



CITY COUNCIL

STUDY SESSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: APRIL 29, 2014

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

DATE: APRIL 21, 2014

FROM: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPT.

PRESENTATION BY: GARY ARMSTRONG, AICP, DEV. SVCS. DIRECTOR

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: GARY ARMSTRONG (714) 754-5182

Staff is seeking direction from City Council on the following items related to the General Plan Update:

- 1) Proposed Land Use Alternatives (Maps and Descriptions)
 - a. Eight land use study areas are proposed:
 - i. Two new areas were added that include large vacant parcels (north of the 405 Freeway)
 - ii. Two areas were eliminated from the last review (John Wayne Airport and SOCO mixed use)
- 2) Change in the scope of project and contract with MIG (Hogle Ireland)
 - a. Consider the addition of other General Plan elements to the scope of the project to streamline the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) review
 - b. Timeline for the revised scope

BACKGROUND

A joint study session was held on January 24, 2014. Staff presented several land use alternatives and requested input from the City Council and Planning Commission. A summary of the public and City Council and Planning Commission comments from the meeting is included as Attachment 3. Based on direction received at this joint study session, the land use alternatives were revised to include eight study areas. A summary of each study area is included in this report and detailed descriptions and maps are included as Attachment 1 and 2 respectively.

PROPOSED LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

The proposed land use alternatives have been drafted based on direction received from the City Council at the earlier study session on January 28, 2014 and prior meetings in 2013 and to establish the basis for the environmental analysis required for the General Plan Update. It should be noted that all single family residential neighborhoods are excluded from potential changes to their general plan land use designation. Major regional commercial areas north

of the 405 freeway and along Harbor Boulevard (i.e., auto dealerships) and industrial parks in the northern part of the City with exception of a few areas in proximity to South Coast Collection (SOCO) and the 55-freeway were also not included in the focus areas and no General Plan land use changes are proposed in those areas. No land use changes are anticipated for more than 85 percent of the City as is show in Attachment 4 – No Change Map.

As noted in the March 19, 2013, City Council meeting, the strategy behind targeted land use changes is to identify specific areas that allows the City to maximize development potential such as the vacant land north of Interstate 405, Westside urban plan areas, motel nodes and marginal commercial land uses located along major freeways, Harbor Boulevard, and Newport Boulevard.

The focus areas for the proposed land use alternatives are based on their individual development potential and existing land uses, and the boundaries were established based on proximity to sensitive uses. For each of the focus areas a description of the intent of the land use district is provided in Attachment 1 - Land Use Alternatives. The focus areas are further described in a series of maps (see Attachment 2 – Maps) that include the existing land use, existing General Plan designations, and proposed alternative designations, along with likely build out information and trip generation rates for each mapped condition.

The full study area descriptions and related maps are included as Attachments 1 and 2.

Each focus area has been studied for land use opportunities that promote desirable uses. The boundaries were established with the intent to minimize impacts to existing low density residential, large commercial and industrial properties. The alternatives include a variety of residential and commercial intensities for most of the focus areas to encourage discussion and provide a range of options for consideration. A brief summary of the land use alternatives for each focus area is provided as follows:

- **No Change Areas**

The vast majority of neighborhoods in the City will not see any change to their General Plan Land Use Designation. These no change areas apply to more than 85 percent of the City where no land use changes are proposed. Please refer to Attachment 4 “No Change Map” for the areas where no land use changes are anticipated by this General Plan update.

- **Area A: Business Park Overlay**

The *Business Park Overlay* allows for low- to mid-rise professional office buildings within the *Industrial Park* land use designation that applies to properties on Harbor Boulevard between Coast Drive and Talbert Avenue. The Overlay is intended to expand business and use opportunities beyond more traditional light industrial activities occurring here. Professional office is intended as the primary use. However, support retail and service commercial uses are also permitted to support professional offices and other businesses. Parking structures are encouraged to meet parking demand. Industrial uses permitted under the *Industrial Park* designation can continue.

- **Area B: Segerstrom Home Ranch**

This alternative would revise the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan development standards for the Segerstrom Home Ranch sub-area, which is located south of Coast Drive and north of Interstate 405. Currently, the Specific Plan for this sub-area allows up to 760,000 square feet of office and office-related uses at an FAR of 0.40. The recommended alternative would allow residential uses at a maximum density of 40 dwelling units per acre; the intensity of nonresidential uses would increase to an FAR of 1.50. The new General Plan land use designation would be *Urban Center Mixed Use*, with the goal of integrating modest-scale professional offices and high-density residential uses. Parking structures would be encouraged to create opportunities for plazas and open spaces integral to development. Restrictions would apply to residential development within 500 feet of Interstate 405, including the use of buffering, sound walls, landscaping, air filtration systems, and similar measures to reduce noise and air quality impacts.

- **Area C: Sakioka Lot 2**

This alternative would revise the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan development standards for the Sakioka Lot 2 sub-area, which is located south of Sunflower Drive and west of State Route 55. The Specific Plan for this sub-area currently allows a mix of retail and office at 1.00 FAR. The Draft Recommended Land Use would allow a maximum residential density of 28 dwelling units per acre and an FAR of 1.50. This designation is intended to encourage moderate-scale mixed-use development that balances high-density residential and professional office uses. Commercial and retail uses would also be allowed to support surrounding residential and professional office uses. Restrictions would apply to residential development within 500 feet of Interstate 405, including the use of buffering, sound walls, landscaping, air filtration systems, and similar measures to reduce noise and air quality impacts.

- **Area D: Residential Overlay**

The *Residential Overlay* would create opportunities for residential development at strategic locations along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard. This designation would allow for new-high density residential uses in areas where only commercial uses were previously allowed. The Overlay would also increase development opportunities on underutilized motel and commercial properties. The ground floor of new buildings would be required to have retail frontage along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Beach Boulevard to engage pedestrians and create a lively streetscape. Side streets could include ground floor residential uses so that each unit has individual access to the sidewalks. Stoops and entry porches would be encouraged to balance privacy with formal access.

Buildings can be up to four stories in height, provided privacy concerns of established neighborhoods are adequately addressed through the setbacks of upper stories or other design approaches.

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Buildings can be up to four stories in height, provided privacy concerns of established neighborhoods are adequately addressed through the setbacks of upper stories or other design approaches.

- **Area F: Westside Overlay District**

The *Westside Overlay* intends to introduce a diverse mix of uses with the objective of creating a much more integrated, walkable, and complementary balance of creative industrial and office spaces, neighborhood-serving retail and commercial services, and residential uses. The *Overlay* allows mixed use, stand-alone (or single use) multi-unit residential, commercial, retail, and creative light industrial uses. Creative light industrial uses could consist of innovative start-up and creative design businesses in the arts, engineering, sciences, marine, technology, and information industries. This Overlay also facilitates neighborhood-serving commercial uses such as restaurants, cafés, and small shops and service businesses. Multi-unit residential uses would be allowed, particularly developments that encourage ownership.

The *Westside Overlay* designation would be ideal for encouraging mixed uses, including live work uses that combine residential occupancy with commercial activity on the ground floor in the same building space, with the resident using the nonresidential space for his or her business. Typical uses would include lofts, creative studio spaces, small offices, and similar low-intensity uses. This designation also would provide affordable office space to small businesses and organizations which are engaged in innovative activities, including incubator businesses.

With regard to industrial uses, established industrial uses are allowed to continue and expand. New residential development must recognize long-established industrial uses and should be designed to minimize conflicts. New creative industrial workspace would be permitted, provided that activities limit or confine noise, dust, and vibration impacts.

Established low-density residential neighborhoods identified in the General Plan Land Use Plan in the Westside would not be subject to any land use designation changes. Zoning and other regulatory controls would be applied to provide compatibility between established and new uses.

- **Area G: Newport Boulevard Mixed Use**

The current land use designation, *Commercial – Residential*, permits both commercial and residential uses. However, the intent of the *Newport Boulevard Mixed Use* designation is to provide development flexibility to spur development activity along the corridor on underutilized commercial sites and motel properties. This flexibility is needed to respond to the shallow, narrow lots. The designation is intended to allow residential, neighborhood-focused commercial, and mixed-use (residential and commercial) development along Newport Boulevard. Mixed-use developments could be either horizontal or vertical mixed use.

New buildings must be designed with sensitivity to surrounding low-density residential neighborhoods with such features as increased setbacks, stepped-down rear building facades, and landscaped buffers.

- **Area H: SoBECA**

Area H applies to the established *SoBECA Urban Plan* bounded by Baker Street, Bristol Street, and State Route 73 (Corona Del Mar Freeway), and recommends expanding the Urban Plan boundary to a three-block area bounded by Bristol Street, Paularino Avenue, Baker Street, and the Avalon at South Coast apartment community.

The *SoBECA Urban Plan* will continue to include a mix of housing and retail/service commercial businesses, light industrial uses, creative studios, retail campuses, and entertainment and restaurant uses that attract local residents and visitors. Permitted development approaches would be mixed-use development that combines residential and commercial uses, as well as stand-alone uses. This designation would emphasize commercial uses and would aim to expand the established innovative, eclectic, and unique uses that demonstrate the importance of homegrown and incubator-type businesses to the local economy. The integration of innovative public spaces and “hangout” areas for special events would be highly encouraged.

The maximum residential density of the Urban Plan is 20 dwelling units, a maximum building floor-area ratio of 1.25, and a maximum height of four stories or 60 feet.

Preferred Land Use Alternative

Staff is seeking input from City Council on preferred land use alternatives for each focus area. Input regarding alternatives that are no longer being considered or modification to the proposed alternatives will inform the next step in the process. While the Study Area Maps show trip generation numbers these are preliminary figures only to provide a gross measure of traffic volumes that would be generated by the various alternatives. The trip generation numbers allow a comparison of the change or “Delta” in trip counts and clearly demonstrates the change in trip volumes between existing conditions, future conditions with no General Plan changes and a variety of potential future land use alternatives.

Once a recommended alternative has been identified a more detailed and costly Traffic Model Run will be performed. The Traffic Model Run will more accurately calculate anticipated overall traffic volumes for the City, including the preferred land Use changes, and how those trips will be distributed around the City. The Traffic Model Run will predict traffic

volumes and levels of service grades for major roadways and intersection throughout the City.

Change in Scope of the Project and Contract

The current contract with MIG includes three of the General Plan Elements (Land Use, Circulation and Housing). The required General Plan elements are land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, noise, and safety. Since 2000, new State laws have been enacted related to greenhouse gases, complete streets, flooding, fire hazards, and disadvantaged unincorporated communities that need to be addressed by revising the Conservation and Safety Elements. In addition, updating the Noise Element and Open Space and Recreation Element will allow the City to address issues that have been raised during the Great Reach process, particularly with regard to parks. This will also strengthen EIR analysis relating to noise/land use compatibility and impacts on parkland resources.

A memo prepared by MIG, submitted on March 4, 2014 was forwarded to City Council for consideration. Staff believes that a comprehensive update to the General Plan achieves cost savings in terms of the environmental analysis as well as community benefits of adopting a consistent and cohesive General Plan. A refined proposal (submitted on April 21, 2014) including the timeline associated with the process is attached as Attachment 5.

Next Steps

Land Use Alternatives:

The preferred vision statements, land use alternatives and associated traffic generation comparisons will be presented to Planning Commission and City Council for a final recommendation that will be further developed in the Draft General Plan Land Use Element.

Contract with MIG:

If a revision to the scope of the contract with MIG is approved to proceed, the revised contract could be agendized for City Council consideration within the next two months.

Attachments: [1 – Land Use Alternatives – Descriptions](#)
[2 – Land Use Alternatives - Maps](#)
[3 – Summary of comments](#)
[4 – No Change Map](#)
[5 – Proposal for Change in Scope of Contract](#)

Distribution: CEO
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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT PERTAINING TO:

ITEM NUMBER 2

**GENERAL PLAN UPDATE –
LAND USE ALTERNATIVES**

- **Area B: Segerstrom Home Ranch**

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- **Area C: Sakioka Lot 2**

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- **Area E: Corridor Mixed Use Designation**

The intent of the *Corridor Mixed Use* designation is to introduce limited residential development opportunity along the southern portion of Harbor Boulevard and the western portion of 19th Street, and to increase development opportunities for underutilized commercial sites and motel properties. Proposed residential uses would complement the commercial corridor by introducing new housing within walking distance of commercial services and retail uses along Harbor Boulevard and 19th Street. Established automobile dealerships are encouraged to remain. New buildings must be designed with sensitivity to surrounding low-density residential neighborhoods, with features such as increased setbacks, stepped-down rear building facades, and landscaped buffers.

The new proposed *Corridor Mixed Use* designation would accommodate moderate-scale residential and commercial mixed-use developments appropriately scaled. Development approaches would include both horizontal and vertical mixed use. Ground-floor commercial frontage and signature architectural elements at designated focal locations would be required.

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