

# **Beyond the Environment: Socio-Economic Sustainability & Meaningful Community Input in Land Use Decisions**

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# Outline

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# Challenges Facing Local Government

- Limited government resources:
  - Cities and Counties across the country are facing structural budget deficits requiring ongoing cuts to needed services and staff
- Growing community needs:
  - Affordable housing
  - Additional park space
  - Access to health care services
  - School improvements
  - Neighborhood services

# Opportunities for Local Government

- Leverage: Economic development
- Set local standards on what should be built and where
- Create a vision/platform for future development
- Set standards regarding opportunities for public involvement

# Community Impact Reports

- Community Impact Reports: project level analysis that provides additional information on how a proposed project will positively or negatively impact a community
- CIR's often include information on:
  - Impact on the local housing market
  - Fiscal impact to the city (i.e. will new revenue be generated)
  - Impact on parks and city services
  - Impact on jobs



# Case Study: San Jose Cost Benefit Analysis

- To be applied to all projects that receive more than \$1 million in public subsidies.
- Projects must include the following analysis:
  - Net fiscal impact: A calculation of tax revenues generated by the subsidy minus tax revenues lost.
  - Net job impact: number of jobs generated from the project
  - Housing impact: number of housing units constructed or demolished
  - Neighborhood impacts: including services such as parks, community centers and libraries
- Community Input: All information regarding the proposed project must be available to the public 30 days before a City Council vote on the project.

# Large Scale Land Use Decisions

- Local government can also leverage social and environmental standards on large scale land use decisions
- Such large scale land use planning efforts can include:
  - General/ Comprehensive Plan updates
  - Visioning process
  - Specific Plan
  - Planning for transit development

# Overview of Coyote Valley Project

- Coyote Valley: 7,000 acres
  - Approximately 3,500 acres are reserved as permanent open space
- City of San Jose's goal: 50,000 jobs and 25,000 housing units
- When complete, Coyote Valley will have approximately 80,000 residents



# Social and Environmental Equity Goals

- Affordable Housing
  - 20% affordability (5,000 units)
  - 3,000 units will go to households earning at or below \$40,000/yr
- Health Care Services
  - Require that the City include two health care clinics in the Specific Plan and that funding for construction be included in the overall infrastructure cost of the project

# Social and Environmental Equity Goals

- **Parks/ Open Space**
  - Ensure that Coyote Valley has adequate park spaces for all community members
  - Open space preservation (3,500 acres)
- **Neighborhood Design/ Transportation**
  - Encourage mixed-use high density development
  - Provide a comprehensive public transit system
  - Creates an urban center that promotes commercial activity within the urban core and not along the freeway

# Lessons Learned

- Local governments and city staff and community members need to think creatively about how they can use economic development to leverage a improvements all residents in their community
- Community Impact Reports and large scale planning processes can provide substantial benefits to local communities without impacting city finances or creating disincentives for developers