



## **STAFF REPORT**

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### RESOLUTION DIRECTING INITIATION OF LAND USE POLICY AMENDMENTS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TARGET SITES AND THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

#### **Summary/Background**

As part of the Belmont Economic Development Strategy effort, a logical next step is the consideration of amendments to existing zoning and Downtown Specific Plan regulations in order to accommodate desired types of new development in Downtown. City staff and the consultant team (Field Paoli Architects, Keyser Marston Associates – Economic Consultants, and Dyett & Bhatia - Urban and Regional Planners) have worked to define potential amendments to be considered through the public review process. The economic development strategy efforts are focused on three target sites - **Firehouse Square, Village Center, and Belmont Station**. In order to address these target sites, amendments to existing zoning and the Downtown Specific Plan would cover the entire Downtown Specific Plan area, and the area of Belmont Station that is not within the Downtown Specific Plan boundary (see the provided map - Attachment A.)

This staff report presents recommended language for the City Council to initiate consideration of Zoning and Downtown Specific Plan amendments; a resolution has been provided (See Attachment B) memorializing the land use policy amendment initiation. If City Council directs staff to proceed with the consideration of these amendments, the full text of the amendments will be drafted along with supporting graphics and illustrations. Community meetings and public hearings as required by City ordinance will be held to consider the amendments. An environmental review document will be prepared analyzing potential environmental impacts.

#### **Discussion**

##### Proposed Language to Initiate Consideration of Amendments to Existing Zoning and the Downtown Specific Plan

Staff recommends amendments to the Downtown Specific Plan and Zoning Code to allow increased building height, greater floor area ratio, and/or residential uses, on a case-by-case basis. This action can be manifested in the requirement of a Conditional Use Permit approved by City Council (with recommendation from the Planning Commission), and the establishment of specific criteria for site planning and superior design quality. The amendments will be considered for applications within the Economic Development Target sites within the Downtown Specific Plan Area, and the areas currently zoned R-4 (High Density Residential) and C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) that are within the Belmont Station area - See Exhibit A attached.

### Additional Option

The City Council may also wish to consider applying the zoning code amendments to other commercially zoned areas (C-2, C-3, and C-4) along El Camino Real. The City Council should provide direction regarding this option.

### Environmental Review

An environmental review document will be prepared analyzing potential environmental impacts of the amount of new development that could be accommodated by the new regulations on the target sites identified by the Economic Development Strategy. It will not analyze a maximum build-out of all parcels within the Downtown Specific Plan area. The document will likely be a Mitigated Negative Declaration. While it is not anticipated that a full Environmental Impact Report will be required, a final determination will be made based on an initial study of potential impacts.

### Public Review Process

The following interviews, meetings, and public hearings are proposed as the public review process for the project.

#### **1. City Council Economic Development Subcommittee – Two Meetings**

- 1a. Discuss Options (*completed*)
- 1b. Present Analysis and Recommendations

**2. Bus Tour (*completed*).** Conduct a bus tour to Bay Area cities that offer good models of downtown and El Camino Real development. Include City Council members, Planning Commissioners, members of other boards and commissions, City staff, property owners, businesses, and the community.

**3. Initiate Amendments.** Staff will present the consideration of amending the Zoning Code and Downtown Specific Plan to City Council.

**4. Interview Stakeholders.** Interview key stakeholders to gather input and test out reactions to the proposed zoning changes. These would include Planning Commissioners, Board members, members of the City’s Visioning Committees, etc.

**5. Interview Property Owners.** Meet individually with target site property owners to tell them about the proposed increases in allowed development on their property. Describe the City’s long-term interest in facilitating redevelopment, and even developing a public/private partnership if appropriate.

**6. Community Meeting.** Hold a community meeting to present the proposals. Invite public input and give dates of upcoming public hearings on the item. Include the Planning Commission

members, or have them host the community meeting.

**7. City Council Meeting.** Review and discuss full proposal of planning document amendments.

**8. Planning Commission Public Hearing.**

**9. City Council Public Hearing.**

Economic Development Bus Tour – September 15, 2007

As discussed above, one of the completed tasks was a bus tour conducted on 9/15/07 to assess downtown development of other peninsula cities. By all accounts, the tour was a success and tonight's action seeks to seize upon the momentum of the bus tour in moving forward with the initiation of above-described land use policy amendments. Attached to this staff report is a summary memo from Dyett & Bhatia and an appendix of tour comments (See Attachment C).

**General Plan/Vision Statement**

Approval of this matter is consistent with the General Plan and Vision Statement.

**Fiscal Impact**

Consultant Services for Dyett & Bhatia work efforts and deliverables have been appropriately funded to complete the *Public Review Process* tasks described above.

**Public Contact**

This matter was placed on the agenda and posted as required by the California Government Code.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Council adopt the attached Resolution directing initiation of land use policy amendments for the Economic Development Target Sites and the Downtown Specific Plan.

**Alternatives**

1. Provide guidance to staff regarding an alternative course of action regarding the land use policy amendments for the Economic Development Target Sites and the Downtown Specific Plan.
2. Take no action.

**Attachments**

- A. Economic Development Target Sites & Downtown Specific Plan Area Exhibit Map
- B. Resolution of the City Council of the City of Belmont directing initiation of land use policy amendments for the Economic Development Target Sites and the Downtown Specific Plan
- C. Bus Tour Summary Memo & Appendix of Comments – Dyett & Bhatia – October 2, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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Carlos de Melo  
Community Development Director

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Jack R. Crist  
City Manager

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***PLEASE NOTE:*** Attachments A & C are not included as part of this document. Please contact the Community Development Department at (650) 595-7417 for more information on viewing these attachments.

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT INITIATING  
LAND USE POLICY AMENDMENTS FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
TARGET SITES AND THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Belmont City Council desires to implement a work program and public review process schedule in concert with the initiation and review/assessment of land use policy amendments for the Economic Development Target Sites and the Downtown Specific Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, a companion purpose of the Economic Development Target Site Strategy is to clarify the vision for the City's downtown village corridor that ultimately better facilitates developer negotiations and project implementation; and,

**WHEREAS**, completion of the land use amendment process is paramount to City General Plan & Vision Statement goals for economic/redevelopment and revitalization of the City's downtown village corridor.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Belmont hereby directs initiation of Economic Development Target Site and Downtown Specific Plan land use policy amendments for the City of Belmont.

\* \* \* \* \*

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a special meeting thereof held on October 9, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

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MAYOR of the City of Belmont