



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2015

ITEM NUMBER: **NB-1**

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE YEAR 2015-2025
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

DATE: SEPTEMBER 25, 2015

FROM: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPT.

**PRESENTATION BY: GARY ARMSTRONG, AICP, DEV. SVCS. DIRECTOR
LAURA STETSON, AICP, PRINCIPAL, MIG INCORPORATED**

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RECOMMENDATION

Provide the following direction to staff for the Year 2015-2025 General Plan Update for each item by separate action:

A. For the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative, direct staff to include the following:

1. **Residential Incentive Overlay** consisting of 40 du/acre along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard.
2. **Seegerstrom Home Ranch** at a maximum of 1.2 million square feet, or 0.64 FAR of office uses on the development site.
3. **Sakioka Lot 2** at a maximum density of 80 dwelling units per acre without any changes to the existing trip budget, maximum 660 units, and any other development standards as specified in the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan.
4. **SoBECA Mixed-use Overlay Zone** with a site-specific density of 40 dwelling units per development lot with an overall cap of 20 du/acre in the overall urban plan area.
5. **Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Zone** as a new mixed-use planned development area with a maximum 1.0 FAR and maximum specified residential density.
6. **Fairview Development Center** property with a new land use designation consisting of: (a) 0.25 FAR Institutional/Recreational, (b) Minimum 25% open space for recreational purposes (approximately 28 acres), and (c) Maximum 500 dwelling units at 15 du/acre (or maximum 25 du/acre) with a density bonus.
7. **LA Times Site** at a maximum 0.64 FAR for office uses and 0.54 FAR for retail/commercial uses in a Commercial Center land use designation.

B. For other Alternative(s):

1. Direct staff to study any other Land Use Alternative(s) in addition to the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative specified above.

BACKGROUND

Purpose of Study Session

On September 8, 2015, the City Council and Planning Commission held a joint study session to consider potential land use alternatives for 2015-2025 General Plan. The full study session report could be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.costamesaca.gov/ftp/council/agenda/2015/2015-09-08SS/Item1.pdf>

The purpose of this study session was to obtain input from the Planning Commission and City Council on proposed General Plan land use changes. After incorporating comments from the study session, staff is seeking Council direction on a recommended land use strategy for the General Plan update.

While State Law does not require the City Council to give formal direction on a preferred land use plan, staff is requesting authorization from Council to proceed with a land use strategy.

This report identifies a primary General Plan Land Use Alternative and summarizes comments from the study session. Other potential alternatives, as directed by Council, will be further analyzed in the City's traffic model and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Brief Summary of Study Session Comments

The following summary represents comments that appear to have interest from two or more Councilmembers/Commissioners. If there was general interest, these comments became the basis for the development of the General Plan Land Use Alternative for study purposes.

Comments which were made by an individual member without reinforcement or follow-up by another Councilmember/Commissioner are not included in the proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative. [Attachment 1, Summary of Comments from Study Session]

For example, comments which formed the basis of the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative included the following:

- *Home Ranch Site*
A higher Floor Area could be supported to attract major users; general support to increase the FAR to 0.64. No housing to be allowed on this site; however, mix of commercial and office uses allowed based on the trip budget determined by 0.64 FAR for office uses.
- *LA Times Site*
This site includes the 24 acres of the LA Times site and the adjacent ballfield recently acquired by the Tribune. Comments were in support of an increase of maximum 0.64 FAR for office uses consistent with the allowed intensity for Home Ranch with no housing units allowed.

- *Robinson-Pharma Site*
No change to the current land use designation is supported. In general, no new housing to be allowed north of the 405 Freeway west of South Coast Plaza.
- *Sakioka Lot 2*
General support to increase the maximum density for residential development to 80 du/acre (instead of 28 du/acre currently allowed) with the current cap on the maximum number of units (660 units). No change to the FAR.
- *Fairview Developmental Center*
Allow for 25 percent open space/ parks and recreational uses; no corporate offices to be included in the land use. Maximum residential units to be no more than 500 units.
- *Residential Incentive Overlay Zone on Harbor and Newport Boulevard*
Expand the area to the west of the freeway to include a block north of Bay Street and four blocks east of the freeway between 20th Street and 19th Street.
- *SoBECA*
No change to the proposed land use with a maximum density of 40 du/acre.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ALTERNATIVE

The final draft of the Land Use Alternative includes only 4 percent of the area of the City and the majority (96%) is left unchanged. As previously noted, 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, 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 3 - Land Use Descriptions. The focus areas are further described in a series of 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.

Important Note: The Proposed General Plan Alternative will be studied in the Environmental Impact Report along with any other Alternatives as directed by Council. The identification of a Proposed General Plan Alternative at this point does not represent a final commitment or determination by the City Council of the Final General Plan.

A brief summary of the land use changes for each focus area for the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative is provided as follows.

1. Residential Overlay of 40 du/acre along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard

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 of up to 40 du/acre in areas where only commercial uses were previously allowed or residential uses were allowed up to 17 du/acre. 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. The Overlay would also increase development opportunities on underutilized motel and commercial properties.

Interest in reducing the proposed density from 40 du/acre to 25 du/acre is indicated as a secondary alternative.

The proposed map includes two areas; Council direction is needed to specify the areas to be included in the Residential Incentive Overlay Zone.

- Option 1, includes several blocks on the eastside of the freeway and the Sandpiper Motel property located at 1967 Newport Boulevard;
- Option 2, includes Option 1 and five additional blocks including a block north on Bay Street on the west side of freeway and four blocks on the eastside between 19th and 20th Street.

2. Segerstrom Home Ranch

This alternative would revise the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan development standards for the 43.57-acre 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 new land use will allow up to 0.64 FAR and 1.2M square feet of office use. The maximum intensity on this site will be based on the trip budget for 0.64 FAR office development. 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.

The request from the property owner for an additional 300 dwelling units is not included in the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative.

3. Sakioka Lot 2

Consistent with the allowable densities, the recommended Land Use would allow a maximum residential density of 80 du/acre, or 660 maximum units and an FAR of 1.0. No changes to the maximum allowable trip budget is being proposed. 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.

The request from the property owner for a 1.5 FAR is not included in the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative.

4. SoBECA

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 site specific density of 40 dwelling units with an overall cap of 20 du/acre or (784 maximum units). The maximum building floor-area ratio of 1.25, and a maximum height of four stories or 60 feet is consistent with the existing overlay.

5. Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Zone

This mixed-use corridor area is intended to promote lot consolidation for marginal commercial properties and provide a synergy between Harbor Boulevard commercial corridor and 19th Street focusing on the Triangle as the downtown. Design standards will need to be incorporated to encourage stepped setback along Harbor Boulevard and minimize tunnel effect with development of high residential on both sides.

6. Fairview Development Center

The center provides a unique opportunity for recreational and residential because of its golf course setting. A new General Plan Land use designation is proposed to allow:

- 0.25 FAR Institutional/Recreational
- Minimum 25% open space for recreational purposes (approximately 28 acres)
- 15 du/acre, or maximum 25 du/acre with a density bonus, for an overall maximum of 500 units

7. LA Times Site

This site includes the 20-acre site and the adjacent ballfield site recently acquired by the Tribune. The combination of parcels add to approximately 24 acres. As directed by council, Commercial Center land use designation is designated for this site with a

maximum development intensity of 0.64 for office use. A combination of land uses could be considered as long as the overall trip budget is not exceeded.

Similar to the proposed changes to Home Ranch site allow a maximum 0.64 for office uses and 0.54 for retail/commercial uses within the Commercial Center land use designation.

Traffic Modeling of Proposed General Plan Land Use to Date

Please refer to Attachment 4, technical memorandum of the traffic analysis to date. Please note that this information was provided at the study session and does not include the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative as currently described in this report.

Once a recommended alternative has been identified a comprehensive 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.

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Please refer to Attachment 5 for the fiscal impact analysis to date.

Preparation of General Plan EIR

The land use plan is a recommendation based on all work with the community and policy makers that has been completed to date, and this recommendation will receive full public review through both publication of the draft General Plan Amendments and the EIR.

The EIR, in addition to analyzing the potential environmental effects resulting from the proposed General Plan Amendments, will examine alternatives to the proposals. While as required by law, the alternatives analysis will focus on alternatives capable of reducing any significant environmental effects that the EIR identifies as associated with the draft General Plan Amendments (and the draft land use plan in particular), staff would like the EIR to consider any alternatives that the Council directs. This approach will provide for broad public disclosure of any alternatives that may be considered during the public review process, once the draft General Plan Amendments and EIR are published.

Other Land Use Alternatives

In addition to the Proposed General Plan Land Use Alternative, Council may direct staff to further study other alternatives. Based on the feedback given at the study session, there is interest from a Councilmember to study the following:

- 1) *Study housing north of the I-405.* If there is interest to study residential uses in this area, Council may direct staff to include the Segerstrom's original request for additional residential units for Home Ranch Site. The property owner is seeking to include 300 residential units in addition to the 0.64 FAR (1.2M square feet) to allow for a mixed use development at this site. This alternative will need to be considered in the traffic model so that any potential impacts to nearby intersections is studied and a new trip

generation cap is established. Council may also provide any other direction as it relates to other potential residential development sites in this area.

- 2) Reduce Density of the Residential Incentive Overlay Zone to maximum 20 du/acre with a density potential of up to 24 du/acre for all residential incentive areas proposed on Harbor and Newport Boulevard. (The proposed General Plan Alternative specifies the Residential Incentive Overlay Zone at 40 du/acre.)

CONCLUSION

Staff is seeking formal direction on the Proposed General Plan Land Use Plan and the potential alternatives. This information will be guiding preparation of the General Plan EIR that will be available for a 45-day public review in January 2016. The Proposed General Plan Alternative will be studied in the Environmental Impact Report along with any other Alternatives as directed by Council. The identification of a Proposed General Plan Alternative at this point does not represent a final commitment or determination by the City Council of the Final General Plan.

GARY ARMSTRONG, AICP
Economic Development &
Development Services Director/ Deputy CEO

Attachments: 1 – [Summary of September 8, 2015 Study Session](#)
2 – [Land Use Exhibits](#)
3 – [Land Use Descriptions](#)
4 – [Technical Memorandum – Vehicle Traffic Forecasts](#)
5 – [Technical Memorandum – Fiscal Impact Model Methodology](#)
6 – [Additional Documents](#)

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