

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
February 3, 2009
10:30am

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Affairs

SUBJECT: Initiation Of Special Planning Area For The Section Of Fulton Avenue That Is Located Between The Cross Streets Of Auburn Boulevard And Arden Way

DISTRICT: Peters

CONTACT: Troy Givans, Principal Planner, 874-2413

Overview

A new Special Planning Area (SPA) is proposed for the section of Fulton Avenue between Auburn Boulevard and Arden Way. The SPA will allow flexibility in land uses for the prescribed area subject to design and other criteria that will be developed as part of the establishment of the SPA. The additional flexibility is intended to assist in keeping the area competitive with other commercial corridors. The development of the SPA will be a multi-agency effort with the participation of Department of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Affairs, SHRA, and the Planning Department.

Recommendation

Direct staff to initiate the development of an SPA for the Fulton Avenue Corridor from Auburn Boulevard to Arden Way.

Measures/Evaluation

The proposed development of an SPA is consistent with the Economic Development department's goal of business retention, expansion and attraction and job creation for Sacramento County. Development of an SPA is also consistent with the Planning Department proposal to develop and implement a corridor planning process to revitalize existing commercial corridors within the unincorporated County. Success of the SPA will be measured over time by the number of new businesses attracted to and upgraded within the SPA boundaries.

Fiscal Impact

SHRA indicates that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds will be available to develop and adopt an SPA. The proposed SPA is not anticipated to create any negative fiscal impact to the County. In addition, there is potential for increased generation of sales and property taxes associated with attracting new or expanding existing businesses within Sacramento County.

BACKGROUND:

Staff is recommending that the Board of Supervisors initiate development of a Special Planning Area (SPA) for the portion of Fulton Avenue that is encompassed by the current Fulton Avenue Property Based Improvement District boundary with the exception of the areas already covered by the West Auburn SPA on the northern end of the study area (see Attachment A). Historically Fulton Avenue has been a main thoroughfare with a vital mix of businesses and land uses. However, with the advent of suburban malls, power centers and auto malls, Fulton Avenue now requires a proactive approach to reflect a changing business climate for auto sales and retail.

Fulton Avenue serves as a significant economic engine for Sacramento County and the region; as such, the County and various partners have made significant investments in the area to address the condition and appearance of the corridor. Specifically, the County and Fulton Avenue Business Association (PBID) have invested in a significant upgrade to the streetscape, including landscaping, lighting and monumentation.

However, Fulton is hampered by outdated zoning categories with very prescriptive uses that limit a significant number of properties to auto related uses. Given the current economic climate and the existing zoning, the Economic Development and Planning Departments partnered to engage the property and business owners in a series of focused discussion regarding the future of Fulton Avenue. The proposed SPA is one of a series of proactive steps recommended to assist the competitive position of Fulton Avenue.

DISCUSSION

The intent of the SPA is to spur private sector investment and to accelerate the repositioning and competitiveness of the Fulton Avenue corridor by providing additional land uses by right and establishing design standards to ensure aesthetically pleasing, quality projects. Accelerated reinvestment in the area is also expected to benefit surrounding commercial corridors, neighborhoods, and the Arden Arcade community as well. The SPA is anticipated to address the following elements to ensure appropriate and quality development (this list is not intended to be all inclusive):

- Commercial Design Guidelines, including landscaping
- Land Use and Appropriate Zoning
- Auto Sales Related Design Guidelines
- Signage Design Standards
- ADA Compliance
- Gateway Signage

General Plan And Economic Development Goals

As part of the General Plan Update and in preparation for a new Economic Development Element, both the Planning Department and the Department of Economic Development

presented policy direction that focused on the development and revitalization opportunities within the existing commercial corridors. The proposed development of an SPA is consistent with the aforementioned policy direction of revitalizing and reinvesting in our commercial corridors.

As envisioned the development of an SPA would provide for flexible zoning that will allow multiple uses in addition to providing design standards to ensure quality development. The adoption of the SPA would also remove an additional development impediment by allowing a broad range of acceptable land uses by right (if consistent with design standards).

Work Scope/Timeline

Staff, including staff from the County’s Planning Department, is recommending a streamlined approach to the development of this SPA. The process would incorporate work that has been developed for the West Auburn Boulevard SPA and work that has been completed when staff engaged the property and business owners. In addition, staff will incorporate a process to move forward portions of the planning and environmental work concurrently to work as efficiently as possible. The project is proposed to be conducted in six phases. The phases are as follows:

Phase 1:	Collection, Review and Assessment - The purpose of this phase is to assemble and review existing data, obtain any necessary new data, catalog existing conditions and create presentation base plan material (in process).
Phase 2:	Visual and Functional Analysis – The visual and functional analysis will summarize the constraints, opportunities and existing conditions within the project area. The analysis will serve as a resource throughout the project (in process).
Phase 3:	Stakeholder Workshops – Stakeholder focus groups and workshops to determine the future of Fulton Avenue (in process).
Phase 4:	Draft SPA Development – A Draft SPA will be developed based on the work completed in Phases One through Three.
Phase 5:	Charettes – Public Review and Comment will be solicited on the draft SPA.
Phase 6:	Final Plan Development and Completion – An SPA ordinance will be drafted based on the completed plan, and will be brought before your Board for approval.

Staff is targeting completion of the draft SPA ordinance by September of 2009, at which time the item would be scheduled for the Board for review, comment and endorsement. Upon Board action, the endorsed draft SPA would be forwarded for environmental review and back to your

Board for final adoption. As the process moves forward staff will provide individual Board members with progress reports.

The SPA will be co-managed by the Department of Economic Development and the Planning Department. Day to day oversight of the project will be conducted by County staff from the Planning Department with technical assistance provided by multiple County Departments and consultants as needed. The Director of the Planning Department is in agreement with these proposals and recommendations.

MEASURES/EVALUATIONS:

The proposed development of an SPA is consistent with the Economic Development department's goal of business retention, expansion and attraction and job creation for Sacramento County. Development of an SPA is also consistent with the Planning Department proposal to develop and implement a corridor planning process to revitalize existing commercial corridors within the unincorporated County. Success of the SPA will be measured over time by the number of new business attracted to and upgraded within the SPA boundaries.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA) has identified CDBG Planning money to fund the effort. The agency allocated \$150,000 with a request to program an additional \$40,000 for the effort which staff has estimated will be adequate to cover all costs associated with plan development and approval, including environmental review. The proposed SPA is not anticipated to create any negative fiscal impact to the County. In addition, there is potential for increased generation of sales and property taxes associated with attracting new or expanding existing businesses within Sacramento County.

CONCLUSION:

Development of a Fulton Avenue SPA is intended to maximize redevelopment and revitalization efforts within the corridor. The proposed SPA would increase the flexibility in land uses while providing design parameters for commercial uses that would ensure desirable projects within the corridor. It is anticipated that the SPA would also serve as a catalyst for new projects on the corridor, consistent with goals of the General Plan and priorities established by the Department of Economic Development and endorsed by the Board of Supervisors.

Initiation Of Special Planning Area For The Section Of Fulton Avenue That Is Located Between
The Cross Streets Of Auburn Boulevard And Arden Way
Page 5 of 5

Respectfully submitted,

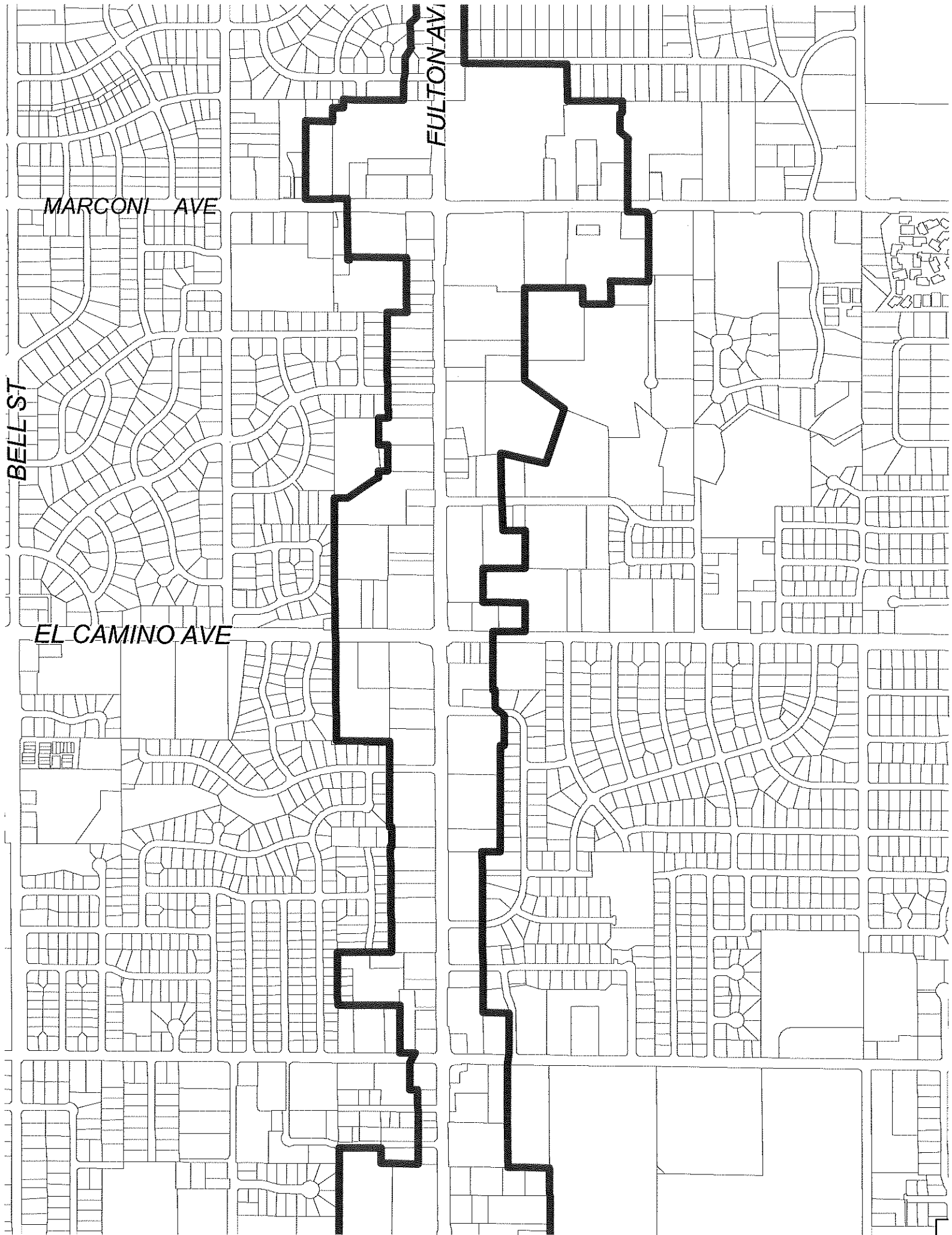
APPROVED:

Robert B. Leonard, Director
Department of Economic Development
& Intergovernmental Affairs

TERRY SCHUTTEN
County Executive

cc: Lisa Bates and Chris Pahule, SHRA

Attachment A: Proposed Fulton Avenue Project Area



MARCONI AVE

FULTON AV.

BELL ST

EL CAMINO AVE