Council Meeting: 5/15/07
Agenda Item: 4.3

CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

Chuck Reed

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor Chuck Reed

SUBJECT: Framework to Evaluate Proposed Conversions of Employment Lands

DATE: May 15, 2007

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff recommendation as modified by adding the following limitations to the framework:

1) There shall be "no net loss" of total employment capacity as the result of any amendment to the General Plan.
2) There shall be "no net loss" of acreage or square footage within the light or heavy industrial designations.
3) Applications for conversions to support public infrastructure may be accepted only after the infrastructure has been designated by the Council.
4) "Extraordinary Economic Benefit" conversions must meet the above criteria and shall be limited to those instances where there will be an increase or retention of jobs and a significant increase in revenue to the city, and/or a capital contribution for investments in economic development like the Catalyst fund or the Economic Development Reserve.
5) Changes in areas with mixed use overlays shall not decrease the amount of land available for churches.

BACKGROUND

Since 1990, San Jose has converted 9% of all employment lands, or 1,400 acres of prime developable land to other non-industrial land uses. Almost 120 acres have been lost in the 5 years between 2001 and 2006 alone, costing our residents between 68,000 and 110,000 jobs.

Our role should be one that aggressively encourages the preservation of employment lands, and discourages conversion of prime space based on current market demand or pricing. It is time to send the message clearly and concisely that our land use and economic development strategies

are long-term opportunities, and that San Jose's economic vitality is dependent upon efforts to provide development options across industry sectors and building types.

The Framework to Evaluate Proposed Conversions of Employment Lands to Other Uses, first approved by the City Council in April 2004, sets forth guidelines on how to evaluate potential conversions of employment lands.
At our Council Study Session on this topic on March 29, 2007, you gave staff direction to return to Council with an update to the Framework. Staff has submitted its findings and recommendations in a memo dated April 27, 2007, in preparation for a May 15, 2007 City Council hearing on this matter.

My recommendation above is an attempt to further strengthen and limit the criteria that allows for a sound evaluation of potential conversions that will be before us in the years ahead.

Your support of these adds to staff recommendations is appreciated.