

# Memorandum

**TO: Envision San José 2040  
Task Force**

**FROM: Andrew Crabtree**

**SUBJECT: September 27, 2010  
TASK FORCE MEETING #43**

**DATE: September 21, 2010**

---

After a two-month break, we are resuming monthly or bi-weekly Envision Task Force meetings in anticipation of completing the Envision San José General Plan Update in June 2011. An updated Envision Work Program is available under the “What’s New” heading on the Envision internet site at: <http://www.EnvisionSJ2040.org>.

This memorandum provides information to assist you in preparing for the September 27, 2010 Envision San José 2040 Task Force Meeting. Links to the referenced documents and other resource materials (e.g., reading materials and correspondence) are posted on the Envision website.

Please note that this is the first meeting scheduled for Phase 3 of the Envision process. Phase 3 of the Envision process for the Task Force will focus on review of draft documents, including the draft General Plan text and Land Use / Transportation Diagram, community engagement and additional refinement of General Plan implementation tools.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Launch Task Force Ambassador Outreach Program**

Staff and Task Force members will provide an update on outreach activities at each upcoming Task Force meeting. Task Force member participation in community outreach and engagement activities will be a key component of the final Phase 3 of the Envision process. Task Force members are encouraged to help identify of community stakeholder groups and leaders to engage in the Envision process, and also to take part in presentations to those groups. The packet materials include an Outreach Strategy that summarizes the proposed purpose, goals, program schedule and resources for these Phase 3 outreach activities. Task Force members will be given an opportunity to provide input on the Outreach Strategy and to volunteer to participate.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Draft Envision San José 2040 General Plan**

The complete text of the Draft Envision San José 2040 General Plan (Draft Plan) has been posted on the Envision website ([http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp\\_update/draftplan.asp](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp_update/draftplan.asp)) and a hard copy has been mailed to Task Force members. The document has been posted in an editable PDF format that allows both Task Force and community members to make notes or comments within the PDF document, which can then be saved locally, and forwarded to staff or other community members.

The Draft *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* organizes the various Goals, Policies and Actions that have been reviewed by the Task Force into seven chapters or sections, each of which addresses a different policy area that will guide the city's future growth. The Draft Plan sections and their general policy areas are:

- **Envision San José 2040** – Presents, in addition to background information, the Plan Vision and overarching City Design Concepts, collectively intended to communicate the unique plan set forth for San José by the Envision General Plan. Within the Background information, the Draft Plan identifies three characteristics that define the unique character of San Jose: “Capital of the Silicon Valley”, “Living amidst Abundant Natural Resources”, and “Home to a Diverse and Thriving Community”.
- **Thriving Community** – Sets forth goals and policies for topics that have an impact upon the City as a whole, shaping its image and role in the region. Topics addressed in this section include economic development, arts and culture, community engagement and fiscal sustainability.
- **Environmental Leadership** – Sets forth goals and policies related to the City's continuing commitment to Environmental Leadership, organized into four categories. *Measurable Sustainability* includes policies that fulfill the City's Green Vision goal for the incorporation of specific measurable standards in the General Plan related to green building, recycling, air quality, energy, water resources and the community forest. *Environmental Resources* includes policies intended to protect the high-quality ecologies and other environmental resources that can be found within the City. *Environmental Considerations / Hazards* includes policies to reduce the potential land use risks related to various environmental hazards, and *Infrastructure* includes policies for provision and management of the City's infrastructure systems.
- **Quality of Life** – Sets forth goals and policies that directly affect the quality of life for City residents, including the look and feel of San José's neighborhoods and the quality of the municipal services provided by the City. Topics related to the community quality of life include urban design guidelines, municipal services such as police, fire and libraries, educational facilities, health care and parks, trails, open space and recreation.
- **Land Use and Transportation** – Contains the Land Use/Transportation Diagram and establishes land use and transportation policies to implement the Diagram, including definitions for the Diagram's land use designations, transportation levels of service, policies to address specific land use types, and the City's trail network.
- **Implementation** – Includes policies to guide use of the General Plan for the ongoing land use decision-making process and development of related City policies, with further explanation of the Annual and Major General Plan review process, use of Planning Horizons, and the Village Planning process unique to the *Envision San José 2040* General Plan.
- **Appendices** –Include supplemental information to make the General Plan document more accessible and user-friendly, including a glossary of terms, a record of General Plan amendments, and a reference guide to indicate how the General Plan fulfills specific state and legal requirements.

The Draft Plan incorporates and reinforces the key concepts that emerged through the Task Force and community planning processes. These concepts are highlighted in the first chapter, “Envision San Jose 2040” and then incorporated into the topics addressed in each of the following chapters. These Key Plan Concepts are:

- 1) Community Based Planning – Embodies the community values and goals articulated through community workshops, Task Force meetings, and on-line initiatives, which have to date enabled the participation of over 4,500 community members.
- 2) Regional Employment Center – Shifts the City’s focus toward establishing San José as a regional employment center, planning capacity for 470,000 new jobs and a ratio of jobs to employed residents of 1.3 Jobs/ER. Growing San José’s role as an employment center will enhance the City’s leadership role in North America, increase utilization of the regional transit systems (e.g., BART, Caltrain and High Speed Rail), and support the City’s fiscal health. The Plan’s Land Use/Transportation Diagram supports employment growth in the Downtown, in proximity to transit facilities and on existing employment lands throughout the City. All existing employment lands are maintained and additional new employment lands have been identified in order to support this ambitious amount of job growth.
- 3) Urban Villages and Corridors –Promotes the development of Urban Villages to provide active, walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use, urban settings for new housing and job growth attractive to an innovative workforce and consistent with the Plan’s environmental goals.
- 4) Complete Streets – Establishes that streets will be designed for people, not just cars, supporting a diverse range of urban activities and functions.
- 5) Grand Boulevards – Identifies that while all of the City’s streets should be developed as Complete Streets, five unique roadways have been identified which have the potential to connect multiple neighborhoods and act as urban design elements at a citywide scale.
- 6) Main Streets – Promotes the ongoing development of Main Streets to foster community identity and walkability, recognizing that they serve as important destinations for retail and other activities within neighborhood areas. In many cases neighborhoods identify themselves according to their neighborhood’s Main Street.
- 7) Destination Downtown –Supports continued growth in the Downtown as the City’s cultural center and as a unique and important employment and residential neighborhood. Focusing growth within the Downtown will support the Plan’s economic, fiscal, environmental and urban design (placemaking) goals.
- 8) Regional Transit Hubs – Focuses significant growth, with an emphasis on increasing employment capacity, in areas surrounding the City’s regional transit hubs in order to support the City’s continuing emergence as a Regional Employment Center and to maximize the use of these systems within the region.
- 9) Greenline/Urban Growth Boundary – Reinforces that the Greenline and Urban Growth Boundary define the limit of the City’s urbanized area and preserve the surrounding hillsides largely as open space. Limiting the City’s outward expansion is a basic requirement for advancing the Plan’s environmental and fiscal goals.
- 10) Fiscal Strong City –Incorporates policies from the Employment Lands Preservation Framework and several critical implementation policies to address the fiscal impacts of future land use decisions.
- 11) Environmental Stewardship – Advances the Green Vision through 2040 and establish Measurable Sustainability indicators consistent with Green Vision Goal #7. The Plan provides the basis for the City’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy.
- 12) Design for a Healthy Community –Supports the physical health of community members by promoting walking and bicycling as commute and recreational options, encouraging access to healthy foods, and supporting the provision of health care and safety services.

- 13) Growth Areas –Focuses new housing growth (Plan capacity for 120,000 new Dwelling Units) into the Downtown, North San José, Specific Plan areas, Transit Corridors & Villages, Commercial Centers and Neighborhood Villages. The Plan policies strictly limit residential development through neighborhood infill outside of these Growth Areas to preserve and enhance the quality of established neighborhoods, to reduce environmental and fiscal impacts, and to strengthen the City’s Urban Growth Boundary. No growth is planned in the Mid-Coyote Valley or South Almaden Valley (Urban Reserves) for the Plan timeframe.

Task Force members will begin their review of the final Draft Envision San José General Plan document at the September 27, 2010 Task Force meeting. Discussion of the Draft Plan is scheduled to continue over the next three Task Force meetings (October 25th, November 1<sup>st</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>) as identified on the Work Program. The discussion on September 27<sup>th</sup> will include three topics:

a) Alignment with Envision goals; Document emphasis and completeness

While over the course of the past 18 months Task Force members have had the opportunity to review the majority of the Draft Plan contents through separate discussions of each topic area, this is the first time the Task Force can review the Draft Plan as a complete document. Task Force members will be asked to consider and discuss how well the whole of the Draft Plan aligns with the Vision, Scenario Guidelines, and other Envision goals as they have been discussed throughout the past 3 years of the Envision process. In particular, after viewing the Draft Plan as a complete document, Task Force members should identify any areas in which the Draft Plan should provide greater or lesser emphasis, or any topic areas which are not currently addressed but which Task Force members feel should be included.

b) Plan Implementation key policies and next steps

The Draft Plan incorporates revised policy language as requested by the Task Force at the June 7th and June 28th meetings. Additionally, to respond to questions raised by Task Force members, key Implementation section policies have been expanded to provide more guidance for the Village Planning process and the Plan’s implementation through future zoning changes. The Draft Plan now includes Community Design policies for Residential Neighborhoods and expanded guidance for appropriate building heights for new development. These, and other text edits were made to memorialize concepts brought forward by Task Force members in the course of their discussions.

c) Topics for upcoming Task Force meetings

Task Force members will be asked to provide input on which specific topics warrant further discussion by the Task Force. While the Task Force has already reviewed and discussed almost all of the Goals, Policies and Implementation Strategies in the Draft Plan document, changes in context or other unresolved concerns may suggest that some topics should be discussed further by the Task Force. The current Envision Task Force Work Program identifies three meeting dates for such discussion of the Draft Plan by the Task Force. Detailed comments on word choice, grammar, style, or other edits that do not need discussion by the Task Force should be provided directly to staff by October 25<sup>th</sup> so that they may be considered for incorporation into future revised drafts of the Draft Plan.

## **Agenda Item 5 – Land Use / Transportation Diagram**

While the general parameters of the Draft Land Use/Transportation Diagram (Diagram) were determined with the selection of a Preferred Land Use Scenario, the Diagram can continue to evolve as the Envision process continues, provided that adjustments made to the diagram are consistent with completion of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental review process in time to allow consideration of the General Plan Update by the City Council in June 2011. The Draft Land Use/Transportation Diagram was previously reviewed by the Task Force at several meetings in the spring of this year in order to establish the “Project Description” under CEQA to allow completion of the Plan’s Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Some minor adjustments have subsequently been made to the Diagram to better reflect existing employment lands or open space uses and to clarify the Village area boundaries. Cosmetic changes (e.g., color choices, depiction of additional transportation network items or context information) will continue to be made and refined as the Envision process continues.

### a) Process for privately-initiated General Plan Amendment requests

Staff is proposing the following process to: 1) provide for privately-initiated requests for land use changes to be considered concurrently with the General Plan Update, and 2) address General Plan Amendment (GPA) requests that are currently on file and pending. Close coordination of pending GPAs and privately-initiated requests with the General Plan Update is necessary to ensure successful completion of the CEQA process for the Update by June 2011. Staff will bring this proposal to the City Council at the October 19, 2010 Council hearing, for review of the proposed General Plan Amendment hearing process and for the Council to provide early direction on the pending General Plan amendments. This direction is needed to define the scope of the General Plan Project Alternatives in order to meet CEQA requirements. Task Force members will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed process as detailed below.

**Deadline for Private Amendment Requests** – Private property owners requesting changes to the proposed Land Use/Transportation Diagram should submit requests by **November 15, 2010**, to be considered as part of the General Plan Update. In order for a private request to be considered concurrently with the General Plan Update, an independent CEQA clearance will either need to be completed for the proposed change by June 2011 and include the Envision GP Update as the 'background' condition, or be consistent with the land uses that are addressed in the CEQA clearance for the Update.

**Pending General Plan Amendments** – At present, there are 19 pending privately-initiated General Plan Amendment requests on file with the City. The packet materials include a summary list and location maps for these Amendments. Some of these pending requests are projected to be ready for City Council consideration during the Fall 2010 General Plan Hearing, while the remainder will need to be addressed in June 2011, along with the General Plan Update. Those Amendments that are heard concurrently with the General Plan Update in June 2011 will either be incorporated into the Update if they clearly align with the Envision goals and Preferred Land Use Scenario, or they will be presented to the City Council as “project alternatives” to the Update.

**No General Plan Amendment Hearings in 2011-2012** – No General Plan hearings are proposed in 2011 and 2012, other than the hearing for Council adoption of the Envision General Plan Update

scheduled for June 2011. The consideration of the General Plan Update in June 2011 will include “Project Alternatives” for private requests that are not part of the recommended Draft Envision Plan. If CEQA clearance has not been completed for a Project Alternative that is selected by the City Council, it may be necessary to defer adoption of the Alternative to a subsequent hearing following completion of any required CEQA process.

**Private Amendment Requests** – Some private Amendment requests may align with the Envision goals and the CEQA analysis conducted for the Preferred Land Use Scenario and therefore may be incorporated into the Draft Plan, others will be inconsistent with those goals (e.g., Amendments that propose conversion of employment land or expansions of the Urban Growth Boundary), or may require additional CEQA analysis. In order to maintain consistency with the total planned job and housing growth of the Task Force and the City Council-selected Preferred Land Use Scenario, some proposed Amendments may require reallocation of housing and/or job growth capacity from another location within the City in order to maintain the job and dwelling units.

### **Agenda Item 6 – Community Input**

Members of the community will be provided with an opportunity to address the Task Force and provide input on the Agenda discussion items.

### **Reading / Resource Materials**

As noted above, the Draft Envision San José General Plan has been posted on the Envision website at: [http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp\\_update/draftplan.asp](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp_update/draftplan.asp) and other meeting materials are included with the packet as noted, including the Phase III Outreach Strategy, public correspondence, June 28 2010 meeting synopsis and this Overview Memorandum.

### **Public Correspondence**

One item of public correspondence, a letter from the Shasta Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association, is posted on the Envision website. The letter expresses concern with the City’s recommendation for higher density for the Ohlone Towers project after earlier discussions between the project developer and the community.

Three items of public correspondence that were distributed at the June 28, 2010 Task Force meeting are included in the current packet as these materials were not previously made available on line.

### **Announcements**

At the October 19, 2010 City Council meeting, the City Council will be asked to consider the proposed Envision General Plan scope for the CEQA Project Alternatives, including a process for privately-initiated General Plan amendments.

Please welcome Dipa Chundur to the Envision planning staff team. Dipa is in her 10<sup>th</sup> year with the Planning Division, having previously worked on implementation, environmental review and public information teams. She has an undergraduate degree in architecture and a master's degree in city planning.

Lee Butler has moved from the Envision team to a special assignment as the first inter-departmental Development Services Project Manager, where he will work with high-profile, driving industry projects to see them successfully through the City's entitlement processes.

The Envision website has a new, simplified address: <http://www.EnvisionSJ2040.org>. The previous website address will also remain in use: [http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp\\_update/default.asp](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp_update/default.asp).

### **Next Meetings**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 25, 2010 and will focus on continued review by the Task Force of the Draft General Plan document.

If you have any questions, please contact either myself or Susan Walton. I can be reached by phone at (408) 535-7893 or by email at: [andrew.crabtree@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:andrew.crabtree@sanjoseca.gov). Susan can be reached by phone at (408) 535-7847 or by email at: [susan.walton@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:susan.walton@sanjoseca.gov).

Andrew Crabtree  
Envision San José 2040