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Staff Report

**JOINT
SS ITEM 5**

To: Lemoore City Council and
Lemoore Redevelopment Agency Board

From: Judy Holwell, Redevelopment Project Manager

Date: February 10, 2009

Subject: Updates – Retail Attraction Study &
Adaptive Reuse Study

Discussion

Retail Attraction Study: On September 2, 2008, the Redevelopment Agency Board approved a proposal from Buxton to perform a Retail Attraction Study for the community of Lemoore. The Study will combine data about our community member's lifestyles, buying behaviors and media habits to determine the right fit of retail and restaurants that can be supported in Lemoore. The goal of this Study is to aid us in marketing our community to the appropriate retail sector. The following is a brief update of the progress.

Initially, we provided Buxton with three locations that we saw as retail areas with the greatest potential for retail attraction; Highway 41 @ Bush Street, Highway 198 @ 19th Avenue and Lemoore Avenue @ Hanford-Armona Road. Buxton mapped out a 13-minute retail trade area for each location. Because the trade area for the three locations encompassed nearly the same area, Buxton recommended a fourth location. It is identified as the City Center. It will be the basis for the remainder of the study.

Staff invited several interested parties (e.g. landowners, developers, property managers, etc.) to attend an informational meeting regarding the Study. Several of them attended and provided beneficial feedback regarding the trade area. The attendees became more of a working group and they commented that nearby community members often come to Lemoore to shop. They felt that with the right retail mix, we could attract people from surrounding communities to shop in Lemoore such as Coalinga and Avenal, so we asked Buxton to also provide an expanded trade area map to include those locations. It is identified as the Secondary Trade Area. This working group has been kept abreast of information as it has been presented to us by Buxton and several are very interested in the results, since the recruitment of new retailers could directly increase their tenancy.

After identifying the trade areas, Buxton generated a Retail Site Assessment, which identifies the spending habits of persons living within the trade area. This provides us with data that shows the amount of retail dollars spent within our trade area (surplus) and the amount of retail dollars being spent outside our trade area (leakage). This report is 135 pages long and in an effort to reduce use of paper, we will not be attaching it to the Council packet. This document provides preliminary data needed for the final product of the Study. However, if you would like to receive a copy of it electronically, please let me know.

Buxton will now analyze the data in the Retail Site Assessment and provide us with a Retail Matching list of up to 100 retailers that match our profile. We will select 20 retailers from the list and Buxton will supply us with contact information and marketing pursuit materials for each so that we can focus our marketing efforts on those specific retailers. We expect delivery of these materials by March 10.

The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) holds an annual convention, which attracts over 50,000 attendees, most of them retailers. Buxton will have a large exhibit area set up and as part of the Retail Attraction Study, we are allowed to use their facility to meet with potential developers. Our plan is to contact all 20 retailers on the list and set up as many meetings as possible. This year, ICSC is May 17-20 in Las Vegas. Mr. Britz and I plan to attend and focus on recruiting these retailers. It is, however, very important to the retail site location decision makers that our public officials are supportive of their business. We encourage one or two Council Members to attend and assist us with this effort.

Adaptive Reuse Study: The Adaptive Reuse Study for the three underutilized commercial shopping centers: Pioneer Square, Lincoln Square and Lemoore Town Center is progressing slowly. This is a CDBG Economic Development Planning Grant funded project and it was awarded to Rosenow Spevacek Group, Inc. (RSG)

So far, RSG has performed a preliminary market study to determine if the highest and best use of each site is still retail. They will look at the type of retail that fits Lemoore's needs and whether the square footage of the available space will accommodate such retailers. If they find that retail is not suitable, they will make a recommendation for an alternative use. If the outcome of the Study finds that changes need to be made to a facility to make it more economically viable, then an Economic Development Grant can be applied for to assist with the cost of the proposed improvements.

We have been promised that the final outcome of this Study, which is due in March, will be on time. Staff will update you on any additional progress made during the Study Session.

Budget Impact

None.

Recommendation

Informational only.