General Plan Program
Citizens' Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting #5 – September 8, 2003

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the General Plan program held its fifth meeting on Monday, September 8, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room, 5th floor, City Hall. Attendees were as follows:

CAC Members
Chairman David Leonard
Surekha Acharya
General Stan Brown
Manuel Carrasco
Kimberly Davidson-Morgan
Michael Fine, Education Subcommittee Representative
George Flower
Barry Johnson
Maureen Kane
Morgan Keith
Colleen McBride, Arts Subcommittee Representative
David McNiel
Tom Pevehouse
Sally Silva
Kenneth Sutter
Mike Teer
Judy Teunissen
Bill Warkentin (BIA alternate)
Matt Webb, Magnolia/Market Subcommittee Representative

Other Attendees
Ian Davidson, Magnolia/Market Subcommittee
Wendy Eads and Alice Auck, University Neighborhood Association
Bill Galloway, Magnolia/Market Subcommittee
Conrad Guzkowski, City of Riverside Development Department

City Staff
Ken Gutierrez, Planning Director
Craig Aaron, Principal Planner
Diane Jenkins, AICP, Senior Planner
Patricia Brenes, Associate Planner
Robert Laag, Planning Intern

Consultant Team
Laura Stetson, Cotton/Bridges/Associates

Brian Boecking, Cotton/Bridges/Associates
John Cook, Cotton/Bridges/Associates
Jean D'Agostino, The Arroyo Group

Introduction
Chairman Leonard started the meeting at 6:00 p.m. He stated that the City Council had approved the CAC's request for additional time and meetings to allow the group to delve more deeply into land use issues. He indicated that the group was authorized to hold up to three additional meetings.

Minutes from 8/04/03 meeting
Chairman Leonard requested comments or changes to the minutes from the previous meeting. Hearing none, he entertained a motion on the minutes. Dave McNiel moved approval; Kimberly Davidson-Morgan seconded; the minutes were approved by acclamation.

Laura Stetson stated that at the end of tonight's meeting, she would go through a proposed schedule of the next several CAC meetings. She stated that John Cook would first make a presentation regarding the General Plan's vision foundation, followed by a presentation of major planning challenges and issues facing the City. After that, Jean D'Agostino would present the City's urban design framework.

Cook gave a short history of the "Visioning Riverside" document and its intended role as the foundation of the general plan update. He indicated that the consulting team had prepared a discussion paper extracting from "Visioning Riverside" and other City reports any vision statements that appeared relevant and useful to the General Plan update. Some of these fundamental visioning concepts included:

- Mixed-use development is appropriate in many different neighborhoods.
- Housing should be provided within walking distance of downtown.
- Higher-density development will complement and be a natural extension of the best existing single-family development; the city will not compromise on design quality.
- Preserve the character of neighborhoods.
- Increase homeownership.
- Increase opportunities for use of public transit.
- Say "no" to short-term business opportunities; allocate land to industries targeted in the Husing report – high-skilled, high paying jobs

Stetson then outlined several of the key planning issues/challenges facing the community:

- Accommodating anticipated population growth over next 20 years
- Protecting and preserving neighborhoods
- Identifying and creating opportunities for economic growth
- Projecting a positive City image at "gateways", particularly freeway locations
- Developing open space linkages and connections
- Addressing weak identity and definable edges of some neighborhoods
- Recycling of inappropriate land uses and underutilized properties to better use
- Identifying ways to enhance landscaping and streetscape amenities along City's strategies and historic corridors, particularly Magnolia and University Avenues

Stetson also discussed the General Plan map, which was posted on the wall. She stated that this map showed land use designations from the existing General Plan. She stated that members are encouraged to discuss particular areas where a change in General Plan designation might be appropriate.

D'Agostino next presented the urban design framework. D'Agostino presented a map of the City's key features: natural areas, major parks, major roadways, gateways, existing and potential activity centers, and others. She indicated at the start of her presentation that this framework was the context within which the consultant team has been working.

Following D'Agostino's presentation, Chairman Leonard stated that "Visioning Riverside" indicated that the community appears to have a tolerance for well-planned growth. Stetson added that many City neighborhoods are in good shape; the General Plan should preserve and enhance these areas. In other neighborhoods, however, some land use changes could be used to catalyze area improvement. She again encouraged CAC members to indicate areas in the City where General Plan land use areas might be so revised.

Chairman Leonard asked questions regarding community plans in general and the Arlington Community Plan in particular. Regarding the Arlington plan, he asked if the plan needed to be updated. D'Agostino responded that there was a possibility of extending the plan area and a mixed-use zone up to California Avenue. His second question was whether community plans would be integrated into the General Plan update. Stetson responded that many of these plans appeared to be out of date. She said that the draft General Plan update would retain the features from each plan that appeared appropriate and/or up-to-date. Chair Leonard stated that the mixed use boundary could be extended up to Challen Avenue.

Dave McNiel stated that the Arlington area has many historic homes, but none that are officially recognized. He asked if parts of this neighborhood could be designated as an historic district. Judy Teunissen disagreed, stating that the area is not that historic.

Stan Brown stated that better medical and educational facilities and infrastructure were essential to helping the community attract more affluent residents. He said the City should plan for medical infrastructure aggressively.

Bill Warkentin said that the General Plan could distinguish between infrastructure provided by government agencies and by the private sector. He stated that marking locations for private infrastructure, such as medical facilities, on the General Plan map would preclude market forces from selecting a location. He also stated that if the group was going along with the visioning statement that every residential neighborhood should have a park and/or community center, such features need to be identified on the Urban Design Framework map.

Chairman Leonard stated that the area between 3rd Street at the I-215 freeway, currently used for auto dismantling area, could be a good candidate for a change in land use from industrial to commercial. He stated that this area has proximity to downtown and Metrolink. Mr. Warkentin stated that the area has great freeway access, but terrible arterial access, creating major bottlenecks. He agreed that the site is a good candidate for a land

use change, but that change would need to be accompanied by circulation improvements. He said that if the area intensified, it would be a great location for a transit station.

Mr. Warkentin continued, stating that there is a lot of developer interest in doing mixed use projects, even though they have had a reputation of being unusual and tough to finance. However, he stated that the City should resist being too specific about what the mix of uses any site should contain; that there is a need to let the market determine what will work on any given site. He also stated that there was a need to ensure adequate depth of space along Arlington for commercial development. Depth of a single lot would not provide adequate space for parking and other needed infrastructure. In response, Mr. McNiel stated that he was concerned that Mr. Warkentin's statement about "letting the market decide" would be interpreted to mean giving carte blanche to market forces. Mr. Warkentin responded in his opinion that there are many checks in the form of city reviews to prevent carte blanche approval.

Ms. Davidson-Morgan asked about the old Alpha-Beta shopping center in the University neighborhood. She asked if there was something that could be done here. She stated that a private school was looking to use the site, but the plans fell through. Wendy Eads stated that her association had been trying for years to get another grocery store in there. She said she had heard rumors that UCR would overtake the entire area. She stated that the community wants and needs a grocery store on this site. Barring that, she said her organization would like to see the site become a community center, because the neighborhood does not have one, despite its relatively large amount of high-density housing. She stated that she would object strongly to mixed use/more intense development on this site. Ken Gutierrez stated that a student housing project for the site was dropped, but indicated that the site could be redeveloped as Metrolink station. He stated that there were many possible future uses for this site, and felt that it was a perfect spot for a mixed use development.

Chair Leonard asked to discuss the northern part of the Arlanza neighborhood. He stated that there were many undeveloped properties in the area and that the overall appearance of the area was not positive. Director Gutierrez stated that the area's "semi-rural" character had been the subject of debate many years ago; many indicated that it was important for the City to retain an area which would have lots sufficiently large for animal keeping purposes. He added that he would like to get opinions regarding potential land use changes from people who live in that part of the City. Mr. Warkentin stated that the typical lot size in this area, 20,000 square feet, made potential reuse awkward. Ms. Eads stated that conditions in this area sounded like more of a code enforcement problem and that it is unfair to characterize the area as blighted solely because of its semi-rural status. Maureen Kane added that General Plan should not rule out the different life styles Riverside now affords. She stated that she would rather have code enforcement make sure that places are up to code instead of removing the semi-rural designation. She stated that in time, this area could resemble the Greenbelt in rural feel and character. Mike Teer stated that communities surrounding the City might be less eager to be annexed to Riverside if they perceive that annexation means major change in the community's character.

Ms. Stetson added to the earlier discussion of supermarkets. She stated that she has seen supermarket closure to be a frequent concern in different cities, usually due to industry trends favoring market consolidation. She stated that it is very difficult to lure supermarkets

to a particular site unless the site meets very specific industry criteria (size of property, nearby population, traffic patterns, etc.).

CAC members then discussed a number of different sites for potential focus in the General Plan update process. Sites included:

- The area near I-215 and Hunter Business Park
- Tyler Avenue north of the Galleria: what function should this area serve?
- Estate lots along Alessandro – south side, just north of March AFB (SOI area)
- Five Points: A representative from La Sierra University, at the Education Subcommittee meeting on September 4th, indicated excitement about cooperative planning with city, opportunities to do something that would be symbiotic with students
- The Sears property
- Pine Shopping Center and immediate environs
- Arlanza: this neighborhood lacks a community center
- 3rd Street east to Chicago – underpass needed?
- Old Chinatown (along Tequesquite near cemetery)
- Brockton Arcade area

Director Gutierrez stated that it appeared that in limited circumstances, parts of the community appeared to embracing higher density development. Ms. Eads added that to her, unlimited sprawl is worse than higher density. Mr. Warkentin stated that density is less of a factor of a project's success than adequate code enforcement and good property management.

Chair Leonard asked that for the next meeting, the consulting team prepare detailed maps of the areas that were discussed. Ms. Stetson stated that she would do that. She stated that the subject matter for the next several CAC meetings appeared to be as follows:

September 29	More discussion of land use in particular areas
October 6	Finish discussion of land use in particular areas; discuss disposition of sphere of influence
October 27	Circulation: background discussion

Ms. Stetson indicated that it was not certain if there would be a November CAC meeting; if so, it would possibly be on November 17. She stated that following that last November meeting, the consulting team would need time to draft the land use and circulation plan and would return to meet with the CAC in March.

Following this discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Next meeting: **Monday, September 29, 2003, 6:00 p.m.**
Location: Mayor's Ceremonial Room, 7th floor of City Hall

Note: The CAC meetings for October 6 and October 27 are scheduled to be held at the Fairmont Park Boathouse.