

**Date:** September 14, 2011

**To:** Planning Commissioners

**Subject:** **Ad Hoc Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force**

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At its September 6, 2011 meeting, the City Council approved the formation of an 11-member ad hoc Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force to develop a set of guidelines addressing key elements in creating a positive and responsible environment for Downtown vitality. The Task Force is comprised of two members from the City Council, two members from the Planning Commission, two members appointed by the Pleasanton Downtown Association Board of Directors, and five at-large Pleasanton residents. Additional information on the Task Force is presented in detail in the City Council agenda report, attached as Exhibit A.

The Planning Commission is now being asked to select two of its members to serve on this Task Force. Appointments to the Task Force will be ratified at the October 18, 2011 City Council meeting, with the seven-month process projected to start soon thereafter and completed by May 2012.

September 6, 2011  
Economic Development

**TITLE: APPROVE A PROCESS FOR COORDINATING PARTICIPATION ON AN AD HOC DOWNTOWN HOSPITALITY GUIDELINES TASK FORCE**

**SUMMARY**

The City Council is being asked to consider and approve a process for coordinating participation on an ad hoc Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force. This task force will develop a set of guidelines that addresses key elements in creating a positive and responsible environment for downtown vitality, including consistency in hours of operation for venues, allowance of indoor and outdoor music, and acceptable noise levels.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the formation of an 11 member ad hoc Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force comprised of two members from the City Council, two members from the Planning Commission, two members appointed by the Pleasanton Downtown Association Board of Directors, and five Pleasanton residents to carry out the task as set forth in this report. City Council and Planning Commission representatives will be selected from their body's members. The Pleasanton Downtown Association Board of Directors will appoint two representatives from among its membership. The Pleasanton residents will be selected through the City's normal application and selection process, whereby the Mayor and each City Council member make one selection to the task force.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

While the process is being lead by City staff, there are some costs associated with developing the guidelines. Professional services related to reviewing and defining noise levels along with costs related to preparing for and holding the public meetings should not exceed \$22,500 and funding is provided in the Planning Department's 2011/12 FY Budget.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2010, the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA) board of directors contracted with the Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) to host a workshop describing a model for how communities can successfully incorporate hospitality venues and activities to enhance the economic vitality of downtown districts. At the PDA's invitation, the workshop brought together 30 people from various stakeholder groups affected by downtown activity, including restaurant owners, residents, downtown property owners and employees, and city staff from the Community Development, Economic Development and Police departments.

The discussion was framed by the RHI model which identifies six key elements to be considered:

- **Public safety** – What police and other practices are most effective to convey a sense of safety and order to visitors?
- **Music and entertainment** – What rules and regulations will encourage opportunity for music venues and entertainment while minimizing conflict with nearby residents?
- **Multi-use sidewalk** – What incentives and rules will entice public art, sidewalk benches, street entertainers, and an active street life, day and night?
- **Quality of life** – What practices are effective to control unnecessary noise, trash, litter and nuisance of all kind?
- **Transportation** – How to promote pedestrian friendly streets and provide opportunity for safe transportation home for people who need it?
- **Venue safety and security** – How can the venue owners, police and the downtown community collaborate to assure that patrons are genially channeled into appropriate behavior to each other, serving staff, neighbors and police?

After the initial workshop, PDA reconvened these participants, and invited interested community members, to brainstorm issues and ideas related to each of these six areas. Each of the six subgroups then vetted and narrowed its idea list, and researched concepts for additional discussion. These group proposals were then presented and further developed at a third stakeholder meeting, resulting in a list of priorities for each of the six elements. The collection of these tasks was then reviewed and prioritized by the PDA and outlined in the PDA's March 2011 Downtown Hospitality Plan document.

Implementation of the Downtown Hospitality Plan is one of the four priority items the PDA submitted to the City Council for consideration to be included in the Council's 2011-2012 priorities. The Council acknowledged the intent of the Downtown Hospitality Plan – to ensure a socially and economically vibrant downtown by fostering a variety of daytime and nighttime activities and venues in a safe and welcoming atmosphere – and did include it on its priority list. As noted in their discussion, the Council members wanted the City to take the lead role on a specific item contained in the plan: exploration of a "downtown hospitality district" with the PDA's active participation. To do this, staff is recommending the creation of an ad hoc task force to review relevant downtown issues and to develop a set of guidelines for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council. It is envisioned that these guidelines will bring a measure of

standardization by which to review projects proposed for downtown, while acknowledging the potential for modifications to address site-specific issues.

## **PUBLIC PROCESS**

In recent years, the City Council has developed a model for using ad hoc committees to achieve desired outcomes; most recent examples are the Housing Element Update Task Force and the Hacienda Design Guidelines Task Force. This model of City and public collaboration has served well to address the issue in a timely manner while allowing for a participatory community process.

### **Task Force Composition**

Staff is recommending – with support from the Pleasanton Downtown Association – the City Council approve the formation of an 11 member ad hoc Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force comprised of two members from the City Council, two members from the Planning Commission, two members appointed by the Pleasanton Downtown Association Board of Directors, and five Pleasanton residents to carry out the task as set forth in this report. The City Council and Planning Commission representatives will be selected from their respective memberships. The Pleasanton Downtown Association Board of Directors will select its two representatives. The Pleasanton residents will be selected through the City's normal application and selection process, whereby the Mayor and each City Council member make one selection to the task force. It is important to note the inclusion of residents on this task force, and is suggested that these five at-large appointees represent a mix of neighbors adjacent to the downtown as well as residents who live throughout the community.

Coordination of the Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force will be shared by staff in the City's Economic Development and Community Development Departments. Senior Planners Robin Giffin and Steve Otto will facilitate the task force's efforts with direction and involvement of Economic Development Director Pamela Ott and Community Development Director Brian Dolan.

### **Task Force Focus**

The task force's discussions will be focused on a few key topics: consistency in hours of operation for evening venues, allowance of indoor and outdoor music, and acceptable noise levels, although other topics may be identified for current or future consideration. While the task force will look to the Downtown Specific Plan as a reference point for community's vision for the downtown district, it is not intended that this task force will amend the specific plan. Rather, a review of the Downtown Specific Plan with particular attention to guidelines for historic preservation will be planned for after these hospitality guidelines are adopted. As well, other issues may arise during the discussions; these will be evaluated for relevance to the focus of the task force and either incorporated into this guidelines process or deferred for consideration through a different process.

### **Schedule**

It is projected by City staff that this process can be started in late October and completed by May 2012, with monthly meetings of the task force with additional

meetings scheduled if needed. Appointments to the task force will be ratified at the October 18 City Council meeting. With the Council's approval of this process, advertising for the five resident representatives will begin immediately: September 7 through September 23, 2011.

Staff anticipates approximately six public meetings between October and March 2012. In addition, the process is intended to include one meeting before the PDA Board of Directors (March 2012) and Planning Commission (April 2012) before the draft is brought to the City Council for consideration in May 2012. In general, the public process should assure adequate opportunity for community involvement, input and support given the representation on the task force.

### **Budget**

While the facilitated process is being led by City staff, there are some costs associated with developing the guidelines. Specifically, as one of the key topics is noise levels, professional services related to defining acceptable noise levels will be engaged to provide background information and assist the task force in reviewing current noise specifications/limits. It is anticipated that the professional services related to noise could incur costs up to \$15,000. Upon the City Council's approval of this process, staff will prepare a Request for Proposals to select the noise consultant to meet the process timeline. Additional costs related to research, and preparing for and holding the public meetings are expected to be no more than \$7,500. Thus, the budget for this project should not exceed \$22,500 and funding is provided in the Planning Department's 2011/12 FY Budget.

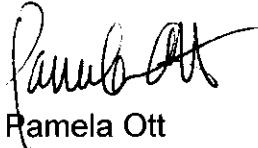
### **Role and Responsibilities**

As articulated for the aforementioned task force initiatives, to assure a successful and timely process it is important to define the role of the Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task force prior to the start of the process to ensure City expectations are being adequately addressed. To that end, staff has identified the Task Force's role and responsibilities as follows:

- ***Be informed, collaborative and solution oriented.*** Be committed to attending meetings, reading staff information, and being prepared to balance individual and minority interested for the overall good of the downtown and benefit to the community.
- ***Provide a forum for community discussion.*** Actively engage the community in a constructive dialogue around downtown issues, possible strategies and assist in educating the community on downtown matters. Be open to comment and various view points.
- ***Provide input on draft products.*** Review and provide input on information presented throughout the process including draft Downtown Hospitality Guidelines.

- **Keep your commission and/or board informed and up to date regarding Downtown Hospitality Guidelines Task Force activity.** (Councilmembers, commissioners and PDA board members). It is important that the City Council, the Planning Commission and the PDA Board of Directors are kept abreast of Task Force activities and leanings.
- **Advise and provide recommendations.** Providing recommendations to the City Council and Planning commission is important to ensure they receive guidance prior to making the policy decision needed to adopt the Downtown Hospitality Guidelines.

Submitted by:



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