

City of Sulson City – Community Development Department

2013 PDA PLANNING GRANT

Update of the Downtown Waterfront Specific Plan

The Amended Downtown Waterfront Specific Plan (DWSP) 1999 still represents a good overall framework for future development of the PDA. However, given the time that has passed since it was created, it is dated and does not consistently address current goals for PDA, especially related to commuter opportunities. A previous FOCUS grant allowed the City to explore what the development community considered feasible future development in the PDA. Armed with this understanding, the City would like to update the DWSP to include the development opportunities identified through the FOCUS grant process and to serve as a PDA Plan in accordance with MTC guidelines. In addition, the DWSP update process will involve working closely with and collaborating with the City of Fairfield to address mutual land use and transportation planning issues, such as enhanced connectivity between the two downtown areas.

The City of Sulson City has already undertaken several planning efforts related to the PDA including:

- Downtown Waterfront Specific Plan (DWSP) – adopted 1999
- RDA Implementation plan – (no longer relevant with the demise of RDA)
- Completion of a TOD study for the PDA
- Completion of a parking study in the PDA
- Certification of a Housing Element that identifies locations for downtown housing
- Senior Housing Feasibility Study
- FOCUS grant-funded Development Feasibility Analysis

In addition, a General Plan Update (GPU) and Zoning Ordinance Update (ZOU) are currently underway. However, due to funding constraints, updating the DWSP is not included in the scope.

The goals of the DWSP update include:

- Create a plan for a functional PDA.
- Develop consistency in land use and policy among the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and DWSP.
- Create policies and land use plans that are consistent with sustainable communities guidelines.
- Complete programmatic environmental review.

The scope for preparing an update to the DWSP includes 11 planning elements:

- 1) PDA Profile – A brief initial report detailing demographic and socio-economic characteristics, as well as transit-travel patterns and use will be prepared and will inform the remaining elements.
- 2) Community Involvement Strategy – An outreach strategy, including outreach tools, will be developed. An outline describing its use in plan development will be prepared and included.
- 3) Alternatives Analysis – Many of the areas within the existing DWSP area have been through an alternatives analysis during Specific Plan preparation. However, there are several significant vacant sites in the PDA and alternatives analyses for these sites will be prepared. In addition, analysis of potentially incompatible land uses will be prepared.
- 4) Market Demand Analysis – Both the TOD Study, prepared in 2009, and the Development Feasibility Study, prepared in 2012, considered market demand in specific locations. An expanded analysis of

future market demand for higher density housing (at all levels of affordability), retail commercial, and service commercial uses will be prepared.

- 5) Affordable Housing Strategy – While the City's Housing Element has already considered and identified affordable housing opportunities in the PDA, and the General Plan Update will be reviewing the Housing Element for consistency with updated General Plan land uses and policies, a more in-depth analysis of existing housing stock, range of housing choices, prevention of potential displacement, and strategies to meet affordable housing goals will be included.
- 6) Multi-modal Access & Connectivity – Analysis of and strategies to improve multi-modal connections among all transportation modes, especially connectivity to the Suisun-Fairfield train depot, along with access and safety will be included. Since it is anticipated that the adjacent City of Fairfield Downtown South PDA will be preparing a PDA Specific Plan concurrently with the City of Suisun City's, there is exciting potential for exploring methods to increase connectivity between the PDA's.
- 7) Pedestrian-friendly Design Standards – The City's General Plan Update, zoning code update, along with the development of this PDA/DWSP update will address building, open space, and street design standards that focus on enhancement of the walking environment and improved pedestrian comfort and convenience. The City also anticipates receiving a combination of funding through the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) e.g. OBAG funding, in the immediate future, to address safety and security of transit patrons in and around the station area, along with other station area improvements. These improvements will be coordinated with vision, strategies, and policies in the PDA/DWSP to maximize benefits.
- 8) Accessible Design – The STA funding mentioned under 7), above, will address many current issues of accessibility at the station. Additional accessibility analysis will include how to make Suisun City's PDA a tourism destination for the disabled, the feasibility of adapted housing for the disabled in proximity to the station, and connectivity with Travis AFB to determine how multi-modal transit can help meet the needs of disabled veterans accessing services at the AFB.
- 9) Parking Analysis – An analysis of existing and future parking demand/supply, parking policies, and support for alternative modes will be prepared.
- 10) Infrastructure Development & Budget – An analysis of future public infrastructure, in addition to that prepared in conjunction with the City's GPU, to serve existing and future needs, along with financing strategies and mechanisms, will be prepared.
- 11) Implementation Plan & Financing Strategy – A list of measurable actions detailed in the plan, along with an estimated timeline for implementation, including adoption of new policies, a CIP for the PDA/DWSP, and identification of priorities will be completed.

Environmental Review:

In addition, the City will complete the required CEQA review for the Specific Plan update. Staff anticipates that the Specific Plan will require the preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), given that the Specific Plan update will be consistent with the City's General Plan Update, including the Housing Element. Technical studies required to meet the requirements of CEQA may include traffic and infrastructure analysis.

Desired Outcomes:

The process will result in the creation of a framework for the development and redevelopment of the Downtown Waterfront PDA, including urban-scale pedestrian and transit-oriented residential uses, retail and service commercial uses, and visitor-serving development. The City intends to expand the current DWSP area to be consistent with the current PDA boundaries by including property that is adjacent to the Suisun-Fairfield train depot, north of Highway 12. What happens in this area will affect what happens in the rest of the downtown waterfront. By including this property in the DWSP area, policies can be designed to ensure that its future

development is beneficial to the rest of the downtown area and consistent with station area planning goals. This will help the City achieve its goal of a lively waterfront community.

The City's General Plan and Zoning Code are currently being updated through a separate locally-funded consultant contract. The existing Downtown Waterfront Specific Plan (DWSP) includes policies to protect important Suisun City assets such as Old Town, historic resources, the waterfront, the train station and, to a certain degree, destination tourism uses such as the hotel. Since the downtown waterfront is a synergistic area, what happens in the residential area on the east side of the basin can affect what happens on the west side of Main Street. Specific uses that have been identified with near-term potential for development include senior housing and a hotel/destination restaurant/conference center. By utilizing policies consistent with the PDA Planning Program development guidelines, the PDA can emerge as a unique and vibrant Transit Town Center.

Draft Proposed Budget:

Budget Item	Primary Responsibility	Projected Cost
STA Administrative Expenses	STA	8,150
PDA Goals and Vision	City staff/Consultant	10,000
Land Use/Market Feasibility	City staff/Consultant	30,000
Policy Development	City staff/Consultant	15,000
Design Guideline Development	City staff/Consultant	15,000
Circulation/Streetscape	City staff/Consultant	15,000
Infrastructure Analysis	City staff/Consultant	15,000
Implementation Tools	City staff/Consultant	20,000
CEQA	Consultant	55,968
Total Budget		\$184,118
City Cash and In-Kind Contributions		-21,118
Total Grant Request	STA/MTC	\$163,000

Proposed Tentative Schedule:

February 2014	RFP Developed and Issued
March/April 2014	Consultants Selected by City
April 2014	Project Kickoff
July 2014	Complete PDA Profile/Prepare Community Involvement Strategy
August 2014	Update Market Demand Analysis/Prepare Vision and Land Use Alternatives
September 2014	City Review of Vision and Land Use Alternatives
October 2014	Public Outreach - Vision and Land Use Alternatives
November - December 2014	Refinement of Vision and Land Use Alternatives
December 2014 - August 2015	Prepare Remaining Specific Plan Components
August 2015	Public Outreach
September 2015	Refinement of DWSP Amendment
October - February 2016	Finalization of Plan Concepts and CEQA Review
March - May 2016	Adoption of Amended DWSP