



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Accept the Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors accept the Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Plan.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The Vibrancy Plan for Downtown Salinas is being presented to the Board of Supervisors. This plan was prepared by a partnership between the City of Salinas, the County and City downtown stakeholders to identify ways to integrate the downtown core of Salinas into a community with adequate parking and circulation that is friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists. The County's interest is rooted in the County Government Center including restoration of the East and West Wings. The County's participation in this partnership recognizes the opportunity to integrate the County campus as an important component of downtown Salinas.

In August of 2013, the County entered into a cost sharing agreement with the City to fund the Vibrancy Plan. At that time, Kimley-Horn was contracted by the City to provide the technical expertise in preparation of the Vibrancy Plan. The agreement called for the County to contribute up to one-third of the cost of the consultant contract, not to exceed \$110,000.

The Vibrancy Plan development process engaged between 18 and 24 members of the Downtown Stakeholder Team (DST), who persevered through 29 meetings. A survey was completed identifying the desires and dreams of the citizens of Salinas for Downtown. The Survey results were shared with 80 community members in December 2013. A second community meeting followed, which targeted the needs of merchants. The County has been represented in each phase of the development of this plan. The City Council of Salinas accepted the Vibrancy Plan on March 17, 2015.

The Vibrancy Plan is not a plan binding on the County, except that it does identify strategies that affect County facilities. The impetus for the Vibrancy Plan was to make the downtown friendlier for alternative forms of transportation, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists. A significant component of the plan is identifying the need for convenient parking facilities, strategically located to facilitate downtown as a destination.

The portions of the Vibrancy Plan of most interest to the County include:

- a. A parking model designed to illustrate when and where parking issues occur. Development of this model has involved interaction of the DST. The model shows parking impacts and walking distances within the existing conditions and in 5-year increments as projected

- growth occurs. This may point to the potential for a shared parking garage used by the County, City and downtown merchants.
- b. Redesigning City streets to include two-way traffic on some of the one way streets, and the inclusion of improved bicycle lanes on designated streets such as West Alisal.
 - c. Reconfiguration of West Alisal to create a more pedestrian friendly environment, especially for County employees and customers crossing the street from the employee parking lot.
 - d. The government centers (City and County Facilities) serving as a catalyst site. This identifies a parking garage on the County Government facility site where the modular trailers are currently located, a new City government center with a plaza, pedestrian promenades which connect to North Main Street, and use of existing parking lots as opportunity sites for future development (See Figure 5-3).

The primary importance of the Vibrancy Plan in relation to the County is how the County facilities integrate into the fabric of downtown Salinas. In future planning of County facilities, the County will want to consider this plan. This plan also includes the opportunity for the County, City and downtown to develop a multi-use parking facility to benefit everyone. Increasing good pedestrian connections in the downtown will facilitate connectivity between the County/City Government Centers and the downtown merchants, which increases the potential for the downtown to be a viable commercial district. The Vibrancy Plan lays the ground work for the County, City and downtown merchants to proceed into the future with mutual goals and opportunities.

The Vibrancy Plan for the City of Salinas is completely separate from the Dover Kohl Partners contract being developed with the City of Marina and offered to other cities in the County. Dover Kohl and the City of Marina are working on a scope of work for the preparation of a similar type of document. The Plan is not subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because numerous actions must be taken pursuant to State and local laws and regulations before the plan policies and concepts can be implemented. The plan is not a commitment to any particular projects and environmental review would be conducted at the time any specific project is proposed.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Resource Management Agency, including representatives from RMA-Planning and RMA-Public Works, participated in the Downtown Stakeholder Team meetings.

FINANCING:

There is no impact to the General Fund to allow the Board of Supervisors to receive the Vibrancy Plan which has been paid for, and no additional expenditure of funds is necessary.

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Approved by: Carl P. Holm, AICP, Acting Director, Resource Management Agency
John Guertin, Acting Deputy Director, Resource Management Agency
Mike Novo, RMA - Planning Director

Attachments: Downtown Vibrancy Plan (On file with the Clerk of the Board)

Can also be viewed at <http://www.ci.salinas.ca.us/services/downtownvibrancy.cfm>

cc: Carl P. Holm, Acting RMA Director; John Guertin, Acting RMA Deputy Director; Shawne Ellerbee, RMA Finance Manager; Donald Reynolds, City of Salinas