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November 28, 2001

**TO: INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP REVIEW PANEL**

**FROM: BRUCE ABANATHIE**

STAFF REPORT  
INFORMATION

**SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF STANISLAUS AREA PROPOSALS**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The five-county Inter-Regional Partnership (IRP) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit applications for Jobs/Housing Opportunity Zones. In timely response, three job-producing proposals were submitted from jurisdictions in Stanislaus County. The proposals were subjected to preliminary scoring and ranking by a subcommittee convened by StanCOG at the direction of the StanCOG Executive Committee. The subcommittee was composed of our three IRP elected officials, one staff member each from StanCOG and the Stanislaus County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDCO), two local agency representatives, and three representatives from the Citizens' Advisory and Technical Advisory committees. The results of the scoring subcommittee were presented to the StanCOG Policy Board at their November 14, 2001 meeting. The StanCOG Policy Board accepted the scoring results without change.

We now submit the three proposals to the Interregional Partnership Review Panel for final scoring and ranking.

**DISCUSSION**

The three proposals, listed in ranked order are:

- 1. Stanislaus County/City of Patterson  
"Patterson @ Sperry I-5 Business Park Project"  
Draft average score: 102 out of a possible 125**

This project would encompass 477 acres of unincorporated land adjacent to the Sperry Road interchange on the rapidly developing I-5 corridor, near the City of Patterson. The

proposed zoning plan for this development will provide 64 acres of Highway Service Commercial/Light Industrial area, 361 acres of Business Park Light Industrial area, and 52 acres of Planned Development. Developing the project in this manner will generate 10,000 total jobs, providing a high density of jobs/acre, and producing jobs of technical and skill levels that would complement the resident laborforce currently commuting long distances for employment.

In discussing this proposal, the scoring subcommittee assessed the primary strength of this proposal to be the potential effect on the *jobs/housing balance*, and the potential to utilize the (currently commuting) resident laborforce.

The subcommittee identified the *development proposal*, the *existing commitments*, and the substantial experience of Stanislaus County and the City of Patterson in administering and implementing *similar programs* as additional strengths for this project. The proactive measures initiated by both agencies, such as inclusion of this project in the Patterson Master Development Plan and the Stanislaus County General Plan, show a strong commitment to completion of this project. The agencies have also initiated activities to prepare the area for development addressing such issues as transit, utilities, public services, etc.

The weaknesses of this project are its consumption of agricultural lands, its remote location from the mainstream of the Stanislaus County population centers and its limited transportation facilities to and from the project area.

**2. City of Modesto**  
**"Kansas Avenue Business Park Jobs Opportunity Zone"**  
**Draft average score: 100 out of a possible 125**

The proposal submitted by the City of Modesto, in partnership with SCEDCO, the Modesto Irrigation District, Modesto Junior College, and the Modesto Redevelopment Agency incorporates 92 acres of currently underutilized land, zoned as light/heavy industrial. The project would rezone this area to mixed use, business office and light industrial. This proposal also seeks to generate 1,500 medium to high paying jobs at the technical and skill levels complimentary to abilities of the (currently commuting) resident laborforce.

The scoring subcommittee identified the strengths of this proposal as the *jobs/housing impact*, *transportation and infrastructure*, and the *zoning characteristics* of the project.

Though the *jobs/housing* impact of this project is not as significant as the other two proposals, its effect on the local job market will provide significant and effective alternatives for Stanislaus area residents currently commuting long distances to work at jobs appropriate to their job skills and abilities.

This project, as an infill project, lies within the urbanized jurisdiction of the City of Modesto. Because the project is within the City of Modesto the *transportation and infrastructure* facilities are largely in place, or available. The project area lies within one-quarter mile of a multimodal transportation hub and the proponents have included plans for public transit, as well as pedestrian and bicycle friendly pathways through the Business Park. The area is also included in the Modesto Redevelopment Area and the Planned Urbanized Area. This project is consistent with the City of Modesto General Plan, and would effectively develop a mostly vacant and underutilized area.

The suitability of the area for the intended use is the strength of the *zoning characteristics*. Though most of the land is currently vacant or underutilized, as mentioned above, there are currently operating businesses in the project area, and there was previously a similar type of business operating in the vacant portion of the project area. The use of this area is also for the proposed project is a two-fold benefit to the City of Modesto and the surrounding area. In addition to the benefits of an infill project, The City of Modesto has the opportunity to utilize land designated as a "Brownfield Remediation" area; land that might otherwise lay fallow for years.

This proposal also exemplifies the ties to whole community development, as witnessed by their *existing commitments* and partners. Through their partnerships and economic development efforts, the City of Modesto has also created significant funding resources for the potential occupants of the project area. Funding opportunities such as Enterprise Zone designation; economic development revenue bond and loan programs; Brownfield Remediation funds; and rebates, loans, and credits through partnering utility and economic development organizations. The City of Modesto also has substantial experience in administering and implementing *similar programs*.

The weakness of this proposal, discussed within the subcommittee, is the restructuring of the transportation facilities in and around the project area. There are currently several transportation plans and projects being discussed and studied in and around the project area. Some of these restructuring projects conflict with the plan that the project proponents are recommending. All of the projects being studied would significantly effect the Kansas/SR99 interchange and the Kansas Avenue/ 9<sup>th</sup> Street intersection both of which are important connector routes to the west end of the Downtown Modesto business area and to Modesto Junior College.

**3. Stanislaus County**  
**"North Salida Business Park Project"**  
**Draft average score: 96 out of a possible 125**

The Salida Project would encompass 467 acres in the unincorporated community of Salida immediately adjacent to the City of Modesto. The project area (currently) consists of 20 acres zoned commercial, 20 acres zoned industrial, 154 acres zoned planned industrial,

and 273 acres zoned agricultural. This project compliments several businesses and manufacturing companies in the area and is in harmony with the Stanislaus County Community Plan Update (1999) and a similar study done by the City of Modesto. This plan seeks to generate 14, 016 new jobs in the area.

The strengths of this proposal identified by the subcommittee are its potential positive impact on the *jobs/housing balance* if the project were to come to fruition and the fact that the project would infill an area with a significant commuting population.

The project is a well-conceived idea, and did meet the important goals of the IRP, however the subcommittee assessed this plan as being proposed too early in its conceptual stages. The subcommittee was concerned that the lack of advancement in the planning, land acquisition, zoning, and other components of a successful project, would prohibit the project from being completed in the five-year time frame identified in the RFP.

### SUMMARY

Each of these proposals compliments other projects in the Stanislaus County area directed toward balancing the jobs/housing mismatch that is consistently a problem throughout the county. Stanislaus County is a magnet area for people looking for affordable housing, but has not been as successful in attracting the jobs market.

Although each of the three proposals individually possesses stronger emphasis in one or more of the goals of the IRP, each of the proposals met the important goals of the IRP as stated in the RFP. Each proposal seeks to:

- Achieve a more equitable jobs/housing balance in the region.
- Improve transportation and air quality.
- Enhance the quality of life throughout the inter-regional area.
- Pursue inter-regional economic development opportunities. and
- Establish more sustainable methods of moving people between their homes and their jobs.