Council Meeting: April 19, 2005
Item: 4.7

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

# Memorandum

**TO:** The City Council

**FROM:** Mayor Gonzales
Councilmember Campos

**SUBJECT:** Council Agenda Item 4.7 Evergreen Visioning Project/Smart Growth Strategy

**DATE:** April 19, 2005

Approved Ron Gonzales Nora Campos Date 4/19/05

**RECOMMENDATION**

As the next steps in the Evergreen planning development process, we recommend the Council adopt the following measures:

1. Defer action on item 4.7 for two weeks and direct the Mayor, Councilmembers Cortese and Campos and the Interim Chief of Staff in Council District 7 to bring forward recommended appointees for a Specific Plan Task Force to move forward on the tremendous amount of work that has already been accomplished on the Evergreen Visioning Project. This Task Force would use the work of the Evergreen Visioning Project Task Force as the foundation for its work. The Specific Plan Task Force should be chaired by Councilmember Cortese with Councilmember Campos serving as Vice Chair. The Interim Chief of Staff in Council District 7 should also be appointed to serve on the Task Force until the next District 7 Councilmember is elected.

2. At that same meeting, the Council should discuss key policy issues, desired outcomes and guidelines for discussion within the Specific Plan process. The discussion should at least include affordable housing requirements (as was done in the Coyote Specific Plan) and whether Council supports allowing the conversions of hundreds of acres of industrial properties to residential use or possibly only industrial intensification to allow the job counts to remain the same while freeing up some land for other uses. The Mayor and Councilmembers Cortese and Campos, with input from District 7 staff, should identify the range of key policy questions to be discussed by Council.

3. In two weeks consider the staff recommendations for this item.

We believe these recommended measures will: 1) clarify Council's position on key policy questions before the planning process goes much further; 2) reaffirm Council's support for community planning process includes all the key stakeholders; 3) ensure impacted residents in neighboring districts are have opportunities to become fully informed about the development opportunities in the Evergreen area and their potential impacts and benefits; and 4) ensure an effort will be made to address the concerns of residents in impacted neighborhoods in adjacent Council districts.

## DISCUSSION

We appreciate the tremendous amount of work done by the EVP Task Force to date. However, we have concerns in two broad areas: 1) the need for Council to weigh provide input on key policy questions related to the planning effort in the Evergreen area; and 2) the involvement of a broad-based community body that will serve as an advisory body to the City Council once a plan is brought forward. The concerns we raise, and the recommendations we propose to address them, are meant to ensure that: 1) As the Evergreen planning process proceeds, it contains a wider range of perspectives and provides good opportunities for informed input from all interested parties and 2) The end result is something we can all support.

### Key Policy Issues

Before the planning process advances further, we believe Council to needs to have a discussion on key policy issues in the areas of affordable housing goals, desired density, the conversion of industrial property, etc. In addition, it will be helpful to have a clearer sense of the financial feasibility of what's now being considered. A Council discussion of the key policy issues would help to provide guidance to the proposed specific planning effort.

### Involvement of Impacted Neighboring Communities

We also have some concerns about the level of involvement of impacted neighboring areas in Council districts 5 and 7. While neighboring communities may not be the principal beneficiaries of the EVP, the increased housing, amenities and traffic created by a successful EVP will certainly impact them. For example, in District 7, some members of the West Valley SNI have expressed the belief that their community's concerns are not being addressed on the EVP Task Force. In Districts 5, which is actually within the planning area, there is concern is that there has not yet been a strong effort to include impacted neighborhoods and/or businesses in the community planning effort.

We do not believe these concerns are the result of a conscious effort on the part of anyone to minimize the involvement or concerns of the neighboring Council districts. However, as the Evergreen planning process forward, we believe now is the appropriate time for the Council to ask that consideration be given to broadening the perspective of the advisory body reviewing the development opportunities in Evergreen while simultaneously reducing the concerns of nearby communities outside the Evergreen area by making sure they have good opportunities for informed participation in the planning processes from this point forward.

We believe this can best be accomplished by empanelling a Specific Plan Task Force chaired by Councilmember Cortese with Councilmember Campos serving as Vice Chair. The Interim Chief of Staff for District 7, representing the Mayor, should also be appointed to serve on the Task Force as a member until the next District 7 Councilmember is elected. At that time the new Councilmember would be appointed to serve on the Task Force as a Vice Chair. The Specific Plan Task Force would be an advisory body to the Council.

The role of Councilmember Campos and the District 7 Interim Chief of Staff is to represent the interests of their district residents by ensuring: 1) the impacted communities are fully informed of the Task Force activities and decisions; 2) there is have ample opportunity to provide input into the planning process, as appropriate; and 3) every effort is made to address any identified concerns. The Task Force will have the work already done by the EVP Task Force as its foundation in moving this planning effort forward

We recommend Council support this approach.