

**Council Meeting: March 20, 2012****SUBJECT: 2010-7090 – Creation of a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)  
for the Lawrence Station Area Plan****REPORT IN BRIEF**

In 2011, the Lawrence Station Area planning (LSAP) project was awarded a Station Area Planning (SAP) grant by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) under the Station Area and Land Use Planning Program. The Station Area and Land Use Planning Program is an initiative to finance planning efforts that will result in land use plans and policies that will substantially increase transit ridership around public transit hubs and bus and rail corridors in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The program guidelines for the MTC SAP grant **require** that the process of station area planning involve a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG). The formation of a CAG would be important to the success of the Lawrence project because it could provide in-depth community education, discussion and policy deliberation. In order to fully address these issues, staff is recommending forming a representative LSAP Citizen Advisory Committee, with community members selected by the City Council, to serve in an advisory capacity and assist in community outreach efforts on the LSAP.

**BACKGROUND**

In January 2008, City Council directed staff to review and analyze current and future development potential in the area around the existing Caltrain Station near Lawrence Expressway. With this direction, staff completed an economic feasibility study that was approved by Sunnyvale City Council in May 2009 (RTC 09-120). The Council further directed staff to pursue grant opportunities to prepare a Station Area Plan.

In 2009, the City was awarded a grant from Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for an amount of \$150,000 under VTA's FY 2008/2009 Community Design and Transportation Grant Program for the Lawrence SAP project. Using this funding, staff completed Phase 1 of the LSAP effort in partnership with a consultant team led by BMS Design Group. Phase 1 of LSAP included: overall framework plan, land use alternatives analysis, access and circulation analysis and a preliminary assessment of parking needs, traffic, infrastructure and open space requirements in the area. Council accepted the first phase plan for LSAP in November 2011(RTC 11-240).

Meanwhile, staff continued to seek grant funding for subsequent phases of the study. In August 2011, the City was awarded a Station Area Planning (SAP) grant, for an amount of \$450,000, by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) under the Station Area and Land Use Planning Program, also known as the FOCUS program. This RTC outlines the structure, composition and role of the CAG in phase 2 of the LSAP effort.

### **EXISTING POLICY**

GOAL A: Achieve a community in which all community members are well informed about local issues, City programs and services.

GOAL B: Achieve a community in which all community members can be actively involved in shaping the quality of life and participate in local community and government activities.

*Policy B.4* – Promote and encourage volunteerism in City and community affairs.

*Policy B.5* – Plan for and develop wide representation of the community when obtaining public input for policy decisions

### **DISCUSSION**

Staff is working on selection of a consultant team with the required expertise through a competitive RFP process. It is anticipated that the consultant selection process will be completed by April 2012. The work plan will be developed in consultation with the consultant team. A detailed work plan will be presented to Council outlining the scope of Phase 2 of the LSAP and the schedule of Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings as well as a contract with the staff recommended consultant team.

Phase 2 of LSAP will include a thorough analysis of the following issues for the LSAP study area:

- Parking and Traffic Circulation Analysis (including pedestrian and bicycle improvements)
- Toolkit for Mixed Use Developments
- Preferred Alternative, Urban Design, Streetscape and Open Space Standards
- Affordable Housing and Anti Displacement Strategy
- Infrastructure development, Budget and Financing Strategy
- Implementation Plan
- Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- General Plan and Zoning Code amendments

The four public outreach meetings conducted in 2011 (as part of Phase 1 of the study) provided staff with useful information and insights on the issues that are relevant for LSAP and the City as a whole. It was apparent, however, that participation from community stakeholders on an ongoing basis would be key to shaping a plan that addresses the concerns and goals of the community. Staff suggests forming a CAC consisting of 9 members representing various City boards and commissions, and residents/businesses from within the study area.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been formed already and was involved through Phase 1 of the plan. The TAG comprises staff from various departments within the City as well as from public agencies that have an interest in the project including, the City of Santa Clara, County of Santa Clara, and VTA. In Phase 2 the TAG will be expanded to include staff members from MTC, BAAQMD, and SamTrans/Caltrain.

The benefits of a Citizen Advisory Group include the following:

- 1) The advisory committee will allow for more in-depth public education, dialogue and deliberations on relevant policy issues;
- 2) The LSAP is an important strategic document (10-year timeframe) that will guide future development within the 400 acre study area and should include a systematic and interactive public review process;
- 3) The LSAP involves many technical and complex issues that require considerable knowledge to reach well-balanced and informed recommendations;
- 4) The advisory committee with additional community outreach will facilitate an open and transparent public review process; and
- 5) Through committee meetings, early public discussion of policy alternatives can occur, and timely feedback can be provided to staff during the preparation of the plans.

The advisory committee would require additional staff support, and the expanded planning process would require more time to complete the Phase 2 study. Staff believes, however, that the additional time and staff commitment would result in a plan with broader community understanding and acceptance. The committee process would not replace the community outreach and formal public hearing process conducted by the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption of the LSAP and associated environmental studies.

### **Selection of a Committee**

The advisory committee could be selected from a cross-section of the community including representatives serving on City boards and commissions, residents and business owners from within the study area as well as Citywide. Staff suggests the following 9-member composition for the LSAP CAC:

- Two (2) Planning Commission members
- One (1) member from the Sustainability Commission
- One (1) member from the Housing and Human Services Commission
- Two (2) business representatives or property owners from the study area
- Two (2) residents from the study area
- One (1) resident or business representative from the City at large

The members of the LSAP Community Advisory Group could be selected by soliciting applications from residents and businesses using e-mail and postal mailing lists, Facebook, newspaper ads, e-mail, and other avenues to invite participation. The suggested composition of the committee would represent a broad and balanced cross-section of the study area and the Sunnyvale community overall. Similar to the Horizon 2035 Committee, a sub-committee of the City Council could be designated by the Mayor to review applications and select the committee. Alternatively, a City Council sub-committee could make a recommendation to the full City Council. Generally it is best to have a committee of 10 or fewer members, for a project of this scale, to better manage schedules, training, and other logistics of committee work.

Staff anticipates the commitment for the advisory committee would be approximately 12-15 months with meetings held once every month or every other month, depending on the work plan.

If the LSAP Advisory Group is authorized by the City Council, staff would prepare recruitment announcements and ask for applications within a few weeks of the announcements. Announcements soliciting interest would be sent to a wide range of community members such as neighborhood and business associations, and City Boards, Commissions and Advisory Committees. Announcements would be posted on KSUN, in the *Sun*, on the City's website and on the LSAP webpage. Attendees of the 2011 outreach meetings would also be notified.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funding for the Lawrence Station Area Planning effort will be through the MTC FOCUS grant for \$450,000 that was awarded to the project in 2011. The LSAP Citizen Advisory Group is a requirement of the grant and would have minimal expenses other than additional time for staff support and expanded outreach.

### **PUBLIC CONTACT**

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of

the City Clerk and on the City's Web site. Attendees of the 2011 LSAP outreach meetings were advised of this report.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Authorize a Citizen Advisory Group to act in an advisory capacity on Phase 2 of LSAP, and assist in community outreach efforts. The committee would consist of up to 9 members representing City boards and commissions, residents and businesses, primarily from within the study area.
2. Appoint a Council sub-committee of three City Council members to select the advisory committee.
3. Forward a recommendation to the full City Council.
4. Do not authorize the formation of a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) for the Lawrence Station Area Plan and forego the MTC FOCUS grant award.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Alternatives 1 and 2:** Staff recommends that the Council determine that a community advisory committee for the LSAP is appropriate to help validate the findings of the study, act as advisors during the planning process and assist in community outreach and education. Staff further recommends that the Council direct staff to widely recruit for applicants and appoint a Council sub-committee to form the committee.

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Approved by:

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City Manager

**Attachments**

Attachment A: Existing Related Policies

## **Policy 7.2.1 Community Engagement— Goals, Policies and Action Strategies**

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When City Council adopts the General Plan Sub-elements, it is adopting the related goals and policies; the action strategies included in this document inform Council and the public regarding the initial operational steps which staff proposes to implement the goals and policies adopted by Council. Staff may create new action strategies and revise others without action by City Council. Action strategies are short-range in nature. The action strategies translate the long-range goals and adopted policies into decisions and actions which address community engagement needs in Sunnyvale. They are the critical link between long-range planning and current decision-making.

**GOAL A: ACHIEVE A COMMUNITY IN WHICH ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE WELL INFORMED ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES, CITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

Policy A.1 – Assure that all community members have reasonable access to City information, services and programs within budgeted resources.

### Action Strategies

- A.1a.* Provide reasonable and cost effective access to City facilities, programs and services.
- A.1b.* Develop suitable customer feedback mechanisms for City programs to assess quality and customer service issues and opportunities for improvement.
- A.1c.* Monitor legislative and regulatory trends regarding public access and information issues.
- A.1d.* Utilize community and business organizations to assist in informing the community about City Services and programs.
- A.1e.* Provide news media with timely and comprehensive information regarding Council actions and City information of interest to the general public.
- A.1f.* Assist the news media in receiving information regarding coverage of City issues.
- A.1g.* Identify communications media and communications technology which are appropriate and cost effective to provide information to and access for the community.
- A.1h.* Monitor communications technology and policy developments and evaluate their potential impact on public information activities to improve communications, reduce duplication of effort, and enhance cost-effectiveness.
- A.1i.* Monitor the City communications policy to guide utilization of technology for public participation and community involvement.
- A.1j.* Continue to provide and support a central information center in City Hall to assist community members in locating and using City services.

Policy A.2 – Provide accurate and thorough information in a timely manner to ensure that community members have an opportunity to respond effectively.

Action Strategies

A.2a. Respond in a timely manner to all resident inquiries or concerns regarding City services.

A.2b. Identify residents, community organizations and businesses affected by significant City actions and decisions and ensure that they receive timely and appropriate information enabling participation in planning and decision-making processes.

A.2c. Ensure that effective public notification and access, in accordance with relevant laws and City Council policies, are provided to enhance meaningful community participation in the policy making process.

A.2d. Notify community members of opportunities for involvement in policy making and program planning.

A.2e. Ensure that all public board, commission and Council meetings provide an opportunity for public input and involvement.

A.2f. Provide opportunities for community members to participate in the development of relevant public policy decisions.

A.2g. Ensure that public notification measures are proportionate to the magnitude and public sensitivity of issues.

A.2h. Produce periodic comprehensive publications on City affairs that are readily available and distributed to all City residents and businesses.

A.2i - Publish and distribute timely and accurate information regarding City programs and services, City Council actions, and policy issues.

A.2j. Encourage comprehensive, accurate and timely media coverage of City actions, services and programs.

A.2k. Develop mechanisms to evaluate the impact of marketing efforts on the public demand for services and the City's ability to deliver them.

Policy A.3 – Ensure an integrated approach to informing community members about local issues, City programs and services that reaches segments of a diverse community.

Action Strategies

A.3a. Provide appropriate language translation assistance and translated materials to residents seeking City services.

A.3b. Enhance the ability of City programs and staff to serve community diversity.

A.3c. Provide information and outreach through various mechanisms in order to effectively inform and engage community members.

*A.3d.* Encourage the development of and support community organizations and networks for public information.

*A.3e.* Work with businesses, local institutions, school districts, and other public agencies to develop informational networks serving the community and assist in informing the community about City services and programs.

*A.3f.* Provide community organizations and networks with information regarding City events, programs and services and encourage distribution throughout the City.

*A.3g.* Develop mechanisms to assess community needs in provision of services.

*A.3h.* Regularly update a coordinated database for information distribution.

*A.3i.* Periodically evaluate City public information materials, activities and plans, to assess effectiveness, minimize duplication, maximize cost-effectiveness of information distribution, and respond to community needs.

*A.3j.* Assess the effectiveness of public information about City programs and services and the fiscal impact.

**GOAL B: ACHIEVE A COMMUNITY IN WHICH ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN SHAPING THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES.**

Policy B.1 - Encourage community involvement in the development and implementation of City and community activities, programs and services.

Action Strategies

*B.1a.* Support community participation in City programs and services and develop materials to assist and encourage involvement.

*B.1b.* Promote involvement of businesses in City and community activities, programs and services.

*B.1c.* Promote public awareness and understanding of financial and other constraints on municipal services, and involve community members in identifying solutions which balance public demand for services with limited resources.

*B.1d.* Support communication throughout the community to create and strengthen relationships.

Policy B.2 – Simplify processes and procedures to make it easy and convenient for community members to participate in City activities and programs.

Action Strategies

*B.2a.* Provide community outreach programs throughout the City to improve service delivery and communication with community members.

*B.2b.* Facilitate the development of relationships and partnerships among community organizations and the business community to achieve common goals.

*B.2c.* Encourage grass-roots efforts to identify and develop solutions for community problems.

*B.2d.* Evaluate public involvement measures to ensure their utility as policy making and program planning tools.

Policy B.3 – Promote the importance and benefits of community involvement.

Action Strategies

*B.3a.* Work with local school districts and community organizations to encourage student involvement in local government, community activities and issues.

*B.3b.* Support City and corporate employee involvement in community activities.

*B.3c.* Identify and build on opportunities for partnerships between the City and community members which can leverage resources to meet community needs.

*B.3d.* Identify and support mechanisms to strengthen the capability of community organizations to achieve community-wide goals.

*B.3e.* Facilitate the ability of businesses to support or supplement public resources to achieve community goals.

*B.3f.* Publicly recognize business community involvement, contributions and achievements.

Policy B.4 – Promote and encourage volunteerism in City and community affairs.

Action Strategies

*B.4a.* Continue to support and evaluate the use of volunteers as a method of maintaining and/or enhancing municipal service delivery and as a means for building a stronger community.

*B.4b.* Identify opportunities and mechanisms for community members to maintain and/or enhance City programs, services and assets through volunteer endeavors.

*B.4c.* Publicly recognize City volunteer involvement, contributions and achievements.

*B.4d.* Support efforts to implement and foster effective volunteerism throughout the City.

Policy B.5 – Plan for and develop wide representation of the community when obtaining public input for policy decisions.

Action Strategies

*B.5a.* Identify and strengthen contacts between the City and community organizations.

*B.5b.* Support the development of a comprehensive directory of community organizations and resources to strengthen relationships throughout the City.

*B.5c.* Identify opportunities and develop plans for City personnel to meet and interact with community groups regarding City issues.

*B.5d.* - Provide opportunities for community input and monitor feedback.

*B.5e.* Identify feedback mechanisms to provide the optimal level of community input in public decision making.

Policy B.6 – Provide opportunities for and encourage involvement from community members that reflect the diversity of the City.

Action Strategies

*B.6a.* Develop specific criteria and plans to obtain a diversity of representation in community engagement activities.

*B.6b.* Encourage a diverse pool of applicants for membership on boards, commissions, advisory committees and task forces to reflect the diversity of the community.

*B.6c.* Use surveys and/or other methods to determine community awareness and opinion concerning local issues and to provide information for policy and program planning.

Goal C: CREATE A STRONG, POSITIVE COMMUNITY IDENTITY, RICH IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Policy C.1 – Actively encourage public and professional recognition of the City through awards and promotion of significant City and community accomplishments and innovations.

Action Strategies

*C.1a.* Identify opportunities for recognition of City achievements, innovations, personnel, and programs and services.

*C.1b.* Maintain a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement of City programs and services.

Policy C.2 - Encourage celebrations which help to create a strong, positive community identity and recognize cultural diversity.

Action Strategies

*C.2a.* Facilitate the efforts of community members to provide safe, well-organized community-wide special events which strengthen a positive community identity.

Policy C.3 - Engage in regional, state, national and international activities which promote a positive community identity for the City of Sunnyvale.

Action Strategies

*C.3a.* Exchange ideas and innovations with other communities.

*C.3b.* Facilitate the exchange of technical assistance between the City and other agencies and the private sector.

Policy C.4 – Foster an environment of awareness, respect and understanding that encourages community engagement with different cultures.

Action Strategies

*C.4a.* Encourage and celebrate the diverse cultures that represent the Sunnyvale community.

(Adopted by Resolution 116-95; RTC 95-058 (2/7/95); RTC 07-359 (10/30/07))

Lead Department: Office of the City Manager