



# *Planning Division*

## *Memorandum*

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**DATE:** October 9, 2006

**TO:** Mayor Pierce and City Council Members

**FROM:** Rosanne Foust, General Plan Liaison to the City Council  
Tom Passanisi, Principal Planner

**SUBJECT:** Economic Development Element

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and discuss concepts in the attached Economic Development Element and refer the Element back to the Planning Commission for continued refinement. This action is only to provide an update and “check-in”, and allow the Council to affirm the direction and approach to Economic Development Element.

**BACKGROUND**

Planning staff has been working on the General Plan update for the last several years. There have been numerous community meetings and discussions on the guiding principles and the future story of Redwood City. City Council has already conceptually reviewed four of the Elements.<sup>1</sup> Now staff wishes to submit the Economic Development Element to the City Council for the same type of review.

Staff has worked closely with the Chamber of Commerce to develop the Element and also obtained comments from the Finance Director. The Planning Commission has already reviewed the Element and has held several public hearings.

At this time the City Council is not being asked to adopt the element or substantially discuss the details of the document. Rather staff wants to simply provide an update and affirm direction and approach on the policy *concepts*. If there is some goal and policy that does not seem appropriate or something is missing then staff would appreciate the feedback. Following Council review, staff will work out the details at the Planning Commission level and then bring the entire General Plan back for formal review and adoption. This approach will essentially be the same process for all thirteen elements.

The General Plan process consists of several steps. First the Planning Commission reviews the draft documents as they are written by staff. Following Planning Commission’s review, comments, and public hearings, the General Plan Liaison to

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<sup>1</sup> The City Council conceptually reviewed the Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element on August 7, 2006, and the Water Supply and Infrastructure Elements on September 11.

the City Council then brings forward the Elements to “check-in” and inform the City Council (one or two elements at a time). Council then comments on each document and confirms that staff is generally on the right track.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

The Economic Development Element establishes goals and policies to help create a healthy economy for Redwood City. It focuses resources to retain local business, attract new industries, support the tax base and provide important services for existing and future residents. The document also provides a brief economic profile of Redwood City.

Although not a State required Element, both staff and the Chamber of Commerce felt that the City’s economic well being was important enough to warrant an individual Element. For this reason staff has been working closely with the Redwood City San Mateo Chamber of Commerce to prepare the Economic Development Element.

The Economic Development Element reflects several of the General Plan’s Guiding Principles adopted by both the City Council and Planning Commission. They are:

- ❖ ***Strengthen economic vitality to provide jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.***
- ❖ ***Plan for sustainability within our finite resources including, but not limited to open space, water, energy, and air quality***

Some of the highlights of the Element include:

- An economic profile of the City
- Policies and goals for business development both in the Downtown and City-wide
- Developing workforce programs and education
- Building community and a livable City
- Working toward fiscal stability and resource sustainability.

The actual strategies and implementation actions for the Element can be found in a separate document, Economic Development Strategies. That document is also being considered at your City Council meeting on October 9. Please refer to a separate staff report for more information.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Following your discussion and general direction, the Economic Element together with the other Elements will then be compiled and packaged together for additional review by the Planning Commission and ultimately for review again by the City Council.

The next Element to be discussed will be the Land Use Element. Staff will first focus on the Downtown Precise Plan and will be working on this with the Planning Commission for the remainder of 2006. Staff will then present the document to the City Council in January, 2007. Following discussion on the Downtown Precise Plan,

staff will then begin to focus on the land use issues in the Bayfront Area and elsewhere in the City.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Economic Development Element