

For Immediate Release

July 14, 2005

Contact:

Jonathan Noble, Office of Vice Mayor Chavez
(408) 277-5231 After July 15: (408) 535-4903
Amy Olay, Transportation
(408) 975-3283

PLANNED STREET CONVERSIONS TO IMPROVE SAFETY, BENEFIT NEIGHBORHOOD

Portions of Third, Fourth and Julian streets to allow two-way traffic

San José, California – The City of San José will begin the process of converting portions of Third, Fourth and Julian streets back to two-way streets starting on Saturday, July 16, 2005, thus restoring the historic neighborhood character, while increasing safety for motorists and pedestrians alike.

“This long-awaited conversion from citywide arterials to neighborhood-oriented streets has been a priority of residents living along these streets for over 30 years, and we are extremely pleased to see this project nearing completion,” stated Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez.

After Saturday, July 23, two-way traffic will be allowed on Third and Fourth streets, from Julian Street to Jackson Street, and on Julian Street, between Third and Fifth streets. This project, funded by the San José Redevelopment Agency at a cost of \$2.3 million to design and construct, has headed the list of priorities for the 13th Street SNI (Strong Neighborhoods Initiative) area Neighborhood Advisory Committee, the 13th Street Traffic Committee, the Hensley Historic District and the Japantown Community Congress. The City’s Transportation Department worked closely with all four groups to plan and coordinate the project.

Currently, these streets serve as citywide arterials, bringing commute traffic through the neighborhood, which can severely impact the safety and quality of life in a neighborhood. The conversion of Third and Fourth streets to two-way streets is the first phase of a project that will enhance traffic and pedestrian safety and improve access for residents and businesses.

[more]

**Planned Street Conversions to Improve Safety,
Benefit Neighborhood**

July 14, 2005

Page 2-2-2

According to Lenora Porcella, of the Historic Hensley Neighborhood, "The couplet conversion will be the single most important change to a downtown neighborhood in the past forty years. We look forward to slower traffic and the healing calm that it will bring to our historic neighborhood."

Fourth and Julian streets will be closed to through-traffic between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, in order to implement the final conversion to two-way traffic. This will include modifying the signals at Fourth and Jackson, at Fourth and Julian, and at Fifth and Julian streets, as well as activating the railroad gates and devices at the Fourth Street railroad crossing. Access to these streets, however, will remain open to residents and businesses, although on-street parking will be prohibited until these streets reopen. The design phase to enable further conversion to two-way traffic on Julian and St. James streets, east of this area, is scheduled to begin later this year.

Through-traffic traveling northbound is encouraged to use Market Street to Coleman Avenue, and then proceed north on Highway 87 (Guadalupe Parkway), and for southbound traffic, Highway 87 to the Julian/St. James exit, as an alternative route, beginning Saturday, July 16.

On Saturday, July 23, a similar conversion to two-way traffic will take place on Third Street, between Jackson and Julian streets. **This section of Third Street will be closed on July 23, between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m.**, while the final stages of the project are implemented. Residents and businesses will have access to the street during this time, but on-street parking will be prohibited.

Final project improvements will begin construction the week of July 25th, when center islands will be installed at the intersections of Third and Empire, Fourth and Empire, Third and Julian, and Fourth and Julian streets. These center islands will serve as the entrance features to the Hensley Historic District.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned for August, once all phases of the project have been completed.

###