



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the City Council

DATE ISSUED: October 18, 2016 REPORT NO: 16-083

ATTENTION: Honorable Council President Sherri Lightner and City Councilmembers,
Agenda of October 25, 2016

SUBJECT: North Park Community Plan Update

REQUESTED ACTION:

Approve the North Park Community Plan update and associated zoning implementation actions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **CERTIFY** Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) SCH No. 2013121076 and **ADOPT** Findings, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP); and
2. **APPROVE** a resolution amending the North Park Community Plan and amending the General Plan; and
3. **APPROVE** an ordinance amending the Land Development Code Chapter 12, Article 6 and 7; Chapter 13, Articles 1 and 2; Chapter 14, Article 1; and Chapter 15, Article 12 and amending the City's certified Local Coastal Program.
4. **APPROVE** an ordinance amending the Land Development Code Chapter 12, Article 6 and Chapter 14, Article 3.
5. **APPROVE** an ordinance rezoning land within the North Park planning area consistent with the North Park Community Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM BACKGROUND:

The North Park planning area encompasses 2,258 acres located in the central portion of the City of San Diego that is adjacent to Balboa Park and is in close proximity to Downtown, Uptown, City Heights and Mission Valley. The North Park Community Plan was originally adopted in 1970. It was comprehensively updated in 1986. The plan update work program has resulted in a comprehensive update of the 1986 North Park community plan in order to bring it into conformance with the 2008 General Plan and the City's Climate Action Plan. The draft North Park community plan (Attachment 1) provides the vision, guiding principles, and policies to guide future growth and development in this distinctive and vibrant community, consistent with the City's General Plan, and Climate Action Plan. The community plan provides smart growth goals and policies, clear urban design guidance, and innovative development incentives to help spur high quality investment while also addressing the infrastructure, housing and economic development needs of North Park. Overall, the update was drafted through a community-based process and greatly benefitted from the efforts of an engaged citizenry and stakeholders.

DISCUSSION:

A. Why is an update to the current North Park Community Plan needed?

While the 1986 North Park Community Plan was seen as a progressive Smart Growth document for its time, there are elements in the 1986 plan that were in need of an update to bring it into conformance with not only the 2008 General Plan, but also the City's Climate Action Plan. To accommodate these policies, the draft plan update includes the following.

- High density, transit-oriented villages;
- A robust urban forestry section;
- A detailed historic preservation element that includes the identification and preservation strategies for historical resources;
- Comprehensive urban design guidelines and enhancement programs to promote appropriately-sited new higher density development that is in character with the existing and evolving areas of North Park;
- Affordable housing policies that help to achieve a balanced community; and,
- Furthermore, emphasis on multi-modal infrastructure as well as identification of specific park and recreation opportunities and park equivalencies. The plan also provides specific policies related to sustainable growth and development practices in order to implement the City's Climate Action Plan.

B. What does the North Park Community Plan update attempt to accomplish?

Guided by the City of Villages growth strategy and citywide policy direction contained in the General Plan, the draft plan identifies land use and multi-modal mobility strategies to cohesively guide growth and development in North Park, foster walkable and transit-oriented communities, address a range of long-range planning topics such as urban design, historic preservation, recreation, conservation, public facilities, noise and urban forestry. The draft community plan recommends that future growth and development be focused along major corridors in close proximity to high frequency transit. Areas that are not subject to change include the predominately traditional single family and low-density residential areas that comprise the majority of land uses.

Development completed in accordance with the draft plan would occur in an existing urbanized area with established transit infrastructure, and support bicycling and walking as transportation choices. In addition, implementation of the policies contained in the Land Use, Mobility, Recreation, and Conservation elements would improve mobility within the plan area, including open space and recreation areas through the development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network.

C. What are some of the more significant changes being proposed in the plan update?

1. Land Use

- Land Use & Village Areas

The draft community plan provides a mix of uses and development intensity that support smart growth/transit-oriented development and heightened multi-modal use within the designated community village districts and along the major transit corridors; identifies the need for

additional public services and facilities in accordance with City standards; and maintains and enhances the character of established single-family traditional areas. The Land Use element defines Village Districts and key transit corridors where future growth is targeted.

The villages are envisioned to have an integrated mixture of uses, accessible and attractive streets, and public spaces. The Village Districts are within “transit priority areas,” in close proximity to the Bus Rapid Transit high frequency bus transit service and a future light rail transit line. The draft community plan’s Urban Design element is intended to work in conjunction with the other elements of the draft community plan to create a pattern and scale that complements and fosters design excellence in the existing and evolving character of the villages.

The placement of future higher-intensity residential and commercial/retail uses have been identified to occur within two designated Village Districts that are located around the 30th Street and El Cajon Boulevard node as well as the 30th Street and University Avenue node. The intent of placing higher density and intensity uses around the transit stations is not only to identify appropriate multi-modal areas for future growth but to also preserve the established low-density residential neighborhoods.

- 30th Street and University Avenue Community Village

This community village is centered around the University Avenue and 30th Street intersection and includes most of the commercial properties along University Avenue between Idaho Street and Bancroft Street. It primarily includes a number of commercial and retail uses, multi-family housing within mixed-use developments, the historic North Park Theater, a designated mini-park, and a parking structure that serves the commercial district. It is considered the community’s entertainment district with a range of quality shopping and eating and drinking establishments.

- 30th Street and El Cajon Boulevard Community Village

This community village is centered around the intersection between 30th Street and El Cajon Boulevard. Its key location along El Cajon Boulevard commercial and transportation corridor allows opportunities for mixed-use development with high residential densities that will be supported by transit and served by the surrounding commercial areas and services.

2. Development Enhancement Programs

The draft community plan is designed around a strong transit-oriented development (TOD) framework that focuses new higher density and intensity development within the Village Districts and along the transit corridors. However, there are opportunities to transform the multi-family (non-historic)

projects that were developed from the 1960s through the 1980s that were not sensitive to North Park's character and its traditional architectural and design treatments. Future projects using either enhancement program must meet the Urban Design Element policies as well as the standards set forth in Section 143.0402 of the Land Development Code for Planned Development Permits (PDP), and may be approved only if the decision maker makes the findings in LDC Section 126.0604(a).

Both of the Community Plan Enhancement Programs discussed below are separate from the City's Affordable Housing Density Bonus Regulations in Land Development Code (LDC) Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 7 that is subject to the State of California's Affordable Housing Density Bonus Program. The Affordable Housing Density Bonus Program is available to eligible development citywide. The following includes the description of the two enhancement programs:

a. Pedestrian-Oriented Infill Development Enhancement Program

The Pedestrian-Oriented Infill Development Enhancement Program is available to applicants with existing development projects of 6 dwelling units or more in Multi-Family Residential areas designated as Medium High up to 44 dwelling units per acre within the area located between Lincoln Avenue and Howard Avenue, see Land Use Element Figure 2-4 for location. The intent of the Pedestrian-Oriented Infill Development Enhancement Program is to create more street and pedestrian friendly projects by transforming projects, commonly known as Huffmans, into development projects that include non-contiguous sidewalks, shade-producing street trees, porches and individual front entrances to units from the front yard. The Pedestrian-Oriented Infill Development Enhancement Program allows for the density range for this area to be increased up to 73 dwelling units per acre, whereby an applicant may request approval of the increased density on a specific property through a PDP.

b. Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Program

The Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Program is available to applicants along the Bus Rapid Transit Corridor in areas designated 73 du/acre along Park Boulevard and 109 du/acre along El Cajon Boulevard. See Land Use Element Figure 2-4 for location. The intent of the Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Program is to allow for increased residential density to create more street and pedestrian friendly projects that support transit. The Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Program allows for the density range for this area to be increased up to 145 dwelling units per acre, whereby an applicant may request approval of the increased density on a specific property through a PDP.

3. Open Space Boundary Correction

As part of the update effort, staff completed an extensive Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) mapping effort to adjust the open space boundary

lines that are adjacent to single-family homes along canyons, in order to accurately reflect existing development.

4. Multi-Modal

The draft community plan envisions the development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that improves pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility while also addressing vehicular traffic capacity. A major component of the plan is to enhance the pedestrian environment throughout the community and consider circulation improvements in an effort to create a more efficient multi-modal network. The Mobility Element describes improvements that support a “complete streets” network and encourage alternative modes of transportation. Specific improvements include enhanced bike paths, improved walkability, attention to transit operations requirements, the inclusion of Intelligent Transportation Systems, and a Transportation Demand Management program.

5. Recreation

The household population for the North Park Community Plan at build out is estimated to be 73,170 residents. The projected population warrants almost three recreation centers equivalent to roughly 50,000 total square feet, and approximately one and one-half aquatic complexes.

Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within North Park are anticipated to come primarily through development of private and public properties and through the application of park equivalencies. While the City’s primary goal is to obtain land for population-based parks, where vacant land is limited, unavailable or is cost-prohibitive, the General Plan allows for the application of park equivalencies to be determined by the community and the City through a set of guidelines.

Facilities that may be considered as population-based park equivalencies include: joint use facilities; trails through open space; portions of resource-based parks; privately-owned, publicly-used parks; non-traditional parks, such as rooftop or indoor recreation facilities; and facility or building expansion or upgrades.

Recreation Element Tables 7-1 and 7-2 summarize the existing and future parks, park equivalencies and recreation facilities that have been selected by the North Park Community to supplement their existing population-based park and recreation facilities inventory. The table also includes recommendations contained in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan for the Neighborhood Edge, including the Morley Field Area, where appropriate, as well as recommendations generated by the community and City staff for facilities outside of Balboa Park. Identification of private property as a potential park site does not preclude permitted development per the underlying land use or zone.

6. Urban Design

a. Framework

The Urban Design Element addresses the defining features and relationships of new buildings, groups of buildings, spaces, and landscapes within existing traditional and evolving neighborhoods, districts, and corridors throughout North Park. It ties together the relationships among buildings, streets, land use, open spaces, circulation, height, density, parking, and parks. The North Park community has demonstrated that new uses and development can be integrated into the existing and evolving community fabric of neighborhoods and districts if they protect or build upon existing character-defining features. North Park's original planning principles promoted human-scale, pedestrian-oriented residential and commercial land uses, with each of its older neighborhoods exhibiting diversity and character with representative traditional architectural styles such as California bungalow, Craftsman, and Spanish/Mediterranean architecture.

As the community experiences infill development and building renovations, the draft community plan encourages new development to include innovative and dynamic forms while still being sensitive to adjacent neighbors. The Urban Design Element provides policies to protect, enhance, and encourage quality design that takes into account the unique features of North Park while recognizing that there will be changes to the urban form and a need to respond to future urban design issues.

b. Transition Areas

The community plan includes language and policies to ensure a better transition between future high density/intensity projects along the transit corridors and the lower density neighborhoods adjacent to these areas. The draft community plan ensures that the bulk of higher scale buildings does not appear imposing upon adjacent or neighboring lower scale buildings. Urban Design Element shows a transition line between lower and higher density areas of the community, where higher scale buildings consistent with the land use designation and zoning could be built adjacent to lower scale buildings. Higher scale buildings along the transition line will need to incorporate designs that provide a transition to lower scale buildings. The draft community plan envisions that the bulk and massing of higher scale buildings will occur along the portion of the building that is farthest away from the transition line along Park Boulevard, Adams Avenue, 30th Street, El Cajon Boulevard, and University Avenue. The Urban Design Element shows how transition planes can guide the bulk and massing of higher scale buildings to minimize visual intrusiveness on neighboring lower scale buildings.

7. Historic Resources

The draft Historic Preservation Element (HPE) contains specific goals and recommendations to address the history and cultural resources unique to North Park in order to encourage appreciation of the community's history and culture. These policies along with the General Plan policies provide a comprehensive historic preservation strategy for North Park. The HPE was developed utilizing technical studies prepared by qualified experts, as well as extensive outreach and collaboration with Native American Tribes, the community planning group and preservation groups such as the North Park Historical Society and the Save Our Heritage Organization. The HPE contains detailed language and policies in relation to the preservation and protection of historic resources. The implementation discussion below and Attachment 13 includes more detailed information on the Historic District protection regulations and identification of potential historic districts.

D. How does the Community Plan implement the Climate Action Plan?

The City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP) lays out five bold strategies to meet 2020 and 2035 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets. Community plan updates play a major role in implementing Strategy 3: Bicycling, Walking, Transit & Land Use. Key CPU-related measures under Strategy 3 include:

- Action 3.1: Implement the General Plan's Mobility Element and the City of Villages Strategy in Transit Priority Areas to increase the use of transit;
- Action 3.2: Implement pedestrian improvements in Transit Priority Areas to increase commuter walking opportunities;
- Action 3.3: Implement the City of San Diego's Bicycle Master Plan to increase commuter bicycling opportunities; and
- Action 3.6: Implement transit-oriented development within Transit Priority Areas.

Emissions reductions attributed to effective land use in Action 3.6 equal 1.0 percent of the total GHG reductions anticipated with implementation of the CAP by 2035 and 4.3 percent of the reductions resulting from local actions. All Strategy 3 Actions mentioned above total 3.6 percent of the total reductions and 14.9 percent of local actions for 2035.

As detailed in the qualitative analysis contained in Attachment 5, the North Park community plan update complies with the CAP through: identification of village locations, applying land use designations and implementing zoning to support transit-oriented development, supporting transit operations and access, and designing a multi-modal mobility network, among other measures. Because of the citywide nature of the GHG reductions, the CAP does not include a specified quantitative target applicable to each individual community plan. Just as the General Plan acknowledges that implementation of the City of Villages strategy will vary by community, so too CAP measures require thoughtful discretion in application so that co-benefits are achieved to the maximum extent possible, and City responsibilities to implement additional state laws (related to general plans, environmental justice, water quality, air quality, housing, fire safety, and others topics) are addressed.

In addition, while the City has committed to meeting its GHG reduction targets, there is flexibility in how those targets are attained. As stated on page 29 of the CAP, “for identified local ordinance, policy or program actions to achieve 2020 and 2035 GHG reduction targets, the City may substitute equivalent GHG reductions through other local ordinance, policy or program actions.” This will allow the City to be responsive to changes in technology and public policy priorities, as well as to seek the most cost-effective and beneficial strategies over the long-term implementation of the CAP.

Quantitative precision in achieving reductions is an exercise that is most appropriately addressed on a citywide level during the annual monitoring of the CAP as a whole. However, City staff, in coordination with SANDAG and consultants, has prepared a supplemental planning report to further analyze the changes in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita, commuter travel trip length, and mobility mode share in Transit Priority Areas (see Attachment 18).

E. How will the plan be implemented?

The plan provides community-specific, tailored policies and a long-range physical development guide for City staff, decision makers, property owners, and citizens engaged in community development. Key tools to implement the plan include the following:

1. Impact Fee Study (IFS)

An Impact Fee Study (IFS) (formerly known as the Public Facilities Financing Plan) identifies public facilities improvements in North Park and determines financing mechanisms, primarily through use of Development Impact Fees (DIF). See Attachment 6 for the draft North Park Impact Fee Study.

2. Zoning Program

a. Rezones and Chapter 15 LDC Amendments to Mid-City Planned District Ordinance

The adopted Mid-City Planned District Ordinance (MCPDO) and its zones that have served as the community's zoning regulations will be replaced with citywide zones. Attachment 7 reflects the proposed zoning map. Attachment 8 includes the rezoning ordinance changing from the Mid-City PDO to Citywide zoning. Attachment 9 includes a summary of proposed Land Development Code Amendments and Attachment 10 includes the MCPDO minor clean up amendments to Chapter 15, Article 12 that clarify that the draft community plan area is being removed from the MCPDO.

b. Chapter 13 LDC Amendments to Use and Development Regulations

Various amendments to LDC Chapter 13 (Articles 1 and 2) are proposed to help to implement the vision of the community plan including modifications to density and use requirements. Examples of the proposed use-related modifications include allowing tandem parking as a Process 1 permit approval,

new allowances for visitor accommodations in Neighborhood Commercial zones and for Museums in Community Commercial zones; an allowance for the sale of beer, wine, and hard alcohol in the North Park Neighborhood Commercial Zones; and a new requirement for eating and drinking establishments with drive-thrus to obtain a Conditional Use Permit in the Community Commercial CC-3 zone. The proposed code amendments are included as part of Attachment 11.

- c. New Artisan Beverage & Food Producer Use Category (LDC Chapter 12, Articles 6 and 7 and Chapter 14, Article 1)

Recognizing the need to allow for artisan uses that have developed in the urbanized communities over the past ten years, a new separately regulated light industrial use called the Artisan Food and Beverage Producer is being created. The new use category will allow small establishments up to 20,000 square feet in size that engage in on-site production of food and/or beverage products (i.e. coffee products, ice cream, baked goods, confection, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, and other foodstuffs) in the Community Commercial (CC) zones in accordance with Process One staff level approval where it meets the specified limited use criteria and subject to a Process Two Neighborhood Use Permit (staff level decision appealable to Planning Commission) in the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zones. The proposed code amendment language is included as part of Attachment 12.

- d. New Regulations for Potential Historic Districts (LDC Chapter 12, Article 6 and Chapter 14, Article 3)

Amendments to the Historical Resource regulations are proposed to create a process for review of potential contributing resources to a potential historical district. Proposed development activity that complies may be permitted in accordance with a Process One staff level approval. Development activity on the premises of a potential contributing resource that does not meet the criteria for a Process One approval would be subject to a Process Two Neighborhood Development Permit where the applicant must demonstrate that reasonably feasible measures to protect and preserve the integrity of the potential historical district have been provided and the proposed project will not result in a substantial loss of integrity within the potential district, which would render it ineligible for historic designation. The proposed code amendment language is in Attachment 13.

- F. Historic District Creation

The identification and prioritization of historic districts is an important component of the plan update process as North Park is home to many valuable historic resources as evidenced by the number of designated historic resources including individually-designated resources as well as four designated historic districts that include the Shirley Ann Place Historic District, North Park Dryden Historic District, the University Heights Water Storage and Pumping Station Historic District as well as the Burlingame Historic District.

In order to further preserve the character and heritage of the community, City staff has identified a number of additional proposed historic districts that are included in the HPE. These proposed districts are illustrated in Figure 10-3 of the HPE and include: Spaulding Place; Shirley Ann Place Expansion; 30th Street Commercial; Park Boulevard Apartments (east); Kalmia Place; and the 28th Street corridor south of Upas Street.

In determining how to process the potential historic districts, the Planning Department developed a number of prioritization factors, weighted in order of importance. Based on this criteria, the following three proposed districts have been prioritized: the Shirley Ann Place Expansion; Spaulding Place; as well as Kalmia Place and the Park Boulevard Apartments east and west sides (Attachment 13).

The districts could be process annually based on available funding and staffing resources and the Historical Resources Board. The size of the potential historic districts would also need to be taken into consideration. The City would annually process one district from North Park, Golden Hill, and Uptown. Once all districts in a planning area are processed, the work program would alternate two in one planning area and one in the other.

G. Streamlining for Infill Projects

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.3 allows the City to streamline environmental review for individual infill projects. Future development projects can rely on the analysis in the PEIR if the project meets applicable criteria for an infill project and would only need to address project-specific impacts not addressed in the PEIR.

CITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S)/OBJECTIVE(S):

The community plan update is in direct alignment with the following City of San Diego Strategic Plan goals and objectives; specifically,

- Goal 2 – Work in partnership with all of our communities to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods) and,
- Goal 3 – Create and sustain a resilient and economically prosperous City.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING INFORMATION (if applicable): N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

On October 5, 2016, the Smart Growth and Land Use Committee will make a recommendation on the North Park Community Plan update.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS:

Starting in 2009, the City conducted an extensive community outreach process, where a wealth of valuable community information was received through a variety of avenues, including workshops, meetings and community outreach sessions at various places in the community. Over the past seven years, the North Park Community Planning Committee alone held over 100 public meetings to discuss and provide recommendations to the City. During each phase of the process broad public input was obtained through a series of meetings where residents, employees, and property owners, as well as representatives of advocacy groups and the surrounding neighborhoods, weighed in on issues and provided recommendations, concerns,

and preferences. Through these meetings, the community confirmed its vision and developed a set of guiding principles that were used as criteria in crafting each of the community plan elements.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

Residents, property owners and local business owners and their employees affiliated with the North Park planning area; the North Park Planning Committee and other community associations.

The draft North Park Community Plan provides the vision, guiding principles, policies and specific proposals to guide future growth and provide for the quality of life in this distinctive, vibrant and historic community consistent with the City's General Plan and Climate Action Plan. The community plan provides smart growth goals and policies, clear urban design guidance, and policies for preservation of the community's historic and natural resources. The community plan was drafted through a community-based process and greatly benefitted from the efforts of an engaged citizenry and stakeholders, including past and present members of the North Park Planning Committee.



Jeff Murphy, Director
Planning Department



David Graham
Deputy Chief Operating Officer

- Attachments:
1. Draft North Park Community Plan (June 2016)
 2. Final Program Environmental Impact Report
 3. Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
 4. Draft PEIR Findings and Draft PEIR Statement of Overriding Considerations
 5. Climate Action Plan Conformance Evaluation
 6. Draft North Park Impact Fee Study
 7. Draft North Park Zoning Map (C-Sheet)
 8. Draft North Park Rezoning Ordinance
 9. Summary of Land Development Code Changes
 10. Draft Land Development Code Amendment to Chapter 15, Article 12
 11. Draft Land Development Code Amendment to Chapter 13, Articles 1, and 2
 12. Draft Land Development Code Amendment to Chapter 12, Article 6 and Chapter 14, Article 3 and Chapter 14, Article 1
 13. Draft Historic District Protection Regulations (Land Development Code Chapter 12, Article 6 and Chapter 14, Article 3), Potential Historic Districts Fact Sheet and Historic District Processing Prioritization Factors and issues related to historic resources
 14. Community Plan Comment Topics