Rules Committee: Mar 11, 2009
Agenda Item:

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: RULES COMMITTEE **FROM:** Mayor Chuck Reed

SUBJECT: A's Stadium in San José **DATE:** March 5, 2009

Approved Chuck Reed Date 3/5/09

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Rules and Open Government Committee place this matter on the agenda for the April 7, 2009 evening Council meeting to allow for maximum public participation in the discussion.

The Agenda language for a joint City and Redevelopment Agency item should read as follows:

a. Discuss actions that San José can take to prepare for the possibility that Major League Baseball (MLB) makes a decision allowing the Athletics (A's) to consider relocating to San José.
b. Direct staff to prepare and return to Council with a Resolution indicating the desire of the City of San José to support the A's if MLB favors a relocation of the A's to San José; and, indicating that the City is willing to accommodate the A's on the site at Park Avenue and Autumn/Montgomery Streets.
c. Direct a team of City and Redevelopment Agency staff to assess what steps may need to be taken to prepare the site at Park Avenue and Autumn/Montgomery Streets for potential consideration, and develop an outreach program to neighboring residents and businesses.
d. Direct staff to provide a status report and recommendations for additional actions that may need Council authorization to the Community and Economic Development Committee within two months of the April 7th Council hearing followed by a discussion at the City Council.

BACKGROUND

Encouraging sporting teams, events and facilities, has been part of our Economic Development Strategy since November 2003. The San Jose Sharks, the San Jose Giants, as well the San Jose Earthquakes and San Jose Sabercats have generated significant economic benefits throughout San José.

Over the past few weeks, I have had several conversations with Lew Wolff, owner of the A's. Mr. Wolff has expressed his appreciation for San José's enthusiasm, support, and interest in having the A's move to San José. At this time however, the A's are focusing on Spring training and the upcoming baseball season before assessing options and making decisions about next steps.

We know that MLB territorial restrictions would have to be modified before the A's can enter into negotiations with San José for a stadium location. As such a decision is within the jurisdiction of MLB team owners and the Baseball Commissioner, it is important that San José not impede those discussions by approaching MLB until we are notified of the appropriateness of such action on our part.

It is also critical that, if and when there is an opportunity for San José to talk to MLB or negotiate with the A's, San José be in the best position to move on such an opportunity. That said, we should be prudent with the City and Agency resources invested in this effort and cautiously move forward on actions at the appropriate time.

I am committed to working closely with the designated City and Agency development team, and community stakeholders from throughout the Silicon Valley, ensure that we have an open and transparent process, and present a cohesive and united front to the A's.

Until the appropriate time arrives, we should focus our efforts on preparing to take advantage of the opportunity, if it comes our way. These efforts should include:

- Building community support;
- Building support from Silicon Valley businesses, both small companies and major corporations, and labor; and
- Analyzing the opportunities and challenges of developing the Park Avenue and Montgomery/Autumn Streets site as a location for a baseball stadium.

From: Lew Wolff
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 7:59 PM
To: Chuck Reed
Subject: The A's

Dear Mayor: Naturally my decision to cease our efforts in Fremont has generated a lot of calls, e-mails, etc. from your community and a number of others.

As I tried to indicate that my near-term efforts include enjoying my baseball team, spring training (I was in Arizona today), the World Baseball Classic and opening day, I am doing my best to "accomplish" the aforementioned activities.

I do not wish to seem disrespectful, and I always am delighted to take calls from elected officials and others, I would appreciate you letting those who wish to contact Major League Baseball officials that, as far as I am concerned, such contacts are not recommended.

Lew

Lewis N. Wolff
Chairman and C.E.O.
Wolff Urban Development, LLC