



June 3, 2010

Envision San Jose 2040 Task Force

Re: following the City Council's direction, some options on "backloading" development in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen

Dear Task Force Members;

On April 20th, the City Council directed that the General Plan revision process include consideration of "backloading" greenfield development in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen until jobs capacity has been fully developed in other areas of the City. The vote was to entertain and consider the idea, not necessarily to do it. To provide feedback from the Task Force to the City Council and staff, we suggest the Task Force hold two votes. First the Task Force should consider whether it supports the general principle of backloading, which is modifies the idea that jobs development should occur anytime and anywhere to an idea that prioritizes redevelopment over conversion of open space. Second, the Task Force should vote on different options on backloading to recommend to the City Council, a recommendation that could be useful regardless of the outcome of the first vote, because the City Council must make the final decision on General Plan issues.

We strongly urge the Task Force to support backloading, and to recommend a policy that only exempts existing permits and entitlements.

1. Supporting the principle of backloading. We will not repeat the argument made at length to the Task Force and to the City Council that converting valuable farmlands, ranchland, and open space buffers to development when the rest of the City needs redevelopment is a mistake. San Jose has a chance to grow upward instead of outward, and places like downtown, North First Street, and Evergreen would benefit if development is not siphoned off elsewhere. The idea would not permanently forbid development of North Coyote and east Evergreen, although the Council is aware that the effect may be to stop development. While existing permits such as the Coyote Valley Research Park would not be affected, renewal of unutilized permits would be. Please see the attached April 26th letter for more information.

We suggest a simple motion on this issue that provides feedback to staff and City Council on the general idea that they can use regardless of how the City proceeds on the second question.

2. Options for backloading.

Our recommendation and proposed General Plan Policy:

Preferred Policy: "New permits for industrial or commercial development of undeveloped lands in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen shall not be issued until the planned jobs capacity has been reached in all other parts of the City."

Please note the above policy contains an implicit exemption, in that any truly exceptional proposal could be approved by the City Council through a General Plan amendment, something that a "truly exceptional" proposal shouldn't have trouble achieving.

Alternative policies:

Alternative 1: "New permits for industrial or commercial development of undeveloped lands in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen shall not be issued until the planned jobs capacity has been reached in all

other parts of the City; provided however that exceptions for projects of unique economic opportunity creating at least X thousand jobs shall be allowed when the "trigger" conditions for City fiscal health and governmental services, described for development in mid-Coyote Valley in the San Jose 2020 General Plan, are also met."

We suggest the project be a minimum of 10,000 jobs to ensure a size of project that could not be easily accommodated elsewhere. We recommend this alternative if an exception is to be included.

Alternative 2: "New permits for industrial or commercial development of undeveloped lands in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen shall not be issued until the planned jobs capacity has been reached in all other parts of the City; provided however that exceptions for projects of unique economic opportunity creating at least X thousand jobs shall be allowed."

Removes the trigger concept.

Alternative 3: "New permits for industrial or commercial development of undeveloped lands in North Coyote Valley and east Evergreen shall not be issued until the planned jobs capacity has been reached in all other parts of the City; provided however that exceptions for large projects of unique economic opportunity shall be allowed."

Instead of providing a set number, it merely says the project must be "large."

Please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Schmidt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian A. Schmidt
Legislative Advocate, Santa Clara County