

1. *Introduction*

Over the past several years, concerns over the quality and quantity of new businesses along the East 14th Street Corridor in San Leandro have been voiced by the local community, including homeowner associations, neighborhood groups, business associations, residents and property owners. In response to this concern, the City Council has taken the following actions:

- First, in December 2001, the Council enacted an Urgency Ordinance to require increased discretionary approval for essentially any change of use or new development proposal along the southern East 14th Street Corridor.
- Second, the Council directed City staff to proceed with the preparation of the East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy, a detailed land use, urban design and streetscape improvement plan intended to implement San Leandro General Plan and Alameda County-San Leandro Joint Redevelopment Project Area policy recommendations and actions that are aimed at reducing blight and stimulating development along the corridor.

1.1 Project Background and Plan Components

The San Leandro General Plan identifies the southern East 14th Street Corridor as one of the highest priority areas in San Leandro, acknowledging that it no longer functions as a traditional State Highway, and that its strip commercial facilities are out of date. Although public bus service has a strong presence along the corridor, the businesses in the area suffer from a disorganized pattern of development and in some cases lack adequate off-street parking. Shallow and narrow parcel configurations compound the ability of new

businesses to provide needed off-street parking. Small lot sizes also present a development constraint, as new development may require assembly of multiple parcels to be economically feasible.

This document is the City's response to the concerns voiced about the corridor and the hopes for a City-led revitalization effort. When adopted, the Development Strategy will provide City staff, elected officials, property and business owners, prospective developers and the community with a policy and design document to guide the revitalization effort and the incremental process of its implementation.

Following are the main components of the development strategy and a brief summary of their content:

- ***Goals and Policies***
Derived from the General Plan and developed by the South Area Advisory Committee (SAAC) and the larger community, the goals and policies outline the community's intention for the future of the East 14th Street corridor, providing the basis for all other components of the plan.
- ***Corridor Concept Plan and Illustrative Opportunity Site Development Studies***
The Corridor Concept Plan outlines how the corridor can be divided into districts of different character and land use focus, while retaining an identity as a whole. The plan also illustrates where opportunity sites for future development activities are located throughout the corridor and makes recommendations about the desired character of such future development. This is illustrated through sample development options for four of the identified Opportunity Sites.
- ***South Area Design Guidelines for Development on Private Properties***
The Design Guidelines for Private Properties are intended as a long-term guide for City staff and proponents of future development. In conjunction with new South Area-specific zoning regulations, the guidelines spell out requirements for new development and remodeling projects that address a building's height, bulk, and setbacks, as well the design of its façade, entrances, signage, open space and other design characteristics.
- ***Streetscape Improvements Plan***
The Streetscape Improvements Plan outlines concepts and recommendations for a redesign of the East 14th Street public right-of-way. Together with the South Area Design Guidelines, it is intended to generate momentum for the revitalization process.

The Development Strategy effort has been funded by planning grants awarded to the City, including funds from the Transportation for Livable Communities program of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's Downtown Rebound Grant program. In addition, the City of San Leandro has provided local matching funds through the City's Community Development Block Grant program and the Redevelopment Agency.

How the Development Strategy Will be Used

The Development Strategy will provide staff, elected officials, and the general public with a set of clear goals and directions for the short- and long-term aspects of the revitalization process. City staff will use the document in pursuing and guiding private development to enhance the character of the Corridor. The concepts and recommendations for streetscape improvements will serve as a long-term road map for capital improvements projects, such as the widening of sidewalks, the introduction of a tree-lined median, and crosswalk improvements. The implementation section of the plan will provide as overview of actions and steps recommended for the implementation of each strategy component.

1.2 Planning Process and Public Participation

City staff began the project in December 2001, when the City Council appointed the South Area Advisory Committee (SAAC), a citizen advisory committee with representatives from the Joint RAC, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustments, adjacent homeowner associations (Halcyon-Foothill HOA, Peralta Citizens' Association), Downtown Business Association and the Business Association of South San Leandro. The diversity represented within the committee was intended to ensure that the results of the planning effort would rest on a broad consensus among the different stakeholders within the corridor.

The SAAC began its monthly meetings in March 2002 and held 14 regular meetings, sponsored a variety of other activities, including a walking tour of the Corridor (intended to aid the selection of opportunity sites for inclusion in the Corridor Concept Plan), and a bus tour of infill developments in adjacent communities of the East Bay, giving participants an opportunity to get a first-hand impression of development types pertinent to the future of the East 14th Street Corridor. City staff and the consultant team held a developers' symposium in the summer of 2002 to interview residential,

commercial, and mixed-use developers from the non-profit and for-profit development communities. During the interviews, developers were asked to assess the future development potential of the Corridor and to respond to preliminary development concepts. (Please refer to *Appendix 1: Results of the Developer Symposium.*)

The SAAC also sponsored public outreach efforts, including two community workshops. The first, consisted of presentations of the existing conditions assessment and gave all participants an opportunity to add to the findings. At the second, participants were presented with initial project goals, draft versions of plans for the four sample development studies, and draft streetscape design concepts. City staff worked with staff from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), AC Transit, BART, the Alameda County Fire Department, and other Alameda County departments as well as other City departments (including the Redevelopment Agency, Public Works, Engineering & Transportation, and Business Development) in order to coordinate the proposals, concepts and goals of the project.



Figure 1.1: The East 14th Street South Area Corridor in San Leandro

As part of the final community outreach effort, the City planning staff conducted one-on-one presentations with several community-based organizations between January – March 2004. The organizations included homeowner associations, neighborhood groups, business groups and other civic organizations as follows:

- African-American Business Council
- Asian Business Council
- Business Association of South San Leandro
- Chamber of Commerce Civic Issues Subcommittee
- Congregations Organized for Renewal (faith-based group)
- Downtown Business Association
- Halcyon-Foothill Improvement Association

In addition, staff held an open community meeting in February 2004 at the San Leandro Main Library as a general informational meeting for non-affiliated business and property Owners to outline the draft Development Strategy.

1.3 Area of Applicability and Relationship to other City Policy Documents

Figure 1.1 illustrates the location of the South Area corridor within the City of San Leandro, while Figure 1.2 delineates its boundaries. The corridor includes the East 14th Street public right-of-way and all properties fronting onto the street between Maud Avenue in the north and 150th Avenue in the south.

Portions of the East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy propose new or changed regulations and development standards currently governed by the San Leandro Zoning Code. With adoption of this document, necessary modifications should be made to the zon-



Figure 1.2: South Area Corridor project boundaries

ing code and other related regulatory documents. Doing so will enhance the effectiveness of the South Area Development Strategy. Final legal delineation of parcels included in the corridor will occur as part of these zoning changes. Such changes encompass the creation of three new South Area-specific zoning districts (SA-1, SA-2, and SA-3) and the adjustment of existing zoning regulations as suggested in *Chapter 5, East 14th Street South Area Design Guidelines for Development on Private Properties*.

The contents of the East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy were developed in part by building on goals and policies expressed in San Leandro’s General Plan and are considered to be in accordance with the Plan. This document will inform the City’s decisions about future projects on its list of capital improvement projects (CIP), subject to availability of funds. It also explains local goals and desires that can be referenced by other public agencies.