

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE FULTON CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN AND DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY PLAN

What is the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan?

A downtown lives or dies on its ability to attract investment. In Fresno, high difficulty, high costs, and high uncertainty make our downtown the hardest place in the city to develop. This makes it very difficult to attract new downtown investment.

The Fulton Corridor Specific Plan is a new set of laws that will reduce development difficulty, costs, and uncertainty, making good projects easier to build downtown.

What is the Downtown Neighborhoods Plan?

Concentrated poverty will persist in our inner city unless and until neighborhoods surrounding downtown become attractive places for people from a range of backgrounds to live and invest.

The Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan will protect our city's well designed, walkable, older urban neighborhoods, requiring that future development fit in and contribute to the health, livability, and value of its surroundings. The Plan will provide a level of certainty about the future that helps attract investment to these neighborhoods.

Why are these plans our best approach?

Cities across the country have adopted clear development laws targeted to their downtowns and historic neighborhoods. In California such laws are called "specific plans" and "community plans."

In Fresno, many of our development laws were designed with suburban growth areas in mind, but applied citywide. Yet revitalizing older urban areas often requires very different laws from the suburbs. The proposed plans will finally provide appropriate development laws for the urban areas they serve.

Fresno's Tower District is one example of a thriving urban area served by a strong specific plan that has successfully supported investment and livability by preventing bad development over time.

Are these new plans a luxury or a necessity in the downtown revitalization process?

They are a necessity in part because they include many elements that are essential to the downtown area's success. Beyond new investment-friendly development laws, the plans will:

- Determine the future of the Fulton Mall. Any alterations may require an environmental study, which these plans already include.
- Find the best ways to manage downtown's water capacity, parking system, and historic assets. These issues urgently need attention anyway.
- Set development patterns around the new High Speed Rail station to support pedestrian and transit

access, and nearby housing and commerce.

Why was the lead firm chosen for this project?

Moule & Polyzoides is recognized as a national and world leader in urban planning, and has created model specific plans for the central areas of cities such as San Antonio, Santa Ana, Paso Robles, and Ventura. M&P has deep expertise in involving the community in the planning process, which will be a major component of creating Fresno's plans.

Though none of the 21 planning firms that vied for the job is headquartered locally, four local firms are part of the overall team and will be performing technical work for this project.

How long will it take to create these plans?

Done on their own, the Fulton Corridor Plan or the Neighborhoods Plan would each take about two years to create — or four years for both. Combining these plans into one process reduces the time for completion to about two and a half years.

This period will be reduced to two years or less if the City's applications for grants to support the planning are successful, or if greater City block grant funding is available in future fiscal years.

What will these plans cost?

Creating these two plans and legally required environmental studies will cost approximately \$2.6 million. If certain grant applications are successful, the City's obligation toward this total is reduced.

Retaining M&P's leading planners also creates value by giving Fresno the opportunity to learn new skills that can be applied to other efforts. For example, the plans will include a new "form-based code" that regulates the design of buildings more than their use. Once local planners learn how to write such codes from M&P's experts, they will be able to create them for other neighborhoods without hiring additional consultants, saving the City money in the future — and permanently enriching the quality of local planning and design.

If it requires spending up to \$2.6 million, is revitalization really worth it after all?

Yes. The cost to our community of not following a proven path to revitalization far exceeds the price tag of these plans. The plans will encourage hundreds of millions of dollars of private development that will, in turn, make for a more vibrant city center that will, in turn again, help retain the kinds of smart, well paid workers who have a choice of cities in which to live and invest.

Also, recent state laws will, in coming years, direct cities and regions to grow more densely or lose critical transportation funding. These laws explicitly identify new specific and community plans as key tools to help revitalize urban areas and make cities sustainable.



**HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH THE
FULTON CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN AND
DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY PLAN**

1. Tell us if you support the Downtown Plans at www.surveymonkey.com/s/downtownplans. By giving us your email address, you'll also be signed up to receive updates on the Plans and other news from the City of Fresno Downtown and Community Revitalization Department.

2. Come support approval of the contract at the City Council on Thursday, January 28, 2009, at around 9:15 a.m. For more information, call us at (559) 621-8350, or email Wilma.Quan@fresno.gov.

3. Tell your City Council representative how you feel. Call (559) 621-8000 to speak to staff for your Council Member about the contract for the Downtown Plans.

4. After contract approval, look for updates at www.fresno.gov/downtown. We'll be posting news of upcoming Plan-related meetings and events, especially those where the community is invited to come help make important decisions. We will also provide images and documents for public review.