

# Agenda Report

**DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2003**

**TO: CITY COUNCIL/PASADENA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER/CEO**

**SUBJECT: APPROVE THE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE PASADENA CIVIC CENTER/MID-TOWN DISTRICT DESIGN PROJECT**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council/Community Development Commission (PCDC):

1. Find the project Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Sections 15301.b. and c; 15304(b) and; 15331 and;
2. Approve the attached Design Development Elements for the Pasadena Civic Center/Mid-Town District Design Project as outlined in the Executive Summary document (Attachment No. 1).

**Recommendation Of City Advisory Bodies:**

The *City Center Implementation Task Force* (the "Task Force") recommended that the City Council/PCDC approve the Design Development Plan document; the *Arts Commission* recommended approval of the Public Arts Programming component of the Plan; *Urban Forestry Advisory Committee* approved the choice of replacement tree for Holly Street; The *Community Development Committee* recommended approval of the Plan; the *Historic Preservation Commission* did not have a quorum vote to make a formal recommendation; the *Design Commission* recommended approval of the Plan with inclusion of specific advisory comments; and *Pasadena Sister Cities Committee* supports the recommendations identified in the Design Development plans. A summary of Advisory Body comments and recommendations and Staff responses is found in Attachment No. 2.

**BACKGROUND:** The Task Force initiated the Civic Center/Mid-Town Design and Public Improvements Project in 1999. In April 2001, City Council/PCDC approved the *Civic Center/Mid-Town Refined Concept Plan*, a set of recommendations for public space streetscapes, and transportation and parking amenities within the historic Civic Center/Mid-Town District. In Summer, 2001, the Design Commission approved a number of accelerated design elements, including pedestrian-scaled street lighting, trees, tree grates and paint colors in order to facilitate the development of the Paseo Colorado project. Further development of design plans commenced, and, following extensive input and discussion, the Task Force prepared a final recommendation on the plan elements in July 2003, which was submitted for review and recommendation to various City Advisory bodies. A detailed description of the planning,

and review process associated with this project can be found in Attachment No. 3, and a overview of Task Force Activities from 1998-2003 is described in Attachment No. 4.

## **DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Design Development plans for the Civic Center evolved with a targeted focus on refinements to concept plans for public improvements along Colorado Boulevard (Los Robles Avenue to Arroyo Parkway), Garfield Avenue (from Colorado to Walnut), Centennial Square, and Holly Street (between Garfield and Marengo). The following plan elements were designed to enhance the public space and respect the grandeur of City Hall, while allowing for flexibility of uses within the space.

- **Street and Sidewalk Paving:** Street paving improvements for Holly Street and Garfield Avenue to include the following elements: integral color concrete with exposed aggregate finish, in a warm beige color for glare reduction; the traffic circle area is designed with a granite center and brick/concrete bands; Sidewalk improvements include: rehabilitation of the historic brick sidewalks adjacent to City Hall; new brick sidewalks and crosswalks on Holly Street and Garfield Avenue and at major intersections from Walnut south to Green Street;
- **Site Amenities and Gateway Elements:** New street furniture for the district includes tree grates, benches, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks in a dark bronze finish, compatible with the furniture palettes of Old Pasadena/ Playhouse Districts; retractable bollards to be set in the street bed to promote auto/pedestrian safety; and a new Gateway element with wrought-iron fencing and concrete columns/posts on Holly Street at Marengo Avenue.
- **Lighting Elements:** New pedestrian-scaled street lighting to match the existing historic lighting in the District; five-headed pedestrian light fixtures within Centennial Square and at major intersections; continuation of the double-headed pedestrian lights on Colorado Boulevard to match Old Pasadena/Playhouse Districts; uplighting for buildings, gateway elements and trees; and tall mast lights to illuminate City Hall and the street.
- **Landscape Elements:** Replacement of existing Carob Trees on Holly Street with London Plane Trees (*Platanus Acerifolia*) due to the Carob trees declining health; Addition of new trees, shrubs and ground cover within the District; and addition of a 30-foot wide, turf median along the length of Holly Street between Marengo and Garfield Avenues.
- **Sister Cities Gardens:** Expansion of the Sister Cities gardens to both sides of Holly Street; designated individual areas for each "Sister City", to include additional trees, benches, recognition "Plaques"; new tree-lined walkway; with shrubs and ground cover.
- **Signage and Graphics:** New Civic Center district icon markers, Sister Cities' plaques, Historic Building Plaques and Traffic circle signs.
- **Public Art:** The Public Art program will include a "balance piece" of art similar in size and scale to the Robinson Brothers art element located on the opposite side of Holly Street; use of temporary and permanent public art installations along Holly Street and elsewhere within the District; and the rehabilitation of "Pasadena Way" art work adjacent to Pasadena Police Building.
- **Centennial Square Water Element:** Designed as a grand reflecting pool; 80 feet in diameter with a black granite base; with a flat fountain feature, designed to incorporate timed, programmable water jets with classical forms and heights. The water feature is designed to provide a focal point in the vista from Holly Street to City Hall while respecting the grandeur and view of historic City Hall, and contribute to the animation and cooling of the space, while providing maximum flexibility of use within Centennial Square when not in operation.

The Design Development Executive Summary (Attachment No. 1) provides an in-depth description and illustrative, color graphic representations of each recommended design element identified above.

### **Review And Approval Process:**

Design development plans for the Civic Center/Mid-Town project were submitted to the Task Force for review and recommendation over a series of meetings in 2002-2003, which included two public workshop, and a special Task Force workshop, held in February 2003, to review a "mock up" of the full driveway and water feature dimensions of Centennial Square from the City Hall tower.

The Task Force thoroughly reviewed and voted on each element of the design development plan presented by the Consultant team. Although the vote was not unanimous for all design elements identified in the plan, including a close vote on the proposed water feature element, on July 22, 2003, the Task Force unanimously endorsed the overall design development package and recommended it be forwarded to the City Council/PCDC for approval. Following preparation of the final draft, the Task Force recommendation was presented to the Arts Commission, the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, Design and Historic Preservation Commissions, Community Development Committee and the Pasadena Sister Cities Committee for advisory review and comment.

### **Environmental Determination:**

The project has been determined to be Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Sections 15301.b.c. Existing Facilities, streets and sidewalks; 15304(b) – Minor alterations to Land Use – New Landscaping; and; 15331- Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation – historic sidewalks.

### **MTA Grant for Civic Center Improvements:**

In July 2001, the City was awarded a \$2.83 million grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) through the Federal TEA-21 program for "Pedestrian Improvements" in the Civic Center/Mid-Town District, scheduled for disbursement beginning in FY2005. The PCDC allocated a \$1million in match money for a total of \$3.83 million of available funding for initial project implementation.

### **Timetable for Implementation/Phasing:**

Following approval of the Design Development Plans by the City Council, the construction documents phase of the project will be initiated in conjunction with the MTA grant. This funding will allow the City to undertake Phases 1-3 of the project, which includes Colorado Boulevard, and targeted improvements for Garfield Avenue and Holly Street. Improvements identified in the immediate vicinity of City Hall will be deferred to coincide with the completion of the City Hall seismic retrofit project. All remaining construction phases of the project will be undertaken once additional funding has been secured. The scope of work for all project phases is outlined in Attachment No. 5. A Summary of Operations and Maintenance Cost estimates for the project are detailed in Attachment No. 6.

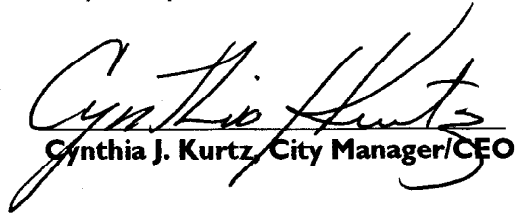
### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Overall development costs associated with the Project are estimated at approximately \$11.3 million (Attachment No. 7), which is in line with 2001 cost estimates identified in the approved Refined Concept Plan document. Private developments including Paseo Colorado (completed in 2001), and the Western Asset Plaza project (under construction) have contributed to the cost of public improvements adjacent to their properties, as will other new developments in the area.

The MTA/PCDC funds provide \$3.8 million toward the total cost of all public improvements, with \$1

million in match money earmarked in the Capital Improvement budget Account No. 73200. The remaining project costs, of approximately \$7.5 million of un-funded design elements will be phased for future project implementation. Staff will work diligently with the Task Force to identify various grants, donor programs and other available funding sources for completion of the remaining Civic Center plan improvements in a timely fashion.

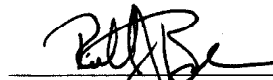
Respectfully submitted:

  
Cynthia J. Kurtz, City Manager/CEO

Prepared by:

  
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Approved by:

  
Richard J. Bruckner  
Director of Planning & Development

Attachments:

- Attachment No. 1: Executive Summary, Civic Center/mid-Town Design and Public Improvements Project, - Design Development Plans, Prepared by Team Pasadena, Dated October, 2003
- Attachment No. 2: Summary of Task Force and Advisory Body Comments on the Design Development Plans
- Attachment No. 3: Overview of Civic Center/Mid-Town Project Review Process
- Attachment No. 4: Summary of City Center Implementation Task Force Activities 1998-2003
- Attachment No. 5: List of Project Phases and Associated Design Elements for Implementation
- Attachment No. 6: Civic Center Design Project Summary of Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs
- Attachment No. 7: Civic Center Design Project - Summary of Probable Estimate of Costs for Design Development Phase, Prepared by Team Pasadena