

## **NORTH FREMONT SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PROGRAM**

### **What is a Specific Plan?**

Under California law, local governments can use Specific Plans as tools to plan for needed revitalization and change, both in existing neighborhoods and new development areas. Specific Plans provide greater planning and design guidance than can be included in a General Plan, and they allow local governments the ability to address complex land ownership patterns and infrastructure needs. Specific Plans can jump-start new development in depressed areas, and can ensure that the public gets the quality it desires in any new development.

The vision of the North Fremont Specific Plan is to create a livable community and a revitalized destination point on North Fremont Street for residents and visitors. It will provide guidance for the development of transit-oriented, mixed-use development along the North Fremont Street corridor, as directed by the City of Monterey General Plan goals and policies. This project will be accomplished through creative and direct community engagement.

### **North Fremont Specific Plan Project Area**

The project area includes the North Fremont Street corridor, which extends from Highway 1 to the west, to Canyon Del Rey (Highway 218) to the east (Figure 1: Planning Area). The project area divides the Casanova Oak Knoll neighborhood from the Del Monte Grove neighborhood, and connects Monterey and Seaside. It includes a five block stretch that supports an eclectic mix of businesses, including commercial retail and services, hotels and motels, restaurants, offices, medical facilities, public utilities and public land, including the Monterey Fairgrounds. The area has a small town-urban setting.

### **Project Definition**

Similar to a General Plan, the contents of a Specific Plan to a degree are defined by State law. The legal requirements for a Specific Plan include the following:

- Text and diagrams showing the distribution, location and extent of all land uses, including open space.
- Proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy and other essential facilities needed to support the land uses.
- Standards and guidelines for development, and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- Program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures.
- Statement of Specific Plan's relationship to the General Plan.

A new General Plan for the City was adopted in 2005. The North Fremont Area Plan was last updated and adopted in September 2000 and requires updating to better implement General Plan goals, policies and programs regarding the redevelopment of the commercial corridor as a mixed use neighborhood. These plans can be viewed on the City's website at: <http://www.monterey.org/planningengineering/plans.html>.

The North Fremont Specific Plan will replace the North Fremont Area Plan with a more comprehensive strategy for the enhancement of this commercial corridor as a mixed-use neighborhood. The Specific Plan will provide tools beyond the capabilities of an Area Plan in that the Specific Plan will provide specific development standards and design guidelines, an inventory of existing and proposed improvements to the neighborhood's infrastructure, and an implementation strategy that addresses cost, financing, and fiscal impacts.

The North Fremont Specific Plan will include land use and circulation goals, policies, development standards, and design guidelines; and an infrastructure and financing plan that provides the framework for future development of the General Plan-designated mixed-use development corridor. Design standards and guidelines will provide specific design guidance for redevelopment and infill development that will embrace mixed use ideals.

A streetscape design plan is currently underway for the North Fremont Street corridor that follows the concept of complete streets, which are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. The streetscape design planning effort has involved the North Fremont Business Association, Monterey Salinas Transit (MST) staff, City staff, and adjacent neighborhood association representatives. Because North Fremont also functions as one of MST's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors, one challenging aspect of the plan has been to locate transit stations for the BRT vehicles within the planning area.

The North Fremont Specific Plan will direct the revitalization of the North Fremont Street corridor, creating a destination for community members and visitors and improving access for pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles. It will encourage these users to become patrons of businesses on North Fremont Street as well increase its accessibility for local residents and visitors.

## **2005 General Plan Goals**

Development of the North Fremont Specific Plan will be based on the City of Monterey General Plan goals to coordinate land use and transportation, improve options for alternative transit modes so that Monterey can be a City where people can circulate without cars. The General Plan supports the "Mixed Use Neighborhood" concept, which is a mix of residences, retail shops, services and jobs in close proximity. Mixed use neighborhoods are to be well served by transit and bicycle routes and have a welcoming pedestrian environment. The General Plan estimates that new development within the North Fremont Specific Plan Area will generate at a minimum 30% fewer automobile trips than the same amount of development elsewhere in the City.

General Plan goals that support the development of mixed use neighborhoods and the North Fremont Specific Plan goals include:

**General Plan Land Use Goal b.** Direct future population growth into mixed use neighborhoods. The City's goal is to create and nurture mixed use neighborhoods that: 1) Reduce automobile trips; 2) Improve the quality of the pedestrian experience; 3) Create walkable neighborhoods; 4) Provide more ownership opportunities; 5) Increase the stock of housing affordable to Monterey's work force; 6) Require high-quality design to complement Monterey's image; and 7) Improve neighborhood-oriented services.

**General Plan Land Use Policy b.1.** Create design concepts, development guidelines, and capital improvement programs for mixed use neighborhoods. Emphasize attractive pedestrian,

bicycle and transit access, which may require improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and various public way improvements. The City encourages owner occupied units, innovative site planning and tailoring the design and density to fit with the neighborhood. Mixed use developments are encouraged to be attractive in design, hide parking from the street, create a pleasant pedestrian environment, and provide a transition into the residential zones through good site planning and design.

**General Plan Land Use Program b.1.4.** North Fremont Street. Develop Mixed Use Neighborhood Guidelines for North Fremont Street in the North Fremont Street Area Plan. The plan will emphasize mixed use development, improved pedestrian experience and connections to the neighborhood, and bus transportation. Ownership residential units are preferred. Building sites should provide the required parking or a shared parking plan be developed due to the limited supply of on-street parking and high traffic volumes along North Fremont Street. Guidelines should encourage pedestrian activity that will result in a safe and secure North Fremont Street. Guidelines should address impacts on adjacent residential areas.

**General Plan Circulation Goal b.** Apply land-use planning tools and strategies that support the city's circulation goals and direct growth to areas best served by alternative modes of transportation.

**General Plan Circulation Policy b.1.** Use land-use policies to concentrate development within walking distance of the local transit system to reduce the overall demand for travel and minimize the traffic impacts of development.

**General Plan Circulation Program b.1.1.** Develop criteria for transportation management fees for projects located within walking distance of the local transit system.

**General Plan Circulation Program b.1.2.** Encourage master plans that incorporate transit/pedestrian-oriented design (TOD/POD) standards for areas planned for development of mixed-use neighborhoods.

**General Plan Circulation Program b.1.3.** Require new projects to meet on-site parking standards for projects located outside of Parking Adjustment Districts.

**General Plan Circulation Policy b.3.** Encourage mixed-use development to maximize the shared use of on-site parking spaces.

**General Plan Circulation Policy b.4.** Incorporate retail, office, or residential community uses into the design of public parking.

**General Plan Circulation Goal c.** Provide a safe, efficient, well-maintained, and environmentally sound roadway system that supports equality of choice among all modes of transportation.

**General Plan Circulation Policy c.3.** Identify and implement street improvements to address high accident rates for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, even if such improvements result in increased traffic congestion.

**General Plan Circulation Program c.3.1.** Reduce unsafe conflict points on all major and minor arterial streets by avoiding trap lanes and providing left-turn lanes at intersections.

**General Plan Circulation Program c.3.2.** Place the highest priority on projects that reduce high accident rates.

**General Plan Circulation Program c.3.3.** Develop roadway safety improvement projects that result in self-enforcing conditions and require a minimum amount of signage in order to reduce driver confusion.

**General Plan Circulation Policy c.4.** Create and maintain a roadway system that is safe, unobtrusive, and easy to use for all modes of transportation.

**General Plan Circulation Program c.4.1.** Consider the needs of buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians when planning road improvements.

**General Plan Circulation Program c.6.6.** Carry the local transit routes on minor arterial streets.

**General Plan Circulation Policy g.6.** Improve the pedestrian environment along North Fremont Street

**General Plan Program g.6.1.** Prepare and implement a North Fremont Streetscape Study.

**General Plan Economic Goal d.** Encourage housing, including mixed use housing to meet the needs of business.

### **North Fremont Area Plan Policies**

The 2000 North Fremont Area Plan includes the following policies:

**Policy 1** Encourage Neighborhood and Resident-Serving Businesses to create a distinct business area identity, in contrast to the mix of incompatible businesses often found in strip commercial areas.

**Policy 2.** Encourage coordination between the hotels and Fairgrounds in order to increase the number of room nights, support the primary goal of improving neighborhood serving uses, and support improved appearance and maintenance.

**Policy 3.** Coordinate with other governmental agencies to improve east and west entrances to North Fremont Street.

**Policy 4.** Street design should continue to support access to businesses, traffic flow without encouraging excess speeds or bypass travel through adjoining residential neighborhoods.

**Policy 5.** Consider pedestrian and non-automobile circulation in transportation planning, street design, crosswalks, and traffic signal design.

**Policy 6.** Continue to pursue parking options that support Fairgrounds events.

**Policy 7.** Improve the overall appearance of the North Fremont Street area. Create the visual impact of a distinct commercial area as opposed to a typical strip commercial area.

**Policy 8.** Improve hotel appearance.

**Policy 9.** Encourage property maintenance to support the design standards creating a safe and high-quality commercial environment.

**Policy 10.** Establish a Business Improvement District to implement the programs in the Area Plan.

### **North Fremont Specific Plan Principles**

The North Fremont Specific Plan process will provide an opportunity to update the Area Plan policies to implement the General Plan goals outlined above. The following general principles address General Plan goals as well as mixed use objectives and will serve as a starting point for the development of the specific plan.

**Support the Economy.** Maintain, manage, and enhance the movement of goods and people to spur the economic development and growth, job creation, and trade.

North Fremont Street is a business district and is also a connecting point to Seaside. The North Fremont Street corridor supports the trucks and vans that service these businesses. Therefore, the free-flow of trucks and delivery vehicles is essential to business development. Improving the traffic flow of delivery trucks and customer traffic will be the first step in renewing economic vitality in the North Fremont Street Business District. Furthermore, by developing mixed-use guidelines, which allow for increased residential units, local business will benefit from increased patronization.

**Enhance Public Safety and Security.** Ensure the safety and security of people, goods, services, and information in all modes of transportation.

North Fremont Street serves mainly as a thoroughfare. The street's heavy vehicle traffic, cluttered sidewalks, and frequent driveways create unsafe conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. The complete street concept would alleviate these problems by adding a transit lane for bikers and creating pedestrian landscaping buffers and intersection bulb-outs, which would significantly shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians. The streetscape plan will also strive to decrease the number of driveways along North Fremont Street and direct parking and delivery access to side streets and alleyway accesses.

**Reflect Community Values.** Identify transportation solutions that balance and integrate community values with transportation safety and performance, and encourage public involvement in transportation decisions.

The values of the Monterey community, and specifically the North Fremont business district and adjacent Casanova Oak Knoll and Del Monte Grove residential neighborhoods, are central to designing future development and redevelopment and multi-modal commute options that meet the needs of the end users. Finding a balance between the needs of local businesses, local residents, commuter groups, tourists, and public transportation agencies will require solutions that are creative and well-vetted. This will only be possible if all stakeholders are represented; an important goal of the proposed planning process.

**Provide Convenient and Affordable Housing.** Encourage future development and redevelopment along North Fremont that is transit-oriented that is suitable for low-income households, consistent with SB 375 and the regional Sustainable Community Strategy.

The North Fremont Specific Plan area includes both vacant and underutilized lots with the capacity to contribute to the City's affordable housing goals. Most of the City's residential districts are built out and provide few opportunities for the construction of new affordable housing. Because the City of Monterey has a limited water supply, most of the City's recent affordable housing development has resulted from the redevelopment of underutilized sites in the commercial neighborhoods where high water uses are replaced with mixed use projects. The North Fremont Specific Plan will identify candidate sites that have development capacity and contain adequate water and for redistribution within a mixed use project that includes an affordable housing component.

## **Community Outreach**

The City of Monterey is fortunate in that its citizens care deeply about the City and actively participate in every planning process that involves their community. The scope of work for the project includes a public participation component that includes community workshops, team charrettes, focus groups, and innovative online and outreach tools. The success of the North Fremont Specific Plan as a livable/sustainable community strategy is entirely dependent on the support of the community it impacts. By creating opportunities for public involvement and community study, the stakeholders become the key factor in the project's successful development and implementation.

Project stakeholders for designing the North Fremont Specific Plan are varied and include representative groups from a wide range of economic, cultural and political backgrounds, including local business owners, adjacent residential area residents, and minority stakeholders (elderly citizens, tourists, and ethnic groups), who both live in the region and commute to the North Fremont business district for work. The project is intended to make North Fremont Street a destination for various user groups. In order to achieve this it is essential to include all interest groups early in the planning process. Intensification of development adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods is a sensitive topic that will be carefully analyzed to address potential impacts resulting from traffic, parking, and building height.

The methods of outreach described below will be used for the North Fremont Specific Plan and are designed to reach the project stakeholders in their everyday environment. Making them aware of the opportunity using different technologies and providing incentives to encourage attendance are also included.

Team Charrettes – Intensive work sessions combining the talents of the project team with residents and community members.

Community Workshops – Public gatherings with diverse stakeholder groups present. These will provide an opportunity for various interest groups to come together to learn about, and participate in, developing the project.

Online Survey and Outreach. An online survey and interactive project website will provide an opportunity for those unable to attend the workshops to participate and provide input to the planning process.

## **Project Implementation**

Implementation of the North Fremont Specific Plan will occur when new development is proposed. The intent of the Specific Plan is to provide clear direction for future development, thereby providing a property owner/developer with a certain confidence that designing a project consistent with the Specific Plan will facilitate the approval process.

Once the North Fremont Specific Plan is adopted by the City Council, the City will continue its outreach efforts and advertise the new plan as a tool for economic development as well as development of affordable housing.

The North Fremont Specific Plan will include an implementation chapter that provides a cost estimate for proposed public rights-of-way improvements and identification of potential funding sources for such improvements. Funding may include grants, assessment districts, or a combination thereof. This chapter will also include a recommended strategy to obtain the necessary funding to meet the project recommendations.

As the North Fremont Street corridor redevelops, the new mixed-use/transit-oriented vision will take shape. As more residential units are built, economic vitality will increase within the business district. Upon completion of North Fremont Street as a complete street, movement of people and goods will be smoother. The public transit lines will be more efficient and convenient, therefore increasing its attractiveness to its ridership. A dedicated bicycle lane will facilitate and encourage bicycle travel. Finally, landscaping and bulb-out intersection crossings will increase pedestrian safety.

## **NORTH FREMONT SPECIFIC PLAN WORK PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

### **Kickoff**

- Review/refine scope of work, timeline, roles and responsibilities, schedule.
- Develop, refine and customize the community outreach program. This will include advertisement strategies, format for each workshop, workshop exercises, and outreach to the Spanish speaking community.
- Review project needs/issues.
- Review data sources/information needs (GIS data, information on assessment districts, outreach contact information).
- Site visit.

### **Conduct Land Use and Infrastructure Inventory**

- Parcel base
- Land Use
- Commercial square feet
- Residential unit count
- Number of stories/Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
- Form
- Ownership
- Assessed value
- Infrastructure – need storm drainage from Ramona - east
- Water availability

### **Summarize existing conditions**

- Land Use
- Parcel dimensions
- Ownership patterns
- Infrastructure
- Subcommittee to review Existing Conditions and Workshop #1 agenda

### **Workshop – Issues and priorities and overall theme/architectural character**

- Workshop #1 will focus on identifying and prioritizing issues as well as educating the community on the Specific Plan process. The goal will be to design the workshop to engage participants in a fun and interactive way. Exercises may involve forms of polling participants through the use of tape dots, report cards, or similar methods. The workshop will likely include:
  - Review content of the existing Area Plan, the Specific Plan process, the purpose of the Specific Plan, and the opportunities presented by the Specific Plan.
  - Review Land Use Inventory, and Existing Conditions Summary.
  - Guide the participants to identify, refine and prioritize the community's issues, needs, vision and priorities for the area.
  - Conduct a priority setting exercise to prioritize the importance of the issues and ideas generated.

### **Identify issues, opportunities and constraints**

- Identify parcels with greatest opportunities for near-term redevelopment (based on ratio of improvements to land value) will be identified.
- Identify parcels with development constraints, such as small size or limited frontage.
- Prepare a single thematic map to illustrate such properties.
- Prepare summary of all regulatory and infrastructure constraints.

### **Develop vision, goals and principles**

- Develop draft based on prior research and outreach.
- Subcommittee to review draft vision, goals, and principles.

### **Workshop – Design Charrette to frame design alternatives**

- Workshop #2 will involve an interactive charrette to begin evolving the community's ideas into a future plan for the North Fremont project area. The workshop will be oriented so that participants are engaged in finding solutions and will likely be structured in two parts. During the first part, workshop participants may be guided through the opportunities and constraints report, and the draft vision, goals, and principles. The second part of the workshop may involve facilitating an interactive design charrette, a "roll up your sleeves" activity aimed at exploring big picture ideas, land uses (including retail types and locations), key pedestrian and bike connections, gateways and other opportunities.

### **Develop and analyze alternatives**

- Develop at least two alternative concept plans that address the issues, goals and principles of the general plan and the community as expressed through the outreach program while working with technical experts (City staff) to ensure feasibility.
- Prepare preliminary cost estimates for improvements for each alternative and analyzed for desired uses, development product types, public space and civic and cultural uses, and streetscape improvements. This work will be focused on which types of

improvements need to be included in the funding plan, and which can be assumed by developers.

- Analyze the effect of proposed changes to parking and businesses along the North Fremont corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.
- The Subcommittee will review the alternatives and analyses.

### **Workshop – Evaluate Alternatives**

- A third workshop will strive to obtain feedback on the alternative land use scenarios and visions for North Fremont. The workshop will involve a presentation of the alternatives, a question and answer period, and an interactive charrette exercise with breakout focus groups to engage workshop participants in the review and feedback process aimed at refining a preferred alternative.
- The second half of the workshop would involve a visual preference survey. Each participant will be given a remote control device and requested to vote on urban form, massing, and architectural character images. A visual preference slide show will display images of various architectural styles, building forms, development densities/intensities, and other urban design amenities. We will utilize images provided by the City in addition to images collected by the RRM Design team. Participants will vote on each image and the results will appear instantaneously. After the workshop, a summary of the results will be prepared. This is an exciting and interactive exercise that will give the team direction for the architectural design guidelines in the Specific Plan.

### **Develop Preferred Alternative**

- Refine a Preferred Alternative that addresses comments from Workshop #3.
- Subcommittee will review the preferred alternative.

### **Workshop - Preferred Alternative**

- Participants will review elements of the Preferred Alternative. The workshop could be an informal open house style meeting or a workshop involving interactive exercises with breakout focus groups that engage workshop participants in the review and feedback process.

### **Council Acceptance of Preferred Alternative**

- Present the preferred design concept to the Planning Commission for recommendation and to City Council for acceptance as the preferred alternative to serve as a basis from which to build the Specific Plan.

### **Develop Draft Specific Plan/CEQA Analysis**

- Develop policies, development standards, and design guidelines that support preferred concept plan.
- Refine the Streetscape Plan as needed and incorporate into the Specific Plan.
- Identify necessary infrastructure improvements.
- Develop cost estimates of infrastructure improvements.
- Evaluate the relative advantages, disadvantages, and potential funding that could be raised through typical public financing techniques, including assessment districts (Community Facilities Districts and others); tax increment finance (does not include evaluation of the feasibility of creating a project area); impact fees; increases in transit occupancy taxes; grant sources from the County, TAMC, or State or federal governments; and other sources identified during the planning process.

- Develop projections on the amounts of funding that might be raised from the above sources. For amounts tied to development value, BAE will look at current market values for new development, based on publicly available data, and purchase local lodging market data from Smith Travel Research.
- Evaluate phasing options to enhance access to funding.
- Prepare a “sources and uses” table that shows the relationship between identified sources of funding and proposed public improvements, along with strategies to close any gap.
- Prepare a funding plan and implementation strategy memorandum that summarizes the work for this task with tables, and outlines the implementation actions to be taken to utilize the identified sources.
- Conduct Environmental Analysis:
- Subcommittee Review.

**Workshop /Study Session - Present Draft Specific Plan**

- City staff will present the draft Specific Plan at a Planning Commission study session.

**Specific Plan Adoption Hearings**

- City staff will revise the draft Specific Plan, as necessary, and present the revised draft to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption, including further opportunity for public comment.

**Tentative Project Schedule**

Task	Completion Date
Kickoff Meeting	1/10
Land Use and Infrastructure Inventory	1/10
Summarize existing conditions	3/10
Issues, Opportunities and Constraints	4/10
Subcommittee Meeting/Workshop	4/10
Vision, Goals, Principles	5/10
Subcommittee Meeting/Workshop	5/10
Develop and Analyze Alternatives	6/10
Subcommittee Meeting/Workshop	6/10
Develop Preferred Alternative	8/10
Subcommittee Meeting/Workshop	8/10
Council Acceptance of Preferred Alternative	10/10
Develop Draft SP/CEQA	12/10
Subcommittee Meeting/Workshop #5	1/11
Revisions and further Subcommittee Meetings	2011 – 12/2012
Adoption Hearings	1/12 – 2/13