues such as those related to the M-2 zoning district without committing staff and financial resources to a minimum 12-month effort. In addition, it could also serve as the appropriate time to re-visit the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update as perhaps the appropriate tool for implementing any changes to land use regulations. As stated in the January 23 staff report, staff continues to believe that the City can only focus on one geographic area of the City at a time in discussing land use and economic development issues and it appears that the El Camino Real corridor and Santa Cruz Avenue areas are the Council's focus in terms of the need for developing a plan.

Relationship of Economic/Business Development and Land Use

As the Council considers the revised goal statement, it is important that there is a common understanding of certain terms in order to increase the likelihood of achieving the goal. One term that staff believes might need clarification is economic development, especially as it is viewed in relationship to land use. Economic/business development could include a number of activities that are not directly tied to land use. For example, the City could hire additional staff to assist with efforts to attract and retain businesses. Alternatively, economic/business development could be viewed as being very closely related to land use regulation in terms of modifying requirements to clearly state expectations and create incentives for attracting desirable development.

Next Steps

Scope of Community Visioning Process

The community visioning process would focus on asking people what it is that they want the corridor and area to be like five to 20 years from now. The characteristics or features that could be discussed are land use (focusing on commercial while recognizing the needs and benefits for housing development), revenue impacts of particular land uses, transportation (vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian), parking (both public and private in regards to quantity and location), aesthetics (in both the public right of way and private property), and development regulations (such as floor

area ratio, height, setbacks, etc.) The most successful visioning processes have a heavy focus on asking people what they want the area to look like and what sorts of activities they like. Once the desired form of development is articulated, then the preliminary implications of the form can be identified and evaluated. Computer generated visual simulations of prototype development and charettes are helpful tools in articulating the vision. Once the vision is articulated, it will be clear whether there is a desire for enhancement of properties while maintaining the scale of development or whether there is a desire for transformation of properties in certain locations. The formulation of the vision also needs to be grounded in economic realities, especially in light of State and Federal tax policy, which have the potential to create a disincentive to reinvest in properties if property owners do not see economic advantage in pursuing changes to property. It is important to identify the types of incentives property owners need to develop properties in a way that are consistent with the vision.

Staff has begun the process of identifying plans from other communities that could be used to inform the scope of work. Staff will compile a list of plans that could be most applicable to Menlo Park prior to the February 12, 2007 study session.

Community Advisory Committee

At the January 23, 2007 Council meeting, the Council expressed a desire to form a Community Advisory Committee to assist with this project. It would be important for the Council to provide guidance regarding the composition of such a committee. The following are parameters that the Council may wish to consider:

- Including members from the residential, business, and commercial property ownership communities;
- Including members from Commissions such as Planning, Transportation, Bicycle, Housing, and Environmental Quality;
- Including members from the Council;
- Limiting the membership to no more than 15 members;
- Seeking applicants through an advertised process.

The Committee could be formed while staff begins the process of bringing a consultant under contract.

Timeframe

Staff believes that an intensive community visioning process could be accomplished by the end of June 2007 if the City sole sources the work with a consultant. It is important for the Council to weigh in as to whether there is a desire to complete the work by this timeframe ahead of the summer vacation months, which present challenges for achieving community participation, or whether the Council would like to establish a longer timeframe for conducting the process.

Consultant Selection

To pursue a plan involving a community visioning process, the City would need consultant assistance. There are a handful of firms in the Bay Area that has the expertise to conduct such a process. The Council primarily has two options for selecting a firm. One option would involve a request for proposals (RFP) and selecting a firm with the best proposal. Through this option, the City would not need to choose the proposal of the lowest cost, but would be able to choose the best fit of qualifications and cost. Alternatively, the City could sole source by approaching a specific firm and negotiating a scope of work and cost. The City has conducted two RFP's for land use planning projects over the past year and has been impressed with the qualifications of the firm of Dyett & Bhatia. Dyett & Bhatia was selected to prepare the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update and was the preferred submittal for the Dumbarton Rail Station Area Specific Plan. Dyett & Bhatia bring a breadth of experience and an understanding of Menlo Park, which would enable them to work quickly to prepare a realistic scope of work and commence work with Council approval. If the Council desires a Request for Proposal process, it would add a minimum of 6 weeks to the overall timeline. Staff believes that sole sourcing with Dyett & Bhatia would be appropriate in this case.

Resource Needs and Impact on Other Projects

Existing Project Priorities

There are a number of projects currently prioritized for the Comprehensive Planning Program of the Community Development Department. The specific projects are listed below, with more detailed descriptions of each of the projects provided in Attachment D:

- Streamline Commercial Development Process (Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update);
- East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study;
- Haven Land Use Study; and
- Development of a Policy for the Review of Fences on Corner Lots.

Of the four projects, substantial work has occurred on the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update and preliminary work has occurred on the East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study. Work on the remaining two priorities was scheduled to begin later in fiscal year 2006-07 and has not yet been started.

If the Council decides to prioritize work on the El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue Goal such that the visioning process can be completed by June 2007, then work on these projects would be delayed and would be brought back to the Council for reprioritization on March 6, 2007. Specific to the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update, a significant amount of work has been completed on a new approach to the Zoning Ordinance for commercial zoning districts that includes purpose statements for each of the districts and a modified format that articulates a clear set of commercial use classifications and

the review process for each of the classifications. Staff believes that the visioning process would help inform the work on the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update and that continued work on the update would likely be one of the implementation measures that would follow the visioning process.

Specific to the East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study, staff is currently working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), San Mateo County Transportation Authority and Caltrain to determine an appropriate station location given the pending development by General Motors (GM) of the property previously identified as a station location. MTC has indicated that reconsideration of the station location may take several months and that the grant funding for land use planning will not be available until the station location has been resolved. It appears at this time that the land use planning study will be ready to be reactivated near the time of the completion of the visioning process, which may allow for the necessary shifting of staff resources from the visioning process to the Dumbarton Rail Land Use Planning Study.

El Camino Real Pipeline Projects

There are a number of projects that are currently in the development pipeline. For purposes of this discussion, the pipeline includes all projects that have filed a planning application or have made public statements about development intentions. The following is a list of projects and the status:

- **Derry (580 Oak Grove Avenue)** – a high density, mixed use development that was approved and is the subject of a referendum;
- **1300 El Camino Real (former Cadillac site)** – a high density, mixed use development that is scheduled for a study session on March 13, 2007 and the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Report in early April 2007;
- **Park Theater (1275 El Camino Real)** – historic preservation of theater building and potential conversion to a dance studio; study session held on January 23, 2007;
- **1906 El Camino Real (former Acorn Restaurant)** – a new medical office building schedule for a City Council public hearing on February 27, 2007;
- **389 El Camino Real (former Anderson Truck Lot)** – a high-density residential concept that was presented to the Council on February 7, 2006; and
- **Stanford Park Hotel (100 El Camino)** – hotel expansion on portion of former Anderson Chevrolet Lot (300 El Camino Real) that was presented to the Council on February 7, 2006.

In addition, the former Varsity Ford site (350 El Camino Real) and the former Pontiac, Buick, GMC site (550 El Camino) on Stanford University leased land are vacant, but no development plans have been presented.

The City can continue to process applications while the visioning process is underway, but it may be helpful for the Council to require study sessions for certain types of projects in order to provide direction to staff and manage expectations of applicants and the community. The categories of project that seem worthy of a study session would be those that require a General Plan or Zoning Ordinance Amendment, construction of new buildings or additions greater than 1,000 square feet, and project with characteristics that staff believes would be of Council or community interest such as a substantial change of use.

In addition to projects within the City of Menlo Park boundaries, there are development proposals in Palo Alto at the Stanford Medical Center and the Stanford Shopping Center that have potential impacts on Menlo Park, especially along El Camino and Santa Cruz Avenue, related to traffic and sales tax/transient occupancy tax. As the City moves forward with the visioning process, it would be critical to keep these development proposals in mind.

Summary Questions

In order to frame the Council discussion and provide the necessary direction to staff, the following summarizes what staff believes are the key questions for the Council to consider at the study session:

- Does the Council want to refine the goal statement to focus on the creation of a vision and strategies?
- Does the Council want to prioritize the Community Visioning Process for El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue over existing priorities for the Community Development Department (e.g., Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update, East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study, Haven Land Use Study, and Development of a Policy for the Review of Fences on Corner Lots)?
- Does the Council want to complete the work on this goal by the end of June 2007, thereby sole sourcing the consultant work?
- Does the Council want to create a Community Advisory Committee comprised of 15 members representing interests of residents, business owners and property owners?
- Does the Council want to continue to process development applications along El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue area while the visioning process is conducted, but require a study session for certain types of proposals?

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The creation of a plan would require resources for consultant assistance. The precise scope of work and timeframe would impact the cost, although based on similar studies;

staff would estimate the cost at \$100,000. Upon returning with the consultant contract, staff would recommend an appropriation from General Fund Reserves in FY2006-07.

POLICY ISSUES

The results of the plan could be used to establish policy related to a number of issues along the El Camino Real corridor and Downtown Santa Cruz Avenue Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental review is not required at this time. The adoption of a plan would be subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

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PUBLIC NOTICE: Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Excerpt from January 23, 2007 Council Report (#07-009) regarding the Council Goals for El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue and M-2
- B. Study Area Map for El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue
- C. Annotated Bibliography of Past and Current Studies related to the El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue Area
- D. Excerpt of Community Development Project Priorities as Updated on January 4, 2007

ATTACHMENT A

Excerpt of January 23, 2007 City Council Staff Report on Council Goals

El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue Economic Development and Land Use

Goal statement: Adopt a Specific Plan for the El Camino Real Corridor and Santa Cruz Avenue downtown to increase economic vitality and guide land use development and transportation and other infrastructure proposals.

Existing efforts: A number of studies and planning initiatives have been undertaken in the downtown and El Camino Real area. These include the recent work on the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update, parking related studies, grade separation study, storm drainage master plan and participation in the Grand Boulevard Initiative. Studies in the recent past that can help to inform future work on a Specific Plan include the "Imagine a Downtown" Design Charrette and Center City Design Guidelines. In addition, there are several development proposals pending in the area, including the mixed use development on the Derry Lane property, a mixed use proposal located at 1300 El Camino Real and an office project proposed for 1906 El Camino Real. Interest in development has also been expressed by the Stanford Park Hotel as well as for the vacant automobile dealership sites.

Suggested approach: Staff recommends the creation of a Specific Plan as the best tool for achieving a vital and well-planned downtown/El Camino corridor. This plan would serve as a "mini general plan" plus implementation regulations similar to a zoning ordinance. It would be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Report and would address a range of issues, including economic development, the impact of housing in the area, and infrastructure needs such as transportation, parking and storm water management. The recommended planning horizon is 2030, since a 20-year horizon is typically used for long range planning documents.

Development of a Specific Plan will require working with a number of stakeholders and interested parties, including business and property owners in the area, the Chamber of Commerce, Caltrans, regional planning organizations, neighboring jurisdictions and the general public. The City's commissions would, of course, have an important role to play in shaping the plan and facilitating community input.

If such a plan were the Council's top priority, it could be completed in approximately one year from the approval of consultant contracts. The estimated budget for this project is in the range of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, with the level of public participation and the requirements for visual simulations as major, variable cost-drivers.

Developing a Specific Plan for El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue is a major undertaking that will require commitment of significant consultant resources as well as staff time from several City departments. It will also be an important focus for the

Planning, Transportation and Housing Commissions. As such, it will have implications for the City's ability to undertake other projects. It will also raise questions regarding how to address proposals that are already in the development approval process or are submitted to the process during the planning period.

Next steps: Staff proposes holding a special Council session on February 12 to allow a full discussion of this goal. Topics during this session may include a briefing on prior and current studies relevant to this area, a preliminary overview of similar efforts in other cities, a more detailed outline of the recommended approach, the need to consider possible impacts of pending Stanford projects, resource needs and the implications for other Menlo Park projects and the options for addressing development proposals already in the pipeline. In addition, the special session will provide the first of many opportunities for public input. Staff will conduct outreach to promote awareness of the special session. With Council's direction from this special session, staff will develop a project for Council's final consideration and adoption during the annual project priority setting process, which is scheduled for March 6.

M-2

Staff recommends postponing work on a land use and economic development plan for properties located in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district in order to focus work efforts on the El Camino Real and downtown areas. Staff believes that the review process used for the El Camino Real and downtown areas will establish a model that can then be used for other areas of the city, including the M-2 zoning district. In thinking about a land use and economic development plan for the M-2 district, the Council might want to consider that the M-2 district is comprised of multiple areas with very different characteristics. Additionally, there are a number of current proposals that will begin to redefine the area. These include the proposal by General Motors Corporation (GM) for the development of auto dealerships, the proposal by the Bohannon Organization for the development of a hotel and offices, and the Dumbarton Rail Station Project. Unless otherwise directed by the Council, staff will continue to process developer-driven projects, including the GM and Bohannon Organization proposals. Work related to the Dumbarton Rail Station Area Land Use Plan is on hold pending further discussions with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) regarding station location and funding of the land use study.

ATTACHMENT C

El Camino Real Corridor/Santa Cruz Avenue Study

Annotated Bibliography of Past and Current Studies

Grand Boulevard Initiative

This is an active regional work effort that was initiated in 2004 with a vision of developing El Camino Real to its full potential as a place for residents to work, live, shop and play. Its aim is creating links between communities that promote walking, public transit and an improved quality of life. The City of Menlo Park participates on both the Policy Task Force and the Technical Working Committee in compiling information and making it available to interested parties, preparing guiding principals that will lead to greater coordination, efficiency and aesthetics for the “boulevard”, creating an on-going forum for involved agencies to resolve issues challenging El Camino Real, and fund-raising for jurisdictions wishing to implement the guiding principals.

Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update (CZOU)

The purpose of the work is to streamline zoning regulations and review processes for commercial development in order to support business development in the city. The work is being conducted in four phases. Phase I was completed in November 2004 and included new administrative review procedures for certain types of development proposals. Phase II was completed in May 2005 and included changes to review requirements for projects involving structural alterations and changes to parking. Phase III involves a comprehensive update to the use categories in commercial zoning districts. Work on Phase III began in April 2006 and continues to be an active fiscal year 2006-07 project, although placed on temporary hold in late 2006. Phase IV involves changes in review requirements for the use of hazardous materials in certain locations. Work has not yet been initiated.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Case Study on Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth

This effort is a grant-funded MTC case study of parking policies to support smart growth specific to downtown Menlo Park. The study conclusions will be issued in conjunction with seven other case study cities in May 2007. An overall report of the collective case studies is due sometime this summer identifying best practices for smart parking for the entire Bay Area. The Menlo Park report will inventory parking supply, analyze demand, evaluate current regulation and enforcement practices, identify alternatives, develop policy recommendations for possible parking improvements and present these options to stakeholders.

"Imagine a Downtown" Design Charrette

A one-day design charrette was held on April 9, 2005, the result of a cooperative effort between the American Institute of Architects San Mateo County Chapter, the City and the Chamber of Commerce. The charrette involved 78 volunteer design professionals organized into four teams to create urban design concepts to transform the area of El Camino Real, Oak Grove Avenue, Alma Street and Ravenswood Avenue into an inviting and vibrant extension of downtown. Four design concepts that incorporated various grade separation scenarios impacting downtown were presented to the City Council at a public meeting held on June 7, 2005 and are summarized in a written report.

Downtown Parking Structure Feasibility Study

In 2004 the City evaluated all eight downtown parking plazas to consider the feasibility of structured parking. Based primarily on the size and configuration of the lots, Plaza One (near El Camino and Oak Grove) and Plaza Three (near Oak Grove and University) were considered the most suitable locations. Based on City Council direction, numerous design alternatives were developed for a parking structure at Plaza Three. Options considered parking structures with and without a commercial space component, and various heights from no levels above grade to three levels above grade.

Caltrain Grade Separation Study

In 2003, the City conducted a railroad grade separation study of the four Caltrain crossings in Menlo Park at Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood, and Encinal. The study analyzed several potential grade separation alternatives including raising the rail and/or the road at varying levels. On September 9, 2003, City Council discussed the alternatives and agreed to continue to evaluate the options in future studies pending funding through Caltrain. At this time, Caltrain is preparing to conduct a new study to further four alternatives including elevated rail, split with rail slightly elevated and the road slightly depressed, deep depressed roadway, and a trench alternative. The new study is expected to begin in 2007 after Caltrain has completed its system wide study to determine the number of tracks within the area, type of station configuration, etc.

Report on Business Development Environment in Menlo Park

The preparation of the report was undertaken in 2002 with consultant assistance. The focus of the report was to assess the general business environment in Menlo Park by surveying the opinions of City officials, staff and the business community. The intent was that the work might serve as a framework for the creation of a business development strategy for the City. Subsequent to the

completion of the report, the City sponsored several meetings of a Business Roundtable comprised of community and business representatives in early 2003. Actions pursued as a result of the Business Roundtable included the creation of the City's Business Manager position and initiation of work related to the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update (CZOU).

Land Use and Circulation Study

The study was conducted in 1999 and 2000. The purpose of the study was to examine the impacts of commercial development on traffic conditions, both citywide and in defined study areas, including the North El Camino Real Commercial Corridor from Ravenswood Avenue to the northerly city limits. The study found that alternative development scenarios for both down-zoning and changes in uses would not provide significant relief to traffic congestion due to the fact that the alternative development scenarios did not result in a major reduction in trips and that any reduction of trips would be replaced with latent regional travel demand. Based on these findings, the Council took no further action to consider changes in the Zoning Ordinance for the defined study areas.

Smart Growth

The Smart Growth Initiative was conducted in 1998 and 1999 and was intended to define a community vision on a citywide basis. Extensive public outreach was conducted that included one-on-one interviews with members of the community and several community workshops held throughout the city. As a citywide vision began to emerge, concerns over portions of the vision and the implications for future development also emerged. The work on the initiative ended in 1999 with no action taken.

Center City Design Plan

The study was undertaken from 1996 through 1998 and was focused on El Camino Real and downtown. The purpose of the study was to articulate a future vision for the center of the city. Goals were articulated that focused on the need to create a sense of place and enhance the vitality at the center of the city, in part by creating a pedestrian-friendly environment and envisioning new uses including mixed use at higher densities. Capital projects were identified for improvements to public spaces, landscaping, lighting and signage and design guidelines for uses, building volumes and design standards, street frontages, landscape spaces, and parking. The Center City Design Plan was never adopted, based in part on concerns over increased densities that may have resulted from the plan. The work was ultimately folded into the city wide Smart Growth Initiative in 1998.

Development Guidelines for the El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue/Merrill Street/Ravenswood Avenue Block

In 1987, the City Council adopted Development Guidelines for the block that is now developed with Menlo Center. The value of the block as a transitional element connecting the downtown, Civic Center and surrounding neighborhoods was recognized in both the 1974 General Plan and the El Camino Real/Southern Pacific Railroad Corridor Study. Menlo Center was developed in a cooperative effort between the City and the developer and is consistent with the Guidelines.

El Camino Real/Southern Pacific Railroad Corridor Study

The study was undertaken in the late 1970s and focused on the area located between El Camino Real and the railroad tracks, from the southern to the northern city boundary. The purpose of the study was to formulate goals and policies for future development of the corridor that would improve the functional relationship of land uses, enhance the aesthetic quality of the area, and solidify a “sense of place” in order to enhance commercial activity. Ultimately, the study recommended a new “PD” or Planned Development overlay zoning district to provide for comprehensive planning on larger properties. The PD zoning was subsequently incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance and has been applied to six properties.

Attachment D

City of Menlo Park Current Project Status Report January 4, 2007

Community Development Department/Comprehensive Planning Projects

Development of Policy for the Review of Fences on Corner Lots	\$4,500
Anticipated Completion: June 2007	
Description: Development of a policy to guide Planning Commission and staff review of use permit requests for fences located on corner properties. The policy would specifically address issues such as design and materials, landscaping, appropriate setbacks and motorist, pedestrian and bicyclist safety.	
Current Status: The Council prioritized the project in fiscal year 2006-07. Work will commence in the spring of 2007.	

Streamline Commercial Development Process	\$65,000
Anticipated Completion: Phases III and IV – Pending direction by the City Council	
Description: Evaluate and prepare recommendations for streamlining zoning regulations and review processes for commercial development in order to support business development efforts in the city. The work is being conducted in four phases: Phase I included a new administrative review process for certain types of development proposals; Phase II included changes to review requirements for projects involving structural alterations and changes to parking; Phase III involves a comprehensive update to the use categories in commercial zoning districts; Phase IV involves changes in review requirements for the use of hazardous materials in certain locations.	
Current Status: The Council initiated work on the streamlining effort in February 2004 and identified it as a project priority in fiscal year 2004-05. Phase I was completed in November 2004. Phase II was completed in May 2005. Phase III began in April 2006 and included community and working group meetings to assist in the development of a draft update of use categories in commercial zoning districts. In September 2006, work was postponed pending further direction from the Council. Costs to date for Phases I, II and III are approximately \$50,000.	

Haven Avenue Land Use Study	\$300,000
Anticipated Completion: December 2007	
Description: General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments, associated environmental review and possible design charrette to allow for alternative uses, including auto dealerships and regional retail uses, in the Haven Avenue area.	
Current Status: The project began with Council direction in August 2004 and was first prioritized in fiscal year 2005-06. A fiscal analysis and preliminary traffic analysis have been completed. The traffic analysis indicates that any substantial change in land use would require preparation of an EIR, requiring a significant commitment of funds for consultant services and staff resources. Work will progress as allowed by the East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study.	

East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study	\$225,000
Anticipated Completion: June 2008	
Description: The study is associated with and being coordinated with work on the Dumbarton Rail Corridor (DRC) Project intended to extend commuter rail service across the Bay between the Peninsula and the East Bay by rehabilitating and reconstructing rail facilities on the existing railroad alignments and right-of-ways. As a part of the DRC Project, a new rail station is proposed in the Menlo Park area. The East Hamilton/Tyco/Dumbarton Rail Land Use and Circulation Study (now known as Dumbarton Rail Station Area Specific Plan) would evaluate potential land use and circulation scenarios based on transit-oriented development policies for an area within, at a minimum, a one-half mile radius of the new station location, and would likely include the Redevelopment Agency-owned property on Hamilton Avenue and the adjacent Tyco site. The completion of the work would result in adoption of a specific plan through General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments and related land use entitlements, including an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).	
Current Status: The Council first prioritized the project in fiscal year 2004-05. Since the project was prioritized, staff has participated in the regional efforts on the DRC Project, been in discussion with interested parties on the development of the area and, with consultant assistance, conducted background research on the surrounding neighborhood in order to provide a foundation for a collaborative outreach process. In June 2005, the City applied for and received a Station Area Planning Grant for \$225,000 from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for the project. In May 2006, the City applied for and received a \$75,000 grant from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) for the project. In May 2006, the Council approved a work plan for the project and authorized a total of \$225,000 in City/Agency funding for a total project cost of \$525,000. Staff is currently in discussions with the MTC and TA to determine a specific station location. Additionally, staff is currently reviewing proposals from land use consultants for the study.	