



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: September 13, 2011

Staff Report #: 11- 159

Agenda Item #: F-3

REGULAR BUSINESS: Review of Planning Commission Recommendations on the Draft El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Meeting 2 of 3)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council continue its review of the Planning Commission's recommendations on the Draft El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan to provide initial direction on Downtown and areas of El Camino Real (other than El Camino Real South-East (ECR SE) zoning district).

The Planning Commission's recommendations are included as Attachment A. The Planning Commission recommends moving forward with the Specific Plan subject to specific revisions/questions. The City Council's preliminary direction from August 30 (focusing on the Station Area and the ECR SE zoning district) is included as Attachment B, for reference, as some topics overlap different geographic areas. All preliminary recommendations and non-geographic topics will be reviewed and finalized at the Council meeting of September 20.

BACKGROUND

Menlo Park is developing a long-term plan for the El Camino Real and Downtown areas. The completed visioning process (Phase I: 2007-2008) has led into the preparation of a Specific Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA) (Phase II: 2009-2011). The culmination of the first phase of work was the City's Council's unanimous acceptance of the Vision Plan, which serves as the foundation for the Specific Plan. The completed Specific Plan will be a comprehensive, action-oriented set of rules, containing elements such as plans for open space and other public improvements, detailed land use regulations, design guidelines, and implementation measures. Both the Vision and Specific Plan processes have benefited from extensive community outreach and participation.

The Specific Plan process is currently in Task 4 (*Draft Specific Plan, Fiscal Impact Analysis, and Draft EIR*), having completed the *Project Initiation, Existing Conditions Analysis; Vision Refinement; and Development of Framework, Concept Plans, Programs and Guidelines* tasks. Key milestones of the current phase of work were the release of the Draft Specific Plan on April 7, 2010, and the release of the Draft EIR on April 29, 2011, both to strong community interest. The Draft EIR comment period ran through June 20, 2011, and comments were received both in written correspondence and verbal remarks at a June 6, 2011 Planning Commission public hearing. Draft EIR

comments that address the adequacy of the EIR or the City's compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be responded to in the Final EIR and can potentially result in changes to the Draft EIR text/analysis (non-environmental comments will be noted). The response to comments in the Final EIR will be reviewed at future Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

With the conclusion of the Draft EIR review period, the project focus is the Planning Commission and City Council's review of, and recommendations/direction on, the Draft Specific Plan itself. The Planning Commission was originally scheduled to hold one meeting to provide direction on the Draft Specific Plan, but the Commission subsequently expressed an interest and willingness to hold additional meetings in order to more fully explore and address comments, questions, and concerns, both from the Commission and the public, with the aim of providing clear and specific direction on potential improvements and refinements to the plan. The Planning Commission's recommendations form the foundation of the City Council's subsequent discussion and direction on the Draft Specific Plan. The expanded Planning Commission review process has been strongly supported by the Council's Specific Plan Subcommittee (currently Council Members Cline/Keith; previously Boyle/Cline), as it would enable the Commission to conduct an in-depth discussion, and thus allow the Council itself to have as efficient a review process as possible.

The Planning Commission's review of the Draft Specific Plan commenced on July 11, 2011, with an overview/background meeting. The Planning Commission subsequently reviewed the Station Area on July 21, Downtown on July 28, and El Camino Real on August 4. Each of the geographic area meetings concluded with tentative recommendations, which were reviewed comprehensively and finalized/augmented at the final meeting of August 22. The Planning Commission's comprehensive recommendations are included as Attachment A. The August 22 Planning Commission meeting also included review of the plan's Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA), which will be the subject of more detailed City Council review at the meeting of September 20. Staff reports, presentations, public comment summaries, and video for the preceding Planning Commission meetings are available as part of the project web page.

Concurrent with the Planning Commission's review, the Housing and Transportation Commissions conducted sessions on the Draft Specific Plan and have recommended moving forward with the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan process, subject to specific recommendations. The Housing and Transportation Commissions' actions are included as Attachments C and D, respectively. The Bicycle Commission is intending to conduct a session on the Draft Specific Plan on September 12. Recommendations from this meeting (if any) will not be available in time for the publishing of this staff report, but will be distributed separately to the City Council in advance of the September 13 meeting.

City Council Draft Specific Plan Review Process

The City Council was originally scoped to conduct its review of the Draft Specific Plan in one meeting. In discussions with staff, the Council Subcommittee recommended that the City Council review process be enhanced, in order to allow for more discussion and

deliberation. At the August 30 meeting, the City Council approved the staff recommendation to expand the Council review process to three meetings, with the following focuses:

- August 30, 2011
 - Introduction/overview
 - Review and approval of the Draft Specific Plan review process
 - Geographic area review
 - Station Area and ECR SE zoning districts
- September 13, 2011
 - Geographic area review
 - Downtown
 - El Camino Real (other than ECR SE zoning district)
- September 20, 2011
 - Non-geographic topics, including but not limited to:
 - Bicycle/pedestrian improvements
 - Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA)
 - Public benefit
 - Review/wrap-up

The breakdown of the discussion by geographic area reflects the Planning Commission experience, which found this a generally useful way to structure the discussion. The geographic area splits should also benefit the Council's review, since the following Council Members with conflicts-of-interest can more easily recuse themselves from specific discussions:

- Council Member Fergusson: ECR SE and ECR SW (El Camino Real South-west) zoning districts
- Council Member Ohtaki: ECR SW zoning district

As noted previously, the City Council's preliminary direction from August 30 (focusing on the Station Area and the ECR SE zoning district) is included as Attachment B.

ANALYSIS

Discussion Framework/Meeting Structure

As noted in the Draft Specific Plan, the various geographic areas are distinct, but they are also connected, and as such some zoning districts may be considered to be part of multiple areas, and issues may overlap. The City Council is encouraged to keep in mind the various interrelationships between plan elements as its detail-type discussion proceeds. As the Council considers potential changes to a particular plan element, the potential changes to other aspects of the plan should also be considered. In addition, the Council may consider the Draft EIR analysis throughout the review process.

The City Council should consider the El Camino Real elements within the context of the established Council-accepted Vision Plan's Vision Statement and Goals (Attachment E) and the Draft Specific Plan's Guiding Principles (Attachment F). The Council may wish

to structure its recommendations on potential modifications to the draft plan to reference specific Goals or Guiding Principles that would be enhanced by a proposed change.

Downtown and El Camino Real (Other Than ECR SE Zoning District) Review

The City Council's second geographic zone review will focus on the Downtown and areas of El Camino Real other than ECR SE zoning district. Key elements of these areas are discussed below, with Draft Plan page numbers noted where applicable. Council Members and the public are encouraged to have hard copies of the Draft Plan available during all meetings, in order to reference topics in more detail. Where the Planning Commission has recommended that a plan element change, that is noted in *italics*.

Urban Design Framework

Chapter C (Plan Principles, Framework + Program) discusses the Guiding Principles in more detail, and correlates them to an Urban Design Framework for each of the three geographic sub-areas. For Downtown, the framework (pages C16-C18) intends to establish a more vibrant and active Downtown through enhanced pedestrian pathways, active gathering spaces, and new mixed-use infill development, including residential uses. The concept for Downtown emphasizes the existing small-town character, ensuring a variety of public spaces and smaller-scale buildings complementary to the existing character of the area. The Downtown concept celebrates Santa Cruz Avenue, enhances its character and functionality, and positions it for a successful future through wider, more comfortable sidewalks and a refreshed streetscape. For the El Camino Real corridor, the framework (pages C10-C13) recognizes the street's role as both a local-serving and a regional-serving arterial roadway. The concept for El Camino Real enhances overall street character, east-west connection opportunities and pedestrian safety and comfort. It recognizes and addresses the character of various areas along the corridor. Specific elements of this framework are discussed in more detail below.

As noted in the draft plan, graphics of various improvements are conceptual, meant to relay the overall intent, not final designs. Both public and private space improvements will undergo public review and approval processes for discrete projects.

Public Improvements

Downtown

Within Downtown, Santa Cruz Avenue sidewalks (pages D10-D13) would be improved, creating new space for informal gathering and outdoor dining. The existing medians and center street trees would be retained, as they are iconic features of Downtown. The sides that currently have angled parking would be reconfigured to provide parallel parking, with the reclaimed width (also from narrowing the travel lane) being used to widen the sidewalks. The sides that currently have parallel parking would keep the same parking layout, although the travel lanes would be narrowed to widen the sidewalk slightly, and street trees would be integrated into the parking lane to provide more

usable sidewalk space. Overall, these improvements would help encourage walking and increase levels of street activity, as well as renew the image of Downtown with updated streetscape elements. *The Planning Commission recommended that implementation of the sidewalk widening proceed on a temporary basis for smaller block or half-block areas in order to assess the viability of the widening and whether to expand and make permanent the widened sidewalks over time.*

Between the northern legs of Crane and Chestnut Streets, Santa Cruz Avenue sidewalks would be expanded further to create the Santa Cruz Avenue Central Plaza (pages D14-D17). In this area, the two automobile through lanes would be retained, but all on-street parking would be removed to widen the sidewalks to their maximum extent. The street surface would be raised to be flush with the sidewalks, creating a unified pavement treatment, and helping establish this area as Downtown's central public space. Although the automobile travel lanes would be retained, the plaza could be closed for special occasions.

The Chestnut Paseo (pages D18-D19) would extend the Central Plaza pedestrian-oriented experience south along Chestnut Street, toward the market place and flex space/parking area (discussed below). Closed to regular traffic (emergency vehicles would retain access), the paseo would provide space for temporary vendors, benches, additional landscaping, and would offer a unique environment away from motor vehicles. The Market Place (pages D20-D21) describes a broad concept, linked with the paseo, which could take a number of forms: a plaza expanding the paseo, a pavilion structure creating a covered and shaded plaza for a portion of the existing Farmer's Market or other events, or small enclosed building(s) providing permanent stalls for vendors. The intent of the market place, whatever its form, would be to reinforce and activate the area as the center of downtown, and to complement and not compete with the existing Sunday Farmer's Market or other nearby markets. The market place would preserve an existing heritage oak tree in Plaza 6 and would also retain automobile access to and from Plazas 6 and 7, at the southern edge of the paseo. *The Planning Commission has recommended that implementation of the Chestnut Paseo and Market Place be pursued in a phased approach, with a temporary weekend trial as the first phase. If successful, this could lead to a more permanent second phase. The Commission noted that these two elements are linked in functionality and that their success is dependent on uses that would attract people. The Commission also recommended that consideration be given to existing Menlo Park merchants for access to the public space, and that improvements should build upon existing successful businesses, including the Farmer's Market.*

Several other public space elements support these central features. The South Parking Plazas Pedestrian Link (pages D22-D23) would serve as a safe and welcoming pedestrian pathway along the rear store entries for Plazas 4 through 8. The Flex Space/Parking Area (pages D24-D25) would retain automobile parking in Plazas 5 and 6, but would improve the paving and landscaping to allow them to be used for special events. Pocket Parks (page D26) along Crane Street and at Chestnut Street and Oak Grove Avenue would provide smaller, more intimate open spaces, and serve as small gateways to Santa Cruz Avenue from the north side parking areas. Other Street/Alley

Improvements (page D27) in this area would provide clear and comfortable connections to and from the proposed parking garages (see below) and pocket parks.

Within Downtown, the existing shared surface parking would be enhanced with up to two parking garages, proposed for Plazas 1 and 3. The proposed locations are derived from an earlier analysis, which found that these two plazas would be the most cost-effective locations for new garages, primarily because they are the largest of the eight downtown plazas, although these locations would also have the benefit of having limited visibility from public streets. *The Planning Commission has recommended that Parking Plaza 2 also be considered as an optional location for one of the two potential parking garages.*

The garages would provide parking spaces to offset those relocated for public space improvements, such as widened sidewalks and pocket parks, as well as potentially provide parking for new Downtown developments paying an in-lieu fee (discussed more in the Private Improvements section). The increase in parking supply would also allow for more use of extended time limits (currently, parking is limited to a maximum of two hours, with a pending program to limited extensions), as well as provide a centralized location for employee/owner parking, which is currently dispersed among all plazas (with the exception of Plaza 4). Downtown parking supply is described in detail in Table F2 (page F26). Total Downtown parking would increase by between 256 and 536 net new spaces, which would represent net increases of between 16 and 34 percent over the current supply of off- and on-street parking spaces (the difference is due to an option for one of the garages to also include a housing component, which would reduce the amount of public parking). Parking garages would be required to be set back 25 feet from neighboring private property, in order to preserve services and emergency access. *In addition to the recommendation to consider Parking Plaza 2 as a potential garage location, the Planning Commission recommended the following regarding parking garages:*

- *Encourage utilization of parking structures by parking permit users.*
- *Provide opportunities for businesses to contribute to the financing of parking structures to the benefit of the business through reduced parking permit costs or other incentives.*
- *Require high aesthetic standards for the parking structures, including landscaping within required setbacks or as a vertical element of the structure.*
- *Encourage the preservation of as much surface parking as possible within the parking structures.*
- *Retain the height standards of the Specific Plan as maximums but encourage the design of parking structures that are consistent with the scale of adjacent planned and existing buildings.*

Bicycle improvements would include Class III bicycle routes (shared auto/bike use) on Menlo Avenue, University Drive, and Crane Street, and a Class II bicycle lane on Oak Grove Avenue. The latter improvement would require the removal of parking on one side of the street and restriping to accommodate two dedicated bicycle lanes (one bicycle lane on each side of the street).

El Camino Real

El Camino Real would see significantly improved north-south walkability (pages D38-D41 and F6-F10). Along the east side of the street, sidewalks would be required to be at least 15 feet wide, with a minimum of 10 feet used for the pedestrian through zone. On the west side, sidewalks would need to be at least 12 feet wide along the majority of the corridor (12-15 feet wide within the Downtown area), inclusive of an eight-foot wide pedestrian through zone. Because of the constraints posed by the existing street dimensions and its arterial service role, most of the sidewalk improvements would take place as adjacent redevelopment occurs, with sidewalks located in part on private property setback areas. Within the downtown core (between Oak Grove Avenue and Menlo/Ravenswood Avenues), sidewalks would be widened to the maximum extent possible by adjusting roadway and lane widths (no changes to the overall number or configuration of El Camino Real automobile through-lanes or parking are proposed).

East-west connectivity (pages D42-D44 and F6-F10) would also be enhanced at key locations. Links between Downtown and the Caltrain station would be improved through the enhancement of pedestrian crosswalks on El Camino Real at Oak Grove Avenue, Santa Cruz Avenue, and Ravenswood/Menlo Avenues. These crossings would be improved with “special” crossing treatments, including high-visibility crosswalks with enhanced pavement, accessible pedestrian signals, countdown pedestrian signals, sidewalk extensions (“bulb-outs”), and median islands/pedestrian refuges. Intersections at Encinal Avenue, Glenwood/Valparaiso Avenues, Roble Avenue, Middle Avenue, and Cambridge Avenue would see “basic” treatment improvements, including marked crosswalks, accessible pedestrian signals, and sidewalk extensions. East-west connectivity would also be improved with grade-separated pedestrian/bicycle crossings of the railroad tracks at the Caltrain station and in the vicinity of Middle Avenue. The latter improvement would be coupled with a plaza that provides an additional open space amenity. *The Planning Commission has recommended that the option for sidewalk extensions (also known as “bulb-outs”) be removed from the Plan, so that north-south vehicle flow could be improved and thus potentially increase the frequency of east-west pedestrian/bike crossings. The City Council has enhanced/clarified this direction by preliminarily recommending that the plan be revised to remove any elements (such as curb extensions) that would preclude the ability of the City to modify the central portion of El Camino Real to either provide three lanes of auto travel and/or Class II bike lanes (potentially limited to peak hours).*

Bicycle improvements (pages F11-F14) would include a Class III bicycle route (shared auto/bike use) along the majority of El Camino Real, with the section north of Encinal Avenue proposed as a Class II bicycle lane. Additional Class II and III lanes and routes along Alma Street and Garwood Way would provide alternate paths for north-south travel along streets with less automobile traffic than El Camino Real. *The Planning Commission has recommended exploring the possibility of improving/upgrading bicycle improvements on El Camino Real and Middle Avenue to Class II bicycle lanes (the latter when the proposed pedestrian/bicycle crossing of the railroad tracks is implemented).*

Private Improvements

The land uses (pages E4-E9) for the Downtown core would be governed through the Downtown/Station Area Retail/Mixed Use and Downtown Station Area Main Street Overlay land use designations. These designations would emphasize community-serving uses, such as retail, restaurants, personal services (limited size per business), office (limited size per parcel), residential, and others, with specific limits on non-retail ground-floor uses on Santa Cruz Avenue, in order to reflect existing practice emphasizing this as a retail corridor. The Downtown Adjacent Office/Residential designation would apply to Menlo Avenue, University Drive, and Oak Grove Avenue, and would complement but not compete with the downtown retail focus, with office (limited size per parcel), personal services (limited size per business), residential, and public/semi-public uses. The land uses for the parts of El Camino Real closest to Downtown and the Station Area would be governed through the El Camino Real Mixed Use/Residential land use designation, while the parts of El Camino Real at the northern and southern edges of the corridor would be governed through the El Camino Real Mixed Use designation. Both land use designations would permit a wide range of uses, including retail, personal services, office (limited size per parcel), residential units, and hotels. In contrast to the various Downtown and Station Area designations, personal services would not be limited in size or location, and more automotive-oriented uses would be permitted or conditionally permitted (for example: auto sales, gas stations, and take-out restaurants).

The private development building regulations for Downtown are described in the D (Downtown) zoning district, and the adjacent areas are part of the DA (Downtown Adjacent) zoning district. The private development building regulations for El Camino Real are described in six different zoning districts: ECR NW (El Camino Real North-West), ECR NE-L (El Camino Real North-East – Low-Density), ECR NE (El Camino Real North-East), ECR NE-R (El Camino Real North-East – Residential Emphasis), ECR SW (El Camino Real South-West), and ECR SE (El Camino Real South-East) (*the last district was the subject of the August 30 City Council meeting but is noted here for comprehensiveness*). The number of zoning districts is due to the variety of El Camino Real, with different development regulations proposed to address unique conditions.

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The primary development regulations are summarized as follows:

| AREA | FAR | DU/ACRE | FAÇADE HEIGHT | MAXIMUM HEIGHT | SETBACKS (FRONT AND CORNER SIDE) |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---|---|---|
| D | 2.00 (2.25) | 25.0 (40.0) | 30'; 38' for Parking Plazas 1 + 3 | 38'; 48' for Parking Plazas 1 + 3 | 0' |
| DA | 0.85 (1.00) | 18.5 (25.0) | 30' | 38' | 5'-20' (11' sidewalk) on Menlo Avenue and University Drive; 10'-20' (11' sidewalk) on Oak Grove Avenue |
| ECR NW | 1.10 (1.50) | 25.0 (40.0) | n/a | 38' | 5' |
| ECR NE-L | 0.75 (1.10) | 20.0 (30.0) | 30' | 38' | 10'-20' (15' sidewalk) |
| ECR NE | 1.10 (1.50) | 25.0 (40.0) | n/a | 38' | 10'-20' (15' sidewalk) |
| ECR NE-R | 1.10 (1.50) | 32.0 (50.0) | n/a | 38' | 10'-20' (15' sidewalk) on El Camino Real; 7'-12' (11' sidewalk) on Oak Grove and Garwood |
| ECR SW | 1.10 (1.50) | 25.0 (40.0) | 30' (rear) | 38' | 7'-12' (12' sidewalk) south of Live Oak Ave; 5' north of Live Oak Ave |

Details are available in the full zoning district regulations (pages E53-E97). The differing FAR (Floor Area Ratio) and DU/acre (dwelling units per acre) standards represent the proposed Base and Public Benefit Bonus levels. The Base standards are intended to achieve inherent public benefits, such as the redevelopment of underutilized properties and creation of more vitality and activity. The Public Benefit Bonus standards would be applied when an applicant proposes to provide additional benefits to the city through a negotiated process. As with the entire plan area, medical and dental office would be limited to one-third of the applicable FAR, with total office limited to one-half of the applicable FAR. The office limits are intended to reflect existing City policy restricting those uses, to increase the diversity of overall uses, and to address concerns in particular about traffic from medical and dental uses. The D district is currently made up of the C-3 district, where the current maximum FARs range between 1.00 and 2.00. The DA district is currently within the R-C, R-3-C, and C-1-B districts, where FARs vary between 0.40 and 0.85. For most of the El Camino Real districts, the current FAR effective maximum is 0.75. In all areas, where residential is allowed, the current DU/acre maximum is 18.5.

The existing maximum height in most of the Downtown and El Camino Real districts is 30 feet, although certain properties can currently apply for Planned Development (P-D) or Conditional Development Permits (CDP) to exceed 30 feet (for example, the building at 800 El Camino Real is 56 feet to the main roof deck). Current heights in the DA district currently range between 30 and 35 feet. Under the Specific Plan, façade height would be a new standard in certain districts, intended to limit the perceived mass of any building. Above the façade height limit, upper floors need to step back at a 45-degree angle (10-foot minimum), similar to the Daylight Plane regulation that is used in many residential districts. Within the D, DA, and ECR (no-SE) zoning districts, maximum building height would be limited to 38 feet, which would be close to the existing 30- to

35-foot height limits. However, within the D district, the two parking garage sites would be permitted a maximum height of 48 feet (with a façade height of 38 feet). *The Planning Commission has recommended that, in the ECR NE and NE-R zoning districts, a new Public Benefit Bonus standard for height be established, equivalent to one additional story. Also, as noted earlier, the Planning Commission recommends revisions to encourage the design of parking structures that are of high aesthetic quality and are consistent with the scale of adjacent planned and existing buildings.*

Buildings would be required to provide façade modulation over long stretches to provide visual interest and could also continue to inset entrances and provide other variation. *The Planning Commission has recommended that regulations in the ECR NE-L and SW zoning districts call for compatible modulation of form on facades adjacent to residential or residential-mixed-use zones, and also that the Massing and Modulation regulations for all ECR zoning districts be modified to state that major portions (as opposed to “all”) of a building facing a street should be parallel to the street.* All developments in Downtown and in the ECR districts would be required to provide private open space for residential development, and the ECR districts would include open space requirements for non-residential development.

Parking standards would be set by use, as shown in Table F1 (page F21), with the potential to propose shared parking reductions by a standard ULI (Urban Land Institute) methodology. All developments in the DA and ECR zoning districts would be required to provide all parking on-site. Developments within the D district could either provide all parking on-site, or pay an in-lieu fee for some or all of the parking to be provided in downtown plazas/garages. The parking in-lieu fee process would require that capacity be available, which would likely not occur until at least one downtown parking garage is developed.

Plan-wide design guidelines, such as requirements for active ground-floor uses, building entries, retail frontage, and parking/service access, would all be applied in these areas. In addition, sustainability regulations and guidelines, in particular LEED Silver certification requirements for common project types, would be also required.

The Planning Commission has recommended revisions to private development regulations to encourage senior housing, such as through increased density, lower parking ratios, or other incentives. This recommendation was relayed during the Commission’s El Camino Real meeting, although staff is interpreting it as applying generally to the entire Plan area, unless directed otherwise by the City Council.

Correspondence

All public correspondence submitted since the August 30 meeting is available as part of the City Council Email Log (<http://ccin.menlopark.org:81/>).

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The Specific Plan requires both staff resources dedicated to the project, as well as appropriations of \$839,080 from the General Fund Reserve for consultant services,

\$78,400 for transportation and traffic analysis contingency, \$27,010 for a Water Supply Assessment (WSA), and \$25,000 for related City costs, for a total appropriation of \$969,490. The City Council has made General Fund Reserve appropriations over the preceding years for these expenses. In addition, due to a conflict of interest with the City Attorney (who leases property within the Plan area), the City has contracted with a Contract City Attorney to provide legal services for the project. The Contract City Attorney's review of the Draft EIR was conducted through a contract under the City Manager's discretion. Depending on the scope of the City Council's direction on the Draft Specific Plan, as well as on the scope of the Draft EIR comments (detailed review in progress), the project could require adjustments in order to adequately address work not covered by the existing contract.

The City Council prioritized planning work on the El Camino Real/Downtown areas during the project priorities process. Planning fee changes approved by the City Council on November 25, 2008 include overhead allocations for General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments, which could be applied to this project. In addition, costs for the Specific Plan preparation could be applied directly to future development in the project area through fees, although this would require future analysis to allocate the costs appropriately, as required by law.

The Vision Plan (Phase I) required both staff resources dedicated to the project as well as a General Fund reserve appropriation of \$176,500 for consultant services and \$50,000 related City costs (initial outreach, speaker series, printing and mailing of the project newsletters, meeting documents and refreshments, and contingencies).

POLICY ISSUES

The El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan will result in policy clarifications or changes related to land use and transportation issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Vision Plan (Phase I) was a planning study and as such was not a project requiring environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Specific Plan (Phase II) includes the preparation of a program-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The comment period for the Draft EIR closed on June 20, 2011, and responses to the comments will represent the Final EIR, which will be reviewed publicly at future Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. In addition, the City has prepared a project page for the proposal, which is available at the following address:

<http://www.menlopark.org/specificplan>. This page provides up-to-date information about the project, allowing interested parties to stay informed of its progress. The page allows users to sign up for automatic email bulletins, notifying them when content is updated and meetings are scheduled. The project list currently has 971 subscribers.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. [Planning Commission Recommendations on the Draft Plan](#)
- B. [City Council Preliminary Recommendations on the Draft Plan](#)
- C. [Housing Commission Recommendations on the Draft Plan](#)
- D. [Transportation Commission Recommendations on the Draft Plan](#)
- E. [Vision Plan Excerpt - Vision Statement and Goals](#)
- F. [Draft Specific Plan Excerpt - Guiding Principles](#)

Note: Attached are reduced versions of maps and diagrams submitted by the applicants. The accuracy of the information in these drawings is the responsibility of the applicants, and verification of the accuracy by City Staff is not always possible. The original full-scale maps and drawings are available for public viewing at the Community Development Department.