



Information Item

Date: March 31, 2008

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Barbara Stinchfield, Director of Community and Cultural Services
Subject: Update on Joint Use Planning for Civic Auditorium and Santa Monica High School Campuses

Introduction

This report updates the City Council on the activities and timeline associated with the exploration of joint use opportunities between the Civic Auditorium area of the Civic Center Specific Plan (Civic Auditorium Campus) and the Santa Monica High (Samohi) School Campus as described in the information item of [December 13, 2007](#).

Background

In fall of 2007, recognizing the unique joint use potential opportunities inherent in the concurrent development of the Samohi and Civic Auditorium campuses, a staff working group of representatives from the City, the District and Santa Monica College began meeting. The following areas for possible joint benefit were identified as worthy of further study: shared parking (possibly under the Samohi football field); circulation; recreation (evaluating the optimal locations for the soccer field currently planned for the Civic Auditorium campus and other sports facilities); cultural (expanding the connection between the Civic Auditorium and Samohi's Greek Theatre and Barnum Hall and realizing the vision for the reuse of the Civic Auditorium as a cultural venue); educational (studying the optimal location for early childhood facilities on both campuses); increasing the flow between the two sites and "softening" the 4th Street streetscape; and incorporating elements from the City's current LUCE workshops including improved access and mobility.

As the Samohi project was well into the programming phase and the comprehensive Civic Center design process had not been initiated, the December information item to Council presented an “interim study” approach for joint uses that would not significantly delay the Samohi BB project nor compromise the larger comprehensive planning process for the Civic Center. The report indicated that City staff would conduct a competitive process to select an interim consultant to work with the City and District to conduct a preliminary study of the viability of joint uses on the two sites. Concurrently, the District and City would be working with transportation consultants on a parking demand analysis for the study area. It was anticipated that the consultant team for the larger Civic Center process would be selected in spring 2008, followed soon after by community workshops.

Discussion

Following a competitive process, the City selected Koning Eizenberg Architecture (KEA) to assist in the joint use study. In early March, a calendar of information-gathering meetings, joint architect meetings with the Samohi architect (R. L. Binder, FAIA Architecture & Planning), and staff working group meetings was developed. KEA held information-gathering meetings made up of representatives from the City, District, College and other vested agencies. Issues focused on key study areas: Parking/Traffic, Culture, Recreation and Childcare. During these meetings, District staff discussed also studying the desirability of including a joint use educational component on the Civic Auditorium Campus that might include performing arts space and possibly public broadcasting facilities.

Because the larger Civic Center project team is not yet on board, City staff requested that KEA work with the City and District to coordinate two community workshops intended to inform the broader community of the joint use study that is underway, present information on the various plans that guide the work (the Samohi Master Plan, the Civic Center Specific Plan, *Creative Capital*, and the emerging LUCE), and provide an opportunity for questions and answers. An additional follow-up workshop is also

being scheduled as well as presentations to boards and commissions and study sessions with the Council and the Board of Education. Given the complexity of issues and jurisdictions, staff is working on the development of a plan to present findings and recommendations both to the Council and the Board. A joint meeting is being considered.

The first community meeting will be held on Saturday, April 12th from 10 am to 2 pm at the SAMOHI cafeteria. Participants will park at the Civic Auditorium lot and take a self-guided tour of the campuses prior to convening in the cafeteria for the workshop activities.

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