

ATTACHMENT D

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Prior to the preparation of the proposed Central District Specific Plan (CDSP), the City held the following community meetings/events:

- Three citywide open houses to introduce and solicit feedback on the Specific Plan Update Program and General Plan vision on each of the eight planning areas
 - Open House 1 (March 8, 2018 – Jackie Robinson Community Center)
 - Open House 2 (March 15, 2018 – Pasadena Senior Center)
 - Open House 3 (March 29, 2018 – Victory Park Recreation Center)



- Playhouse District Block Party
 - On June 9, 2018, The Planning & Community Development Department hosted a booth at the Pasadena Playhouse District Block Party celebrating the Playhouse District’s centennial. At the Our Pasadena booth, community members were invited to respond to the questions “What do you like about Downtown Pasadena?” and “What do you want to see more of in Downtown Pasadena?” relating to categories of Buildings & Development, Open Space, Streets, Community Connectedness, and other.
- Youth Summit
 - On October 19, 2019, The Planning & Community Development Department hosted an Our Pasadena Youth Summit for students at the Robinson Recreation Center. Through the use of multi-media tools and interactive activities, including a virtual reality tour through parts of the City, the event introduced city planning to youth and allowed

participants to share their unique perspectives on what they think will make Pasadena a better place now and in the future.

- Three plan-specific events to present and solicit community feedback on the CDSP update
 - Round One Workshop (June 26, 2018) - The objective of the workshop was to solicit community feedback on the general plan vision, desired land uses, and urban form for the area. More than 100 participants consisting of community members, business owners, and developers provided feedback on the future of the CDSP. Group discussion was concentrated into the following major themes based on geographic area: Old Pasadena/Civic Center, Del Mar/Arroyo, In-Town Housing, South Lake, and Playhouse/Walnut districts. Workshop materials and a summary of the community feedback can be found on the program's website, <https://www.ourpasadena.org/Central-District-Round1-Materials>.



- Round Two Workshop (March 21, 2019) - Approximately 65 community members attended the second workshop and provided feedback on the future of the Central District. The goal of this workshop was to present preliminary land use and urban form concepts that considered a number of factors, including community feedback received since the first workshop. Participants were able to provide input on the presented concepts by visiting stations where their feedback was recorded. Sub-area vision statements, overall land use concepts, height and massing regulations, and public realm design guidelines features were all presented to the public, and subsequently feedback was received on the proposed ideas. Materials of the workshop can be found on the program's website, <https://www.ourpasadena.org/Central-District-Round2-Materials>.



- Round 3, Virtual Open House (December 2, 2020) – Due to the COVID public health crisis, the third round of public outreach events for the specific plan update program was conducted online using a virtual open house platform. Staff presented draft guidelines and standards to the community with the primary objective for the virtual open house being to gather feedback from the community on these draft regulations. The virtual open house webpage stayed open since November 19, 2020, and a total of 648 unique users (as of October 2022) have engaged with the website. Materials can be found on the virtual open house page, <https://ourpasadena.consultation.ai/centraldistrict/>.



Participants shared a wide range of input throughout the outreach process, which is summarized in the following recurring themes:

- **Public Realm;** The public showed support for the proposed street wall requirements, wider sidewalks, emphasis on shade and trees, and paseo amenities. There was opposition to a proposed paseo through Vroman’s bookstore.
- **Land Use/Ground Floor;** There was support for more affordable housing, an increase in density near transit, more housing and more height on North Lake Ave., the elimination of parking minimums, more flexibility on ground floor uses, and a decreased emphasis on retail/commercial.
- **Scale and Massing;** There was an expressed desire for more traditional architectural design standards, allowing more height closer to transit, allowing more height in exchange for more public open space, and more flexibility for sidewalk/setback requirements along Green St. Workshop participants were also in favor of reconsidering the façade modulation and façade length standards in order to avoid boxy architecture.
- **Open Space;** There was general overall support for the open space requirements and the paseo concept in the draft plan. Some participants’ suggestions included considering dog and child-friendly amenities, and potentially requiring native landscaping or community gardens. The new publicly accessible open space requirements in the plan prompted a clarification of the meaning of “public” in this context, and a desire to give more flexibility of use to the building owners.

Additional meetings were held to solicit feedback, as follows:

- **Design Commission (June 22, 2021)** – the Design Commission held an information item on the CDSP update to review and provide feedback on the refined plan vision and preliminary development, design, and public realm standards that were presented during the Round 3 outreach. The Design Commission provided the following feedback:
 - Support for connecting open space requirements to number of bedrooms versus units or square footage.
 - Asked for staff clarification on a number of points, including explanation of “step-back” terminology, reasoning behind North Lake Ave. housing restriction, height limitation on City Hall view shed corridor, parking bundling, detailed façade modulation discussion, placement of open space, and clarification of public/private realm boundaries.
- **District 7 Community Webinar (November 16, 2021)** – Vice Mayor Andy Wilson held a community webinar event to give members of the public another opportunity to hear about the concepts presented in the draft plan. Audio recording of the community webinar can be found on the program website: <https://www.ourpasadena.org/virtualopenhouse>. Topics of discussion covered:
 - An overview of the General Plan,
 - A review of the purpose and objectives of the sub-areas within the CDSP area,
 - Review of the key standards and proposed changes for the plan area,
 - Detailed development and design standards review which covered height, FAR, density, setback, step-backs, façade length and modulation, open space, private and public realm standards, minimum sidewalk widths, sidewalk and amenity zones, and walk zones, and

- An update to the allowed uses and ground floor usage regulations.

Planning Commission Study Session (December 8, 2021) – Planning and Community Development staff held a study session with the Planning Commission on the CDSP, focusing on revised plan boundaries and standards that would regulate future development in the plan area. This was an informational item only. The staff report and presentation can be found on the program website:

<https://www.ourpasadena.org/CDSP-PC-SS-120821>. The Planning Commission received public comments, discussed the draft plan, and provided feedback to staff.

A summary of the public comments and feedback received is provided below:

- Support for housing opportunities, including adaptive reuse, around the Metro L Line Stations, particularly along Lake Avenue, north of Colorado Boulevard (in North Lake subarea);
- Concerns about residential density and building heights on Lake Avenue, specifically south of San Pasqual Street (in South Lake and South Lake Village subareas);
- Preference to maintain Lake Avenue, south of Cordova Street, as a commercial-only district (in South Lake and South Lake Village subareas);
- Support for implementation of publicly-accessible open spaces such as paseos and plazas throughout the plan area;
- Desire to preserve historic sight lines and retain green spaces near City Hall (in Civic Center subarea);
- Desire to protect and add to the tree canopy and other features that enhance walkability, such as wider sidewalks and landscaped areas;
- Concern about ensuring that pedestrian mobility improvements, including scrambled sidewalks and mid-block crossings, are sufficiently addressed and implemented through the CDSP update;
- Greater use flexibility and parking reductions for desired commercial uses;
- Caution under-parking new development; and
- Request to remove parcels on Lake Avenue, south of California Boulevard from the CDSP (in South Lake Village subarea).

Commissioner comments are organized by topic and included the following:

- Plan Boundary and Potential Buildout
 - Suggestion to move the portion along Arroyo Parkway (in Arroyo Del Mar subarea) into South Fair Oaks Specific Plan;
 - Consider removing the portion on Lake Avenue, south of California (in South Lake Village subarea) from the CDSP; and
 - Concerns over the potential buildout of the plan area.
- Land Uses
 - Support for housing opportunities with substantial residential density on Lake Avenue, north of Colorado Boulevard (in North Lake subarea);
 - Consider retaining and/or reducing residential density in a few areas, including the Boston Court area, north of Colorado Boulevard (in Mid Lake subarea), the Shopper's Lane parking lot on Lake Avenue (in South Lake subarea), and in the South Lake Village subarea;

- Consider including language that supports adaptive reuse of currently unoccupied office space to residential uses in order to meet housing needs; and
- Preference to maintain Lake Avenue, south of Cordova Street, as a commercial-only district (in South Lake and South Lake Village subareas).
- Building Heights
 - Concerns of proposed heights in a few areas, including the southeast portion of the In-Town Residential subarea, with a preference to limit height to 36 feet as the area west of El Molino; and
 - Support for varied roof lines along Walnut Avenue.
- Public Realm and Open Space
 - Support for the new open space and public realm requirements being recommended in the CDSP, such as the expanded paseo network, but suggest identifying specific publicly accessible open space opportunities at key locations, including the northeast corner of Lake Avenue and California Boulevard;
 - Suggestion to rezone the “lawn areas” of the YWCA and YMCA as open space;
 - Consider incorporating additional standards in the plan that would require new development (potentially new uses) to provide pedestrian entrances along paseos;
 - Support for expanding outdoor dining opportunities along Colorado Boulevard, including parklets;
 - Desire for uniform design guidelines for outdoor dining areas;
 - Consider expanding setback requirements throughout the plan to provide space for street trees;
 - Consider setting the minimum sidewalk width at 12 feet throughout the plan area, maintain existing 15 feet sidewalk widths, and expand the 15 feet minimum sidewalk width on Arroyo Parkway up to Holly Street;
 - Support for the expanded sidewalk widths of 12 feet and setback requirements along Walnut Street.

Planning Commission Study Session 2 (June 22, 2022) – Planning and Community Development staff held a second study session with the Planning Commission to present an update on the Central District Specific Plan (CDSP) focusing on revised plan boundaries and standards that would regulate future development in the plan area. This was an informational item only. The staff report and presentation can be found on the program website: <https://www.ourpasadena.org/CDSP-PC-SS-062222>. The Planning Commission received public comments, discussed the draft plan, and provided feedback to staff.

A summary of the comments and feedback received is provided below:

- Support for overall pedestrian friendliness of plan;
- Caution against height increases and potentially eliminating mountain views;
- Plan should focus more on how people live and experience life in Central District;
- Reinforce guidelines that differentiate areas;
- Allow residential uses, including residential care uses, near Lake Avenue and Walnut Street;
- Concern for historic districts;
- Support for housing in North Lake area.

Commissioner comments are organized by topic and included the following:

- Land Uses
 - The number and names of the districts and subareas was confusing;
 - Support for North Lake walkable/human-scale development;
 - Support for housing in the North Lake area, including adaptive reuse of commercial buildings;
 - Support for South Lake area to remain as a primarily commercial corridor;
 - Need confirmation on whether the I-710 stub will be incorporated into the CDSP;
- Public Realm and Open Space
 - Want explanation of how Department of Transportation and Public Works work together with Planning to implement new public realm standards;
 - PAOS requirements, particularly percentage requirement might be too high; and
 - Include expanded tree root zone in the Central District plan;
- Development Potential
 - Question about the development potential for the next 20 year period given that the development caps have been removed.

Planning Commission Study Session 3 (February 22, 2023) – Planning and Community Development staff held a third study session with the Planning Commission to present a draft of the proposed plan for Central District. This was an informational item only. The staff report and presentation can be found on the program website: <https://www.ourpasadena.org/CDSP-PC-HR-022223>. The Planning Commission received public comments, discussed the draft proposed plan, and provided feedback to staff.

A summary of the comments and feedback received is provided below:

- Align objective design standards with the specific plan update process
- Support for new canopy trees but concern about the removal of existing mature trees
- Support for the draft proposed plan, specifically the allowance for residential uses and senior living along North Lake Avenue
- Questions related to the draft plan referencing the pedestrian plan; the pedestrian plan as drafted does not adequately address pedestrian issues within Central District
- Suggestion that Planning staff coordinate with Transportation about revisions to the pedestrian plan to ensure the plan is comprehensive and supports the specific plan updates
- Lack of a specific pedestrian action in the implementation chapter; request that a detailed fine-grained pedestrian plan for the Central District area
- Encourage that the plan be adopted expeditiously; support the new parking requirements
- Recommend that the design guidelines be incorporated into the proposed plan
- Support differentiating the various districts in the specific plan
- Request to increase building height along Union Street near Los Robles Avenue
- Support for no parking minimums, specifically near public transportation
- Consideration for new tree species that could resist climate changes
- Support the incorporation of the public realm visions for Colorado Boulevard, Lake Avenue, and Mentor within the Playhouse village area
- Recognition of Mentor Avenue as an entertainment district

- Support outdoor dining
- Recommend revising the existing public realm, not just increasing sidewalk space

Commissioner comments are organized by topic and include the following:

- General
 - Support of the draft proposed plan
 - Support the number of subareas/districts proposed in the draft plan
- Land Uses
 - Review and consider updating the land use table that supports a variety of housing options
 - Allow residential uses on upper floors along south Lake Avenue so long as the ground floor provides commercial uses and maintains limited heights (CD-CL)
- Public Realm and Open Space
 - Consider requiring that new development work around existing trees within the public realm – not just along Green Street
 - Preservation of public street trees and concern about removal as part of new development
 - Support for scrambled crosswalks and other amenities that encourage non-motorized activity
 - Recommend that other City Departments utilize the specific plan as guidance on their work efforts and provide annual updates; desire for Public Works and Transportation to provide an update/support for the implementation actions and other work efforts in progress or planned
- Objective Design and Development Standards
 - Recommend existing 2004 design guidelines be incorporated into the proposed plan
 - Too much modulation is not a good thing; prefer that new development does not include too many ‘ins and outs’
 - Consider removing floor area ratio (FAR) and/or density (du/ac) but would not be in favor of it unless the standards were replaced with standards that regulated the form of buildings
 - Consider buffers between residential and commercial uses
 - Add lighting standards to enhance the pedestrian and public environment
 - Favor no parking minimums; too much parking and poorly utilized
 - Suggest the plan includes standards to preserve the sight line to the mountains
- Implementation Actions
 - Concern over the implementation of the plan; new public realm improvements
 - Language is soft and non-committal; what is the implementation plan; measurable outcomes and improvements on the ground
 - Coordination with all city departments is critical for the implementation of each plan
 - Identify new park space within Central District; include it as part of the implementation program
 - Recommend a check box be provided to developers to ensure that public improvements are implemented, such as wider sidewalks and street trees

Residents, property owners, and other interested parties were notified of upcoming events, community meetings and hearings via postcard mailers sent to all properties within the current and proposed CDSP area boundaries as well as within a 500-foot radius of the boundaries to ensure that the greater community surrounding the Central District was notified. Residents were also informed of upcoming events by signing up for email notifications and by interacting with the OurPasadena webpage and social media. Additionally, information about the Specific Plan Update program was provided through Council District newsletters, flyers sent through the Pasadena Unified School District, Pasadena Education Network, and articles in Pasadena Now. Staff also spoke directly with property owners and residents in and around the Central District area, and engaged with the Pasadena Youth Ambassador program to bring awareness of the Specific Plan Update and urban planning in general to the City's youth.