PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2005

2004-0168 – Study Issue on Transportation Demand Management Program for Higher Density Residential Projects **(Also to City Council on 07/19/05)** KD

(This item was moved from the third item to the sixth item on the agenda.)

Kelly Diekmann, Associate Planner, presented the staff report. Mr. Diekmann described the Study Issue as a review of opportunities to support and implement Transportation Demand Management for high-density development. The definition for TDM has traditionally been techniques that reduce single occupant vehicle trips during peak hours on major roadways, the peak hour for Sunnyvale is between 4-6 p.m. on weekdays. Staff noted through their review that they were only able to find one local jurisdiction across the nation that had mandatory residential TDM for very high density development; rather most places focused on employer based TDM. The staff report discussed the demographics and geography of high-density zoning within Sunnyvale. Staff noted that only 3% of the City's land area was zoned for high density. Staff discussed Census 2000 Journey to Work statistics for transportation choices and travel times. Staff also described the current public transportation facilities and their service levels and costs for ridership. The pedestrian and bicycle facilities available within the City were also discussed. Using VTA guidelines and other TDM resources, staff determined that the City of Sunnyvale did not have a sufficient concentration of high-density housing or alternative transportation facilities and service levels to support high levels of public transportation usage. The conclusion of the Study was that density in and of itself did not have a direct relationship to use of alternative transportation, rather the proximity to services was the most important factor. The most influential TDM elements are generally financial subsidies to not drive or having to pay for parking at a destination. Using a case study of Traditions Townhomes on Tasman Drive, transit usage would need to rise from the City average of 4% to 7% for a mandatory VTA transit pass requirement to break even in cost with the cost of individual usage. Staff believed the additional costs to individual households for mandatory transit passes was cost prohibitive as a program requirement. Overall, staff does not believe that program-based administration and financial incentives are appropriate for residential development based on the density and availability of transit facilities, but staff does believe there are some things that can be done to improve site planning. Staff discussed that site-planning improvements would be cost effective at the time of development, while at the same time have minimal long-term costs or maintenance requirements. Staff has expanded their recommendation for implementing residential TDM techniques to include site planning measures beyond the scope of high-density housing. Techniques should be included for all attached housing and mixed use development within 1/3 of a mile of transit stations due to the relationship of proximity to facilities over density.

Comm. Simons commented that some of the information in the report does not match the sources that he has seen, i.e. County Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Pedestrian Technical Guidelines. Mr. Diekmann said that he referenced VTA Best Practices and Census 2000 Journey to Work information. The guidelines on density are from the Oregon Department of Transportation and VTA Guidelines. Comm. Simons questioned the 1/3 of a mile reference in the report that showed what distance people are comfortable walking from a transit site. After some discussion with staff and the Commission it was determined that 1/3 of a mile is close and different sources may show slightly different distances. Comm. Simons thanked staff for the level of detail regarding the issue of trying to do active TDM in residential housing. Comm. Simons said he tried to compare walkway design guidelines in the Pedestrian Technical Guidelines with the recommendations that were in this report. **Comm. Simons asked that staff review the VTA Pedestrian Technical Guidelines section 1.17 regarding walkway designs and width of sidewalks and section 2.3 regarding the impacts on alternative transportation when changing the road width, and consider including this information in the report**. He added that he was very impressed with report. Comm. Simons asked about recommending a type of generic number of units when an industrial area converts to a certain number of units or acreage in regards to TDM implementation. Ms. Ryan said that the areas identified in the policy are areas already zoned, but if we rezoned a large area we could amend this policy to include new areas.

Comm. Hungerford asked for clarification regarding the attachments to the report. Mr. Diekmann said that Attachment A is the policy to be proposed to the City Council and Attachment F is the current policies of the General Plan relevant to the study issue.

Chair Moylan opened the public hearing.

Chair Moylan closed the public hearing.

Comm. Hungerford moved to recommend to City Council to adopt the draft City Council policy as written. Comm. Simons seconded.

Comm. Simons offered a Friendly Amendment requesting staff to review some of the text from the VTA Pedestrian Technical Guidelines for possible inclusion in the report; sections 1.17, walkway designs and width of sidewalks, 2.3, impacts on alternative transportation when changing the road width. Comm. Hungerford accepted the amendment.

Comm. Hungerford commended staff on a well done report that he can strongly support to present to the City Council.

FINAL ACTION:

Comm. Hungerford made a motion on Item 2004-0168 to recommend to City Council to adopt the Council Policy on Residential Transportation Demand Management with modifications: staff to review sections of the VTA Pedestrian Technical Guidelines to possibly be included in the report, Sections 1.17, walkway designs and width of sidewalks, 2.3, impacts on alternative transportation when changing the road width. Comm. Simons seconded.

Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

Item to be heard by City Council on July 19, 2005.