



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the City Council

DATE ISSUED: October 18, 2016 REPORT NO: 16-084

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

SUBJECT: Golden Hill Community Plan Update

REQUESTED ACTION:

Approve the Golden Hill 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 Golden Hill Community Plan and amending the General Plan; and
3. **APPROVE** an ordinance amending the land development code to repeal Chapter 15, Article 8 (Golden Hill Planned District); and
4. **APPROVE** an ordinance rezoning land within the Greater Golden Hill planning area consistent with the Golden Hill Community Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM BACKGROUND:

The existing Golden Hill Community Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1988. The current community plan is beyond its typical period of relevance and an update to that plan began in 2009. The community plan update work program has resulted in a comprehensive update of the 1988 Community Plan in order to bring it into conformance with the 2008 General Plan and the City's Climate Action Plan. The draft Golden Hill 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.

DISCUSSION:

The Greater Golden Hill planning area is a demographically diverse, urbanized community consisting of approximately 745 acres located adjacent to Balboa Park and in close proximity to Downtown, North Park, Southeastern San Diego and City Heights (Attachment 5). The community has a long-standing history within the region, varied topography, and an established land use pattern and street network. The community is also comprised of distinct neighborhoods based upon geographic and historic subdivision patterns as well as resident and business involvement. Of these, the Golden Hill neighborhood and the South Park neighborhood are the most prominent, with 'A' Street the boundary between the two neighborhoods.

A component of San Diego's General Plan, the Golden Hill Community Plan (community plan) is a guide for how the community will grow and develop over 20 to 30 years. The community plan update process evaluated issues identified with the 1988 adopted Golden Hill Community Plan. Key issues addressed by the 1988 plan include preservation of single-family and low-density neighborhoods through appropriate densities; the appropriate scale and character of new development; achieving conformance between zoning and community plan land use designations; elimination of land use conflicts; revitalization of commercial areas; and preservation of open space.

A. Why is an update to the current Golden Hill Community Plan needed?

The current community plan is beyond its typical period of relevance. Although visible progress has been made to address the issues identified in the 1988 plan (discussed above), several issues are still relevant, particularly as progress has been uneven throughout the community. The plan often lacks sufficient policy direction on various issues, as well as policy relevance with the General Plan. The 1988 plan also does not adequately address current community needs identified during the outreach process such as preservation of traditional, fine-grained neighborhood character, preservation of historic resources, improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, protection of public views, sustainable development, and a lack of parks and recreation opportunities within the community.

B. What does the Golden Hill Community Plan update attempt to accomplish?

Because of the community's central location within the region, long development history, and lack of vacant land, a key aim of the community plan update is to balance the goal of neighborhood character preservation with future growth needs. The draft community plan update policies encourage smart growth and transit-oriented development consistent with guidance in the City's General Plan on how to design infill development and reinvest in existing communities. Growth and development within the planning area would occur in an existing urbanized community with established transit infrastructure and be focused along transit corridors. Policies and proposals are intended to provide a more balanced, multi-modal transportation system fostering walkable and transit-oriented neighborhoods. The community plan proposes a mix of uses and development intensities intended to support transit-oriented growth and also be compatible with community character.

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

1. Land Use

The community plan update proposes changes to current community plan land uses to further protect existing neighborhood character, to reduce pressure on infrastructure and facilities needs within specific neighborhoods, and to better reflect existing conditions. Changes to residential density would reduce density near the center and eastern portion of Golden Hill and within the potential South Park historic district and increase density at the portion of the City's Central Operations Yard in the community. Residential land use within two locations would be changed to Neighborhood Commercial to reflect existing conditions. Open space land use is proposed to be adjusted to more closely follow the location of existing natural resources.

2. Multi-Modal Mobility

The draft community plan envisions the development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that improves pedestrian, bicycle and transit access while also addressing vehicular traffic capacity. A major goal of the community 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 proposals for new and enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Traffic improvements that would potentially reduce impacts are proposed to be limited as loss of parking or need for additional right-of-way would impact neighborhood character within a developed community.

3. Open Space Boundary Corrections

The update effort included an extensive mapping effort to correct the Multi-Habitat Planning Area boundary lines that are adjacent to single-family homes along canyons, in order to accurately reflect existing development.

4. Recreation

The draft community plan identifies new park sites as well as use of park equivalencies within Balboa Park and canyon trails. Implementation of parks and recreation proposals would result in new recreation opportunities throughout the community, and a substantial reduction in the parks and recreation needs deficit. The household population at community plan build-out is estimated to be 24,010 residents and there are currently no parks within the planning area, although portions of Balboa Park are used by the community. The projected population requires roughly 16,000 square feet of recreation center space, which is partially fulfilled by the existing 10,000 square foot Golden Hill Recreation Center in Balboa Park.

Suitable sites for neighborhood parks are difficult to identify and purchase because Golden Hill is a developed community where vacant land is limited, unavailable or cost-prohibitive. However, during the plan update process, vacant sites were identified for potential park use. Additional parkland and recreation facilities are proposed as park equivalencies within resource-based parks, as non-traditional parks, and facility expansions or upgrades. The majority of these park equivalencies are proposed within Balboa Park and are consistent with proposals within the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan for the neighborhood edge and other areas identified primarily for community use. Recreation Element Tables 7-1 and 7-2 summarize existing and future parks, park equivalencies and recreation facilities that have been selected by City staff and the Golden Hill community to supplement their existing population-based park and recreation facilities inventory.

5. Urban Design

The Urban Design Element address a full range of diverse topics, including streetscape elements, building interfaces with streets/public realm; transitions

between new and existing development; sustainable design, public view protection, and canyon rim and hillside development. It assimilates the relationships between buildings, streets, land use, open spaces, circulation, height, density, parking, and parks, and addresses the defining features and relationships of new buildings within existing traditional and evolving neighborhoods and corridors.

As the community experiences infill development and building renovations, the draft community plan would allow new and innovative 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 Golden Hill while recognizing that new buildings are not expected duplicate older styles.

6. Historic Resources

The draft Historic Preservation Element (HPE) contains specific goals and recommendations to address the history and cultural resources unique to the community 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 the community. The HPE was developed utilizing technical studies prepared by qualified experts, as well as outreach and collaboration with Native American Tribes, the community planning group and preservation groups such as the Save Our Heritage Organisation. The element contains detailed language and policies in relation to the preservation and protection of historic resources. The draft plan identifies two new potential historic districts: South Park, and Culverwell and Taggart's Addition within the Golden Hill neighborhood. The implementation discussion below and Attachment 6 includes more detailed information on the work program prioritization of potential historic districts and proposed regulations intended to protect resource integrity within the potential 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 7, the Golden Hill 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 14).

E. How will the community plan be implemented?

The plans provide 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:

1. Impact Fee Study (IFS)

Impact Fee Studies (formerly known as Public Facilities Financing Plans) identify new and expanded public facilities and determine financing mechanisms, primarily through use of Development Impact Fees (DIFs). A list of facilities and their estimated costs is determined based upon needs identified in the community plan. DIFs are calculated based upon development estimates, and new development paying its proportional fair-share cost. The largest DIF component by cost within the draft Golden Hill IFS is for park and recreation facilities followed by mobility, and fire-rescue facilities. The IFS is included as Attachment 8.

2. Zoning Program

The adopted Golden Hill Planned District Ordinance (GHPDO) would be repealed and the community would be rezoned using citywide zones (Attachments 9 and 10). This will serve to update development regulations as citywide zones have evolved

to contain newer standards, and also allow more streamlined administration. The proposed zones allow similar permitted uses, heights and floor area ratios to those of the GHPDO. Attachment 11 reflects the proposed zoning map for the Greater Golden Hill planning area.

Municipal Code amendments to citywide commercial zones are also proposed to address specific issues such the location of parking and limiting drive-thru components. Also, a new separately regulated light industrial use of Artisan Food and Beverage Producer is proposed in response to these businesses locating in the urbanized communities over the past several years. The new use category will allow establishments up to 20,000 square feet in size that engage in commercial 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 limited use criteria are met, and subject to a Process Two Neighborhood Use Permit (staff level decision appealable to Planning Commission) in the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zones. These code amendments are being processed separately as a part of the actions associated with the North Park Community Plan update.

3. Historic Districts

The identification and prioritization of historic districts is an important component of the plan update process as the community is home to many valuable historic resources. In determining how to process the two potential historic districts identified, the Planning Department developed a number of prioritization factors, weighted in order of importance. Based on these criteria, the priority of the two districts proposed by the community plan update would be: South Park and Culverwell and Taggart's Addition (Attachment 6).

The districts could be processed annually based on the capacity of staff and the Historical Resources Board. The size of the potential historic districts would also need to be taken into consideration. The City intends to annually process one district from North Park, Golden Hill, and Uptown.

Amendments to the Historical Resource regulations (Municipal Code Chapter 12, Article 6 and Chapter 14, Article 3) 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. These code amendments are being processed separately as a part of the actions associated with the North Park Community Plan update.

F. 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 analyses 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 Golden Hill 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, including formation of a community plan update advisory committee. The outreach included advisory committee meetings on various land use topics, historic resources and mobility open house events, and a workshop on urban design. A brochure in both English and Spanish was mailed to each address in the community inviting participation in the update and the multi-day workshop or "charrette". The charrette focused on community engagement and identified major issue areas to produce a community plan vision and conceptual planning framework. Subsequent input has been provided by the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee, the officially recognized community planning group. On September 14, 2016 the Greater Golden Hill Community Planning Committee voted 12-1-1 to support the final draft Golden Hill Community Plan.


KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

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

CONCLUSION:

The draft Golden Hill 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 Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee.



Jeff Murphy, Director
Planning Department



David Graham
Deputy Chief Operating Officer

- Attachments:
1. Draft Golden Hill Community Plan (June 2016)
 2. Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)
 3. PEIR Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program
 4. PEIR Draft Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
 5. Vicinity Map
 6. Potential Historic District Fact Sheet and Prioritization
 7. Climate Action Plan Conformance Evaluation
 8. Draft Impact Fee Study
 9. Draft Zoning Ordinance – Repealing Golden Hill Planned District
 10. Draft Zoning Ordinance – Rezoning Land
 11. Draft Zoning Map (C-sheet)
 12. Draft Community Plan Amendment Resolution
 13. Errata Sheet with Community Plan Edits Since June 2016
 14. Supplemental Analysis of Community Plan Updates for North Park and Golden Hill