



**CONCURRENT MEETING
CITY COUNCIL/SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY (CRA)/RANCHO CORDOVA FINANCING CORPORATION (RCFC)**

**City Hall
2729 Prospect Park Drive, Rancho Cordova**

Tuesday, June 11, 2013

**5:30 PM – Special Meeting
American River Community Room North**

AGENDA

1. WORK SESSION - CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Council Members McGarvey, Sander, Skoglund, Terry and Mayor Budge.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

At a special meeting, citizens wishing to address the Council for any matter on the agenda may do so at the time the matter is discussed. Note, under the provisions of the California Government Code, the City Council is prohibited from discussing or taking action on any item not on the agenda.

3. SPECIAL MEETING ITEMS

3.1 **Subject:** Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Check In and Key Issues Discussion.

Recommendation: Receive summary of stakeholder outreach, consider staff's presentation and provide direction on key issues, and provide input on recommendations for the update of the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan.

Result of Recommended Action: Council direction on key issues and input on recommendations for plan amendment and will allow staff to proceed with updating the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan.

Staff Report: Paul Junker, Planning Director.

Advances Goals: 1, 2, and 6.

- 3.2 **Subject:** Charter City Discussion.
 Result of Recommended Action: Discussion item only.
 Staff Report: David Gassaway, Public Works.
 Advances Goals: 1, 4, and 5.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

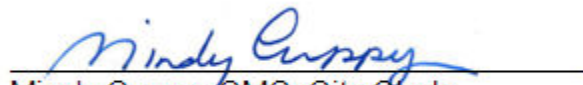
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (916) 851-8720 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

I, Mindy Cuppy, CMC, City Clerk for the City of Rancho Cordova, declare that the foregoing agenda for the Tuesday, June 11, 2013 Special Meeting of the Rancho Cordova City Council/Successor Agency to the CRA/RCFC was posted and available for review on Friday, June 7, 2013 at City Hall of the City of Rancho Cordova, 2729 Prospect Park Drive, Rancho Cordova, California, 95670. The agenda is also available on the city website at www.cityofranchocordova.org.

Signed Friday, June 7, 2013 at Rancho Cordova, California.


Mindy Cuppy, CMC, City Clerk

MEMORANDUM



DATE: June 11, 2013

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Paul Junker, Planning Director

SUBJECT: **FOLSOM BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN CHECK IN AND KEY ISSUES DISCUSSION**

RECOMMENDATION

Receive summary of stakeholder outreach, consider staff's presentation and provide direction on key issues, and provide input on policy recommendations for the update of the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan.

RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Council provides direction on key issues and input on recommendations for plan amendment which would allow staff to proceed with updating the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan.

BACKGROUND

Staff is proceeding with work efforts to complete major amendments of the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan (FBSP) by the end of this year. This status update will brief Council on the findings of a focused stakeholder outreach effort and will bring forward three key policy discussions that will allow work to continue and ensure that staff efforts are consistent with Council expectations.

Following the March 28 City Council Study Session, staff initiated the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan amendment process with a series of stakeholder meetings and evaluation of the existing plan. At that time, the City Council directed staff to conduct a focused and expedited outreach to specific stakeholders invested in the Folsom Boulevard area. Outreach efforts have been completed and finding of those efforts are attached for Council review.

Additionally, based on initial discussions with City Council in February and March regarding the vision, land use, development standard, and process issues within the existing specific plan, staff began evaluating and identifying ways in which the specific plan should be amended to meet the City Council's current goals for the Plan area.

In order to ensure Council expectations are being met, staff has prepared brief "white papers" on three key issues and will ask Council to confirm whether our approaches are consistent with Council goals. This Study Session serves as an early check-in with City Council and this type of check in on status and direction will occur periodically as work proceeds on the FBSP. Once we receive input from City Council on stakeholder input and the key issues discussed herein, staff

will prepare an Administrative Draft FBSP for public review and consideration by City Council in late August/early September.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Summary of Stakeholder Outreach
2. Key Issues Discussion Papers
 - A. Vision
 - B. Pulse Points
 - C. Residential Use
3. Comparative Table of Contents

Attachment 1**SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**

This memorandum summarizes a series of stakeholder meetings that were conducted for the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Amendment project and includes an outline of each meeting's agenda, key themes, and issues overall and specific to each discussion. A transcript of all comments follows.

OVERVIEW

A series of three outreach meetings were conducted with the following groups: large landholders and key opportunity site owners, community leaders and business owners, and brokers and developers. Stakeholders represented a broad cross section of interested parties in the future of Folsom Boulevard. A list of questions were developed for each meeting that were intended to encourage conversation among participants, focusing on topics such as existing barriers to achievement of the Boulevard vision, opportunities for the City to assist with achievement of the vision, and potential changes to the current Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan. All three meetings were held at City Hall on May 16 and 17, 2013.

INTERVIEW TRENDS AND KEY FINDINGS

Overall, there was consensus among stakeholders in three primary areas:

- Develop destination and community gathering sites, as indicated in the original vision
- Emphasize cleanup and enhancing public perception of the corridor
- Create incentives and programs to cultivate appropriate development

Stakeholders were very appreciative of the opportunity to provide input. Many felt that the original Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan vision is still relevant and offered strategies for how the City might support more activity to advance the vision. Developers had concerns about the vision's feasibility, but did point out several opportunity sites that could be combined to create parcels for destination activities and community gathering spaces. All would like to see Folsom Boulevard improve.

Additional key themes that emerged from the meetings included:.

Large Landholders and Key Opportunity Site Owners

- Expectations for future changes to regulations on specific properties are varied. Some stakeholders wanted no change, some wanted a specific zoning change, some were open to new proposals on their property, and some owners are in the middle of new projects.
- Housing is not feasible on Folsom Boulevard. Participants generally felt that there was little current demand for housing fronting Folsom Boulevard and that it would be difficult to convince people to live there in the future. They did not explain or detail why they believe this.
- Streetscape and transportation design solutions can help make the boulevard more attractive. Participants felt that improvements could be made to lighting and landscaping along the boulevard. They would like to see street improvements maintain consistency.

Attachment 1

- Market should dictate what happens in the near term. Some felt that tax revenue now, regardless of use, is better than no new development. Some participants encouraged the City to accept any business willing to locate along the boulevard.
- Incentives can help to catalyze development. Participants acknowledged that there are financial barriers to development and that incentives to attract developers will be critical to jump-starting activity on the boulevard.
- Business-friendly environment at all levels of City government. City staff, developers, and business owners will need to work together with creativity and flexibility to achieve the boulevard's collective vision.
- Use design review process to its fullest. Participants felt that there are opportunities during the design review phase to require or incentivize specific improvements along the boulevard. Reaching the overall vision may require small steps forward with every project.

Community Members and Business Owners

- Easy improvements can be made to the boulevard now. Participants would like to see trash along the boulevard cleaned up and increased code enforcement. Participants would also like additional police presence at transit stops to help resolve the perception that Folsom Boulevard is a dangerous area.
- City can be a bridge between grant resources and business owners. Business owners want to make improvements to their facilities, but don't know where to access available resources or grant funding. The City can help to organize opportunities and to assist local businesses with the grant application process.
- City can support efforts to reinvent Folsom Boulevard's identity. Existing signs and gateways do not reflect the corridor vision and could be replaced.
- Keep central gathering places in the vision. Participants agreed that the boulevard would still benefit from destination activities and community spaces. They also encouraged improvements that create a sense of place, such as:
 - Increased walkability
 - Bicycle infrastructure, such as bike parking and trails
 - Speed enforcement, including side streets
 - Better restaurants with outdoor dining
 - Residential options above commercial spaces
- Residents are open to change. Participants identified several opportunity sites along Folsom Boulevard:
 - Joann's
 - Los Rios Community Center site
 - The City should look for bigger sites with opportunities for multiple tenants
 - North of Folsom Boulevard – just under overpass (anchor at one end)
 - Off of Kilgore, old Sam's Club
 - La Loma and West La Loma

Attachment 1

- Access American River Parkway from Kassis property
- Baskin Robbins

Brokers and Developers

- Current vision is not a realistic expectation. They did not detail why they believe that or which particular requirements are not realistic.
- Perceived limitations created by light rail. Participants feel that there is a limited trade area due to the Sacramento River constraining Folsom Boulevard to only two crossings or access points. The location of the light rail line also contributes to trade area limitations. The “one-sided retail corridor” caused by the rail line is not ideal for retail health. They also think the light rail infrastructure is unattractive and hindering the market. Without improvements that increase public safety in and around light rail stations, it will be challenging to create change along the boulevard.
- Development incentives are encouraged. Specifically, developers would like to see reductions in time and cost to streamline projects that fit the corridor vision. Catalyst projects can help to demonstrate to other developers that Folsom Boulevard can support new types of uses.
- Interest in capitalizing on international assets. Some stakeholders would like to celebrate the unique assets of the corridor, in particular its international businesses. However, others were unsure about the success of such an effort. They recognize the unique nature of the assets, but don’t know if it would be attractive regionally.
- Boulevard needs a large destination site. Participants agreed that some parcels may need to be combined to provide options for an anchor business or destination activity.
- Focus on uses that are part of the vision. Suggestions included the development of a community member oversight board that would weigh in on potential new businesses. There are risks associated with letting in some uses (check cashing, thrift stores, or lease restrictions from some large anchor tenants) that could stifle improvements long term.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS APPROACH

Large Landholders and Key Opportunity Site Owners

Meeting Purpose

- Understand what the group has planned for their properties so we can coordinate or make the plan fit
- Understand why change isn’t happening on these properties or on the boulevard in general
- To make this group aware of our effort to refine the plan, to listen, and make them feel heard and involved

Meeting Structure

Participants were welcomed and introduced to the project team and each other. Participants learned from project staff about the Specific Plan amendment process and meeting goals.

Attachment 1

Participants were offered the option to complete a short questionnaire about opportunities and constraints related to their properties in the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan area if they preferred to submit their comments in writing. Discussion questions included:

1. What is the current use of your property?
2. What are your plans for you property? In 5 years? In 10 years?
3. What obstacles have you faced with development?
4. What do you need to do to make things happen and make change?
5. Do you have any specific suggestions on what the City can do to help you realize your visions?
6. What strategies do you have to improve the overall quality of development on Folsom Boulevard?

Participant comments were recorded by the project team. To close the meeting, participants had the opportunity to ask the project team any remaining questions.

Community Members and Business Owners

Meeting Purpose

- Understand how the group currently uses the boulevard today, and if not, why not
- Gain an understanding of what this group would like to see along the boulevard
- Identify challenges to development
- Understand what changes should be made to the plan to address any challenges
- To make this group aware of our effort to refine the plan, to listen, and make them feel heard and involved.

Meeting Structure

Participants were welcomed and introduced to the project team and to each other. Participants learned from project staff about the Specific Plan amendment process and meeting goals. The facilitator asked participants to respond to the following discussion questions:

1. What short- or long-term plans do you have for your property or business?
2. What are your ideas for improving the boulevard?
3. What are the greatest opportunities on the boulevard?
4. What's missing?
5. What can the City do to help improve the boulevard?
6. What should the City avoid?

Participant comments were recorded by the project team. To close the meeting, participants had the opportunity to ask the project team any remaining questions.

Brokers and Developers

Meeting Purpose

- Gain an understanding of what type of development is realistic along the boulevard in the next 10–20 years
- Identify challenges to development
- Understand the challenges they perceive in the future
- Understand what changes should be made to the plan to address any challenges

Attachment 1

- To provide information about the effort to refine the plan, to listen, and provide opportunities to be involved

Meeting Structure

Participants were welcomed and introduced to the project team and to each other. Participants learned from project staff about the Specific Plan amendment process and meeting goals. The facilitator then asked participants to respond to the following discussion questions:

1. What type of development do you feel is realistic along Folsom Boulevard in the next 10–20 years?
2. What impediments do you see standing in the way of new development or redevelopment?
3. How can the City help support business and new development along the boulevard (tools, flexibility, support, and/or programs)?
4. How do the regulations in Rancho Cordova compare to those in other communities in the region?

Participant comments were recorded by the project team. To close the meeting, participants had the opportunity to ask the project team any remaining questions.

APPENDIX

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Large Landholders and Key Opportunity Site Owners

Sharon and Tom Kassis
 Pablo Manzo (Los Rios Community College)
 Andrew Skinner (Parker Stevens)
 Sam Fong
 Jim and Dimitrios Kogos

Community Members and Business Owners

Ruben and Blanca Marquez – owners of Rancho's Club
 Robert J. Kashatt – resident
 Leslie and Bill Bisharat – business owners
 Jeanette Galloway – resident
 John and Melissa Gales – owners of Cordova Pet Clinic
 Jessica Ocenosak – Sun River Neighborhood Association

Brokers and Developers

Hank Choe – Real Estate Portfolio
 Sergio Diaz – Real Estate Portfolio
 Beth Walter – McNellis Partners, LLC
 Chuck Shaw – FITE Development Company
 Ken Noack Jr. – Cornish and Carey

TRANSCRIPT OF PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

Large Landholders and Key Opportunity Site Owners

- City needs a plan, and we will consider what works.
- Concerned about demographics and if they support mixed use or residential.
- New community college will be built in three phases (25,000 sq. ft. each phase); ready to start Phase 1.
- Maybe there are interim uses for opportunity sites until residential uses make sense.
- There are significant issues with existing zoning; people bought commercial properties with the intention of building commercial properties, not residential.
- Business owners want their stores to remain the same.

What obstacles have you faced with development?

- The zoning nomenclature is difficult to understand.
- Perception that the City thinks brokers are just lazy and need to figure out the code on their own.
- Owners should have a choice if the zoning has changed since they purchased a property.
- Clean up the City's website and make the Zoning Code easier to understand.
- Aesthetics are not good on Folsom Boulevard currently; not sure if we can attract people to live there.

Attachment 1

- Lots of things would need to happen to the corridor before residential.
- Consider roadway improvements that slow traffic, timed signals.
- There are long stretches between intersections.
- There has been no demand for housing on Folsom Boulevard.
- Need more uniformity along the corridor.
- The rules are too strict.
- There is a market for thrift store retail; why won't we let it in?
- The economy cannot support mixed use.
- The boulevard is not attractive to potential homebuyers/renters.
- Resource and cultural constraints are an obstacle.
- Not enough young people who go out to eat.
- Developers need help to put in a nice building and attract people there.

What do you need to do to make things happen and make change?

- There are different ways to do retail that make it more inviting; the way you develop is important.
- Mixed-use developments have to be market driven; need to collaborate with brokers.
- Let owners do what's feasible today.

Do you have any specific suggestions on what the City can do to help you realize your visions?

- Lighting and landscaping
- Consistent street improvements
- Reduction of fees to catalyze development
- Business-friendly environment/proactive outreach
- Top-level goals should translate to staff level; need to be more business-friendly day to day
- City Council needs to be more realistic
- Increased lighting at night – make people feel comfortable shopping

What strategies do you have to improve the overall quality of development on Folsom Boulevard?

- City needs to make an investment
- Clean up business operations
- Code enforcement
- Complement, don't detract from business
- Raise architectural standards; need to incentivize people to work on the façades of their commercial spaces
- A more business-friendly environment will improve the quality of development
- City has gone out of its way to solicit input and that is appreciated
- Someone should monitor what projects get approved going forward
- Need to be realistic and dynamic for the time being
- Keep long-term goals
- Design review is a critical step in getting the projects you want
- Can you reduce fees for bringing in development?

Community Members and Business Owners

Do you have any specific suggestions on what the City can do to help you realize your visions?

Attachment 1

- To give Folsom Boulevard a distinct look, it needs to have a theme, possibly referencing a historic time for the area. This will attract visitors and increase business.
- Need a pedestrian walkway.
- Concerned about how long it will take to get rid of blighted businesses.
- No more fast-food places; need a nice (not fancy) restaurant where you can go out to dinner.
- No more service stations/lube stations.
- Is there money available for façade improvements?
- Vision of a walkable community.
- Parts of the area scream blight, makes it unappealing to investors.
- There are “hidden costs” when you try to improve your property (ADA requirements).
- Gateway signs to Rancho Cordova are tired and sad.
- Need to continue street improvements; seems that more than half the businesses are vacant.
- Keep garbage cans behind fence in residential area, paint utility boxes, talk to business owners about cleanup.
- Can the City apply for a civic improvement grant?
- We need more bike racks.
- Some of the zoning concepts won’t work and need to be changed (residential mixed use).
- Code enforcement is key; maybe the City should invest in another officer to improve?
- Street lighting on side streets leading to Folsom Boulevard.
- The City should make money for façade improvements available.
- City should help connect the funds to the business owners.
- We need funding support/grants for improvements, improve every business in the area.
- Police presence/service is needed on Folsom Boulevard, particularly at light rail station.
- Code enforcement is critical for cleaning up the boulevard.
- Need to make it easier to fill vacancies.
- Need to maintain restrictions on certain types of uses (check cashing, thrift store, etc.).
- We need destination places, where you can park and walk. Initial vision had grand ideas; need to keep central gathering places in the vision.
- Only one side of Folsom Boulevard has the opportunity to be nice because of the light rail – it’s really ugly.
- Specific improvements suggested by participants:
 - Places to walk
 - Bike racks
 - Speed enforcement, including on side streets
 - Talk to restaurants in other places and find out what it would take for them to locate on Folsom Boulevard
 - Outdoor dining
 - Lofts above thriving businesses
 - Bike trail
 - Require improvements with new leases
 - Need design standards – signs not billboards
 - Fabric store
 - Senior housing
- Opportunity sites suggested by participants:
 - Joanne’s
 - Los Rios Community Center site

Attachment 1

- Look for bigger sites with opportunities for multiple tenants
- North of Folsom Boulevard – just under overpass (anchor at one end)
- Off of Kilgore, old Sam's Club
- La Loma and West La Loma
- Access to American River Parkway from Kassis property
- Baskin Robbins

Brokers and Developers

Do you have any specific suggestions on what the City can do to help you realize your visions?

- We need to set “realistic” expectations.
- Create a standard that reduces the time needed to get a project through.
- Streamline projects that fit the vision.
- There is a thriving Korean business community; maybe we should create an international center?
- Create a zoning district where discretionary fees are waived. The City might lose some income, but it will come back in tax dollars.
- What if we add a housing component?
- Tracks make it one-sided retail, people look at “trade areas” – hemmed in by river and light rail. You have a hard time getting across the river. People want 360 trade area not 180 trade area.
- Most of the small parcels are owned by small mom & pop shops and absentee landlords.
- Need a signature gateway project.
- Need large parcels to create a destination. People are screaming for places to eat.
- Where do large tenants go? We need to assemble; only current opportunities are for small businesses.
- Community college may not drive revitalization; we need something more.
- Community goals are not realistic.
- Need to take care of code enforcement.
- Don't see much potential to incentivize international businesses.
- Development incentives work – follow design standard and waive the fees to expedite projects.
- Key opportunity sites suggested by participants:
 - Eastern gateway to the corridor by the Marriott
 - King State building – they subsidized a tenant to operate it and it's been a lot nicer since
 - Douglas Boulevard – the restaurant is the highlight
 - Laundry project – won't be on hold forever
 - Bradshaw intersection is a great place for freeway access
 - Olsen Drive is crowded at lunchtime
 - Need a tenant in 99 Cents space

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSION PAPER

TOPIC: VISION FOR FOLSOM BOULEVARD

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

Given City Council unanimous input on March 28th that the existing vision for Folsom Boulevard is not feasible, staff will be revising not only the vision statement, but the implementation of that vision statement throughout the FBSP. Proposed changes include an organizational shift in the document vision and staff will ask for Council input and guidance on the new strategy/key concepts of the modified vision.

RECOMMENDATION

Vision Structure. To simplify the vision for FBSP, it is recommended to reference, rather than include General Plan goals, policies and vision with in the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan. We also recommend revising and simplifying plan goals and creating a vision statement to communicate expectations and guide the plan more effectively.

Modified Vision. To modify the vision statement with the following new strategy/key concepts:

- Describe a vision that is more grounded in economic realities
- Plan for uses that are appropriate for today's residents and today's markets
- Dedicate assets and resources in focused area(s) of the corridor
- Recognize that existing uses and structures will undergo a more gradual revitalization and evolution, rather than a forced or rapid transformation
- Focus on bringing activity to the corridor
- Target development that can realistically occur in the next 10 year period
- Continue to emphasize quality design quality

CONTEXT

Today, the FBSP includes relevant General Plan excerpts (goals, policies, and vision) as well as FBSP-specific goals (11 total), a vision statement and 7 big ideas for Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan. The current vision statement within the FBSP is:

To repurpose the street from primarily a local-serving commercial area saturated with underutilized commercial development to a complement of regional- and local-serving retail, residential, and office while creating vibrant "places" and less intense "spaces" in between.

Attachment 2A

The vibrant “places” or pulse points are described as an intensified mix of commercial uses and activities that serve as destinations. The big ideas for the plan include:

1. Treat Folsom Boulevard as a link between local places
2. Establish pulse points of activity
3. Establish transit villages
4. Create a downtown with a grand public space
5. Re-green the Boulevard in targeted locations
6. Revitalizing adjoining neighborhoods
7. Create neighborhood gateways

This vision is carried throughout the document in the form of new urbanist or form based regulations for public and private property. The designated pulse points have a higher level of development standards with minimum intensities of development and in some areas requirements for vertical and/or horizontal integration of uses. Between these pulse points are other, less intense uses with limited retail use permitted (e.g., residential and office uses).

ANALYSIS

The economic conditions and development forecasts today are substantially different then they were during FBSP preparation and adoption in 2005 and 2006. As such, the City Council directed revisions to the plan to better current conditions and evolving expectations for the future of Folsom Boulevard. The existing vision includes some words, phrases and concepts that may no longer be appropriate (e.g., transit villages, downtown as it relates to the image of Main Street).

Because the vision sets the tone for the remainder of the document, the vision statement and key concepts should be modified to better reflect the desired outcome from the current perspective. We’re not asking the City Council to craft a vision statement or to wordsmith the existing statement. Rather, we’re asking whether the key concepts we identified in the recommendation section accurately reflect the City Council direction for the plan amendments. Is there anything missing or any big ideas that need to be added to the list? Based on Council direction, staff will create a vision statement and modify the plan to implement that vision.

RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The result of recommended action is a revised FBSP that better reflects the desires and expectations of the community and its elected officials.

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSION PAPER

TOPIC: FOLSOM BOULEVARD PULSE POINTS

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

During the February 26th and March 28th Work Sessions regarding the FBSP, the City Council raised questions about the number of Pulse Points along the corridor, as well as purpose and effectiveness of such designations.

We heard that the concept of the Pulse Point was difficult for many to grasp and that the idea should be simplified and some Pulse Points could be eliminated. We also heard that problems with allowed uses, development standards, and regulating plans for the Pulse Points needed to be fixed. Because this is a significant component of the plan, amending the Pulse Point approach and regulations will result in significant changes throughout the FBSP document. Staff is seeking additional Council direction on recommended changes to the Pulse Points to guide our work.

RECOMMENDATION

Our recommendations relative to Pulse Points are listed below:

1. **Focus on 3 rather than 5 Pulse Points of activity.** Staff is recommending a reduction in the number and scale of Pulse Points in order to better focus City assets and resources. We believe the following areas have greatest potential for change/transformation and catalyst projects (see attached map).
 - a. Mather Mills Pulse Point
 - b. Olson Island Pulse Point
 - c. Sunrise Pulse Point
2. **Move towards a more conventional zoning approach.** To simplify the plan, we recommend eliminating the regulating plans (form based regulations) in the current document and reorganizing allowed use and development standards in a more conventional manner.

Pulse Point regulations should focus on non-residential development. Council discussed the need for a higher standard of development in Pulse Points. Staff proposes that any special requirements would apply only to the non-residential development located within a Pulse Point

CONTEXT

The current plan identifies 5 Pulse Points as follows:

1. Routier/ La Loma Pulse Point
2. Mather Field/Mills Station Pulse Point
3. Coloma Pulse Point
4. Zinfandel Pulse Point
5. Sunrise Pulse Point

Attachment 2B

These Pulse Points were identified based on proximity to transit stations and with a focus of retail activity/development potential. Allowed use regulations are the same for property located within or outside of a Pulse Point. However, development standards may vary to some limited extent depending upon location. Within the Pulse Points, the current FBSP establishes a form based approach with regulating plans and a requirement for more urban development patterns with higher standards than those properties located outside of a designated Pulse Point. This organizational format and the regulations themselves have been difficult to understand and challenging to meet. Our evaluation of the Pulse Point concept includes recommendations to improve ease of use and flexibility of the plan.

ANALYSIS**Selection of Pulse Points to be Retained**

During previous discussions the Council directed that the Routier/La Loma Pulse Point be eliminated, but that the remaining four Pulse Points be retained. Staff respectfully asks that the City Council to consider eliminating the Coloma Pulse Point to focus City effort more closely on the remaining three Pulse Points.

Staff convened the City management team, developers, brokers, property owners and economic specialists to discuss the best approach for moving forward with Pulse Point regulation. General consensus was that there are 2 or 3 priority areas along the corridor that are best positioned for success and near-term change. Those areas (in order of priority) are:

1. Olson Island Pulse Point
2. Mather Mills Pulse Point
3. Sunrise Pulse Point

While staff has approached the selection of Pulse Points from a perspective of narrowing the City's focus to the most key locations, the City Attorney has suggested that we allow further consideration of a Pulse Point centered at an additional site. For example, consideration of a Pulse Point on the Kassis property may make sense in order to ensure appropriate planning of this property that is designated for mixed use and located adjacent to a potential future Light Rail station.

Development Regulations within Pulse Points

Council has provided direction that development within Pulse Points should carefully reviewed and that it is important to foster high quality development at the Pulse Points due to their high visibility and high development potential. Staff proposes the following key guidelines for regulating development within Pulse Points:

1. Eliminate the current Form Based Code and Regulating Plan approaches in the FBSP due to complexity and incompatibility with today's market conditions.

Attachment 2B

2. “Right size” requirements such as architectural details, building placement, site improvements based on the size and scope of the project. Expect more from large projects and less from minor projects.
3. Recognize that the setting and opportunities for new development are different at the three Pulse Points - provide flexibility to approve development that is well suited and appropriate for the circumstances of the three Pulse Points.
4. Pulse Point regulations should focus on the commercial land uses within these key sites – residential development within a Mixed Use Pulse Point site would be regulated consistent with all other residential uses in the FBSP.

RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Council direction on the issues discussed herein will allow staff to prepare new draft regulations that would guide development in Pulse Points. Specifically, staff is requesting the Council respond to the following questions:

1. Does Council support limiting FBSP Pulse Points to the three locations (Olson Island Pulse Point, Mather Mills Pulse Point and Sunrise Pulse Point) as described herein?
2. Does Council support eliminating the Form Based Code and the Regulatory Plan provisions of the Specific Plan?
3. Does Council agree with the general approach for regulating development within the Pulse Points?

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSION PAPER

TOPIC: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE FOLSOM BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

In February and March of this year, the City Council discussed the continued requirements for residential development within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan area in light of existing opportunities on the Boulevard and the City's forthcoming Housing Element update. At the conclusion of the conversations, the City Council provided direction that amendments to the Specific Plan should allow, but not require, residential development throughout the corridor with the exception of three specific locations maintaining their existing designations for mixed use or entirely residential development. The three specific sites identified for these continued requirements include: the Kassis site (APN 075-0450-005), Fong Properties (076-0020-022, etc), and the former Joann's Fabrics site (APN 058-0291-003).

As described in detail below, staff has identified this item as a key discussion topic to confirm with the City Council the refinement of residential requirements in light of continued research and stakeholder outreach that has occurred since March. The recommendation below is intended to express the City Council's direction while addressing concerns about development moving forward on the three sites identified to retain residential requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council confirm the following assumptions and desired policies, subject to additional fine tuning and legal review, to be implemented in the forthcoming amended Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan:

1. The Kassis site and Fong Properties will continue to be subject to a mixed use development requirement where any future development of these sites would need to incorporate residential uses (a component of commercial uses would be allowed, but not required)The Former Joann's site will continue to be designated entirely for residential uses.
2. For the mixed use sites (Kassis, Fong), the amended Specific Plan will include policy statements that would allow for the non-residential component of the mixed use development to proceed in advance of required residential development. As part of the adoption of the amended Specific Plan, any existing residential uses in the Plan Area will be zoned for residential use to alleviate non-conforming use issues for existing residents.

CONTEXT

The current Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan includes two land use categories (UR-1 and UR-2) that require residential development, either within a mixed use development or entirely residential development, for a large portion of the Plan Area. This requirement is consistent with the future vision anticipated by the specific plan, which was intended to inspire and support forward-thinking, mixed use development that would be transformative to the Boulevard. Additionally, for the 2006-2013 Housing Element and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), approximately 20% of the City's legally mandated inventory of sites was assumed to be accommodated within the Specific Plan.

In discussing the upcoming amendments to the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan, the City Council supported altering the requirement for residential development. Following research by staff and discussion with the Council, it was determined that a portion of the RHNA designated along Folsom Boulevard could be eliminated, but that some component of residential along the Boulevard will be needed to meet legal obligations within the 2013 – 2021 Housing Element. Based on a city-wide analysis of available properties that would meet the State requirements for inclusion in the City's RHNA inventory, which looks at vacant and underutilized parcels, availability of goods and services, access to public transit, and site readiness for development, three residential opportunity sites were identified within the Specific Plan. Upon receiving this information at the March Study Session, the City Council directed staff to keep the residential requirement for these three sites in the draft Specific Plan amendment being prepared for Council consideration. This allows the City to meet its RHNA obligations for the 2013-2021 RHNA planning period, thereby supporting City efforts to receive Housing Element Certification from the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

When looking at the entire length of Folsom Boulevard, the three sites chosen to retain residential requirements are the only three sites that are largely vacant, are well placed in relation to existing and future transit stops, and are within close proximity to commercial services. All of these conditions make these priority locations for future residential development. These three properties all protrude into and are immediately adjacent to existing residential. The residential requirement on these properties does not create an isolated residential zone, but rather, connects to and would logically extend the existing residential areas. The three sites include:

Kassis Property: The Kassis Property is located at the western edge of the City limits on the north side of Folsom Boulevard and west of Rod Beaudry Drive. The site is a total of 41.99 acres and the land required for housing purposes is estimated at 10 acres. Additionally, the northern portion of this property is subject to flood hazards and the southern portion, adjacent to Folsom Boulevard, is best situated for urban density development. The site is currently designated UR-2 (Urban Reserve – 2). Development anticipated at this location would include both medium and high density residential as well as some commercial

and/or office uses along the Folsom Boulevard frontage. The estimated capacity for high density residential uses is 240 dwellings.

Fong Properties: The Fong Properties (4 adjacent parcels) are located at the northeast corner of Folsom Boulevard and La Loma Drive in the Mather/Mills Pulse Point. Combined, the four parcels are a total of 9.85 acres. The site is currently designated UR-2 (Urban Reserve – 2). Development anticipated at this location would include medium and high density residential with the possibility of vertically or horizontally integrated mixed use development that includes commercial and/or office while maintaining the overall residential capacity. The estimated capacity for high density residential uses is 117 dwellings, on approximately 4.8 acres, which may be reduced based upon the density, siting and configuration of the residential construction. The balance of the property could be developed for non-residential uses. The balance of the property could be developed for non-residential uses.

Former Joann's Site: The Former Joann's Site is located at the northeast corner of Folsom Boulevard and Cordova Lane in the Zinfandel Pulse Point. This site is a total of 8.07 acres. The site is currently designated UR-1 (Urban Reserve – 1). Development anticipated at this location is entirely high density residential due to the site's proximity to existing commercial services and public transit. The estimated capacity for high density residential uses is 194 dwellings.

As the City considered the three sites to retain residential obligations, a key factor was to identify properties of adequate size to accommodate housing that would be contiguous to existing housing. The siting of higher density housing between commercial uses and lower density single family homes is intended to serve as a buffering and transitional use between differing land uses.

It is anticipated that all three of these sites will be zoned to allow a density range for the residential development (i.e. 25.1 to 30 dwelling units per acre range for RD-30 zoning) and therefore, may accommodate slightly more or less residential units at final build out. The RHNA inventory includes a modest buffer that will allow for some flexibility in the overall unit count but, the goal would be to accommodate this overall number of units within the sites as closely as possible. It should be noted that the City would consider higher density housing types, for instance senior housing, that would require less land to accommodate the RHNA units assigned to the various housing sites.

The exact location, size, and configuration of the residential development will be subject to review and approval by the City Council during the Major Design Review and/or other required entitlements when a project is proposed.

For the three specific locations where residential development will continue to be required, the suggested policies will allow for non-residential development on the mixed use sites as the market allows in advance of the residential development while retaining residential capacity necessary on each site. It will also allow for market flexibility as to the exact site plan, size, configuration, and design of the residential use.

Attachment 2C

Again, the details of siting, design, and other aspects of the residential development within these sites remain under consideration and may be flexible in the final plan. As the plan amendments continue to move forward, staff is continuing to investigate if additional, appropriate sites for required residential development existing within the Plan area.

While the current approach for the Specific Plan would require residential development on three key parcels, it is anticipated that additional properties within the Specific Plan would retain the right to construct residential mixed use developments if so desired by individual property owners.

Sequence of Development

Under the current FBSP regulations, a residential mixed use project (Kassis and Fong) is required to include a minimum amount of residential development and such uses must be included in the initial phase of project construction. Staff proposes a more flexible approach that would allow the non-residential component of a mixed used project to precede the residential portion. This approach would rely upon an analysis that demonstrates the subject property could meet its residential obligation on the remaining undeveloped portion of the site and that such remaining property is situated (size, shape, access, etc.) such that residential development would be feasible.

The exact mechanism to secure any future residential uses within a given site after the non-residential development occurs is still under discussion and might include rezoning and a parcel map, contract development, or a development agreement.

ANALYSIS

In light of the City's need to achieve its RHNA obligation, it is important that at least some component of residential development remain required within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan area. Alternatively, as part of the Housing Element Update, staff would need to identify and rezone properties elsewhere within the City to achieve the RHNA obligation. Staff has heard that there is some question as to whether there is a market desire for residential uses on Folsom Boulevard at this time. As part of the amendment process, staff conducted outreach with a variety of stakeholders and heard ideas regarding residential uses on Folsom Boulevard that warrant consideration. In summary, staff heard:

- Housing is not feasible on Folsom Boulevard. Participants generally felt that there was little current demand for housing along Folsom Boulevard and that it would be difficult to convince people to live there in the future.
- Market should dictate what happens in the near term. Some felt that tax revenue now, regardless of use, is better than no new development. Participants encouraged the City to accept any business willing to locate along the corridor.

Attachment 2C

- Maybe there are interim uses for opportunity sites until residential uses make sense.

The City has demonstrated in the recent past and will continue to demonstrate in the near-term future that residential uses in the Specific Plan area, are feasible, particularly when pursued in joint public/private partnerships. The Crossings at New Rancho, an 18-unit affordable multi-family complex, was constructed near Folsom Boulevard in late 2012 and was fully occupied in early 2013. The Horizons at New Rancho project, a 48 unit affordable senior housing project will be constructed on the Boulevard in the near-term future. It is possible that traditional, market-rate housing will not be palatable in the near-term future, but the City's affordable housing activities demonstrate the willingness to support higher density housing on Folsom Boulevard and that such projects can be both feasible and desirable. Staff is also exploring the possibility of obtaining additional economic analysis regarding the feasibility and attributes of residential in the Specific Plan area.

The recommendation identified above represents a beneficial outcome for both the City and the property owners of the three specific sites because it retains the City's ability to meet its RHNA obligations while allowing for some non-residential development activity on the three sites.

RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

By implementing the suggested recommendation, the following goals and objectives would be accomplished:

- The City would meet its overall RHNA obligation as defined under State housing law
- Flexibility would be added to Residential Mixed Use sites (Fong and Kassis) that would allow non-residential development to proceed while deferring construction of residential uses
- Small properties with fragmented ownership patterns would no longer have mandatory obligations to provide housing – in many cases housing would be allowed, but not required
- Existing residential uses within the FBSP would be accurately described and regulated (avoids non-conforming uses)

Attachment 3

EXISTING TABLE OF CONTENTS	PROPOSED TABLE OF CONTENTS
I. Introduction and Placemaking	I. Introduction
The Specific Plan Relationship to Other Plans and Policies Plan Administration Project Area Document Organization Placemaking on Folsom Boulevard	Specific Plan Description, Organization and Use Plan Goals Plan Goals and Vision Regulatory Review
II. Vision for Folsom Boulevard's Transformation	II. Key Planning Concepts and Land Use Plan
Plan Goals Vision for Folsom Boulevard	Key Planning Concepts Land Use Plan and Designations
III. Development Process	III. Allowed Use Regulations
Design Review Development Capacity and Density Transfer/Bonus Integrated Developments	Purpose and Applicability Allowed Uses Special Allowed Use Regulations
IV. Private Realm – Land Use and Development Standards	IV. Development Standards
Land Use Designations and Classifications The Land Plan/Zoning Map Permitted Uses Development Standards	Purpose and Applicability Development Standards for Minor Projects Development Standards for Major Projects
V. Public Realm – Mobility	V. Public Improvements
Background Mobility Improvements Transit Improvements Parking	Circulation Streetscape Gateway Signage Infrastructure, Public Utilities And Services
VI. Public Realm – Gateways and Streetscaping	VI. Implementation Strategy
Wayfinding Streetscaping and Landscaping Parks, Plazas, and Public Spaces Activities and Events	City Directives Funding
VII. Infrastructure, Public Utilities and Facilities	VII. Glossary
Sewer Drainage and Hydrology Water Dry Utilities Public Safety Schools	Terms Use Classifications

Attachment 3

EXISTING TABLE OF CONTENTS	PROPOSED TABLE OF CONTENTS
Parks and Public Facilities Public Transit System	
VII. Plan Implementation	
Economic Conditions Influencing Development Potentials in Plan Area Types of New Development Likely to Be Economically Viable Summary of Demand Projects Potential Development Incentives Implementation Action Plan Potential Funding Mechanisms	
IX. Glossary	
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Use Classifications	
Appendix	
Background and Existing Conditions Residential, Retail and Office Growth Projections Retail demand Estimates Folsom Boulevard Development Strategy Density Bank Historic Resources	

FOLSOM BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN

Rancho Cordova City Council
Paul Junker, Planning Director
June 11, 2013



Meeting Purpose

- ▣ Summarize stakeholder input
- ▣ Discuss 3 key issues and request direction:
 - Vision
 - Pulse Points
 - Residential Use
- ▣ Summarize recommendations for amendment to FBSP

Stakeholder Meeting Summary

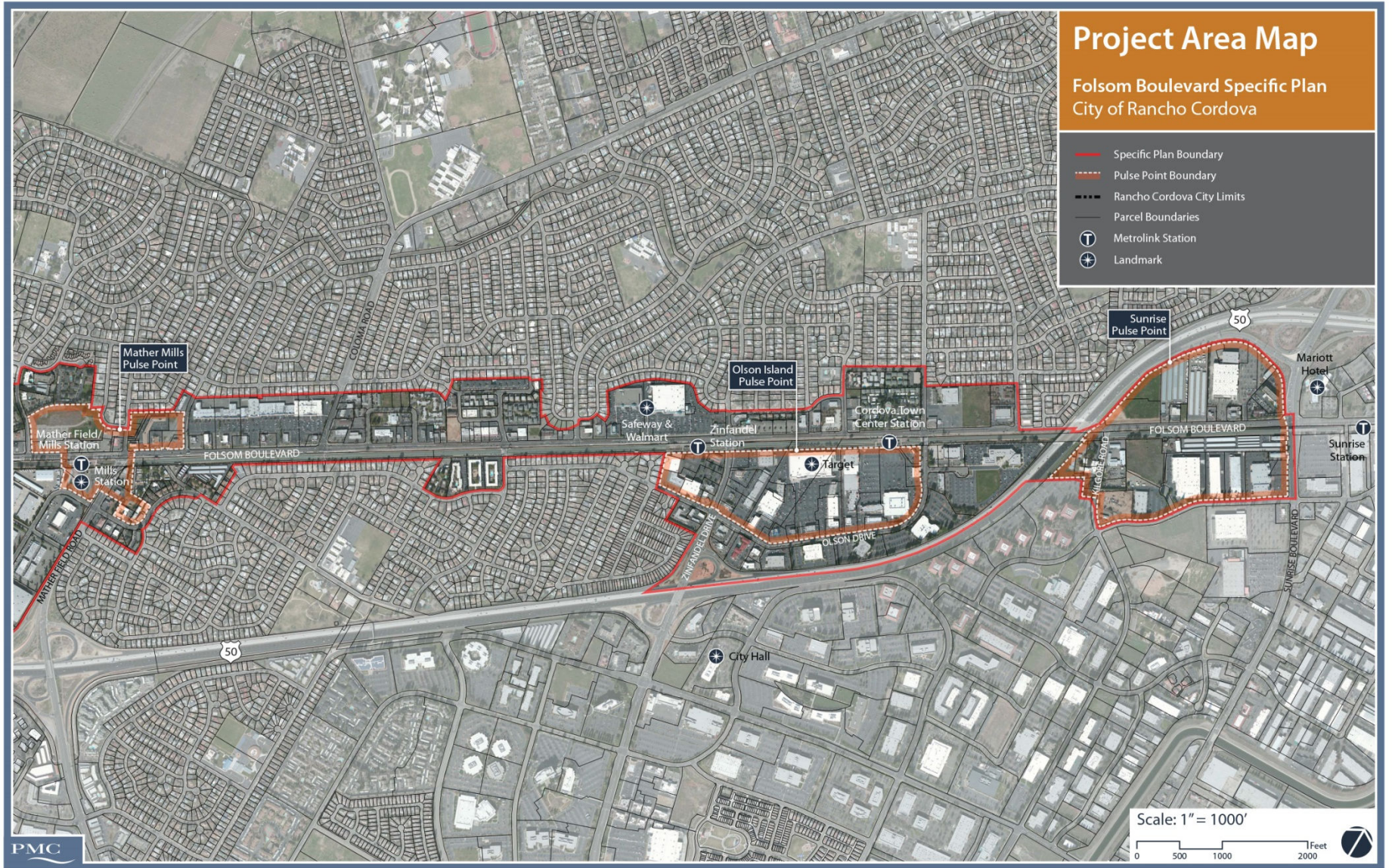
- Stakeholder Meetings (May 16 & 17)
 - Large landholders and key opportunity site owners
 - Community members and business owners
 - Brokers and Developers
- Meeting approach
- Meeting structure
- Interview trends and key findings

Key Issue #1 - Vision

- Organizational Shift/Vision Structure
- New Strategy/Key Concepts for Vision
 - More grounded in economic realities
 - Corridor appropriate for today's residents
 - More focused allocation of resources/assets
 - Natural evolution for existing uses/structures
 - Focus on bringing activity to the corridor
 - Inspire development for next 10 year period
 - Continued emphasis on design quality

Key Issue #2 - Pulse Points

- Focus on 3, rather than 5 pulse points
 - Mather Mills Pulse Point
 - Olson Island Pulse Point
 - Sunrise Pulse Point
- Kassis Property as a potential new Pulse Point



Key Issue #2 - Pulse Points

- Pulse Point Development Standards
 - ❑ Eliminate the current Form Based Code and Regulating Plan
 - ❑ “Right size” requirements based on the size and scope of the project - Expect more from large projects and less from minor projects
 - ❑ Provide flexibility to approve development that is well suited and appropriate for the circumstances of each Pulse Point
 - ❑ Pulse Point regulations to focus on the commercial land uses – residential development regulated consistently throughout the FBSP

Key Issue #3 - Residential Use

- Residential requirement relative to RHNA
 - Maintain existing designation for Kassis, Fong, and Joanne's
 - Fix existing residential use designations on map to eliminate most cases of non-conforming status
- Residential mixed use policy change
 - Non-residential use may be permitted in advance of residential development

FBSP Overall Structure

- Comparison table of existing and proposed table of contents

FBSP Project Schedule

- April/May **(done)**
 - Engage Stakeholders; Evaluate Existing Plan
- June/July **(current phase)**
 - Present Recommended Changes; Vet Key Policies
- July/August **(next steps)**
 - Amend the Plan
- September/October
 - Review and Revise the Plan
- November/December
 - Consider and Adopt the Plan

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 11, 2013

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: David Gassaway, Public Works

SUBJECT: CITY CHARTER DISCUSSION



RECOMMENDATION

NONE

RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Discussion only – no action to be taken

DISCUSSION

In 2003 Rancho Cordova incorporated as a general law city. In the ten years since incorporation there has been interest from Council, citizens, and staff on how becoming a charter city could benefit the Rancho Cordova community and city organization.

Through the years, various staff members (and a few interns) have worked to deeply research the aspects of charter cities in California. The body of research conducted has helped a team of staff members to explore all aspects of chartering, looking for any clear, “game-changing” advantages to becoming a charter city. While no game-changing aspects of chartering have been found, there are a number of interesting possibilities a charter could provide Rancho Cordova.

This work session will present City Council with the opportunity to hear the advantages and disadvantages found by staff, and to have a discussion on whether or not pursuit of a charter makes sense for the community. We will also be outlining the various steps and procedures necessary to create a charter and the time frames and process required.

BACKGROUND

Introduction

The federal and state constitutions are the foundations of federal and state law. They are the guideposts for the governance of the federal and state governments and they provide protection for the rights of the people. Each law adopted by the Congress or the State Legislature must measure up to the requirements of the respective Constitutions. Similarly, in California, the State Constitution allows a city to adopt its own local “constitution” – otherwise known as a city charter. At present, 121 of the 483 cities in California have adopted a municipal “constitution,” as charter cities. The charter is likewise the guidepost for how those municipalities govern and

how they protect the rights of those that live and work in the city, and empowers local leaders with the possibility to do bold and innovative things for their citizens.

Home Rule and Municipal Affairs

A city becomes a charter city in order enhance its home rule powers. Home rule is a provision of the State Constitution that allows for units of local government to maintain authority over municipal affairs, as opposed to being subject to statewide general law.

Cities, being the level of government closest to the people, are most concerned with those issues that are local in character; have the greatest impact on daily life in the city; and are addressed more appropriately at the local level. The legal name in California for these concerns is “municipal affairs.” Both charter cities and general law cities are equal in that they both spend their time focused on municipal affairs. But there is one significant difference between charter cities and general law cities: a charter city has legal authority to act autonomously over matters not specifically guided by statewide law – autonomy over municipal affairs.

General law cities are bound by the state’s general laws, even with respect to municipal affairs. Charter cities are not. Therefore, a charter city has more home rule authority than a general law city. Charter cities may choose how much they will be bound by the state’s general laws guiding municipal affairs, as opposed to being subject to them as a general law city. Charter cities may take advantage of home rule by choosing to change the way it legally operates with respect to municipal affairs.

Statewide Concern

The State Constitution has reserved the right for the state to preempt legal authority over municipal governments on matters considered to be non-local in nature. These legal matters are known as “statewide concerns,” and are those issues which are deemed to require statewide uniformity of law. Both general law and charter cities are equally bound by matters determined to be of statewide concern.

An example of a statewide concern is the use of eminent domain. It is reasonably justified that a local agency does not have local autonomy in determining how and why a local government can take property rights away from private property owners. This matter requires broader uniformity of law within the state to ensure that property rights remain equal from one locality to another. Regardless of whether or not a city has a charter, all municipal governments are bound by matters deemed to be of statewide concern.

Applicability to Rancho Cordova

The purpose of becoming a charter city is to allow local elected officials the ability exercise the home rule provisions of the State Constitution. Home rule, through the adoption of a charter, would provide increased flexibility for Rancho Cordova to operate in ways that may increase efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation. A city charter would provide greater choice and options in areas including, but not limited to:

- Public contracting
- Prevailing wage provisions
- Financing and taxing powers

- Elections and ballot initiatives
- Fines, penalties, and forfeitures
- Council pay and public campaign finance

A city charter need not activate additional home rule powers in each of these areas. Many charter cities only utilize their home rule powers for areas of specific interest to the municipality, and end up adopting statewide general laws for most aspects of governance. Utilizing home rule powers to draft local rules governing municipal affairs can lead to increased litigation risk, whereas statewide general laws are legally validated through the courts, thereby minimizing litigation risk.

Our lengthy research into local governance has been educational and interesting. We are looking forward to stimulating a robust discussion on this important issue.

