



TO THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

DATE: March 1, 2016

SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EARLY CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2016

Report in Brief

Staff recommends that the City Council extend the Council Committee on Early California Architectural Review (ECAR), with the same membership (Councilmembers Grayson and Leone and Design Review Board Member Shelby), through September 2016 for the review of new projects within the Downtown Specific Plan area. It is expected that the Todos Santos Design Guidelines will be adopted as an implementation measure of the Concord Downtown Specific Plan prior to September 2016, and that those guidelines will be used to review architectural projects in the central portions of the Downtown Specific Plan area, rather than the ECAR Committee.

Background

The Concord Downtown Specific Plan (Specific Plan) contains a number of Implementation Strategies. Chapter 7 of the Specific Plan includes direction to implement design guidelines with an “Early California Theme” for the Specific Plan area.

In early 2015, several project applications within the Specific Plan area were submitted for entitlement, including Design Review approval. Because Early California Architectural design guidelines had not yet been established, in September 2015, then Mayor Tim Grayson appointed a Council Committee on Early California Architectural Review (ECAR for a period of six months, ending in mid-February, 2016; the Committee was appointed at the September 1, 2015 Council meeting. The Committee members are Council member Tim Grayson, Vice Mayor Ron Leone, and Design Review Board member Kirk Shelby. The Committee is charged with review of the conceptual designs for new projects within the Specific Plan area and to provide feedback on what was intended by an “Early California Theme,” as broadly described in the Specific Plan.

The Committee was originally established as an Ad Hoc Committee. However, because it includes membership of more than two members of the Council, the City Attorney’s Office subsequently determined that, pursuant to the Brown Act, it is a standing Committee and it has operated as such.

The Committee met with development project applicants on several projects in 2015, including the Concord Village multifamily housing development, Rocketship charter school, the BART Plaza project, and the Thai Restaurant façade remodel on Todos Santos Plaza. The Committee does not approve the final design

of projects, but rather gives feedback to staff and the Design Review Board on the Early California architectural designs.

Discussion

Since the formation of the ECAR Council Committee, staff has proceeded with the Work Program to develop design guidelines, now referred to as the Todos Santos Design Guidelines. Staff met twice with the Housing and Economic Development (HED) Council Committee to determine the parameters of the Todos Santos Design Guidelines. The Inner Core and Outer Core boundaries where the Todos Santos Design Guidelines would be in effect were recommended by the Housing and Economic Development Committee. Staff then drafted a 30% progress report of the Todos Santos Design Guidelines.

The 30% draft Todos Santos Design Guidelines were reviewed by the ECAR Committee members and the Design Review Board (DRB) at a joint public meeting on February 8, 2016. Staff is now revising the design guidelines based upon input from the February 8th meeting, and will return to the ECAR Committee and DRB in a joint meeting in March to discuss and receive feedback on the revised guidelines. Staff is anticipating bringing the 30% draft design guidelines to City Council for a Study Session on April 5th. The work program anticipates the 100% draft of the Todos Santos Design Guidelines to be reviewed by the DRB and Planning Commission in Summer 2016, and reviewed by the City Council for adoption thereafter.

Fiscal Impact

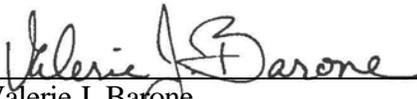
Extending the Council Committee on Early California Architectural Review has a minor fiscal impact on the City, as staff time will continue to be devoted to this project.

Public Contact

Posting of the Council agenda.

Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends extension of the Council Committee on Early California Architectural Review through September 30, 2016 with the reappointment of Council member Tim Grayson, Vice Mayor Ron Leone, and Design Review Board member Kirk Shelby.



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