

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** JANUARY 24, 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 November 1999.

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 are evaluating the goals and policies of the existing element against comments received from the community and experience in five years of implementing the element. The consultant has prepared a draft document that updates the demographic and land use data that form the background for the revised Element.

Mobility Element – City staff are working with Kaku Associates to develop a scope of work that meets the City's needs to update the Mobility Element and provides the necessary data to update the Land Use and Noise Elements. Once the scope of work is finalized, it will be brought to the City Council in the form of a contract amendment.

Housing Element – All cities in the SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments) region are required to update their Housing Elements by July 1, 2000. City staffs from the Planning & Permitting and Housing & Development Departments are coordinating the update of the Housing Element with the preparation of the Consolidated Plan and other housing reports. Consultants, Cotton Beland Associates, have prepared a background report on the existing population and housing market in Pasadena.

Noise Element – The Noise Element of the General Plan was adopted in 1985. In November 1999, the consulting firm of Rincon Associates was selected to assist staff in updating the Noise Element of the General Plan. The scope of work includes analyzing and quantifying the major sources of noise in the city, which include: freeways, mobility corridors, heliports, industrial plants, and other stationary ground noise sources (Rose Bowl, Eaton Canyon Rifle Range and others). Because traffic on roads and freeways is a significant source of noise, the preparation of this Element will be closely tied to the preparation of the Mobility Element. Data on the existing and proposed classification of the streets is necessary to determine which streets to monitor for noise impacts. The revised Element will include goals, policies, and implementation measures for mitigating noise impacts on residential areas.

Safety Element – The current Safety Element was adopted in September 1975. The update will provide policy direction on hazards and disasters, seismic safety, and other public safety issues. The element will reflect current best practices for disaster preparedness. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the selection of a consultant to assist in the preparation of the Safety Element will be issued in February 2000. Selection of a consultant is expected by April 2000.

Zoning Ordinance Revision – Following interviews with city staff, commissioners and users of the zoning code, the consultant has provided a diagnosis of the existing Zoning Ordinance, a draft Table of Contents, and a style sheet. The major issues in the diagnosis relate to the format and the overall organization of the zoning code. The Planning Commission will begin providing input on zoning ordinance issues and format late in January.

Because of the interconnectedness of the Zoning Ordinance and the Land Use Element, staff has structured the process to discuss the two documents simultaneously, rather than sequentially, as is done in many other cities. One of the benefits of this approach is that it allows the community to understand how land use policies are translated into implementation measures in the zoning code.

Sign Ordinance Revision – Staff is reviewing a draft sign ordinance and draft sign design guidelines that have been prepared by the consultant. After corrections are incorporated, the drafts will be the subject of public workshops with the Planning and Design Commissions and the community.

Revisions to the Cultural Heritage Ordinance – This task evolved from the General Plan principle of harmonizing change to preserve Pasadena’s historic character and environment. The goals of this project include:

- Simplifying and streamlining the existing ordinance;
- Clarifying the role of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC), especially in relation to other city commissions and committees;
- Refining the designation and review processes for historic properties; and
- Clarifying review standards.

Consultant, Clarion Associates, has held three public meetings with the Cultural Heritage and Design Commissions to obtain input on the strengths and weaknesses of the City’s existing cultural heritage ordinance. They have submitted a diagnostic report, evaluating the existing ordinance. Staff has completed an outline and preliminary draft of the revised ordinance based on discussions at public meetings and recommendations from the consultant. This draft was submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation in December 1999 to fulfill the requirements of a \$15,000.00 grant in support of this project. During the next few months there will be additional reviews of the draft ordinance by city staff, presentations to commissions, and completion of a final draft ordinance.

Joint Subcommittee – A subcommittee with representatives of the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Community Development Committee meets once or twice each month to review the public participation program and work products from staff and consultants. The subcommittee is planning the agenda for an upcoming joint meeting between the Planning Commission and the Transportation Advisory Commission and reviewing the policies and objectives of the Land Use Element for potential changes and additions.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES / NEXT STEPS

A joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Transportation Advisory Commission is scheduled for February 4, 2000. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss how the Land Use and Mobility elements relate to each other as well as to economic vitality; discuss the role of the Commissions and the joint subcommittee; and to listen to each other’s concerns relating to planning, development and traffic.


The Story Bus, the City’s mobile stage for conversations in the Pasadena community about planning and transportation issues, will continue to attend large and small community events to receive input about issues. On Saturday, January 29, 2000, the Story Bus will participate in the *Y2 Be Healthy Fair* at the Jackie Robinson Center and Park. Part of the City’s Youth 2000 Millennium Celebration, the focus of this Fair is to reach out to youth and their families with upbeat messages about health and well being as the millennium turns. Over the next few months, the Story Bus will make impromptu

Saturday stops in downtown Pasadena. A display table with exhibits from the Story Bus was set up at the Mayor's State of the City address on January 20th.

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 and are in Account #443000-8115.

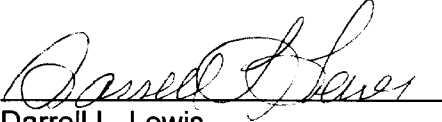
Respectfully submitted,


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared by:


Laura F. Dahl
Senior Planner

Approved by:


Darrell L. Lewis
Director of Planning and Permitting