



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

DATE ISSUED: April 23, 2014 REPORT NO. 14-038

ATTENTION: Smart Growth & Land Use Committee  
Agenda of April 30, 2014

SUBJECT: Ocean Beach Community Plan Update (OBCPU). Council District 2.  
Process 5

REFERENCE: Planning Commission Report PC-13-072 (June 20, 2013). Planning Commission reports can be accessed online at <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning-commission/pdf/pcreports/>.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Forward the Item to City Council for Consideration Including:

1. **Certification** of Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) Project No. 308424/Sch. No. 2011071082 and adoption of the Findings, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and a Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
2. **Approval** of a resolution amending the Ocean Beach Community Plan and General Plan
3. **Approval** of an ordinance rezoning 99 parcels from RS-1-7 to RM-1-1.
4. **Direct** the City Clerk or DSD to file the NOD with the County Clerk.

**COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP RECOMMENDATION:**

On August 7, 2013, the Ocean Beach Community Planning Board (OBPB) voted 11-0-0 to recommend approval of the draft Public Facilities Financing Plan . On October 2, 2013, the OBPB recommended public release of the draft OBCPU, the draft PFFP, and the draft Programmatic EIR by a vote of 9-0-0.

**BACKGROUND:**

The community of Ocean Beach is approximately one square mile in size. The community is bordered by the San Diego River and Mission Bay Regional Park on the north, the Pacific Ocean on the west, and the Peninsula Community Planning area on the south and east (Attachment 1).

The Ocean Beach Precise Plan (Plan) and Local Coastal Program was adopted by the San Diego City Council on July 3, 1975. The Plan was amended on November 25, 1980 to include the Ocean Beach Precise Plan Local Coastal Program, and again on February 15, 1981, to recognize construction of an excess reclaimed water outfall offshore from the mouth of the San Diego River.

The 1975 Ocean Beach Precise Plan was intended to establish as public policy a program for preserving and enhancing the community. Attachment 2 is the existing land use map, and the following table summarizes the land uses and acreages for the adopted plan.

**Adopted Land Use Plan Summary**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low-Medium Residential	135.2	21
Medium Density Residential	184.5	29
Neighborhood Commercial	14.4	2
Community Commercial	32.9	5
Open Space	18.9	3
Private/Commercial Recreation	13.8	2
Parks and Recreation	30	5
Institutional	6.1	1
Right of Way	205.5	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>641.3</b>	<b>100</b>

The existing community plan designates 319.7 acres for residential development. The residential goals of the Ocean Beach Precise Plan include maintaining the existing residential character of Ocean Beach as exemplified by a mixture of small scale residential building types and styles; promoting the continuation of an economically balanced housing market, providing for all age groups and family types; and enhancing the opportunity for racial and ethnic minorities to live in the community.

The plan recognizes that new residential construction in Ocean Beach should be at a scale that is compatible with the present small lot development pattern, but the zoning regulations available at the time fell short of providing necessary guidelines for future development. Also, two initiatives had been approved by voters that impacted both residential and non-residential

development within Ocean Beach. The first, the Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972, was intended to insure the conservation of resources and determine the suitability and extent of all development proposals within 1,000 yards of the coastline. The second was a 30' height limit. Both of these measures tended to restrict residential development. There are approximately 7,914 dwelling units in Ocean Beach with an estimated population of 13,651.

The existing community plan designates 47.3 acres for commercial development, and identifies three major focal points for commercial activity. The community's major commercial center is the Newport Avenue district. Two smaller commercial centers, the Voltaire Street and the Point Loma Avenue districts, function as neighborhood-serving commercial areas.

The Ocean Beach Precise Plan designates 62.7 acres for Open Space, Private/Commercial Recreation, and Parks and Recreation. The Open Space areas of Ocean Beach include Famosa Slough and Sunset Cliffs Natural Park. Private/Commercial Recreation uses include the Barnes Tennis Center, a private recreation facility leased on City owned land. Parks and Recreation lands include Ocean Beach Park and Ocean Beach Recreation Center. The Plan acknowledges that Ocean Beach Park is a leisure and recreational area serving the needs of local residents, the population of the San Diego region, and visitors.

#### **Update Process**

The City embarked on the current update of the Ocean Beach Precise Plan in 2002. A community workshop was conducted in 2003 which identified issues to be addressed through the outreach and update processes. The outreach process included working with the community plan update subcommittee and full community planning group, and holding public workshops and community planning group meetings. The draft Plan includes land use recommendations derived through the public outreach process. The major theme that emerged was the need to maintain and enhance the existing development pattern of Ocean Beach while protecting public views and coastal resources.

After 2002, work on the Ocean Beach Community Plan Update diminished due to staff resources being dedicated to the update of the City of San Diego's General Plan. Planning efforts began again in 2006, a draft plan was presented to the community, and workshops were held in 2007. The workshops further refined the plan's goals and recommended that the Neighborhood Commercial Designation be removed and a Community Commercial Designation applied. In 2008, the determination was made that the Update would require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based on the existing traffic impacts and potential impacts to historic structures. Funding for the EIR was secured in 2009. Consultants for the preparation of technical reports were interviewed in 2010, and contracts for consultant services were signed in 2011.

A Planning Commission workshop was held on June 20, 2013. The draft update, PFFP, and PEIR were released for public review in October 2013. The review period for the PEIR closed on November 19, 2013. The Peninsula Community Planning Group requested and was granted further time to submit comments, however, no comments were received by the City.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Ocean Beach Community Plan and Local Coastal Program does not propose any new land use designations or zones. The update focuses on urban design, community character, public views, multi-modal mobility, protection of sensitive resources, and sea level rise. The project will re-designate the Voltaire Street and Pt. Loma Avenue districts from Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial (Attachment 3). The project will also rezone certain properties to correct an existing inconsistency between the zone and the residential land use designation (Attachment 4).

The Update expresses General Plan policies in Ocean Beach through the provision of site-specific recommendations that implement the City of Villages strategy (Attachment 5). The main issues for the Plan update focus on park equivalencies, urban design, public view and coastal resource protection, and historic preservation.

### **Plan Update Highlights**

#### *Community Plan Update Guiding Principles*

Through the public outreach process for the update, the following guiding principles were generated. The Ocean Beach Guiding Principles are a refinement of the City of San Diego's General Plan Principles. The guiding principles for each of the Plan's elements are as follows:

- **Land Use and Community Planning:** Maintain and enhance the established nature of residential neighborhoods, and encourage mixed commercial/residential development in the commercial districts.
- **Mobility:** Improve transit services, encourage alternative forms of transportation, prioritize walkability, and maintain an effective vehicular circulation system.
- **Urban Design:** Foster the small-scale character of Ocean Beach, maintain an unobstructed and accessible beach frontage, and promote a pedestrian-friendly community.
- **Public Facilities, Services and Safety:** Improve police, fire and lifeguard safety services, ensure a reliable system of water, storm water, and sewer facilities, reduce and manage solid waste, , and minimize adverse impacts associated with utility services.
- **Recreation:** Maintain existing park facilities and actively pursue additional recreational opportunities.
- **Conservation:** Preserve and promote the natural amenities of Ocean Beach.
- **Noise:** Minimize impacts associated with excessive noise.

- **Historic Preservation:** Preserve the history of Ocean Beach, and encourage heritage tourism.

*Land Use Distribution*

As outlined above, the land use plan will replace the existing Neighborhood Commercial Designation with the Community Commercial Designation. The change is proposed because over time the Voltaire Street and Pt. Loma Avenue commercial districts have added services and businesses which appeal to a larger market area. The proposed changes are reflected in the Plan Summary below.

**Proposed Land Use Plan Summary**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low-Medium Residential	135.2	21
Medium Density Residential	184.5	29
Community Commercial	47.3	7
Open Space	18.9	3
Private/Commercial Recreation	13.8	2
Parks and Recreation	30	5
Institutional	6.1	1
Right of Way	205.5	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>641.3</b>	<b>100</b>

*Park Equivalencies and Park Land Deficiencies*

Ocean Beach is an urbanized coastal community with limited opportunities for providing new recreation facilities due to the lack of large vacant parcels. The community wishes to maintain existing parks and to expand opportunities for new facilities through park equivalencies. The park system in Ocean Beach is made up of population-based parks, resource-based parks and open space lands.

The projected population at full community development is 15,071 residents. Therefore, according to General Plan Guidelines for population-based parks at full community development, Ocean Beach should be served by a minimum of 42 useable acres of park land. Of the 42 useable acres, there should be 8 useable acres of Community Parks and 34 useable acres of Neighborhood, Mini and Pocket Parks.

Due to land constraints, the community and City staff evaluated the use of park equivalencies to help meet the park guidelines. Consideration of potential equivalency sites included an analysis of public accessibility, consistency with General Plan policies, and assessment of whether typical population-based park components and facilities could be provided. It was found that a

variety of sites and facilities within and adjacent to the Ocean Beach community already do, or could, serve as park equivalencies. Attachment 6 includes an existing facilities map and a table that illustrates the existing population-based parks and facilities in the Ocean Beach community, as well as the existing deficit of parklands. A table that illustrates the potential Park Equivalency Credits with a Revised Population-based Park Inventory Summary at full community development, and a map showing the location of the potential park equivalencies are included in Attachment 7.

Through the process of using park equivalencies within the urbanized Ocean Beach community planning area, the population-based park lands deficit for the Ocean Beach community would be reduced from 40.57 acres, to 18.66 acres as shown in the table below.

<b>Revised Population-based Park Inventory Summary at Full Community Development</b>	
Existing Population-based Parks	1.42 acres
Park Equivalency Credits	21.92 acres
Population-based parks requirements for year 2030	42.00 acres
Population-based parks deficit for year 2030	18.66 acres

*Coastal Zone and Coastal Resources*

The Ocean Beach community is entirely within the Coastal Zone, with the California Coastal Commission retaining original permit jurisdiction within the area nearest the ocean (Attachment 8). The following table illustrates coastal issues and the corresponding plan element(s) where the issue is addressed.

<b>Coastal Issue Area and Community Plan Elements</b>	
<b>Coastal Issue</b>	<b>Ocean Beach Community Plan Element</b>
Public Access	Conservation Element, Land Use Element
Recreation	Recreation Element
Marine Environment	Conservation Element
Land Resources	Historic Preservation Element, Conservation Element
Development	Land Use Element, Mobility Element

The community of Ocean Beach contains significant coastal resources that are illustrated in the Conservation Element (Attachment 9). Coastal resources include but are not limited to the Famosa Slough, the San Diego River, Dog Beach, Ocean Beach Park, the Ocean Beach Fishing Pier, tidepools and pocket beaches. The Plan update’s goals include preservation of and access to the open space, coastal bluffs, beaches, tide pools and coastal waters for future generations.



Recommendations include resource monitoring to ensure they are maintained in clean and healthy states and prohibition of coastal bluff development. Other recommendations include implementation of the Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan and expansion of educational opportunities through trails and interpretive signs. Physical coastal access recommendations include both lateral and vertical physical coastal access through building setbacks, establishing public access at street endings, and obtaining public access easements across private property.

#### *Sea Level Rise*

Sea level rise caused by climate change is an issue of growing concern in California and in coastal communities around the world. The State of California projects a rise of 10 to 17 inches (.26 to .43 m) by the year 2050 and a rise of 31 to 69 inches (.78 to 1.76 m) by the year 2100 (State of California, Sea Level Rise Task Force of the coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team, *Sea Level Rise Interim Guidance Document*, October 2010).

Based on available research, if sea level rise reaches 1.4-1.5 meters (which is considered to be in the intermediate/high range of projections), San Diego could experience some loss of beaches and coastal habitat (Gersberg, R., San Diego Waters. Retrieved on July 2, 2013 from <http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org/learn/san-diegos-waters/>). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer shows that street flooding is another possible impact if the sea level rises to this level. The Conservation Element of the OBCPU addresses the sea level rise issue by including a policy for the monitoring of sea level rise and the adjusting of adaptation strategies over time.

#### *Urban Design and Coastal Views*

The California Coastal Act requires both physical and visual access to the shoreline be protected and expanded. The coastline is Ocean Beach's greatest natural asset, and the topography and location provide expansive ocean views. Protected public views are an important goal of the Urban Design element, and the update defines and identifies "Scenic Overlooks," "View Cones" and "Framed View Corridors" throughout the community (Attachment 10).

Recommendations in the Plan are intended to protect public views and encourage new development which minimizes intrusions and maximizes public views. Such recommendations include utilizing upper story setbacks, gable alignment with view corridors, and avoiding "walling off" public views. Recommendations also place restrictions on landscape, street tree and fence heights.

The draft Plan also acknowledges that a series of variances have been granted in a specific area of the community which allowed a greater Floor Area Ratio than allowed by the underlying RM-2-4 zone. These variances were met by community opposition. In response, the Plan addresses issues of bulk and scale with design recommendations. The recommendations in the Urban Design element and the establishment of public view corridors would provide stronger direction

and more specific criteria for evaluating proposed development projects, and are to be used when determining whether or not a proposed development would have an adverse impact on coastal views and/or the desirable small-scale character.

#### *Historic Preservation*

Ocean Beach has a rich history that has been shaped by its seaside location, natural resources, and economic booms and busts. The Ocean Beach Historic Preservation element contains specific goals and recommendations to address the history and cultural resources unique to Ocean Beach in order to encourage appreciation of the community's history and culture. The City of San Diego Historic Resources Board has designated 72 properties within the Ocean Beach Community Planning area. The designated resources included individually significant sites, and others that contribute to the Ocean Beach Cottage Emerging Historical District.

The plan update includes an Historic Context Statement and policies that encourage new construction to take design cues from historic buildings, and to respect the height, mass, articulation and materials of surrounding historic buildings.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

On August 9, 2011, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) to the State Clearinghouse, local and regional responsible agencies, and other interested parties. The draft PEIR was released for public review on October 4, 2013, and the review period for the PEIR closed on November 19, 2013 (Attachment 11). The Peninsula Community Planning Group requested and was granted further time to submit comments, however, no comments were received by the City.

Based on the analysis conducted for the update, the City has prepared a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to inform public agency decision-makers and the public of significant environmental effects that could result if the project is approved and implemented, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15121). The evaluation of environmental issue areas in this Program EIR concludes that the proposed project could result in significant and unavoidable direct and cumulative impacts related to Transportation/Circulation/Parking. In addition, the EIR concludes that significant but mitigable direct and/or cumulative impacts to Land Use (MHPA), Biological Resources, Historical Resources (Archaeology and Built Environment) and Paleontological Resources would result from implementation of the proposed project.

It is further demonstrated in the PEIR that the project would not result in a significant environmental effect in the following areas: Visual Quality/Neighborhood Character,



Agricultural and Forest Resources, Air Quality and Oder, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Human Health and Public Safety, Hydrology and Water Quality, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services and Facilities, Public Utilities, and Geologic Conditions. The Final EIR is being prepared and will be available on May 1, 2014. Findings of Fact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be prepared for adoption of the community plan.

**FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Adoption of the public facilities financing plan (PFFP) would provide a portion of the funding for the required public facilities. Portions of project costs not funded by new development through Development Impact Fees, development project conditions, or other specified sources would need to be identified by future City Council actions in conjunction with the adoption of annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budgets.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:** None

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:**

The Ocean Beach Planning Board (OBPB) created an update subcommittee that worked for several years with staff to generate the draft update. The draft plan was presented to the Ocean Beach Planning Board (OBPB) at their regularly scheduled June 5, 2013 meeting. The OBPB posted the draft plan to their website, and gathered many public comments. At the August 7, 2013 OBPB meeting, the Board recommended approval of the draft plan. The OBPB formed a Facilities Financing subcommittee to provide input and review of the draft PFFP. The draft update and draft PFFP were released for public review in October 2013.

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:**

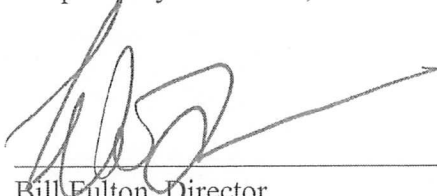
Affected property owners, residents, business owners, public and private institutions, and regulatory agencies in and adjacent to Ocean Beach include the Peninsula community planning area, Mission Bay Park area, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, San Diego School District, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System , California Department of Transportation, Ocean Beach Main Street Association, Ocean Beach Community Development Corporation, and the Ocean Beach Town Council.

**SUMMARY**


The Ocean Beach Community Plan Update represents one of the significant planning efforts underway within the City of San Diego. The Ocean Beach Community Plan Update would be consistent with and further implement the adopted City General Plan as the update establishes policies that are in harmony with the underlying purpose of each of the General Plan's elements. The update advances each of the policies of the General Plan that the City considers mandatory and fundamental to achieving the General Plan's vision and principal goals. The community plan update provides guidance on future growth within Ocean Beach and provides

comprehensive policy recommendations on land use issues that are sensitive to the public facilities needs and timely phasing of the infrastructure.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Attachments:

1. Ocean Beach Location Map
2. Existing (Current) Ocean Beach Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Proposed Ocean Beach Community Plan Land Use Map
4. Areas to be re-zoned
5. DRAFT Ocean Beach Community Plan and Local Coastal Program
6. Existing Population-based Parks
7. Park Equivalencies
8. Coastal Zone
9. Coastal Resources
10. Scenic Views
11. Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report