

Agenda Report

May 14, 2012

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Planning Department

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN LAND USE AND MOBILITY ELEMENTS UPDATE –
PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND
POLICIES AND DRAFT CONCEPT LAND USE MAP**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Review and comment on the General Plan's principles, objectives and policy topic areas; and
2. Review and comment on the draft concept map and growth forecasts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In June 2012, staff will be presenting to the public for the first time a consolidated set of General Plan policy updates and a single concept land use plan. Since the last update to City Council on the General Plan in September 2011, staff has been continuing to elicit community feedback on the policies and refining a land use plan from four survey alternatives into one balanced concept. The purpose of presenting these documents to the public is to receive a last round of feedback before preparing final recommendations for City Council.

Although there was general agreement about the policies, throughout the outreach process the public provided a broad range of opinions regarding the location and amount of future development of the City. In developing the concept land use plan staff worked to balance the diverse needs and opinions of the community. While the plan was guided by the seven guiding principles, other factors were considered in the methodology including current best practices in land use planning, the City's economic development strategy, and environmental concerns. In June, community workshops will provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the concept map and the balance between issues.

Tonight's presentation is intended to provide an opportunity for the Council to review and comment on the direction of the plan prior to being presented at the community workshops. Council comments will be incorporated into the June 2012 presentations to the public.

BACKGROUND:

The Principles, Objectives and Policies

The General Plan contains seven guiding principles, which were adopted in 1994 to serve as the community's vision in guiding its future. Although these principles were reaffirmed by the community as part of the 2004 update, staff sought to receive additional feedback for the current, more comprehensive update. In addition to the principles, the Land Use and Mobility Elements have an extensive number of supporting objectives and policies (26 pages in length for the Land Use Element and 14 pages for the Mobility Element).

To help narrow the scope of the discussion, staff reviewed all previous comments from the community to identify policies that needed revision. Staff went through a similar exercise when comparing the existing policies with best practices from other cities. The result of these exercises showed that most of the potential changes were concentrated in only a few topic areas. Main topic areas for potential revision and enhancement included sustainability, urban design and education. Other topic areas that appeared to require more minor revisions included historic preservation, economic vitality, open space and arts and culture.

Staff prepared draft language for discussion in each topic area. The Planning Commission held a retreat in October 2011 to discuss the land use principles, objectives and policies and the Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) and its Mobility Element Update Subcommittee held study sessions from October 2011 to early January 2012 to discuss the Mobility Element's objectives. The General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPUAC) and the core group of commissions that participated in drafting the four alternatives (at the November 2010 Charrette) also reviewed the draft language. Comments from these meetings were incorporated into presentation materials for the community.

In November and December of 2011, four Mobility Workshops were held to receive feedback from the community on proposed updates to the mobility objectives. In March 2012, a Community Workshop was held to gather feedback on the land use and mobility policies. The public demonstrated general support for all of the draft language as described below.

Policy Topic Areas to Incorporate in the Update

Attachment A includes the draft language that was discussed by the community and the commissions. Recommendations have not been included for historic preservation and

education, although policy options on these two topic areas were circulated and discussed with the public.

Below is a brief summary of the main topic areas discussed:

- *Sustainability, Open Space and Conservation* – Since the last General Plan update, the City has adopted numerous programs and plans that support the principles of sustainability. There was strong support for this topic area to be further developed in the policies. There was also support to incorporate key findings from the recently adopted Open Space and Conservation Element (see Attachment A, pages 5 and 6).
- *Urban Design, Historic Preservation and Arts/Culture* – The amount of feedback received from the community on urban design issues was significant. In addition, the city has adopted many programs and plans that support quality urban design and preserve historic resources. There was strong support to develop this topic further to ensure it is comprehensively addressed in the update. A community group requested text modifications to Guiding Principle #2 related to historic preservation. There was general support for part of the text modification and continued debate over the rest of the modification (see Attachment A, pages 7 and 8).
- *Mobility* – There was broad support to have streets designed to accommodate not only motor vehicles, but pedestrians and bicycles. There was also strong support to increase the number of routes and the hours of operation for local bus service (see Attachment A, pages 9 and 10).
- *Economic Vitality* – The amount of feedback received on the need to create jobs and revitalize commercial areas was significant. There was strong support to incorporate key elements of the recently completed Economic Development Strategic Plan in the update (see Attachment A, pages 11 and 12).
- *Education* – There was general support to add education as new principle. However, there was continued debate whether the principle should focus solely on public education or more broadly address education (see Attachment A, page 13).

Staff will incorporate City Council comments into the final principles, objectives and policies in summer 2012. This will then be presented to advisory commissions and the City Council in fall 2012.

The Draft Concept Map

The General Plan includes a land use map that shows allowed uses and densities throughout the city. The map and policies work together to fulfill the community's vision.

In reviewing the comments received from the community throughout the outreach process, staff identified the following foundational concepts on which to begin the map. These concepts are consistent with the values expressed by the community in the 1994 General Plan update:

- *Protect and preserve* – Protect and preserve residential neighborhoods, historic resources, parkland and open space areas.
- *Target growth* – Focus future growth in the central district, around transit stations and at major intersections. “Transit villages” would be located around transit stations and would include a broad mix of uses that enhance the local economy and create jobs. “Neighborhood villages” would be located at major intersections and would focus on neighborhood serving businesses with some mixed-use housing. In both instances, uses would be clustered to promote walking, bicycling and transit.
- *Plan for walking, bicycling, transit & accessibility* – Incorporate policies and land use patterns that promote alternative modes of travel.
- *Focus on economic vitality* – Preserve and expand land uses that generate jobs. Incorporate policies and land use patterns that help revitalize commercial areas throughout the city.

In fall 2010, four map alternatives were drafted with extensive community input. These were presented to the public in June 2011 in the form of a newsletter and survey. The survey asked which alternative, or combination of alternatives, people preferred for six planning areas. In September 2011, the Planning Department presented the survey results to the City Council and community.

The results of the survey provided additional foundation for the concept map. Staff also took into consideration other factors such as the seven guiding principles, the City’s recently completed Economic Development Strategic Plan, the annual citizen’s survey, feedback from the community workshops on the objectives and policies, environmental concerns such as greenhouse gas emissions and best practices used in the city planning. In addition, staff completed an inventory of the existing built environment to identify properties that were unlikely to change (e.g. historic properties, schools, religious facilities, etc.).

Staff sought to create a concept land use map that balanced the variety of feedback received. For some planning areas, the concept map does not call for significant changes. For other areas, the concept map provides the tools necessary to allow change that is consistent with the community’s vision. While the concept map and corresponding policies provide a vision for each planning area, many of the details needed to implement the vision (such as those related to design and economic development) would be addressed when the City’s Specific Plans and Zoning Code are updated.

The Planning Areas

Below is a brief summary describing the draft concept map at the citywide level and for the main planning areas. Corresponding maps can be found in Attachment B.

Growth forecasts for housing units and non-residential square footage through the year 2035 have been calculated for the land use configuration shown on the Concept Map. The forecasts demonstrate in numerical terms how much development would be generated by the land use plan and serve as a reference tool in determining the desired maximum development capacity for each area and citywide. Based on feedback from the Council, commissions and the community, these numbers will be adjusted in alignment with changes to the land use map.

Citywide

The draft concept map retains the land use designations and densities from the current General Plan throughout a majority of the city. No changes are proposed for existing residential neighborhoods, historic districts and open space areas.

New housing and job opportunities are focused within existing Specific Plan areas and other smaller commercial areas. The current General Plan primarily focused growth in the Central District. The draft map calls for continued development in the Central District, but within key opportunity areas, and also encourages an expansion of commercial uses in East Pasadena near the Gold Line Station to create a walkable center and the evolution of commercial areas at key intersections throughout the city into mixed-use "neighborhood villages". These villages would create a neighborhood identity and enable residents to walk or bicycle for local shopping and services.

Citywide, staff forecasts the draft map would result in an average construction of 236,000 commercial square feet and 319 units annually. As noted above, the majority of this growth would be targeted to the city's main planning areas. This is a total of 5.9 million square feet of commercial space (non-residential square footage) and 7,975 housing units through 2035 (not including approved master development plans). These growth numbers on an annual basis are very similar to past trends (see Attachment B-1).

Fair Oaks/Orange Grove

Community feedback for this area focused on the need for local serving amenities and increased job opportunities. The draft concept map envisions the transformation of the strip commercial corridors of Fair Oaks Avenue, Orange Grove Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue into compact walkable "neighborhood villages" at key intersections. Uses would include a mix of housing with local-serving retail.

For properties within the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan, the draft map calls for a balance of commercial and housing growth compared to past trends and the existing plan. Staff forecasts the map will result in 300,000 square feet of commercial space by 2035. This is greater than the 90,000 constructed since 1994, but less than the existing plan's remaining cap of 485,000 square feet. In addition, the map will result in 325

housing units, which is slightly less than the 360 units constructed since 1994, but greater than the existing plan's remaining cap of 230 (see Attachment B-2).

North Lake

Comments received from the community for this area included providing more local serving businesses, improving walkability and protecting adjacent neighborhoods. Like the Fair Oaks and Orange Grove area, the draft concept map envisions the development of walkable, mixed-use "neighborhood villages" with housing at key intersections along North Lake Avenue. Commercial uses would cater to nearby residents. Higher intensity development with mixed-use housing would be located at the area north of the Lake Gold Line Station, to take advantage of its proximity to rail transit. A smaller "neighborhood village" with infill retail development would be located along East Washington Boulevard.

For properties within the Lake Avenue Specific Plan, the draft map calls for increased commercial and reduced housing growth compared to past trends and the existing plan. Staff forecasts the map will result in 250,000 square feet of commercial space by 2035. This is greater than the 50,000 square feet constructed since 1994 and the existing plan's remaining cap of 125,000 square feet. In addition, the map will result in 250 new housing units, which is greater than the 10 units constructed since 1994, but less than the existing plan's remaining cap of 490 units (see Attachment B-3).

East Pasadena

Community comments for this area included the need to better utilize the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station, create a walkable area, provide new jobs and protect nearby residential neighborhoods. The current plan follows an automobile-oriented pattern and focuses on office uses and does not allow any additional housing. The draft concept map envisions transitioning the area into a walkable transit-oriented village with job generating offices and local and regional serving retail. Housing would also be added to the area to create a walkable place to work and live. The highest densities would be concentrated around the Gold Line Station and decrease as they abut residential neighborhoods. The Lamanda Park area would focus on research and development (R&D) uses to assist in fostering new and emerging businesses.

For the East Pasadena Specific Plan area, staff forecasts the draft map will result in 1.5 million square feet in commercial space, which is less than the existing plan's remaining cap of 2.0 million square feet. This reduction will be partly offset by 1,250 housing units, which is higher than the 400 units constructed or approved for construction since 1994. As previously noted, the existing plan's housing cap has already been reached (see Attachment B-4).

East Colorado

Feedback from the community for this area included providing more amenities for students, reducing undesirable uses, providing for jobs and creating a sense of identity. The draft Concept Map envisions the transformation of Colorado Boulevard's strip corridor into compact, walkable "neighborhood villages" integrating mixes of uses serving students and adjoining neighborhoods. These villages are envisioned around

Pasadena City College and at the intersection of Colorado and Sierra Madre Boulevards. Job generating offices with mixed-use housing would be located south of the Allen and Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Stations. Areas to preserve include the residential neighborhood north of the Allen Gold Line Station and the open space areas parallel to Kinneloa under the utility lines.

For properties within the East Colorado Specific Plan, staff forecasts the draft map will result in 525,000 square feet of commercial space by 2035. This is greater than the 400,000 square feet constructed since 1994 and the existing plan's remaining cap of 200,000 square feet. The higher forecasts are primarily because of greater intensities around the two Gold Line Stations. In addition, the map will result in 500 new housing units by 2035, which is greater than the 14 units constructed since 1994, but less than the existing plan's remaining cap of 735 units (see Attachment B-4).

South Fair Oaks

Community comments for this area included better utilizing the Fillmore Gold Line Station, creating a walkable area with housing and capitalizing on the area's proximity to the Huntington Hospital and Art Center. Over the past decade, this area has been transitioning from industrial to office. The draft concept map calls to create a walkable area with offices that support the hospital, as well as housing to serve hospital workers, seniors and students and some supporting retail.

For properties within the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan, the draft map calls for maintaining commercial growth and increasing housing compared to past trends and the existing plan. Staff forecasts the map will result in 600,000 square in commercial development by 2035 (this number does not include 135,000 square feet approved for the Huntington Hospital Master Plan). This is consistent with the 670,000 square feet constructed since 1994 and the existing plan's remaining cap of 600,000 square feet (see Attachment B-5).

Central District

The community expressed a range of opinions on growth in the Central District including no growth, substantial growth and better managed growth. The draft concept map will continue to focus growth in the Central District, but development would be focused in specific areas that have greater opportunities for development. A site-by-site inventory of vacant and underutilized sites identified the following opportunity areas in the Central District: the Playhouse area, Lake Avenue north of Green Street, the area around Parsons and the CD-6 area (south of Del Mar Boulevard along Fair Oaks Avenue and Arroyo Parkway). These areas are all within close proximity to Gold Line Stations and are well served by bus lines. Growth in these areas would also provide additional customers to support the economic activities of Old Pasadena, Paseo Mall and South Lake District. Areas to preserve include historic properties and the multi-family neighborhood south of Cordova Street.

For properties within the Central District Specific Plan, the draft map calls for a greater balance of commercial and housing growth compared to past trends and the existing plan. Staff forecasts the Concept Map will result in 2.5 million square feet of

commercial space and 3,250 housing units by 2035. Past growth focused heavily on housing, with 1.5 million square feet of commercial space and 4,000 housing units constructed since 1994. The existing plan's remaining caps focus heavily on commercial, with 3.8 million square feet and 700 units remaining (see Attachment B-5).

Analyzing the Land Use Map

Once the concept map is refined into a land use map, it will be evaluated for detailed impacts such as population, employment, traffic and environmental factors such as greenhouse gas emissions. While the original alternatives were evaluated for fiscal impacts at the citywide level, the land use map will be evaluated at the citywide level and for the main planning areas.

Next Steps

The following are the next steps in the update process to completion:

- May 2012 – Staff to present the draft concept map as an informational item to the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) and General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPUAC);
- June 2012 – Hold two community open houses to present the draft land use map and forecasts to the community for feedback. Staff is working closely with the GPUAC to develop and promote the open houses;
- Summer 2012 – Prepare final principles, objectives and policies and prepare a final land use map with caps, analyze land use map for detailed impacts;
- Fall 2012 – Present the final document text, land use map and caps to advisory commissions and City Council;
- January 2013 – Begin work on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will take 6-8 months to complete; and
- Summer 2013 – Adopt final General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements and certify EIR.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:


The General Plan is updated on average every ten to twenty years to ensure it is aligned with the City's overall vision. Previous updates to the Land Use and Mobility Elements were completed in 1994 and 2004. Reviewing the principles, objectives and policies and drafting a concept land use map are important components of any update.

Guiding Principle #7 focuses on community participation and the need for the community to directly participate in shaping plans and policies for the City's future. Continued feedback from the commissions and community is needed to draft the concept map and update the policies.

FISCAL IMPACT:


The implementation of the updated General Plan is intended to improve quality of life and enhance economic stability for the City resulting in direct and indirect fiscal impacts that cannot be quantified at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning

Prepared by:



Jason C. Mikaelian, AICP
General Plan Manager

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachment A: The Guiding Principles and policy topic areas

Attachment B: Maps of the main planning areas