

MEMORANDUM

DATE August 7, 2017
TO Livermore City Council and Downtown Steering Committee
FROM David Early and Carey Stone
SUBJECT Draft Downtown Public Engagement Plan

This Public Engagement Plan describes tools and strategies to solicit input from Livermore residents and business leaders on what types of downtown improvements should occur on City-owned land in downtown Livermore.

The Public Engagement Plan includes two main components:

- **Public Outreach** intended to “get the word out” about the process, and
- **Multiple Channels for Participation** to allow as many members of the public as possible to learn about the downtown and provide input on downtown development alternatives.

These two components are described in sections 5 and 7 of this memo. The remaining sections of the Public Engagement Plan describe the objectives and goals of the outreach process, target audience for the Public Engagement Plan, methods to engage underserved communities and youth, the public input process, and the final synthesis of the results of the public engagement when it is complete.

1. Objectives and Goals

The desired outcome for the downtown public engagement process is to get feedback on what improvements should occur on the downtown catalyst sites from a wide range of Livermore residents and business owners, reflecting the range of opinions within the community as well as the city’s demographics. The Public Engagement Plan’s primary goals are:

- Utilize a range of outreach tools that makes it easy for community members to provide input.
- Solicit input from a greater range of community members than in previous efforts.
- Involve underrepresented and marginalized communities in the process.
- Provide frequent updates on input received and the project schedule.
- Devise a process that focuses on reaching a decision as early as possible about a downtown hotel.

The outreach tools identified in section 7 present a series of strategies to achieve these goals.

2. Target Audience

The target audience for the Public Engagement Plan includes everyone who lives or works in Livermore, with a particular goal of engaging the broad community who might not otherwise participate in civic engagement processes. This Public Engagement Plan presents a variety of outreach and input strategies, with the understanding that multiple avenues for both outreach and input will provide greater exposure and participation.

3. Engaging Underserved Communities

A major goal of this Public Engagement Plan is to ensure that all segments of the community have the opportunity to participate in the outreach process. It will be important to target outreach opportunities at traditionally underrepresented groups, including disadvantaged/low-income communities for whom language and cultural differences may preclude or discourage involvement. In addition, focusing outreach opportunities on Livermore's youth will be important to understand the future and current needs of the next generation of Livermore residents.

To engage underserved communities, the City will implement a variety of strategies that can be applied to all forms of both "getting the word out" and "public input channels" that are described below:

- **Special Outreach.** It will be important to perform in-person outreach at local venues where underserved communities congregate, including churches, ethnic markets, and other community gathering places. Specifically, City staff will post flyers and solicit opinions at Contreras Market and Consuelito Market Carniceria as well as before or after the Spanish-language Sunday mass at St. Michael Catholic Church.
- **Ethnic Media.** The City will place an ad and news article about the project in ethnic newspapers such as El Observador, a bilingual weekly newspaper that serves the nine Bay Area counties. The ad and news article will alert readers about the project and direct them to the project website for more information. In addition, the City will place an ad with a Spanish radio station such as KBRG or KKSF.
- **Translation and Interpretation.** All or most materials will be translated into Spanish and Spanish interpretation will be available at all meetings where Spanish speakers may attend¹.
- **Childcare.** Members of underserved communities often have young children, and lack resources to find care for these children if they want to engage in a civic process. Therefore,

¹ At the April 27 Steering Committee meeting, a Steering Committee member suggested that there might also be a need for translation and interpretation into languages from the Indian subcontinent. To determine the extent of this need, PlaceWorks called the Livermore Shiva-Vishnu Temple to ask about the congregation's language preferences. We learned that there are too many languages spoken by congregants to allow for translation into a single Indian language. Moreover, we were told that the vast majority of congregants also speak English, so translation into Indian languages is probably not necessary.

events will take place at child-friendly venues with fun side activities that kids can undertake so parents can give feedback without distraction. In addition, childcare may be available at select meetings or events as a means to serve underserved communities.

- **Food.** Offering substantial food can be a draw to bring people to a meeting or event, particularly if they are coming straight from work or just need an impetus to attend. Some of the most successful meetings involving underserved communities began with serving a full (but simple) meal. Therefore, all neighborhood meetings and public workshops will provide food.
- **Raffles.** Giving away goods and services through a raffle can be an effective way to entice community members to attend a planning event, and can also provide advertising for merchants who donate prizes.

4. Engaging Youth

It will be important to emphasize not only engaging underserved communities, but also engaging Livermore's youth. The Public Engagement Plan includes several means to emphasize involvement, which include:

- **Social Media.** Since youth are particularly high users of social media, the social media strategy will be highly graphic and avoid planning jargon.
- **Pop-Up Events.** Events such as Back to School Night or school sports events will be particularly important as venues at which youth will be engaged at pop-up events, which are described in more detail in Section 7, below. This Public Engagement Plan will be updated with specific dates for pop-up events once the schools release their 2017-18 school calendars.
- **Class Credit for Participation.** The City will encourage teachers to give class credit to youth who participate in a downtown planning event.
- **Livermore Area Youth Advisory Commission.** The City will coordinate with the Livermore Area Youth Advisory Commission to solicit ideas and comments about how to engage youth and hear what issues are important to Livermore's younger demographic.

5. Getting the Word Out

To ensure the community is aware of the downtown planning process and to spread the word about project updates, the City will utilize:

- **Project Website.** The recently created project website (yourlivermore.org) will be maintained and expanded to provide background information, updates, and information about how to become involved.
- **Social Media.** The City has already reserved Facebook and Twitter accounts for the project, and Instagram, nextdoor.com, and Patch.com will also be added. Staff and consultants will make regular posts on these accounts to update the public about the project. Visibility will be "boosted" through paid advertising on these sites.

- **On-Site Display Boards.** Display boards will be erected on the project sites on both sides of Livermore Avenue to provide background information and a link to yourlivermore.org.
- **Library Display.** A display board will also be installed at the Livermore Public Library.
- **Downtown Kiosk.** A display board will also be installed in the Downtown kiosk.
- **Posters and Flyers.** Posters and flyers will be printed, posted in shop windows and distributed at stores and restaurants.
- **Earned Media.** Press releases and interviews could lead to publication of unpaid news stories in *The Independent* and *East Bay Times*.
- **Paid Print Advertising.** The City will place paid advertisements in *The Independent* and *East Bay Times*.

6. Public Input Process

The main focus of this Public Engagement Plan is to gather public input regarding potential downtown development, with an emphasis on review and evaluation of the alternatives being developed by the Steering Committee.

In order to properly review and evaluate the alternatives, participants in the process will complete three steps:

- **Education.** Participants will learn about development issues in the downtown, based on a summary of key points of information that have been presented at Steering Committee meetings #3, #4, and #5. When possible, this information will be presented as a slideshow similar to the presentation David Early gave to the City Council on June 12 and to the Steering Committee on June 15. When a slideshow is not the appropriate avenue to distribute the background information, the same information will be summarized on poster boards and/or handouts. In addition, the project website includes multi-media presentations of the available background information. The website will be updated as new data becomes available.
- **Alternatives Review and Evaluation.** Participants will learn about the alternatives developed by the Steering Committee and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- **Comment, Selection and Refinement.** Participants will have a chance to comment on the alternatives, select their preferred alternative from those presented, and/or refine one or more alternatives to show their preferences.

This three-step process will be the same for all participants in the process, regardless of the “channel” they use. The public input “channels” are described below.

The City will track the number of people that participate in the outreach process and collect voluntary, self-reported demographic data to measure whether the outreach approach is successfully securing input from all segments of the population.

7. Public Input “Channels”

This section describes five separate public input “channels” that will be implemented as part of the public engagement process. Providing multiple channels is intended to give members of the public multiple opportunities to participate, thereby increasing the number of people involved in the process.

Downtown Tours

Downtown tours will allow participants to see first-hand the issues and opportunities of the downtown sites. Participants will have the option of joining an organized group, or taking a tour on their own using a handheld device. As part of the tour, participants will learn the background information about the plan, see the alternatives, comment on them, select among them, and refine them as desired. The downtown tour will be offered twice: once during a weeknight and once during a weekend day.

Timing: August - September 2017

Neighborhood District Meetings

At Steering Committee Meeting #2, a Steering Committee member suggested hosting neighborhood meetings to share information and hear ideas. Although nextdoor.com identifies 56 neighborhoods in Livermore, PlaceWorks recommends merging these identified neighborhoods into districts and holding five district meetings in various parts of the city (see Attachment 1 for a map of the neighborhood districts). Each district meeting will follow a similar agenda, with a chance for participants to learn the background information about the downtown. These meetings will begin with an open house type setting where participants can become familiar with key background information. After a brief presentation that provides an overview of the project, neighbors will break into small groups to review the alternatives, comment on them, select among them, and refine them as desired. Following the small group discussions, everyone will reconvene to the large group to hear the thoughts and ideas of their neighbors. Participants at the neighborhood meetings will be asked to identify where they live or work, but the meetings will not be restricted to those residents/employees who live and work within the district.

To advertise these meetings, the City will utilize a concerted outreach approach that may include some combination of: direct mailings, paid advertising on nextdoor.com and Facebook, utility bill inserts, and/or targeted mailings to HOAs and neighborhood groups.

Timing: September through October 2017

Pop-up Events

Steering Committee members emphasized the need to go out to the community to solicit input. The Public Engagement Plan includes a total of 10 “pop-up” events at various community activities. Each pop-up event will be structured to allow people to stop by while attending the main event. While visiting the pop-up station, participants will be able to learn background information about the downtown, see the alternatives, comment on them, select among them, and refine them as desired.

They will also obtain a link to the on-line engagement website described below if they prefer to participate on line.

Pop up events may occur at:

- Sunday Downtown Farmers' Market
- Thursday Downtown Farmers' Market (Before it ends for the season on October 5)
- Taste of Downtown
- Witches Night Out
- Places of worship, including St. Michael Church and the Livermore Shiva-Vishnu Temple
- Livermore library.
- Lions' Club, Rotary Club and other service organizations.
- P.T.A. meetings
- Livermore Chamber of Commerce and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce meeting
- Athletic events such as soccer games
- Back to School nights
- Las Positas College

Timing: August through October 2017

On-Line Engagement

In addition to live, person-to-person interactions at tours, meetings, public workshops and pop-up events, the City will augment the project website (yourlivermore.org) to allow the public to engage in the downtown planning process via the internet. The project website will be augmented to include online engagement tools to allow participants to learn background information about the downtown, see the alternatives, comment on them, select among them, and refine them as desired. PlaceWorks will use its on-line civic engagement platform to add a module on the website that allows viewers to view the alternatives, comment on them, modify them, or build their own solutions for downtown development.

Timing: August through end of project.

Community Workshops

Community workshops provide an opportunity for face-to-face interaction among community members who hold a range of opinions and expertise. The Steering Committee requests that the City hold two community-wide workshops, which would present the same information at both workshops. The workshop will include an explanation of key background information, introduction of the alternatives, and provide an opportunity for comment, selection and refinement of the alternatives.

Given that the City will be holding a series of neighborhood district meetings, it might seem redundant to hold a community workshop. However, the citywide workshop provides an opportunity for those who could not attend their neighborhood district meeting and/or for those who prefer a citywide setting. The City will advertise this workshop using some combination of the outreach tools identified for the neighborhood district meetings.

Timing: September through October 2017

8. Final Synthesis

After all selected public input channels have been implemented and input has been garnered, PlaceWorks recommends that staff and consultants summarize all input received in a single report. If appropriate, the consultant team will also create a draft preferred alternative that synthesizes public comments received.

The Steering Committee requests that this report be presented to the Steering Committee for review and recommendation, and then forwarded to the City Council for final action.

Timing: Steering Committee Meeting in November 2017 and City Council meeting late November/early December 2017