

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

For the Agenda of:
October 31, 2007
Timed: 11:00 A.M.

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Affairs

SUBJECT: Old Foothill Farms Community And Economic Development Strategy

CONTACT: Richard Maddox, Principal Code Enforcement Officer 874-7440
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Overview

This report contains a proposed strategy for revitalization of the Auburn Boulevard in the Old Foothill Farms area. This strategy, the “Old Foothill Farms Community and Economic Development Strategy” (OFF-CEDS) contains two implementation phases. The primary focus of Phase I Implementation is supporting the potential formation of a Property Based Improvement District (PBID). Phase II Implementation is dependent upon successful implementation of a PBID. The primary focus of Phase II Implementation is potential capital improvements and ongoing community enhancements, which will require leveraging of resources generated from the PBID and other sources.

Recommendations

1. Accept the Old Foothill Farms Community and Economic Development Strategy.
2. Approve use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds remaining in the OFF-CEDS project (approximately \$45,000) to initiate Phase I Implementation activities, the formation of a Property Based Improvement District.

Measures/Evaluation

Achieve continual business growth and revitalization along the Auburn corridor, particularly businesses that generate sales tax revenues for the County.

Fiscal Impact

Department of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Affairs costs (up to \$45,000) associated with the PBID formation will be reimbursed by SHRA with CDBG funds. There will be no Net County cost to the General Fund. Full implementation costs for Phase II Implementation are contingent upon private funds and/or grants and are estimated to be between \$716,000 and \$936,000.

BACKGROUND:

On July 18, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved Community Development Block Grant funds for this effort. On December 12, 2006 the Board authorized the Department to contract with Bay Area Economics (BAE) and BAE's sub-consultants Rooney Public Affairs, Leland Consulting Group, and HLA for strategy development.

DISCUSSION:

Process Overview

The County contracted with Bay Area Economics (BAE) and BAE's sub-consultants Rooney Public Affairs, Leland Consulting Group, and HLA to conduct the study and develop the proposed strategy. The focus of the study was on economic development, real estate development, and quality of life conditions issues for revitalizing the Auburn Corridor.

During a seven-month period (February-August 2007), the consultants worked with over one hundred (100) community participants to identify and prioritize broad ideas for revitalization of the area. The project steering committee comprised of residents and business owners working with the consultant team consolidated and prioritized the eight (8) broad ideas into four main strategies.

The Steering committee recommendations are separated into two phases. Phase I calls for the establishment of a property based improvement district (PBID). Phase II focuses on physical improvements and safety measures. It is entirely dependent on implementation of a PBID.

Rooney Public Affairs conducted a concentrated outreach effort over a period of three months, providing stakeholders a number of opportunities to provide input and respond to the improvement strategies and approaches that were ultimately developed. The following list of meetings comprised the outreach program:

- Stakeholder Interviews (April 2007 – two dozen interviews)
- Project Steering Committee (May and July 2007)
- Presentation to Carmichael/Old Foothill Farms Community Council (May and August 2007)
- Community Meetings (May and August 2007 – 120 total attendees)
- Other Meetings (County staff, Old Foothill Farms Community Task Force – February, April and June 2007)

Stakeholder Engagement

The Community Outreach Program for the OFF-CEDS project was very wide-ranging. It consisted of the following:

Project Steering Committee

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formed to provide the Project Team with insight and input, in a small group setting. The PSC included representatives from both the private and public sectors. The PSC met two times during the project.

Community Presentations

The project team attended a number of community meetings. The two primary groups were the Old Foothill Farms Community Task Force and the Carmichael/Old Foothill Farms Community Council.

Business Community

Research for the real estate strategy included phone calls and face-to-face meetings with a number of people, including real estate owners, brokers, developers, business managers, and law enforcement staff. These discussions focused on current market conditions, the demand for different types of space, the financial returns on new types of development, and the potential effectiveness of different government actions in changing market conditions.

Stakeholder Meetings

The project team held two dozen stakeholder interviews and meetings with area residents, community leaders, and property and business owners. These interviews were conducted in small focus groups or in one-on-one settings.

Community Meetings

Two general Community Meetings were held during the study. The first meeting was held on May 24, 2007 and the second meeting was on August 2, 2007. Community members had an opportunity to review project materials and provide input. Both meetings were well attended with over 70 and 50 people in attendance, respectively.

Decision Making Process

The consultant team used a facilitated interest based process for the community to use in the development of ideas, needs, and solutions. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was comprised of residents and business owners who worked with the consultant team. In general, the PSC went through a method of identifying and then grouping their findings into an information card and ballot. Next, the PSC's work was reviewed, discussed and then voted upon by attendees at the large community meetings. At these community meetings, attendees prioritized eight (8) broad ideas for revitalization of the area. In addition, throughout the entire study process community members were encouraged to contact project team members to offer any additional ideas and or concerns.

Summary and Recommendations

The consultant team produced three documents for a presentation to the community: a Briefing Book of opportunities and challenges in the area, a listing of Broad Ideas for revitalization, and a refinement of the broad ideas into a Strategy and Action Plan. Additionally, all comments, concerns, and ideas registered during all of the public meetings as well as those received independently have been compiled into an appendix.

Staff has reviewed the proposed strategy and concludes that this approach will greatly aid in the revitalization of the corridor. The community has worked very closely with the consultant team to develop the proposed strategy and action plan. There is a deep concern by many residents and business owners that many of the problems facing the area will have a dire effect on property conditions and the local economy if not corrected immediately. The strategy and actions proposed offer no absolute guarantee of reversing these problems but offer realistic solutions to these challenges.

Phases

The proposed Old Foothills Farms Community and Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan (attached), recommends various action items for implementation in two phases. Vital to a successful revitalization effort, is the establishment of a Property Based Improvement District (PBID). The majority of proposed action steps rely on establishment of a PBID. However, establishment of a PBID does take many months to implement. Thus, a phased approach for implementation of the overall strategy is fundamental. *Please note:* actions and strategies for each phase are listed in the attached Strategy document.

Phase I

Overview

The steering committee, community and staff worked very hard to identify the first phase of this strategy and it includes looking at the feasibility of establishing the PBID as its primary goal. All other action items identified in Phase I (including developing a name, logo, marketing materials, establishing a non-profit etc.) can be implemented when the PBID is established and a regular revenue stream is identified.

When

The effort should be conducted in Phase I and should be led by Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) as it is best positioned to lead such an effort.

Who

Establishment of a PBID includes the commitment of staff and a professional consultant team to bring to fruition. In addition, some of the items such as the establishment of an annual community open house, creation of an ‘Adopt-A-Street’ program may be best handled with County Neighborhood Services staff working in this area.

Costs and Funding of Phase I

The consultant team identified four (4) PBID alternatives. The formation process will facilitate identifying the preferred alternative. Therefore, the estimated funding required is best presented in a range of costs. According to estimates obtained by Rooney and Associates, the costs range from \$25,000 to \$40,000. The primary variable for determining the cost estimates are the number of land parcels included in any PBID.

The funding for this phase will be reimbursed by CDBG funds as proposed.

Phase II

Overview

As mentioned previously, this phase is entirely dependent upon PBID approval and implementation. This phase includes implementation of the various strategies and action items identified by the study. Presumably, the PBID staff and Steering

Committee would provide much of the responsibility for management of these action steps. This has been the case for the existing PBIDs. The primary components of the Phase II strategies and action steps are as follows.

- Reclaim Auburn Boulevard for the Neighborhood.
- “All Hands On Deck” to Wipe Out Nuisances.
- Pursue development of under-utilized sites for catalytic projects to begin the transformation.
- Create a new land use map for the Old Foothill Farms area.
- Identify and attract businesses useful to residents.
- Create an inviting, visible public place where neighbors can gather.
- Create neighborhood events.
- Concentrate businesses most useful to the community at nodes where retail can be synergistic.
- Add for-sale and senior housing on Auburn Boulevard in areas where retail is no longer thriving.
- Review ADA access along the public right-of-way and ensure that access is provided to all residents.
- Establish a dedicated Old Foothill Farms marketing and economic development outreach effort.
- Develop land uses on the corridor that create jobs for local residents.
- Evaluate street paving throughout the neighborhood; prioritize areas that need repaving, repairs and/or maintenance.
- Use distinctive signage and features to let people know they are in Old Foothill Farms and help them find their way.

When

Staff estimates that it will be thirty (30) to thirty-six (36) months to begin implementation of Phase II. This assumption is based on the experience of other commercial corridors where a PBID was established.

Who

This task must include the commitment of the County and SHRA team to bring to fruition. SHRA, Municipal Services Agency (MSA), and Economic Development will need to assign staff to participate on the team to work with the PBID Director. In addition, some of the action items in the study such as the establishment of an annual community open house, creation of an ‘Adopt-A-Street’ program may be best handled with County Neighborhood Services staff working in this area.

Costs and Funding of Phase II

The estimated costs for Phase II are \$711,000 to \$931,000 (present value). The funding for this phase will likely be from both private and public funds in the form of grants and assessments. Potential funding sources are private and business assessments, CDBG funds, the Economic Development Special Projects fund, and other grants.

MEASURES/EVALUATION:

The principle measurement of success for the strategy is to attain continual business growth and revitalization along the Auburn corridor, particularly businesses that generate sales tax revenues for the County. Staff will monitor and evaluate the economic growth for the corridor and PBID formation and report the findings to the MSA, SHRA, and DED Executive team(s).

FISCAL IMPACT:

Phases I and II combined are estimated to be in the range of \$756,000 to \$976,000 (\$45,000 for Phase I and \$711,000 to \$931,000 for Phase II). A realistic approach was made during the planning phase to avoid actions or programs that would require funding from the County general fund.

Phase I Implementation has an identified cost of \$45,000 and will be reimbursed with CDBG funds. The Board of Supervisors previously approved this funding through the OFF-CEDS study.

Phase II Implementation is dependent on the establishment of a PBID. Funding for the Phase II action items will likely come from both private and public funds in the form of grants and assessments. Potential funding sources are private and business assessments, CDBG funds, the Economic Development Special Projects fund, and other grants.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:

ROBERT B. LEONARD, Interim Director
Department of Economic Development
and Intergovernmental Affairs

TERRY SCHUTTEN
County Executive

Attachment(s): Old Foothill Farms Community and Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan