



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

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Staff Report
September 12, 2006

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Design Review Report Back: Commercial Corridors (M06-048)

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Provide feedback and recommendations to staff on report back related to design review in major commercial corridors in the city.

Contact: Luis R. Sanchez, AIA, Design Review Director, (916) 808-5957, William Crouch, Urban Design Manager (916) 808-8013; David Kwong, Current Planning Manager (916) 808-2691

Presenter: William Thomas, Development Services Director

Department: Development Services

Division: Current Planning Division

Organization No: 4881

Description/Analysis

Issue: The City Council requested staff to report back on design review in commercial corridors in the City. Currently many of the major commercial corridors are within Design Review Districts, but there are a number that currently are not within an area subject to Design Review. Staff has developed information for City Council review related to areas that do not currently have Design Review, and has provided relevant statistics and estimated staffing impacts should the Council choose to recommend future expansion of Design Review to these additional corridors.

The two key issues related to expanding Design Review to all major commercial corridors in the City are the following:

- Establish applicable design guidelines and method of project review, including levels of review, i.e., ministerial checklist review, or staff level review, etc.
- Discuss estimated staffing impacts of expanding Design Review to all major commercial corridors in the City if citywide review process is recommended for consideration by the Department in fiscal year 2007-2008.

Policy Considerations: The statistics and information provided to the Council at this time do not require policy considerations, unless additional steps are taken by the City Council to recommend further expansion of Design Review in the future.

Environmental Considerations: The Environmental Services Manager has determined that expanding Design Review to additional areas in the City does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment and is therefore exempt under California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Categorical Exemption Section 15061(b) (3), and Section 15378(b) (5) - "organizational or administrative activities of governments that do not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment." However, subsequent actions or decisions made on proposed projects reviewed in the any expanded Design Review areas may be required to undergo CEQA review.

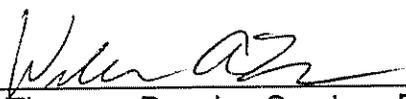
Commission/Committee Action: There has been no committee or commission action on this issue. This report back was requested by the City Council.

Rationale for Recommendation: Staff has provided information to the City Council on current status of design review of projects in major commercial corridors. The City Council may request that staff provide additional refinement of data for future expansion of Design Review in Fiscal Year 2007-2008.

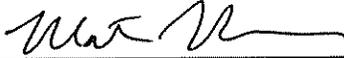
Financial Considerations: This project has no fiscal considerations, unless follow-up steps are taken by the City Council after this report back to recommend augmentation of City staff for additional Design Review functions.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are being purchased under this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: 
William R. Crouch, Urban Design Manager

Approved by: 
William Thomas, Develop Services Director

Recommendation Approved:



 Ray Kerridge
City Manager

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ATTACHMENT 1**Background Information:**

Currently, approximately 20% of the City has full Design Review with staff and Board level review of residential and commercial projects that includes notification of adjacent property owners, affected community groups, and posting of the site. See map, page 5, for areas currently subject to Design Review and with commercial corridors overlaid. In October of 2003, City Council adopted the Commercial Corridor Revitalization Strategy (M02-008) which provided development standards, land use review, and design principles for projects needing planning entitlements in major commercial corridors in the city. With the level of detail and direction provided, they can be used as the basis for project reviews in the commercial corridors not already in a Design Review District.

Of the 19 corridors identified, 11 corridors are already within Design Review Districts. The Northgate Boulevard corridor falls within the Expanded North Area Design Review District, and requires only staff level review of commercial projects proposed. Projects within standard Design Review Districts require Board level review for all new commercial construction, as well as additions and remodels that have over \$100K of exterior work. The other 8 corridors include: Folsom Boulevard West, Folsom Boulevard East, Franklin Boulevard, Freeport Boulevard, Fruitridge Road, Florin Road, 65th Street, and Mack Road.

Staff identified approximately 25 commercial project activities within the commercial corridors in 2005, and with the General Plan updates, and incentives for development in commercial corridors, staff is projecting increased activity in these areas.

Adding the eight corridors to the Design Review workload will require outreach to these new areas requiring review, as well as additional staff time in coordination of projects and working with applicants. Based on projected staff hours required to review commercial projects, staff has estimated that approximately 1800 to 2000 staff hours per year would be required to efficiently perform the work, translating into an increase at minimum of 1 full time employee. Staff is continuing to review this information to improve the process and fine tune resource needs for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. At that time, the Department can return to the City Council with all relevant information.

General Plan Update Vision and Guiding Principles: While the City's General Plan is being updated, the City Council has adopted a vision for the future of the City as well as several guiding principles to help achieve this vision. Staff is ensuring that in the process of analysis for design review we retain the following key principles: promote developments that foster accessibility and connectivity between areas and safely and efficiently accommodate a mixture of cars, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians; include a mix of housing types within neighborhoods to promote a diversity of household types and housing choices for residents of all ages and income levels to promote stable neighborhoods; use the existing assets of infrastructure and public facilities to increase infill and re-use, while maintaining important qualities of community character. The General Plan update will include an urban design component that will provide direction for urban form on a citywide level.

ATTACHMENT 2

