


MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 22, 2021

TO: DESIGN COMMISSION

FROM:  DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE PROGRAM – DRAFT OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT
SPECIFIC PLAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND
GUIDELINES

This memo is intended to provide background information on the Specific Plan Update Program and overall process. The goal is to present draft design and development standards and guidelines on each of the Specific Plans to the Design Commission to solicit feedback during the third round of the community engagement process. A presentation on the Central District Specific Plan will take place on June 22, 2021, with presentations on other plans to follow at future meetings. Feedback received will help inform the preparation of proposed plans that will be presented to Planning Commission for their review and recommendation to City Council.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the City adopted a comprehensive update to the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The 2015 Land Use Element reaffirmed prior core values, including focusing new housing and employment opportunities with a mix of uses and amenities within Pasadena's Specific Plans and former redevelopment areas. The Land Use Element continues to promote a pedestrian-friendly built environment that contributes to distinct and quality places for living, working, shopping, entertainment, and recreation within its Specific Plan areas. The Land Use Element identifies a list of tools in order to implement goals and policies of the General Plan. Specifically, the implementation program calls for the City to update its Specific Plans and applicable Zoning Code sections as a key action item to ensure consistency with the updated Land Use Element and to further the goals of the General Plan.

In 2018, the City initiated a program to update Pasadena's Specific Plans. The program's primary objective is to update existing development and design standards and guidelines within Pasadena's eight Specific Plan areas in order to implement a number of goals within the General Plan. Specifically on urban design, the new Specific Plans aim to achieve the following goals: (1) a built-environment that evolves while maintaining Pasadena's unique sense of place, character, and the urban fabric; (2) encourage an architecturally distinguished city with a diversity of building styles; (3) further contribute to a safe, well-designed, accessible city with a diversity of uses and forms that are walkable, cohesive, and unique; and (4) new development that contributes to pedestrian vitality and facilitates bicycle use within Specific Plan areas.

Engagement Synopsis:

Since the launch of the program, a growing number of community members have engaged in the process by viewing the program website, OurPasadena.org, signing up for email updates, following Our Pasadena on [social media](#), participating in a pop-up event or youth activity, attending a plan-area workshop, and/or participating in a virtual open house.

Community-Wide Open House:

In March 2018, the Planning Department hosted a series of educational community-wide open houses to introduce the program and solicit broad input on community values and concerns for each of the Specific Plan areas.

Round 1 Specific Plan Area Workshops:

In May through July of 2018, the Planning Department held the first round of Specific Plan Area workshops to solicit input on plan vision, desired land uses, and urban form for each of the areas. The Round 1 workshop for the Central District Specific Plan was held on June 26, 2018.

Round 2 Specific Plan Area Workshops:

In January through July of 2019, the Planning Department held the second round of Specific Plan Area workshops to solicit input on preliminary land use concepts based on input received during the first round of workshops for each of the plan areas. The Round 2 workshop for the Central District Specific Plan was held on March 21, 2019.

Pop-Up Events:

In addition, the Planning Department held three pop-up events (at ArtCenter South Campus, Pasadena City College, and Playhouse Block Party) to solicit general input on desired uses and improvements in the relevant Specific Plan areas.

Youth Engagement:

The Planning Department has also engaged youth primarily by partnering with existing community youth programs and by reaching out to schools, including City of Pasadena Youth Ambassador Program, Adelante Youth Alliance, and John Muir High School. In addition, on October 19, 2019, the Planning Department hosted a Student Summit at Jackie Robinson Community Center in order to generate excitement for the Our Pasadena program and encourage youth to share their unique perspective on what will make Pasadena a better place now and in the future.

Round 3 Virtual Specific Plan Open Houses, Webinars, and Commission Discussions:

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while continuing to engage the community, the Planning Department hosted the last round of community workshops virtually in an open house format with a live webinar to solicit input on draft development standards for each of the Specific Plans.

The following is the Round 3 schedule:

	East Colorado	Lincoln Ave	Fair Oaks Orange Grove	North Lake	South Fair Oaks	Central District	East Pasadena	Lamanda Park
Open House	7/16/20	8/20/20	9/24/20	10/8/20	10/29/20	11/19/20	12/10/20	1/7/21
Webinar	8/13/20	8/24/20	10/8/20	10/15/20	11/5/20	12/2/20	12/17/20	1/14/21
Design Commission	10/27/20	12/22/20	5/18/2021	5/18/21	2/23/21	6/22/21	*7/13/21	*7/23/21

*estimated dates

During this phase of the community engagement process, the program team will present drafts of the development and design standards for each of the Specific Plans to the Design Commission for feedback, as shown in the table above. Please review the virtual open house for the Central District Specific Plan to provide feedback on the draft standards at:

<https://ourpasadena.consultation.ai/centraldistrict/>

In addition to the materials available in the Virtual Open House, Attachment A contains various maps and diagrams that more clearly demonstrate the proposed regulations as compared to existing regulations for easier reference.

Attachment(s):

Attachment A: Central District Specific Plan Comparison Maps