



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: June 11, 2008 REPORT NO. 08-091

ATTENTION: Land Use & Housing Committee
Agenda of June 18, 2008

SUBJECT: General Plan Action Plan Workshop

REFERENCE: City Council Report No. 08-019

REQUESTED ACTION:
Provide input on the Draft General Plan Action Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Request staff to return to City Council with a final draft of the General Plan Action Plan for consideration.

SUMMARY:

General Plan Update

On March 10, 2008, the City Council adopted the update to the General Plan, which sets out a long-range vision and comprehensive policy framework for how the City should plan for projected growth and development, provide public services, and maintain the qualities that define San Diego over the next 20 to 30 years. The policies within the General Plan provide guidance for the physical development of the City and are used to: guide community plan updates; review discretionary permits; and provide direction for public projects, master plans, and other implementation programs. The next step to achieve implementation of the goals and policies in the adopted General Plan will be through the adoption of a General Plan Action Plan (Attachment 1), which will provide a comprehensive implementation program for the General Plan and outline the strategies and tools needed to bring together policy and action. After City Council approval, the General Plan Action Plan (Action Plan) will be deemed incorporated into the General Plan by reference. The implementation measures identified in the Action Plan must be consistent with the policies in the General Plan.

General Plan Implementation

After the adoption of a General Plan, the planning agency is required per California State Law to identify and make recommendations to the local legislative body on reasonable and practical implementation measures (Attachment 2). The state of California General Plan Guidelines (2003) identify that a general plan is typically implemented through zoning, subdivisions, and capital improvement programs. The draft Action Plan has been prepared to provide a broad range of actions to implement each of the adopted General Plan policies. Staff is continuing to work on the development and refinement of the implementation actions with the participation of staff from other City departments and interested members of the public.

The Action Plan is organized into nine tables that correlate with the adopted General Plan elements: Land Use & Community Planning; Mobility; Urban Design; Economic Prosperity; Public Facilities, Services and Safety; Recreation; Conservation; Noise; and Historic Preservation. The implementation program for the Housing Element is included within that element under separate cover due to mandatory compliance requirements.

Each of the nine tables contains ongoing, short-, mid-, and long-term actions associated with the implementation of General Plan policies. Ongoing actions are defined as those with no definite completion date or which are part of the ongoing City work program. Short-term actions are those anticipated to be completed within 0-3 years, mid-term actions within 3-5 years, and long-term actions within 5-10 years. Some General Plan policies will be implemented through City processes currently in place such as the development review process. However, other policies will need to be implemented through specific actions such as amendments to the Land Development Code. The Action Plan also identifies which departments are responsible for carrying out each action. Often, multiple departments may share implementation responsibility.

The Action Plan will need to be periodically updated to reflect progress on implementation or to reflect shifting budget priorities. Changes to the Action Plan that further the goals and policies of the General Plan and do not obstruct their attainment will be considered consistent with the General Plan and will not require an amendment to the General Plan. Any changes to specific actions will be recorded to ensure that a clear record is maintained.

Key Implementation Actions

The Action Plan highlights seven key actions which are critical to General Plan implementation. Additional details on funding, timeframes and description of the seven key actions are provided due to their importance in implementing the General Plan.

- Community Plan Updates

The implementation and refinement of citywide goals and policies as applied to individual communities will be accomplished primarily through the update of the City’s community plans. A table provided on page five (5) of the Action Plan identifies community plans that are in the update process or scheduled to begin in the near future. Additional community plans are also in need of update. As staffing and funding becomes available to begin additional updates or as plan updates identified below are completed, updates of the remaining community plans will commence. Funding for community plan updates will be drawn from a variety of sources including: grants, a portion of the

existing General Plan Maintenance Fee revenue, redevelopment funding, the general fund, contributions from other agencies, other sources, and Community Development Block Grants in eligible communities.

- Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments

LDC amendments will take place as part of community plan updates when needed to provide zoning packages to implement land use designations or site-specific recommendations, as part of the regular Land Development Code update process, or as stand alone amendments needed to implement specific policies in the General Plan related to the Conservation, Mobility, and Urban Design elements. The amendments identified throughout the action plan have been assigned a timeframe according to priority. Additional funding will need to be identified to provide for staffing or consultant services to accomplish the amendments in the timeframes specified.

- Public Facilities Finance Strategy

The Public Facilities Financing Strategy establishes a plan of action to address the provision of public facilities within the City. Facilities Financing staff has begun initial work on developing the strategy.

- Economic Development Strategic Plan

The Economic Development Strategic Plan will further refine the goals and policies of the Economic Prosperity Element, report on economic trends, describe targeted industry clusters, inform infrastructure and land use priorities, develop strategies for addressing near- to mid-term economic issues, and identify new initiatives for public and private partnership. The Plan is currently being updated and will be completed with existing staffing.

- Parks Master Plan

The Parks Master Plan will be a comprehensive, citywide plan to guide park and open space acquisition, design and development, recreational programming and needed maintenance over the next 20-30 years. The preparation of a Parks Master Plan will require consultant services and funding will need to be allocated to complete this work within the timeframe identified. A portion of the funding will be allocated in the FY09 budget to begin work on the Parks Master Plan.

- Comprehensive Historic Transfer of Development Rights Program

The Historical Resources Board is in the process of establishing an Incentives Subcommittee to research and evaluate specific incentives, including proposals for a TDR program. The Incentives Subcommittee will meet monthly beginning in June 2008 and will refer specific proposals to the full Board and on the City Council for implementation. Existing Historical Resources staff will work with the subcommittee to develop the program.

- Climate Change Initiatives

Climate change has been a growing concern for the City of San Diego and other cities around the world. The State of California has taken an aggressive stance to address global warming through AB 32, the “Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006,” Executive Order S-3-05, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger, and many additional legislative and regulatory actions. It will be very challenging for the City of San Diego as well as the State of California to meet these targets. Immediate actions are needed in order to reduce the cumulative and more serious impacts that would otherwise occur. The City’s General Plan incorporates policies which address local Green House Gas Emission (GHG) mitigation and adaptation strategies and this Action Plan identifies initial steps that the City can take to help meet state and local targets.

General Plan Monitoring

In compliance with state law (Attachment 2), an annual progress report on general plan implementation and progress on meeting housing element goals must be prepared and submitted to the state Office of Planning & Research and the Department of Housing & Community Development. After the adoption of the Action Plan, annual monitoring will take place to evaluate progress on General Plan implementation. The annual monitoring will also include reporting on economic and sustainable community indicators. Staff is working on refining and developing improved economic indicators and will present the proposed new indicators with the final draft Action Plan.

When the Strategic Framework Element was adopted in 2002, a Five-Year Action Plan was brought forward as a companion item to identify specific measures needed to implement the element. Many of the identified action items were related to completing the comprehensive General Plan update. To close out this Five-Year Action Plan, staff is in the process of preparing an updated General Plan Monitoring Report that will identify which actions have been completed, are underway, or not completed. This updated monitoring report will be provided with the final draft Action Plan.

The General Plan Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

The Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) included within the Final Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan provides a Mitigation Framework to address potential impacts that could result from implementation of the General Plan. The General Plan Action Plan will provide a bridge between the Mitigation Framework in the MMRP and more specific, refined mitigation measures.

Actions identified in the Action Plan will be subject to separate environmental analysis, pursuant to CEQA, to identify any potentially significant direct, indirect and/or cumulative impacts.

Next Steps

Staff intends to continue refining the Action Plan and proceed to a Planning Commission hearing in the fall and then to City Council for final consideration.

FISCAL CONSIDERATION:

The rate at which implementation will occur is dependent on the City budget process. Individual actions may have fiscal impacts due to staffing and budgetary needs. Through the budget process, decisions will be made to prioritize staffing and funding levels for projects and programs citywide. A portion of the funding for community plan updates will be provided through the existing General Plan Maintenance fee.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

No previous discussion or action. A draft of the Action Plan was attached to the City Council Report No. 08-019.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION and PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

A partial draft of the Action Plan was presented and discussed at the Land Use and Housing Technical Advisory Committee as an information item on May 14, 2008. The TAC's preliminary comments focused on concern with the CEBA process. Attachment 3 outlines the process for when a CEBA will be required and how it will be prepared. Staff also presented an information item to the Community Planners Committee (CPC) at their meeting of May 27, 2008. CPC comments addressed the prioritization of additional community plan updates and concern regarding the number of actions identified as ongoing. CPC is interested in following the progress of the Action Plan.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS and PROJECTED IMPACTS:

The Action Plan will identify actions that may have citywide or specific impacts dependent upon the specific action.

Respectfully submitted,

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- Attachments:
1. Draft General Plan Action Plan
 2. California Government Code Section 65400
 3. CEBA Process