



Agenda Item

15-0685

Agenda Date: 1/29/2016

2016 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

CDD 14-10

TITLE Update to the Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Community Development
Support Department(s): N/A

Sponsor(s):

Board/Commission: Heritage Preservation Commission

History:

1 year ago: Deferred

2 years ago: Deferred

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What are the key elements of the study?

The Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines were originally published in 1980 and included a development plan that incorporated significant public improvements to the street, as well as design guidelines to encourage renovations by private business owners.

By 1994, when an update to the Design Guidelines was completed, many of the buildings had been renovated or newly constructed. The 1994 revisions removed the development implementation measures of the plan, which had largely been completed by that time, and included minor modifications to the text, illustrations and graphics of the former document. The body of the guidelines was not substantially changed and no changes to policies were made. Streetscape standards were adopted in 2005.

It has been approximately 20 years since the adoption of the most recent design guidelines. With recent construction and several approved redevelopment projects underway in the surrounding downtown, the context of the historic 100 block of South Murphy Avenue has been transformed. The new study would reexamine the importance of maintaining Murphy Avenue's historical integrity and unique architectural characteristics. New guidelines could provide further design specificity to business owners as well as provide further direction to Heritage Preservation Commissioners and decision makers when considering new proposals for renovation. Consideration may also be given to expand the scope of the guidelines to future redevelopment south of Washington Avenue.

What precipitated this study?

During public hearing discussions, Heritage Preservation Commissioners have noted that the current

Murphy Avenue Guidelines provide limited direction in certain areas and could be updated due to an evolving downtown. Discussion has also included a desire for more specificity with regards to color selection and the possible use of the Munsell Color System to better harmonize design and create connectivity along Murphy Avenue. The intent would be to provide more objective design criteria and improve the overall structure of the document.

Planned Completion Year: 2016

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Moderate

Amount of funding above current budget required: \$25,000

Funding Source: Will seek budget supplement

Explanation of Cost:

Funds would be used to hire a consultant for the recommended limited scope with specific knowledge and experience in historic colors and materials across 100+ years.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.

Explanation of Cost: To be determined as part of study

EXPECTED PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS

Council-approved work plan: No

Council Study Session: No

Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Heritage Preservation Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Support

Explanation: The 100 block of S. Murphy Avenue has been designated a Heritage Landmark District. The guidelines are intended to maintain a link to Sunnyvale's historic commercial area. Staff agrees that more direction and specificity on colors and materials would make the guidelines more useful and easier to implement.

Prepared By: Amber El-Hajj, Senior Planner

Reviewed By: Trudi Ryan, Planning Officer

Reviewed By: Hanson Hom, Director, Community Development

Reviewed By: Kent Steffens, Assistant City Manager

Approved By: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager