

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** MARCH 27, 2000
FROM: CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON THE GENERAL PLAN, LAND USE ELEMENT
UPDATE AND ZONING CODE REVISION PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council review and receive the following status report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This report updates the City Council on activities and events on the General Plan Update, Zoning Code Revision, and related activities that have occurred since February 2000.

BACKGROUND: In June 1998, the City Council approved a multi-year planning program and budget, which included revising the Zoning Code, preparing a five-year update of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, and revising the Housing, Safety and Noise Elements of the General Plan.

STATUS REPORT

Land Use Element – City staff and commissioners have completed an evaluation of the goals and policies of the existing element against comments received from the community and experience in five years of implementing the element. The conclusion is that, in general, the goals and policies of the General Plan are still appropriate, but that the Zoning Code and the Central District Specific Plan need to be completed in order to fully implement the community's vision. Some of the goals that have been identified for further consideration and possible changes include: the provision of affordable housing, adequate open space, design quality, and implementation of the development intensity standards for each Specific Plan area.

Mobility Element – City staff and consultant, Kaku Associates have developed a scope of work that meets the City's need to update the Mobility Element and provides the

necessary data to update the Land Use and Noise Elements. This scope of work will be accomplished by amending the contract with RTKL Associates, who are preparing the Land Use Element update, Zoning Code Revision and Central District Specific Plan. The addition of the Mobility Element to the RTKL Associates contract is being requested under a separate agenda report.

Housing Element – City staff are holding five workshops for people with an interest in the future of housing in Pasadena. The workshops provide an opportunity to discuss the development of key City of Pasadena housing documents. The housing documents are: General Plan Housing Element, Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan, Public Housing Agency (PHA) Five-Year Housing Plan, and the Redevelopment Agency Implementation Plan.

So far, three community workshops have been held:

February 22, 2000 - to provide an overview and present an assessment of housing needs

March 7, 2000 - to describe existing housing programs

March 21, 2000 - to discuss gaps that need to be addressed.

Additional workshops will be held on April 11th to identify policies and programs and on April 25th to present draft policies and programs.

Workshop participants have included a variety of people, including representatives from various councilmembers, with an interest in housing; especially housing that is affordable to lower-income and moderate-income households. Recent increases in the market rates for housing, both ownership and rental, have created additional pressure on people with limited resources. Further, the sizes of subsidies necessary to make housing affordable have increased, but the available funding has not grown proportionately. And as the demand for rental housing has increased, units have become less available for those with Section 8 vouchers. The demand for additional housing at all income levels is much greater than the supply that has been constructed during the past decade.

After the completion of these workshops, these issues will be addressed in a draft Housing Element that will be prepared and reviewed by Commissions and the State Department of Housing & Community Development. Adoption of the Element is scheduled for early summer 2000.

Safety Element – Selection of a consultant is scheduled in April to update this 25-year-old element to reflect the current best practices for disaster preparedness.

Zoning Ordinance Revision – The Planning Commission is discussing issues related to various chapters of the zoning ordinance each month. In March, they will discuss the single family (RS) districts.

The consultant team is preparing a draft of the use classification chapter of the ordinance. This draft is expected to be completed by May. This chapter categorizes all types of residential, institutional and commercial land use. Among several others, two types of land use that will be updated in the revised zoning ordinance are senior housing and industrial, including biotechnology.

Sign Ordinance Revision – At the end of March, the joint subcommittee of the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Community Development Committee will review the draft sign ordinance. In April, the Planning Commission will hold a community workshop on the draft sign ordinance. Draft sign design guidelines are being reviewed by staff and will be reviewed by the Design Commission in April or May.

Revisions to the Cultural Heritage Ordinance – Between June 1999 and January 2000, Planning staff and advisory consultants (Clarion) conducted several public workshops on the revised ordinance. Members of the Design Commission and the Cultural Heritage Commission participated in these workshops. In December, the staff completed an annotated outline of a revised ordinance and work is progressing on a preliminary draft. The staff will present a status report on the ordinance revisions to the Planning Commission in April. Subsequently, the Design Commission, the Cultural Heritage Commission, and the Planning Commission will review a draft of the ordinance in public meetings. A presentation to the City Council is anticipated early in the next fiscal year.

Joint Planning Commission / Transportation Advisory Commission Meeting – A joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Transportation Advisory Commission was held on February 4, 2000. This meeting provided an opportunity for the two commissions to discuss the interconnections between the Land Use and Mobility Elements, and their relationship to economic vitality. A follow-up meeting was requested by the Commissions and is tentatively scheduled for April.

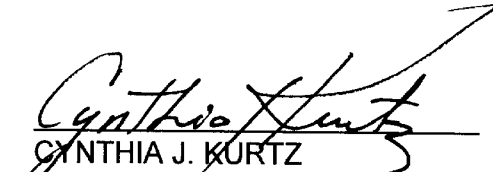
A joint subcommittee of representatives from the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Community Development Committee continues to meet up to twice each month to review the public participation program and work products from staff and consultants.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES / NEXT STEPS

A second citywide community meeting on the Land Use and Mobility Elements, Zoning Code Revision and Central District Specific Plan is being planned for late Spring 2000. The focus of this meeting will be on developing options to address the key planning and traffic issues that have been identified.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funds for this project have been budgeted in Account #443000-101-8115, Planning and Permitting Department, consultants.

Respectfully submitted,


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