

## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** JUNE 18, 2015

**TO:** TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

**FROM:** DAVID REYES, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF  
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT:** GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – REVIEW OF THE DRAFT LAND USE AND  
MOBILITY ELEMENTS

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

- Review staff recommended changes to the language of goals and policies in the Land Use & Mobility Elements that have been modified based on comments received during the public comment period.
- Receive the updated Land Use Diagram.
- Receive information regarding the final adoption schedule and related Transportation Advisory Commission recommendations.

#### BACKGROUND:

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, the City published the Draft Environmental Impact Report disclosing the environmental impacts of the General Plan Update. The publication also signaled the beginning of a 60-day review period, during which any individual or agency could comment on the content, methodology, or conclusion of the environmental analysis. The public review process mandated by CEQA is designed to solicit public input, and provide a lead agency the opportunity to respond to and clarify any issues in the Draft EIR. The lead agency's responses, along with the public comments themselves, will be combined with other clarifications and additions to the Draft EIR to create the Final EIR. The publication of the Final EIR is tentatively slated to occur in early July.

Additionally, as part of the DEIR publication, draft versions of the Land Use & Mobility Elements were made available for review and comment. The material in the Land Use & Mobility Elements provides the scope of the project that was analyzed. Comments related to the scope of the project, (i.e., policies or land use designations) and not related to the analysis of the project's environmental impact (traffic, noise, and GHG Emissions) will not be addressed in the Final EIR and are the focus of today's discussion.

Following the release of the Draft EIR and throughout the 60-day comment period, staff conducted a series of presentations on the content of both the Draft EIR and the Draft Land Use

& Mobility Elements. The presentations were delivered to 10 Advisory Commissions, two Community Forums, as well as business and neighborhood associations. Comments received from Advisory Commissions, individuals, and associations were combined with written correspondence submitted electronically and physically to represent the complete body of comments on both the Draft EIR and the Land Use & Mobility Elements.

Since the close of the comment period, staff has been reviewing the comments and preparing responses. These responses will become a part of the Final EIR. The purpose of today's meeting is to provide an update on the status of the General Plan, review the changes made to the Land Use & Mobility Elements, and prepare for the final adoption process.

#### **PROCESS:**

Going forward, the process for adoption of the General Plan Update is outlined below:

- Publication of the Final EIR (July, 2015)
- Noticed Public Hearing – Transportation Advisory Commission - Final Recommendation to the Planning Commission on the Land Use & Mobility Element Update and Final EIR (*Tentative: July 16, 2015*)
- Noticed Public Hearing – Planning Commission - Final Recommendation to the City Council on the General Plan Update and Final EIR (*Tentative: July 22, 2015*)
- Noticed Public Hearing – City Council – Final Recommendation on the Land Use & Mobility Element Update and Certification of the Final EIR (*Tentative: August 31, 2015*)

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The following is a summary of each component of the General Plan Update.

##### **Draft Land Use Element**

###### Guiding Principles, Goals and Policies

###### *Guiding Principles*

In April of 2013, the City Council provided staff with direction on the proposed wording of the eight General Plan Guiding Principles. These principles are meant to serve as broad vision statements describing the community's values and its vision. To support these statements, the General Plan includes objectives and detailed policies which define how the vision outlined in the Principles will be accomplished. The most significant discussion centered on changes to the Second Guiding Principle related to Historic Preservation and the content of the eighth Guiding Principle related to Education. These Principles remain in their adopted form (see Attachment A Page 1).

###### *Goals and Policies*

The General Plan process has been moving from a broader vision - as defined in the Guiding Principles - to more detailed components of the vision, the Goals and Policies. The new Goals and Policies demonstrate the relationship between land use policies and policies that foster high quality design, the arts and culture, sustainable infrastructure, a vital economy, exemplary public services, and public involvement and participation.

Revisions to the language of specific Goals and Policies were suggested by Commissions as well as by agencies throughout the public comment period. Staff reviewed the comments and recommends the following additions and modifications (see Attachment A).

The changes are limited to the following Goals and Policies:

Goals and Policies	Explanation of change(s)
Goal 4: Policy 4.9 – Gateways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modified language to include references to distinctive engineering such as the Colorado Street Bridge, per comments by the Design Commission.</li> </ul>
Goal 5: Policy 5.5 – Civic Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer directly to the Civic Center, and include a statement to respect concepts in the Bennett Plan</li> </ul>
Goal 5: New Policy 5.7 – Pedestrian Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy created per comments by the Design Commission and Transportation Advisory Commission calling for the support and enhancement of the pedestrian experience.</li> </ul>
Goal 6: Sense of Place Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated wording to reflect Pasadena’s history, transportation system, distinct buildings and neighborhoods, all of which contribute to the City’s sense of place.</li> </ul>
Goal 6: Policy 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included a reference to courtyards, paseos, and alleys per comment by Design Commission.</li> </ul>
Goal 6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace “sensitive” with “appropriate”, replace “respect” with “complement”</li> </ul>
Goal 7: Architectural Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed the word “some” and terms “traditional, creative, innovative” from Goal 7</li> </ul>
Goal 8: Historic Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replaced the word “reminders” with “valued assets and important representations” per comment by Pasadena Heritage.</li> <li>Removed a typographical error in Policy 8.6, per comment by Pasadena Heritage.</li> <li>Reworded Policy 8.9 based on comments by Pasadena Heritage.</li> <li>Removed a typographical error in Policy 8.10, as noted by Pasadena Heritage.</li> </ul>
Goal 18: Correlation of Land Use with Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace the word “with a car” to “without a car”</li> </ul>

Land Use Diagram

The Land Use Diagram assigns General Plan Land Use Designations to individual parcels throughout the City. Each Land Use Designation is associated with a range of development capacity measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The Land Use Designation and the FAR Range combine to provide a framework for the type and scale of development allowed throughout the City. The Land Use Diagram also visually represents the concepts of neighborhood protection, targeted growth around transit centers and corridors, encouraging alternative forms of transportation and fostering a healthy economy. The Land Use Diagram was created over a period of three years based on public input and refined through a series of public meetings with Advisory Commissions. Elements that distinguish the Land Use Diagram from the previous version adopted in 1994 and re-adopted in 2004 are outlined below:

### *Designation of Land Uses and New Boundaries in the Specific Plan Areas*

The most significant change to the Land Use Diagram proposed by this General Plan Update is the addition of land use designations for the specific plan areas. In the existing General Plan (adopted 1994 & 2004), all specific plan areas are listed as "Specific Plan" and there are no land uses or densities for parcels in specific plan areas or for non-residential land use designations. The designations or regulations are contained in the specific plan documents. The Draft General Plan Land Use Diagram assigns development intensities to these parcels, allowing a range of development potential through a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) calculation. Additionally, a number of changes were made to the specific plan areas, including modifying the specific plan boundaries, and sun setting the West Gateway Specific Plan. A map of these boundary changes is included as Attachment B.

### *New Land Use Designations*

There are two new land uses being introduced as part of the Land Use Diagram: Mixed Use and R&D Flex Space. The establishment of the Mixed Use designation is an important tool in fostering a reduction in the frequency and lengths of vehicle trips, increasing transit ridership, and fostering high quality architectural design and a sense of place. It has the potential to achieve this by creating a mix of uses in a geographically concentrated area, which reduces the need to make longer and more frequent vehicle trips. Also, the Mixed Use designation has been placed along many major corridors to grant access to transit for new residents or employees. The design of mixed use projects, with shared public spaces, colonnades, arcades, ground level storefronts and access to high quality transit stations, can develop into aesthetically pleasing and functional buildings.

The R&D Flex Space designation is a land use designation designed to foster a stronger local economy by allowing non-traditional industrial uses, creative office space, biological & technological start-ups, and research & development. These industries create high quality jobs, and would work synergistically with local institutions such as the California Institute of Technology and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

### *Updated General Plan Land Use Diagram*

Since the initiation of the environmental analysis on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013, staff has made minor modifications to the General Plan Land Use Diagram to make technical corrections between existing development and proposed land use designations. The updated General Plan Land Use Diagram is included in Attachment C.

### Development Caps

CEQA requires an analysis of the build-out of your General Plan through the horizon year of the document. Build-out represents citywide development that utilizes the maximum FAR on every parcel throughout the City. Since this is not a development scenario that represents the vision as embodied in the Guiding Principles, the City has set a precedent of adopting Development Caps that are applied to each existing Specific Plan area. The principle of directing growth into the Specific Plan areas has been a central tenet of Pasadena's General Plan since 1994 and it continues to be a central theme. Directing development into specific plan areas and then applying Development Caps to those areas is the mechanism through which the City of Pasadena regulates the overall amount of residential and non-residential development that will

occur through the horizon period.

The Development Caps are based on an analysis of historical growth trends and an understanding of the community's vision for its various specific plans. The intent of the development caps is to define a build-out scenario that's allows enough development to implement the vision as stated in the General Plan Guiding Principles without creating the impacts that adversely affect the quality of life. Attachment D demonstrates the Development Caps for the proposed project, the CD, SFO, Lincoln Alternative, and the Lamanda Park Specific Plan Alternative.

### Implementation Program, Glossary & Technical Appendices

#### *Implementation Program*

The Implementation Program provides an overview of the types of actions or tools the City will use to implement the Goals and Policies of the General Plan Land Use Element. It provides program descriptions, and identifies applicable Land Use Goals and/or Policies and responsible departments. Also, the Implementation Program establishes the timing of each program, which is divided into three categories: 1) Completion time frame (near or mid to long term), 2) Continuous, and 3) Periodic update. It should be noted that even though there is a funding source dedicated to maintenance of the General Plan ("General Plan Maintenance Fee"), additional funding may be required to complete some of the proposed implementation programs due to their complexity.

#### *Technical Appendix*

The proposed General Plan Update establishes new development caps within the City. The Technical Appendix provides a framework for modifying the development caps.

#### *Glossary*

The Glossary includes an alphabetical list of words or terms found in the Draft Land Use Element with definitions and/or explanations.

### Retiring Optional Elements

The elements of a General Plan are designed to provide policy guidance to cities in specialized topic areas. The State of California requires that a General Plan consist of a minimum of seven required elements focused respectively on Land Use; Mobility; Housing; Conservation; Open Space; Noise; and Safety. Pasadena's General Plan currently has 14 Elements, representing the seven mandated elements and seven optional elements. Of the 14 overall elements, six will be retired as a result of General Plan Adoption including Public Facilities, Social Development, Cultural and Recreational, Economic Development and Employment, Historic and Cultural, and Scenic Highways. The Goals and policies in the Draft Land Use Element and Draft Mobility Element have been organized and written to demonstrate the relationships between land use and the related areas of mobility, a sustainable environment, infrastructure, art, economic vitality, urban design, and historic preservation. After reviewing and incorporating the relevant material from these optional elements into the Draft Land Use & Mobility Elements, the optional elements will be retired.

## **Mobility Element**

There were several comments received during the DEIR comment period related to the Mobility Element. Targeted changes to the Mobility Element are being recommended in order to respond to those comments.

### Bicycle Network

A discrepancy was found between DEIR assumed programmed improvements and the Future Bicycle Network Map. The Draft EIR identifies three bike lanes to be installed. The improvements on Washington Blvd between Altadena Drive and Sierra Madre Boulevard is not illustrated on the map (Figure 5.13-4), however the bicycle improvement was included in the Travel Demand Model. The map will be updated to reflect the facilities included in the model.

The Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association was concerned that the Bicycle Transportation Action Plan (BTAP) details specific improvements to be implemented. BTAP provides feasible improvements in order to determine estimated cost to implement the plan. Suggested improvements in the plan to control volume and traffic will be considered with community input.

### Pedestrian Policies

It was suggested by the Playhouse Business District Association to reorganize pedestrian policies and create a Walkability section. Currently, the policies are structured to support the Mobility Element Objectives that assist in the overall implementation of the plan. Each objective considers the benefits of all alternative modes of transportations.

### California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans)

On March 22, 2015, the City received a letter from California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans) providing their comments for the Draft EIR. Caltrans questioned the City's choice of CEQA VMT/cap Threshold and expressed concern that the citywide VMT/cap threshold may be "higher" than what may be ultimately adopted by SCAG as a regional VMT/cap threshold. Caltrans staff acknowledged that under SB 743 cities are able to adopt CEQA thresholds as long as they are technically supported. Caltrans also raised the issue that future transportation impact fees could be an important opportunity to improve Caltrans owned intersections at freeway ramp termini. To address CalTrans concerns Transportation staff developed the following proposed policies:

#### *New Policies*

- City of Pasadena will monitor and evaluate the development and adoption of future VMT/cap thresholds for the SCAG region and Los Angeles County.
- City of Pasadena will involve Caltrans in the revision and update of the existing Transportation Impact Fee.
- City of Pasadena will consider improvements to ITS projects (including the I-210 Connected Corridors project) involving Caltrans owned intersections at freeway ramp termini in the development of the future transportation impact fee.

The City of Pasadena and Caltrans are currently cooperating on the development of the I-210 Connected Corridors project to address congestion relief due to incidents on either freeway or city arterial streets. The goal of the future phases of the project is to also address recurring traffic congestion on freeway and adjacent arterial streets. The City is proposing to introduce the following policy into the Mobility Element to further respond to Caltrans' concern:

#### New Policy

- City of Pasadena will work with Caltrans to evaluate access management needs and strategies to better manage traffic operations on arterial streets located within close proximity of freeway on/off-ramps in an effort to reduce traffic backups and frictions at Caltrans ramp signals.

Additionally, the City committed to amending the Transportation Analysis Guidelines in addition to introducing new policies. In response to Caltrans' concern that future developments should assess any impacts to increased queueing on freeway off-ramps, the City will administratively amend the Transportation Analysis Guidelines as follows:

If a project of "community significance" is within close proximity of a freeway off-ramp, the City of Pasadena will include freeway off-ramp queueing analysis as part of any traffic impact study being prepared for the project.

### **REQUIRED TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION ACTION DURING UPCOMING NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING**

At a public hearing, tentatively scheduled for July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the Transportation Advisory Commission will be asked to recommend that the City Council:

- Certify the Final Environmental Impact Report; and
- Adopt the Mobility Element, Goals and Policies.

### **FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE:**

In order for the General Plan to be effective, the City must review, maintain, and implement it in a systematic and consistent manner. To that end, Section 2 of the Draft Land Use Element discusses an Implementation Plan, which provides a list of tools the city will use to implement policies in the Land Use Element. A few examples of implementation items are listed below:

#### Update and Create Specific Plans

The City will review and update all specific plans to ensure consistency with the updated Land Use Diagram. The City shall also prepare new specific plans as necessary, to further goals and policies of the General Plan.

#### Transit Oriented Development (T.O.D) Revisions

Following General Plan adoption, a Zoning Code revision will create additional flexibility for parking standards in T.O.D's.

#### Develop Citywide Design Guidelines

The City will review and create design guidelines that incorporate both Specific Plan design guidelines as well as citywide design principles into one document.

Establish Climate Action Plan

The City will develop and adopt a Climate Action Plan that monitors the impacts of climate change and provides strategies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

**Electronic Links**

The Draft Environmental Impact Report, the Draft Land Use Element, and the Draft Mobility Element are all available at the following website: <http://cityofpasadena.net/planning/General-Plan-Update/>

Respectfully Submitted,



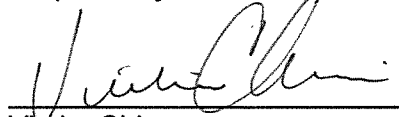
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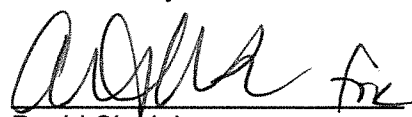
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**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Draft Land Use Element – Guiding Principles, Goals & Policies

Attachment B: Changes to Specific Plan Boundaries

Attachment C: Updated General Plan Land Use Diagram

Attachment D: Development Caps