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Memorandum

Date: January 31, 2023

To: Mayor and Council Members

From: Michael Rogers, City Manager

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MR

CC: Midori Lichtwardt, Assistant City Manager

Bill Dean, Assistant Development Services Director

Scott Claar, Senior Planner

Subject: Downtown TOD Specific Plan – Status Update

This memorandum provides an update and summary regarding the status of the City of Tracy Downtown Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Specific Plan, including previously completed work and work scheduled for the coming year. An updated project schedule is also attached for reference.

Downtown TOD Study, 2019-2020

- De Novo Planning Group was retained by the City to prepare a Downtown TOD Study in 2019.
- The Downtown TOD Study represents the first phase of the Downtown TOD Project, an effort that will plan for the possible introduction of Valley Link commuter rail service in Downtown Tracy and the surrounding areas. The study identifies a transit-oriented and supporting planning concept, comprising land use and access/circulation components, that, upon implementation, can create a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use station area; support the project area's broader revitalization efforts; spur the development of new, well-planned residential neighborhoods and other synergistic uses; and provide the necessary circulation facilities to support all users' convenient access to the rail station and throughout the project area. The study also provides recommendations for planning tools that the City can prepare and adopt to implement the concept, along with possible grant funding sources to help fund the preparation of the planning tools, catalyze development, and pay for infrastructure improvements.
- In preparing the Downtown TOD Study, the City implemented a broad and comprehensive outreach and participation process in order to engage key stakeholders and broad segments of the community. The outreach effort included a community workshop, an online survey, stakeholder interviews and meetings, and working sessions with the City Council and Planning Commission. In an effort to keep these individuals and all City residents informed and interested in the planning process, the project team maintained a project-specific website, notified the community about participation opportunities, and provided the City Council and Planning Commission with frequent updates.

January 31, 2023

Page 2 of 3

- The Downtown TOD Study was presented to the City Council in July 2020, which concluded the original contract scope of work for this stage of the project.

Downtown TOD Specific Plan, 2021-2022

- In April 2021, the City retained De Novo Planning Group to proceed with the next phase of the planning effort, which is the preparation of a Downtown TOD Specific Plan, and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- Under this new contract, the following tasks and efforts have been completed to-date:
 - The project website (<https://tracydowntownod.org/>) has been overhauled to include:
 - Updated project description
 - Animated project overview video
 - Project timeline
 - Frequently asked questions
 - Overview of ways to participate
 - Link to an online community survey
 - Another round of community outreach was conducted via an online survey posted on the project website from March 28 through April 30, 2022. The survey was 13 questions long and had 154 total respondents. The questions focused on the biggest benefits respondents hope the Specific Plan will bring to Downtown Tracy, the types of desired uses, and the types of homes respondents think would be appropriate in the Downtown.
 - A summary of the online community survey results was prepared and is available for download on the project website.
 - A Market Review and Development Feasibility Analysis was prepared. The purpose of this analysis is to assess the market prospects and development feasibility of new housing development in Tracy's Downtown and more specifically the City's Central Business District (CBD) and Bowtie Area. The findings of this assessment will help inform City policy decisions concerning land use and other policies with the goal of supporting and catalyzing new development in Downtown Tracy. This analysis also addresses the retail and office market conditions in Downtown Tracy.
 - The project team is currently refining and finalizing the Market Review and Development Feasibility Analysis.

Next Steps, 2023

- Upon finalization of the Market Review and Development Feasibility Analysis, the project team will work to update and refine the Land Use Plan presented in the Downtown TOD Study to incorporate and respond to key findings presented in the Market Review and Development Feasibility Analysis.

January 31, 2023

Page 3 of 3

- In Spring of 2023, meetings will be held with key stakeholders from Tracy City Center Association, Valley Link, and Union Pacific Railroad in order to directly share the public feedback received, reaffirm the project objectives, and seek greater clarity on the potential for a Downtown Valley Link Station.
- The project team will seek to hold study sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council to:
 - Share findings of Market Review and Development Feasibility Analysis
 - Share summary of community survey results
 - Develop and confirm realistic project objectives
 - Review and confirm direction on the draft Land Use Plan
 - Ensure the Specific Plan is crafted to best fulfill City priorities
- Following receipt of direction from the City Council, the project team will proceed with drafting the Specific Plan and preparing the EIR.
- The Specific Plan will address topics such as architectural standards, zoning standards (permitted and conditionally permitted uses, density, building height, parking, etc.), and determining how to address the Bowtie.

An updated project schedule is attached to this memorandum. Key milestones include:

- Stakeholder Meetings with TCCA, Valley Link, and UPRR (Winter & Spring 2023)
- City Council and Planning Commission Study Sessions (Spring & Winter 2023)
- Administrative Draft Specific Plan (Summer – Fall 2023)
- Public Workshop (Fall 2023)
- Public Review Draft Specific Plan (Winter 2023/2024)
- Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings (Spring & Summer 2024)
- Final Specific Plan (Summer 2024)
- Environmental Impact Report (Summer 2023 – Spring 2024)

It is noted that while the project schedule has been modified, the project remains within the contractual budget, and adequate project budget is available to complete the project. The contract amount for preparation of the Downtown TOD Specific Plan is \$499,942. The invoiced costs to date total \$84,497 and the remaining budget to complete the work is \$415,444, which indicates the project team is staying within budget.