

## MEXICAN HERITAGE PLAZA

### Steering Committee Meeting #10

15 February 2011

5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

#### I. Housekeeping

- City staff to report on the outcome of the Steering Committee's work and recommendations at the Community and Economic Development Council Committee meeting on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. The staff report will be available on the City's website 10 days prior to the CED meeting.
- The Steering Committee reviewed and approved the letter to the Valley Transportation Authority Board (attached) recommending that the Bus Rapid Transit stop at Alum Rock Avenue & King Road should reflect the artistic characteristics of the MHP, and should be aesthetically complimentary to the Alum Rock corridor.

#### II. Presentation of Interim Incubator Operator (IIO) Description

At its meeting on February 1, 2011, the Mexican Heritage Plaza Steering Committee discussed the possibility of selecting an Interim Incubator Operator (IIO) to provide a bridge, for a period of 18 months to three years, to an eventual permanent operator for the vision of creating a school of arts and culture at MHP. This discussion resulted in direction to City staff and the Financial Modeling Team to develop a description of the role of the IIO (See [http://www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/CommitteeAgenda/CED/20110228/CED20110228\\_d2att.pdf](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk/CommitteeAgenda/CED/20110228/CED20110228_d2att.pdf))

- The Committee approved the IIO description after making two revisions to the document initially distributed to the Committee and the public prior to the meeting.
  - Addition of language specifying that the Guiding Principles are subject to continuing revisions by the Prototyping Committee
  - IIO should emphasize development of Latino leadership to manage the permanent operating organization.
- Public comment followed the discussion and reflected general support from the audience members concerning the concept and description of the

IIO. Following the public comment period, the Committee approved the IIO document.

### **III. Discussion of candidates for Interim Incubator Operator (IIO) role**

- The Steering Committee developed the IIO description in order to understand better how an IIO could assist in the development of a business plan, begin to “beta test” the operation of a school, and develop the permanent leadership of the school. One possible organization, 1stACT Silicon Valley, was suggested at the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting as a possible candidate. Given the Committee intention to return to this discussion of 1stACT’s possible role as IIO, Connie Martinez and Tamara Alvarado (1stACT Executive Director and Multicultural Leadership Director, respectively) excused themselves from the room.
- Financial Modeling team Chair, Chris Esparza, framed the discussion by emphasizing that an Interim Incubator Operator (IIO) was necessary to serve as a bridge to an eventual permanent operator for a school of arts and culture. The incubation process is necessary to develop the financial support, partnerships and programming that will make the school a success. Given the functions, core qualities and capabilities necessary for the incubation of the school of arts and culture described in the IIO document, he raised the questions:
  - What organization can do this work? Who is willing?
- The Committee discussed the involvement of a number of organizations in the Steering Committee’s work over the past 20 months, including:
  - Teatro Vision
  - Somos Mayfair
  - MACLA
  - HFSV
  - CSMA
  - MACSA
  - Castellano Family Foundation
- The Committee considered that while some of the organizations have programmatic experience and others cultural experience, none of these organizations has expressed interest in operating the Plaza in the near term. Based on initial discussions at the Committee’s February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting,

1stACT was willing to consider the role and does have the mission and capacity to do the work. All subject to their Board review and approval.

- The question arose as to whether 1stACT has expertise in programming but was quickly resolved based on the expectations set forth in the IIO document that the incubating operator identify partner organizations, based on the existing Cultural Arts Partner model, who can provide programming at the Plaza that is consistent with the conceptual model and the programming Guiding Principles.
- Another committee member expressed support for 1stACT's role as IIO, but emphasized that no one on the Committee should obtain any personal financial gain from the decision.
- Public comments in regard to the recommendation for 1stACT's participation as IIO included:
  - Question as to 1stACT's relationship with the Latino Arts community
  - Financing of the incubation period
  - The selection process to determine the IIO and whether the IIO description was shared with other organizations to gage their interest.
  - Timing and advocacy of the Steering Committee's recommendations in context of the City Council's budget decisions for the next fiscal year.
- Following the discussion and public comment, the Committee unanimously concluded that only 1stACT Silicon Valley could fulfill all the elements of the role as described in the IIO document, and recommended that City staff discuss the role in more depth with 1stACT to determine whether it is willing to engage in this work, and if so, that Council direct staff to negotiate and execute an agreement with 1stACT to serve as the IIO.
- Following the unanimous vote by the Steering Committee, Connie Martinez and Tamara Alvarado returned to the Committee table and were brought up to speed on the recommendation made by the Committee. Connie agreed to update her Board and further explore 1stACT's

participation as the interim incubator operator of a school of arts and culture at MHP.

#### **IV. Scheduling of next Steering Committee meetings**

- The Committee discussed the need for no more than 2 more Steering Committee meetings (March/April) prior to the Council meeting in May.
- The Steering Committee also considered that their work is nearing completion. A successful sun-setting of the Committee's work would be possible at the City Council meeting in May, with the delivery of the following:
  - Strategic frame work of a school of arts and culture
  - Business plan and budget for the Interim Incubator Operator
  - Long-term vision for the future permanent operator developing out of the groundwork laid during the incubation period

Date: February 15, 2011

To: Valley Transportation Authority

Subject: Bus Rapid Transit stop at Alum Rock Avenue & King Road, adjacent to the Mexican Heritage Plaza

Dear VTA Board,

Under the direction of the San Jose City Council, the Mexican Heritage Plaza Steering Committee has been meeting publicly over the past year to develop a new business model for the Mexican Heritage Plaza (MHP). The City Council approved the Steering Committee's recommendation for the MHP to become the site of a school of arts and culture last May. Since then, the Committee has continued to meet to develop the elements of that model and plan for the future implementation of the school.

It has come to the Committee's attention that a BRT stop is planned at the corner of Alum Rock Avenue and King Road adjacent to the Mexican Heritage Plaza. We believe that a BRT stop is an important asset that will provide a rapid transit option of access to the MHP. That being said, we also believe that in keeping with the vision for the Plaza to be a center for arts and culture, the stop should reflect the artistic characteristics of the MHP and should be aesthetically complimentary to the Alum Rock corridor.

Two Steering Committee members, Danny Garza and Maria de la Rosa, have been involved in the development of the plans for the BRT stops on the Eastside of San Jose. We hope that you will accept this letter in support of their efforts, and ours, to see that the BRT stop adjacent to the MHP is designed with attention to the historic, cultural and artistic importance of this community facility.

Sincerely,

Mexican Heritage Plaza Steering Committee  
Members

Alcario Castellano

Maria de la Rosa

Moy Eng

Chris Esparza

Manuel Fimbres

Danny Garza

Guadalupe Gonzalez

Erin Goodwin-Guerrero

Roy Hirabayashi

Connie Martinez

Olivia Mendiola

Carlos Perez

Linda Snook