

**CITY OF GRASS VALLEY  
MEMORANDUM FOR  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF APRIL 11, 2006**

**TO:** Members, City Council  
Via: Gene Haroldsen, City Administrator

**FROM:** Joe C. Heckel, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Review of Special Study and Addendum to Evaluate Economic / Fiscal Conditions and Future Land Use Scenarios for City of Grass Valley into Year 2020

**RECOMMENDATION:** Via motion, accept “Economic and Fiscal Conditions Study” and Addendum and all related information as an informational document

**BACKGROUND:** On January 12, 2004, the City executed a contract with the firm of Applied Development Economics (ADE) to prepare a study that evaluates the market, fiscal and job-housing conditions for the City and Western Nevada County. The study was prompted after the City became aware there was interest from the applicants of the Special Development Areas (SDA) in changing their land use mix from what is shown in the 2020 General Plan. This study was designed as an informational report, not a policy document. However, it was intended that the projections identified within this Study would prompt a further discussion and review of the City’s 2020 General Plan and the land use mix proposed by the Special Development Areas (SDA).

The study, entitled the “Economic and Fiscal Conditions Study for the City of Grass Valley”, was completed and released on September 13, 2005. An attached Council report of October 27, 2005 outlines the purpose, scope, format and general conclusions of the Study.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION OF ADDENDUM:** The Council reviewed the results of the Study on October 27 and November 1, 2005. On November 1, 2005, the Council provided direction to release the Study for a 30-day public review period. Upon completion of the review period, an Addendum was to be prepared containing the comments received on the study and responses from the City with an anticipated Council presentation in winter 2006. The public review period has ended, the comments collected and the Addendum prepared through a collective effort between the consultant and City staff. The Addendum was released on March 31, 2006.

During the 30-day public review period, the City received 20 letters on the Study. Within the 20 letters, approximately 200 comments were identified and responses developed by the consultant and staff. Since the preparation of an Addendum was beyond the budget and scope of work set forth for the consultant, the City worked

closely with the consultant to focus their efforts on technical issues raised with the Study. The Addendum was largely compiled and reproduced using existing budget and staffing resources of the Community Development Department.

On April 4, staff was apprised that there had been six additional letters submitted to the City during the review period that were not incorporated into the Addendum. In checking our files, the City can find no record of any additional letters being received during the public review period beyond what was listed in the Addendum. The City requested and received these additional letters from the groups/individuals, and forwarded them to the consultant for April 4. The City worked with the consultant to compile and evaluate the comments to these letters and develop responses for your review. A “supplement” to the Addendum is attached to this report that provides the additional letters and a list of responses and it was posted on the City’s website on April 7.

The majority of public comments received on the Study during the public review period could be placed into the following categories:

- 1) Questions/Issues with Future Quantity and Quality of Growth. A number of comments expressed concern or provided statements as to preferences for the quality or quantity of growth for the community. These comments were largely informational and not directed to the specific details of the Study.
- 2) Questions/Issues on Study Methodology. A number of comments expressed concern or requested clarifications on the various methodologies applied by the consultant in the preparation of this Study. The responses to a number of these comments did result in the consultant refining or correcting certain items in the Study. All text or data corrections, errata and typographical errors have been identified and summarized in Chapter 3 of the Addendum. Chapter 3 does include five revised tables of which the consultant will summarize during the April 11 meeting. Once the Council provides their acceptance of the Study, it will be revised to incorporate these changes and a finalized version will be produced.
- 3) Questions/Issues on Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities. A number of comments expressed concern with the projection of 840 residential units that the Study was using as a residential infill benchmark into 2020. The majority of concerns emphasized that the number was low and the City could absorb additional residential units within its existing infill properties. The responses contained within Chapter 2 describe why the projection of 840 residential units was applied and further provides a listing of assumptions that the City typically applies in evaluating whether a parcel is vacant or developed. While there are areas of the community where additional density or redevelopment opportunities could be realized which would yield more units than the projected 840 units, the Study relied on existing documents such as the 2020 General Plan Environmental Impact Report, the 2003-2009 Housing Element and past trends in development to arrive at this projection.

The consultant will be available on April 11 to review the conclusions of the Study, the Addendum and any proposed changes to the Study that resulted from the

public review period. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Cc: Members, Planning Commission                      SDA Applicants/Representatives  
Steve Wahlstrom, Siefel Associates                      Doug Svensson, ADE

Attachments:

Supplement to Addendum containing letters and responses dated April 2006

Report from October 27 Council Meeting

Letters/Correspondence received October 27 and November 1, 2005

Economic and Fiscal Conditions Study and Addendum (separately transmitted)

**STEPS FOR CONSIDERATION OF STUDY, SDA'S AND 2020 GENERAL PLAN:**

Beyond this meeting, the Council may elect to schedule subsequent meeting(s) for further discussion and to gain additional public input. By April 11, the City will have access to a number of informational sources such as the results of the January 31, 2006 joint workshop on General Plan policy preferences with the Planning Commission, the results of the Community Survey, and the conclusions of the Economic and Fiscal Conditions Study. The Council may wish to utilize this information in deciding whether any clarifications, modifications or amendments of the 2020 General Plan or the SDA's should be made. The option listed below represents a potential approach for the Council to consider:

**STEP 1. Review Informational Sources.** Conduct a special meeting of the Council to review the following informational sources or tools: A) Status of the 2020 General Plan, B) Results of January 31, 2006 Joint Workshop with Planning Commission, C) Results of the Community Survey, and, D) Conclusions/Recommendations of the Economic/Fiscal Condition Study. After reviewing this information, the Council could discuss tentative preferences on future land use mix, growth projections, fiscal goals and desired community amenities (in exchange for revision in land use mix).

**STEP 2. Gain Community Input.** Gain further public input on future of community by conducting a community forum(s) hosted by the Council on growth preferences for the Sphere of Influence, 2020 General Plan and SDA's. Step 2 could be incorporated with Step 1 if preferred by Council.

**STEP 3. Confirm Policy Preferences on 2020 General Plan and SDA's.** During a regular Council meeting, adopt resolution in support of, and to clarify, the land use mix of the Sphere of Influence and SDA's, the Sphere of Influence Plan and 2020 General Plan. Direct that all SDA applications be brought forward for review to ensure consistency with policy directives.

**STEP 4. Review SDA Applications for Consistency of Resolution.** Direct that all SDA applications be brought forward for clarification for consistency with policy preferences expressed in resolution prior to processing and preparation of any environmental document under CEQA. A subcommittee could be formed to review and provide input as to the application consistency with the 2020 General Plan. In addition, Council can also provide direction to implement any number of growth management approaches to address concerns with development within Sphere of Influence.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Cc: Members, Planning Commission  
Steve Wahlstrom, Siefel Associates

SDA Applicants/Representatives  
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**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT LETTERS  
For  
ADDENDUM  
(errata sheet to follow)**