SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY CENTER STATUS UPDATE

SOURCE: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

COMMENT: To bring the City Council up to date on the subject project, the following is a chronology of the project’s past:

Since 1994, the City has been allocating Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the Neighborhood Community Center. Numerous study sessions and public meetings were held to determine suitable sites and the needs for the project.

October 15, 1996, the City Council adopted the priorities addressing the program needs, building features, and the outdoor features for the Neighborhood Community Center.

February 18, 1997, the City Council awarded the contract for site selection, design services, and construction management for the Neighborhood Community Center to the firm of Kawasaki, Theilacher, Ueno, and Associates (KTU+A) of San Diego.

September 30, 1997, the City Council approved the three recommended sites for further analysis and conceptual design preparation for the Neighborhood Community Center.

May 12, 1998, the City Council authorized staff to proceed with negotiations for the Tulare Valley Railroad Property, located along Orange Avenue near Plano Street. At that time, Porterville Unified School District (PUSD) also selected the Orange Avenue site and the adjacent property for their new elementary school. PUSD subsequently purchased the entire site and has offered to provide to the City that portion of the site needed for the Neighborhood Community Center.

June 23, 1998, the City Council approved the priority ranking of the program and design features for the Neighborhood Community Center.
In August 1999, the City determined it would still need several years of additional allotment of entitlement funds in order to be in a position to begin construction. At that time, as a result of Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) staff recommendations, City Council approved amendments to the 1995 Five-year Consolidated Plan that changed the funding source for the Neighborhood Community Center from CDBG funds to HUD’s Section 108 funding. The Section 108 program allows entitlement communities to borrow up to five times their annual entitlement for major projects, with repayment structured over a twenty-year period. Repayment is made annually from the City’s CDBG entitlement allocation. The City of Porterville qualifies for approximately $3,655,000 under the Section 108 program.

March 7, 2000, the City Council approved the proposed site layout, including the construction of one lighted ballfield, bleachers, and restrooms subject to securing adequate additional parking. City Council also approved staff to proceed with negotiations for the parcel configuration with PUSD and draft agreements for cost sharing, use, and maintenance, etc.

City staff has been working closely with PUSD regarding environmental issues at the site. The current status of environmental processing is:

1. Compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) – The CEQA documentation is complete.

2. Compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – An expanded noise study is currently underway in compliance with HUD policy. NEPA compliance is anticipated to be documented by late September.

3. Sections 404 Wetlands Alteration Permit – A portion of the slough is proposed to be piped and covered as part of the Neighborhood Community Center project. The Section 404 application has been submitted and reviewed. Final determination is dependant upon receipt of clearance from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS). Final determinations from SHPO and USFWS are expected by the end of September.

4. Section 7 Endangered Species Act Consultation - A biological study addressing mitigation measures for the relocation of the habitat of the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle has been submitted to (USFWS). A final determination is expected by the end of September.
5. City staff is also actively pursuing the various environmental permits required by the State of California. Final determination for these various permits is anticipated by late November.

Assuming these reviews maintain their current schedule, a final determination by the Army Corps of Engineers is expected by the end of October.

City staff has prepared plans for a water line across the site from Plano Street to “A” Street. Installation of the water line is anticipated by late November.

Rough grading plans have been completed and submitted to the architects for both the Neighborhood Community Center and the Elementary School for review. Grading is proposed to be completed by late December.

Upon completion of the environmental process, Section 108 HUD funding will be finalized and construction documents will be completed. It is anticipated that construction will begin early 2003.

RECOMMENDATION: No action required. Report is an advisory update.