

TO: JAMES L. APP, CITY MANAGER  
FROM: BOB LATA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN RECONSTRUCTION OPTIONS  
DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 2004

Needs: For the City Council to consider establishing a date for a public workshop dealing with Downtown reconstruction options.

- Facts:
1. The December 22, 2003 earthquake adversely impacted a number of significant Downtown buildings. Demolition of at least one and perhaps more buildings is a likely outcome.
  2. Historic buildings have helped to make Downtown a particularly attractive place to visit, shop and take care of business. The manner in which buildings are constructed to replace lost structures will be a significant factor in preserving the character of Downtown Paso Robles.
  3. In addition to replacing lost structures, there will be a need to address awnings and other façade elements that were damaged or removed as a result of earthquake damage.
  4. A public workshop is being proposed to assist property and business owners in envisioning options for reconstruction and/or enhancement of existing buildings in the Downtown Area.
  5. Support for, and active participation in, the public workshop is being provided by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Analysis  
and

Conclusion: In light of the recent earthquake there will be the need to make some substantial changes to the downtown streetscape. In addition to what may be necessary to address removed buildings, there will also be an option to enhance remaining structures.

Options will include the following considerations:

- Alternatives for compatible architectural treatment of replacement buildings
- Ways in which mixed uses (e.g. offices and residential) could be accommodated above the first story level
- Ways in which the facades of adjacent / nearby structures might be enhanced to provide a more attractive streetscape

The intent is to identify options / alternatives for consideration by property and business owners in the Downtown area as early as possible in the recovery process. The identification of options could lead the community and City Council to consider one or more follow-up steps:

- Providing ideas / inspiration to property owners
- Become the basis for improved design guidelines
- Building standards could be formulated
- More explicit requirements could be established

Based on the schedules of SLOCOG, Cal Poly, and City staff, Thursday, March 4, 2004 is the suggested / proposed date.

Property and business owners, along with all other interested persons, would be invited to attend and actively participate in this public workshop.

The Council Chambers would be the proposed location. An alternative larger meeting space is being sought just in case it appears that the turnout will exceed the capacity of the Council Chambers.

Policy

Reference: General Plan, Zoning, Redevelopment Plan, Downtown Design Guidelines

Fiscal

Impact: Successful reconstruction and enhancement could create significant business opportunities and revenues to the City. The majority of costs and resources for the workshop are proposed to be covered through SLOCOG and Cal Poly volunteer efforts.

Options:

- a. Direct staff to plan for a public workshop regarding reconstruction alternatives for Downtown to be held on March 4, 2004.
- b. Amend, modify or reject the foregoing options.