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Staff Report for a Resolution Approving the San Leandro Downtown Parking Management Plan and Recommendations for Short-term Parking Action Plan

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the San Leandro Downtown Parking Management Plan and authorize the City Manager to proceed with a recommended short-term parking action plan.

BACKGROUND

The San Leandro Downtown Parking Management Plan was funded by a grant from the Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance Program (SC-TAP) of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC). Under the direction of Community Development and Engineering & Transportation staff and in coordination with ACTC, two consulting firms (PlaceWorks and CDM Smith) have developed the draft plan. A City Council Work Session on this subject was held on Monday, May 23, 2016. Through the Work Session, staff received comments from City Council. This staff report seeks City Council’s approval of the Downtown Parking Management Plan and attendant recommendations for a short-term parking action plan.

The goal of the Downtown Parking Management Plan is to improve parking utilization by implementing different parking policies in Downtown San Leandro. The plan analyzes parking inventory, utilization, and turnover in the core downtown and periphery areas. The data includes BART riders, employees of downtown businesses, shoppers, and residents who use parking either for short durations or all-day. By understanding parking patterns, the City hopes to adopt a strategy that will aid future land-use, economic development decisions and increase the sustainability of the Downtown.

In the downtown area, the City controls about 3,239 parking spaces, of which 1,773 are on-street and

1,466 are off-street parking in seven parking facilities, including the recently reconstructed Estudillo Parking Garage. The San Leandro Downtown Parking Management Plan seeks to:

- better utilize the existing on- and off-street parking inventory;
- strategize solutions for Downtown's short- and long-term parking needs; and
- address multi-modal access needs for residents, employees, customers and commuters in San Leandro.

Analysis

The Downtown Parking Management Plan (DPMP) will help clarify program goals, build consensus on program direction and define funding priorities. As the name implies, the DPMP focuses on the Downtown area defined to be located roughly between San Leandro Boulevard to the west, San Leandro Creek to the north, Bancroft Avenue to the east, and Elsie Avenue/Williams Street to the south. The study area is shown in Figure 1 of the DPMP.

Data collection began in 2013 for the downtown area that included an inventory of all public parking spaces and mapping of on-street time limits (prior to the construction of the Marea Alta multi-unit housing development and the San Leandro Tech Campus). This provided parking data that was not skewed by the temporary loss of the BART parking lot and Martinez Street and was therefore a more realistic representation of the near future parking inventory.

A user survey was then undertaken to gather input regarding existing parking conditions, opinions and concerns. Intercept surveys were conducted near entertainment, recreation, the farmers' market and dining venues to provide insight into the most common modes people utilize to reach Downtown, as well as local concerns about parking in San Leandro and opinions on potential parking solutions.

One of the goals of the surveys was to gather information from visitors to the area, regardless of whether they work or live in San Leandro, and to explore how they commute to the area and what amenities or concerns motivate them. Additionally, stakeholder outreach that included workshops with businesses, resident groups and property owners was completed.

Existing Condition Findings

Occupancy

- Documentation of true occupancy rates was the first step to identify 1) the real or perceived parking problems and 2) provide a basis for determining parking time restrictions. Among the various parking areas, the peripheral on-street spaces experience the highest occupancies throughout the weekday, peaking at approximately 64%, while the core peaks at 52% midday. Overall, weekend occupancies do not exceed 50% during any time period analyzed. Although the southern portion of the Washington Plaza lot, Pelton Center and on-street parking in the neighborhoods immediately east of the San Leandro BART station exceed practical capacity during peak periods, the occupancy levels for the entire Downtown area is well below the practical occupancy of 85% at all times. The data indicates that there is parking available but that it may not always be convenient for the users.

Duration

- The average stay duration for on-street parking is 3.0 hours and for off-street parking is

1.76 hours. Further analysis indicates that on-street parkers are most likely local residents or BART commuters and that visitors and shoppers use the off-street lots to visit retail, restaurants and other services.

Future Demand

Short-Term & 10-Year Horizon

- Projections of future parking demand and adequacy based on proposed land-use changes and specific development projects were completed. In both short-term and ten year scenarios, the parking model utilized for the DPMP indicates at no time would parking demand exceed 85% of the available supply. This future supply is impacted by the planned public availability of the Tech Campus's new parking structure.

Guiding Principles and Prioritization

Creating a set of “guiding principles” was the first step in creating the DPMP as it forms the strategic framework of a program. At the initial outreach meetings with residents and business representatives, emphasis was placed on developing guiding principles for both a regulatory structure as well as implementation. Often, changes in parking regulations will benefit some stakeholders and inconvenience others.

With principles in place, the team can continually assess implementation proposals to ensure that they are consistent with the community goals for the project. After extensive community outreach and discussion, the following guiding principles were proposed for this project:

1. Downtown San Leandro is a valuable community asset.
2. Simplify parking operations.
3. Make downtown accessible to all users through multiple modes.
4. The Parking System should support downtown businesses.
5. Prioritize residential parking for residents.
6. Manage the parking system with an understanding of systemic and fiscal impacts.

Implicit in the guiding principles is the idea that certain users will have top priority for parking access in certain locations. For example, parking in the residential neighborhoods between the BART station and East 14th Street should first serve the residents of those areas, with BART commuters and business employees falling lower on the priority list. By contrast, parking in commercial areas should be prioritized for short-term shoppers and visitors, which benefits both businesses and members of the community by making it as easy as possible to patronize Downtown businesses. Finally, the Estudillo Garage should be prioritized for employees of Downtown businesses who tend to park for longer durations.

The DPMP identifies the following recommendations:

- **Implement a Residential Parking Permit (RPP) Program:** This program is to reduce the impact of employee and BART commuter parking in nearby residential neighborhoods.
- **Offer Employee Parking Solutions:** Reducing daily parking fee in Estudillo Garage so that employees are not parking in Washington Plaza and residential areas. This will allow for more parking spaces for customers.
- **Identify and Communicate the Parking System:** Once new regulations are

implemented, it will be essential to ensure that the new policies are clearly communicated to those who rely on the parking system. This can be achieved through outreach, marketing materials, and clear signage.

- **Integrate Parking Technology:** Parking regulations should be easy to understand and our systems should be easy to use. The City has an urgent need to replace the payment technology in the garage. The DPMP also recommends use of license plate reader technology for zone based parking enforcement and installation of modern payment systems for on-street parking.
- **Manage Parking Fund to Solvency:** The goal of the parking system is to support its users, not to raise revenues for the City. Nevertheless, the City's parking fund presently faces a structural deficit. Although meter revenue and costs associated with maintenance and operation of the parking lots, on-street parking, and the garage are included in the fund, citation revenue is not. The fund should be restructured to provide a clear assessment of the net cost of the parking system and the City should move toward a long-term goal of making this fund solvent.
- **Encourage Transportation Demand Management:** Although this study focuses on parking, the City has a long-term goal to support a transit-friendly Downtown that supports all modes of transportation. As new development increases, the City should encourage programs that support use of transit, cycling, and walking to reduce the overall demand on the parking and transportation systems and support a high quality of life.

Costs and Revenues

As noted above, the City parking fund presently fails to generate revenues to match its costs. In part, this situation can be addressed by restructuring the fund to give a more complete sense of the costs and revenues associated with parking. However, it is likely that the parking system will not generate net positive revenue in the near future. The proposed changes include reduced prices for monthly permits and daily parking in the garage. The City also intends to utilize consultants with parking expertise to oversee the implementation of the DPMP and the transition to new technology in the garage and for enforcement. To a certain degree, the costs will be offset by improved enforcement of time restriction violations and increased usage of the garage.

As new development occurs and usage of the Downtown area intensifies, the City will also need to consider installing parking meters at on-street parking locations which will reduce the revenue shortfall and increase the financial support to the system. Installing additional meters should be evaluated when the 85 percent occupancy threshold is reached. When appropriate, existing meters will be reused at short-term parking locations to improve enforcement.

In the near-term, the City may need to consider parking-related costs as an investment in the success of Downtown San Leandro. To the extent that the parking system works efficiently, businesses will see more success and the City will realize a sustainable city center. A successful Downtown will also be desirable for major development and re-investment projects, which will in turn generate increased property tax for the City.

Recognizing that implementation of the DPMP would require a financial investment, the City Council took action in 2016 to allocate \$600,000 from a 2008 bond issuance by the former Redevelopment Agency. That action was also approved by the Successor Agency Oversight Board and the California Department of Finance. These funds are eligible for expenditure as of July 1, 2017 and will be used initially for consultant costs related to implementation of the Plan and for capital costs for the

purchase and installation of new equipment at the garage.

An assessment of the fiscal impacts and a fiscal analysis of the DPMP is included as part of the DPMP.

Comments Received from May 23, 2016 Council Work Session

Comments and feedbacks received from the Work Session are summarized as follows:

- Enhance parking enforcement.
- Address parking needs in the Farmers' Market.
- Offer at least one free permit to each household for the RPP program.
- Place customers as the highest priority in business zones.
- Replace aged meters with smart meters soon to generate parking revenue.
- Do not offer free parking at all as parking should not be free.
- Encourage more biking and walking to downtown.
- Provide better guiding signage to Estudillo garage to increase its usage.
- Reduce the operating cost of the Estudillo garage.
- Use good judgement when hiring a consulting parking administrator.
- Promote convenient parking, easy payment options, and mobile applications.
- Provide integrated parking mapping system.

Having evaluated City Council's comments and feedbacks, and the existing resources, staff recommends City Council to approve the Downtown Parking Management Plan as guiding principles of short-term, mid-term, and long-term action plans, and specifically approves short-term action plans as outlined below to improve the downtown parking conditions.

A. Refine Organization Structure

- **Short-Term:** Conditions exist to move forward immediately (0-12 months):
 - City Staff needs to determine responsible department/staff resource to develop RFQ/RFP for outsourcing program and to serve as contact.
 - It is recommended that the City develop and issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) for third party parking management vendors to develop a qualified pool of candidates to interview.
 - Establish a Parking Technical Advisory Committee comprised of a diverse and representative group of downtown stakeholder to gather input on parking decisions and to ensure the community is included as a partner in program implementation.

Note: The first two components of this recommendation are essentially complete. A consultant services agreement for a parking management consultant in on the City Council agenda for July 17, 2017.

B. Simplify Parking Time Stays

- **Short-Term Actions:** Conditions exist to move forward immediately (0-12 months)

○ **Immediate Steps:**

- *Establish parking zones* - City staff will need to establish enforcement zones like those delineated on the DPMP Figure 2 program maps
- Off-street: each lot and garage as a different zone:
 1. Washington Plaza (N&S)
 2. Pelton Center
 3. Estudillo Parking Garage
 4. Daniel Best Building Lot
 5. Library Lot
- On-street parking can be separated into the following zones; Relocate current single space meters to on-street short-term parking spaces. Consider keeping parking meter poles in place until long-term equipment solution is selected.
 - A. 4 hour parking on San Leandro Blvd
 - B. 3 hour RPP West of E. 14th
 - C. 3 hour parking on West side of E. 14th
 - D. 3 hour parking on East side of E. 14th
 - E. 3 hour RPP East of E. 14th
- Install signs indicating parking zone areas (See Recommendation G)
- Develop ***no re-parking ordinance*** for all time-limited parking zones in the Downtown. The ordinance will include citation policy. It will be necessary to make it clear that the downtown parking is based on a zone system. Parkers will be allowed to move and park in other zones during the day- but unable to re-park in the same zone during that enforcement period. The goal is to motivate parkers to park in the Estudillo, BART or Tech Campus garages if they need to park longer than 2-3 hours.

C. Residential Parking Permit

- **Short-Term Actions:** Conditions exist to move forward immediately (0-12 months):
 - Identify City Department to be responsible for administering RPP program until/unless third party contractor is hired.
 - Establish Geographic RPP Zones East and West of E14th Avenue based on map in DPMP Figures 2 and 4 above.
 - Establish fee schedule and enforcement hours
 - Suggested Fees: \$25/year

- Suggested Hours: M-F 8-6PM
 - Establish program for the sale of visitor passes
 - 1 day passes: \$1/day
 - Sold to residents only
 - Consider establishing a program for the sale of passes to businesses in RPP zone
- Suggested Fees: \$100/year and Link RPP sales to existing on-line permit sales system

Having worked on the aforementioned short-term action plans with the consultant parking administrator for a period up to two years, staff will report back to City Council for the long-term action plans that can be carried out from the third year after this final Downtown Parking Management Plan is fully adopted.

Current Agency Policies

City Council Goals:

- Place San Leandro on a firm foundation for long-term fiscal sustainability.
- Advance projects and programs promoting sustainable economic development, including transforming San Leandro into a center for innovation.
- Maintain and enhance San Leandro's infrastructure.

Applicable General Plan Policies

Policy T-1.7 Off-street Parking Standards. Implement variable parking standards that reflect such factors as proximity to transit, type of occupancy (seniors, etc.), number of bedrooms (for housing), and the expected level of parking demand. Parking requirements should reflect the City's goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Action T-1.7.B: Downtown Parking Management Plan Implementation. Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Management Plan. In areas of highest parking demand, strategies should be implemented to more efficiently manage employee and customer parking, as well as parking for nearby destinations such as BART.

Policy T-4.1 Coordination with Service Providers. Work collaboratively with AC Transit and BART to ensure that public transit service remains safe, reliable, and affordable, and to improve service frequency and coverage within San Leandro neighborhoods and employment centers.

- Action T-4.1.B: BART Improvements.
On an ongoing basis, work with BART to pursue the following:
(b) Parking Management strategies around the Downtown and Bay Fair Stations which ensure that the stations remain available for use by the greatest number of persons possible, and that parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods are minimized.

Policy T-5.7 Technology and Roadway Efficiency. Use technology, including smart phone applications, roadway sensors, and real time data on congestion, travel time, and parking supply to create a more efficient transportation system, and to maximize the benefits of the existing road system before investing in its expansion.

Environmental Review

This project has statutory exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per California Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 (b) and CEQA Guideline Section 15183. Projects “Consistent with Community Plan or Zoning”; whereby the Downtown Parking Management Plan is being updated pursuant to previously approved General Plan and Climate Action Plan policies and the General Plan’s certified EIR.

Summary of Public Outreach Efforts

The Downtown Parking Management Plan project has been announced to the General Public through the BPAC meetings on November 17, 2015 and April 27, 2016.

Intercept surveys were conducted in summer 2015 to gather input regarding existing parking conditions, opinions and concerns over existing San Leandro parking issues.

Additionally, stakeholder outreach that included two workshops each with business, resident groups and property owners were completed between July 2015 and January 2016.

Fiscal Impacts

The San Leandro Downtown Parking Management Plan was funded by the Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance Program (SC-TAP) of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC).

The City spent \$19,000 in hiring the same consultant to conduct a financial analysis of the City of San Leandro’s parking management plan developed as part of the ACTC sponsored Downtown Parking management Plan.

In the short-term parking action plans, hiring a consulting parking administrator will cost approximately \$130,000 over the course of one year. Over the coming year, staff will further refine estimated costs for implementation of a residential permit program and new equipment purchases. Over time, implementation of the DPMP will likely result in increased revenue from citation as enforcement becomes more efficient and effective. Those costs will offset some of the implementation costs and ongoing operating costs.

As noted above, the City has \$600,000 in former Redevelopment Agency bond funds for implementation costs associated with consulting services and capital.

Budget Authority

Funding allocations for the Downtown Parking Management Plan is as follows:

1) \$125,000.00 - Downtown Garage Parking Plan, Account No. 982-86-071, allocated in FY 2012-13

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Downtown Parking Management Plan

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