



**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
CITY HALL  
10300 TORRE AVENUE • CUPERTINO, CA 95014-3255  
TELEPHONE: (408) 777-3354 www.cupertino.org

**CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**  
Meeting: July 7, 2014

**Subject**

Civic Center Master Plan – Study Session

**Recommended Action**

Accept this report and provide direction to staff in response to study session presentation and discussion.

This Council study session seeks to provide an update on the status of the Civic Center Master Plan and Parking Garage project, including an overview of the community outreach to date, and to have Council consideration of and direction on three plan scenarios that will be presented at a general, broad-outreach community workshop.

**Background**

On February 19, 2013, Council received a presentation of the Civic Center Master Plan Framework which laid out three very conceptual scenarios for a master plan for the Civic Center. The Council provided direction to further develop the *Civic Life* plan of the Framework, with a process that would include community outreach, a solution to accommodate the demand for parking at the Civic Center, and consider financing options for realization of the master plan.

In June 2013, Council approved the FY 2014 CIP budget which includes funding for the Civic Center Master Plan project, conceptual design for a Civic Center parking garage, and design for the expansion of the Library story room. On March 4, 2014 Council approved an agreement with the architectural firm of Perkins+Will for the requisite planning and design services.

## Discussion

### Initial Community Outreach

The consultant team participated in the Cupertino 2014 Earth Day festival on April 5<sup>th</sup>, during which they conducted 140 participant surveys inquiring about sentiments about the civic center site, including circulation at and around the site, parking, facilities, and programs.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, a web-based community engagement site, entitled *Imagine Cupertino Civic Center*, was activated to stimulate conversation about the civic center and collect more user surveys. Notice of it was distributed during the Earth Day Festival and by direct email notification to known interested residents and businesses. The initial survey cycle ran through April. A second survey was posted in the last week of June and will run through the end of July.

On May 14<sup>th</sup> a small group of stakeholders convened at the Senior Center for a workshop. The session provided an overview of the project along with information gained from the Earth Day and web-site outreach efforts. The participants included near neighbors of the Civic Center (resident and business), members of the library community, teens, representatives from Commissions (Library, Pedestrian & Bicycle, Information Technology), and the cricket players community. The stakeholder group was selected to provide a broad overview of community “voices” that would help focus the program options for three conceptual plan scenarios to be presented and discussed at a larger community workshop planned for July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The information gained from these community interactions has helped to shape the three plan scenarios that will be presented to Council at this study session.

### Conceptual Plan Options

#### **‘Civic Life’ Master Plan Options description**

The three Civic Center Master Plan options all build off the ‘Civic Life’ Master Plan Framework in 2012. All three options propose the same set of program elements that enhance civic and community life at the Civic Center. The program elements considered in all 3 options are –

- A. Additional parking for existing and future uses;
- B. Expansion of the Library Story Room to a 100-seat Program Room;
- C. Teen Recreation Center;
- D. New and expanded City Hall with community use program space like classrooms, large conference room, art gallery etc.;
- E. Quality food opportunities;

- F. Outdoor amenities; and
- G. Sheriff's office option.

The options vary in the proposed location of the program elements, their space configuration, the parking solution and, the treatment of the open space within the Civic Center site. The options are by no means meant to be exclusive but, are a conceptual consideration of the different possibilities of an enlivened civic center district.

#### Option 1: Civic Life - On the Plaza

This option emphasizes the plaza as the heart of the Civic Center. All improvements are focused around the Library Plaza. Like the existing uses, all additional program front on to the plaza for greater activation of the plaza. The Teen Recreation Center is planned to be located on the plaza adjacent to the New City Hall giving the teens a prominent place at the civic heart of the city. The new and expanded City Hall provides an opportunity to establish a strong civic identity on the plaza. The plaza itself is envisioned to be enhanced and expanded to spill around the east side of the New City Hall opening up the plaza to larger and more community outdoor events. The existing and future parking need is met by a 2-level above-grade parking garage along the east edge of the library and a basement parking below the New City Hall. The south end of the block is maintained to serve the current Library Field functions, except for when it serves as a temporary parking lot while the parking garage is in construction.

#### Option 2: Civic Life – Civic Garden (previously titled On the Block)

This option engages the entire block in a garden like setting that ties together the civic, community and recreational uses of the entire block. All parking is envisioned to be tucked underground, below the Library Field and the New City Hall, freeing up the surface for an inviting civic garden with outdoor lounges, outdoor reading rooms, outdoor movie screening, amphitheater and other features that welcome the community to gather and socialize in a new civic and social heart of the city. The garden is an excellent opportunity to showcase the creek, the mature trees along the creek, and act as a demonstration garden for various site sustainability strategies. The intent of the garden is to seamlessly and harmoniously integrate all the uses on the site enabling the entire block to be considered an outdoor spill out program area. The Library Story Room expansion and the Teen Recreation Center are proposed as an extension of the south end of the library with a separate south entrance that opens out to the Memorial Grove. The new and expanded City Hall provides an opportunity to establish a strong civic identity on the block.

### Option 3: Civic Life - On the Avenue

In this option Torre Avenue is proposed to be transformed as a place of welcoming arrival in a wide promenade like setting that has the open space elements and the built program opening on to it. All new uses are proposed to front on Torre Avenue, including the New City Hall and the Teen Recreation Center. The Teen Recreation Center is located as a stand-alone building south of the Memorial Grove to synergistically build off the recreational possibilities associated with the adjacent Library Field. This location allows the Teen Center the opportunity to expand and grow at a later date. Torre Avenue lends itself to opportunities for drop-off zones, bike parking, food trucks, and attractive and engaging landscape features that establish a distinct identity for the civic center. The parking is proposed as an expanded surface lot along the east half of the block with vehicular access from Pacifica Avenue and Rodrigues Avenue. Underutilized on-street parking along the edges of the Library Field is tapped in this option to meet the parking demands.

The design team is seeking Council direction to finalize the plans for discussion with the public at a general community workshop scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup>. What follows are some questions for consideration during the study session.

### Questions for the Council Consideration

- 1) Is the expansion of the library story room to accommodate a large group of 100 people serve the need to free up the Community Hall?
- 2) Is the Teen Recreation Center an appropriate use for the Civic Center? If yes, should it be integrated with the library building or a stand-alone building either on the Library Plaza or near the Library Field?
- 3) Is the Sheriff's West Valley Substation use, with its need for 80 parking spaces, an appropriate use for the Civic Center?
- 4) Is adding food amenities in the Civic Center desirable?
- 5) Should the space program for the New City Hall share common areas, meeting rooms, and classrooms with the community after regular work hours. Should the New City Hall also be a general community use facility? How does the Council feel about this as a new image of the City Hall?
- 6) The community has expressed a desire to enhance the open space amenities and features in the Civic Center. Is that a direction for the plan?
- 7) The Community has strongly voiced a desire to see parking tucked underground to free up the surface for open space amenities. Is that a direction for the plan?
- 8) Do these three options represent the right mix of parking, open space, and program uses for the public to consider at a community workshop?

### **CEQA Status**

An Initial Study is scheduled to be prepared for the preferred plan and will be submitted at the time of Council approval of the Civic Center Master Plan. To date, the *Existing Setting* portion of the document has been drafted.

### **Sustainability Impact**

This project will be designed to be consistent with City sustainability and environmental policies and objectives.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Cost estimates and funding strategies will be considered as part of this project. The funding/financing options will be developed once the preferred alternative is selected in early September.

### **Next Steps**

July 23, 2014 – A broad-based community workshop will be held at Quinlan Community Center to further refine the plans with the objective of identifying one plan as a preferred plan to recommend to Council.

September 2014 – The community refined plans will be presented to Council for further consideration with the goal of selecting the preferred master plan.

September 2014 – Community meeting to report out to public the preferred master plan.

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Prepared by: Katy Jensen, Capital Improvement Program Manager

Reviewed by: Timm Borden, Director of Public Works

Approved for Submission by: David Brandt, City Manager