

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION



CITY COUNCIL MEETING DATE:

OCTOBER 20, 2020

TITLE:

**RECEIVE AND FILE A STATUS REPORT
REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE
UPDATE TO THE GENERAL PLAN**

CLERK OF COUNCIL USE ONLY:

APPROVED

- ☐ As Recommended
- ☐ As Amended
- ☐ Ordinance on 1st Reading
- ☐ Ordinance on 2nd Reading
- ☐ Implementing Resolution
- ☐ Set Public Hearing For _____

CONTINUED TO _____

FILE NUMBER _____

/s/ Kristine Ridge

CITY MANAGER

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive and file the General Plan status update.

BACKGROUND

In late 2015, City staff commenced work on a comprehensive update to the General Plan. This document, which serves as the blueprint for development in the City, was last comprehensively updated in 1982. Work efforts related to the General Plan update have included extensive community outreach, the formation of a General Plan Advisory Group (GPAG), and creation of a Technical Advisory Committee (GP TAC). The Technical Advisory Committee members have solicited feedback from the City Council on the Policy Framework document that was presented to the City Council in December 2018. The Policy Framework document includes the General Plan Vision Statement, the Core Values, and the Goals and Policies of the proposed General Plan Elements.

Several significant changes are proposed to occur within the Land Use Element, including the creation of five Focus Areas. Over the past year and-a-half, staff has refined the land use concepts of the Focus Areas and drafted updates to individual General Plan elements to reflect potential development opportunities within the Focus Areas. The Focus Areas were selected based on input from the GPAG, the presence of existing and new high-quality transit areas such as the OC Streetcar, opportunities to connect key development areas, and consistency with the principles that align with General Plan core values.

To date, over 48 community meetings and workshops have been held to receive input from the community and local organizations. The initial outreach included an introductory video series, citywide community meetings, and pop-up booths at City events and special gatherings. Individual community workshops were held for each of the five Focus Areas to ensure direct input on the proposed changes in the Focus Areas. Over 300 residents, business leaders, and community stakeholders participated in the workshops. In addition, over 650 respondents participated in an online community survey providing feedback on the Focus Area land use concepts. Multiple meetings were held with individual City Councilmembers and the City's General Plan Technical

Advisory Committee (GPTAC) throughout 2018 and the first part of 2020. As a result of these discussions, the Focus Area land use maps have been revised to address critical feedback from our City Council and the community.

PROGRESS SINCE THE JULY 7, 2020 CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was released for public review on August 3, 2020 for a 45-day review period. Responding to community feedback, staff extended the comment period to allow additional time for the community to review the general plan EIR. The comment period was extended by an additional 20 days and closed on October 6, 2020. As of this date, a total of 57 comments were received. Staff is in the process of preparing responses to the comments and preparing the Final EIR for Planning Commission and City Council consideration.

General Plan Elements

The draft General Plan elements were released for public review on August 3, 2020. Since the release of the 11 elements (the Housing Element is not being updated until 2021) staff has continued to perform outreach and refine the policies and implementation measures of each of the elements. The final version of the elements was released to the public on September 30, 2020.

Recent Community Engagement, Activities in Progress, and Next Steps

As part of the multi-year effort to comprehensively update City's General Plan, the Planning Division has continued to participate in outreach meetings and discussions with the community on key issues such as Environmental Justice (EJ), a review of key changes, and an overview of the five Focus Areas. Councilmembers, the City Manager, and the Executive Director of the Planning and Building Agency met with individual neighborhood leaders in the Logan and Madison Park neighborhoods, as well as walked through the neighborhoods with residents and neighborhood leaders. Additional outreach is continuing throughout the month of October, including continued staff attendance at neighborhoods and City parks in conjunction with the Santa Ana CARES mobile resource center and related programming, meetings with interested organizations and neighborhood leaders, the hosting of a follow-up EJ discussion with the Madison Park Neighborhood Association on October 14, and hosting a citywide EJ meeting with neighborhood groups and interested parties on October 19.

These efforts will supplement the efforts conducted so far, which include the mailing of a targeted Environmental Justice flier to over 32,000 residents, business and property owners, the creation of a webpage dedicated to informing and educating property owners located within our Environmental Justice areas, and creation of an online web learning tool that includes a narrated presentation to help educate and increase awareness on Environmental Justice issues.

Prior to this, two virtual community meetings were held on July 31 and August 1, keeping the public updated on the General Plan and key issues, and about key public hearings and public review periods.

Two study sessions have been held with the Planning Commission, one on August 24 and the second on September 14. Staff also provided the Commission with the ability to have one-on-one

sessions to discuss the details of the General Plan. Additional one-on-one meetings will be held later this month, prior to the Planning Commission making a recommendation to the City Council.

The City Council was also provided draft copy of the General Plan and EIR for early review on September 30. One-on-one meetings will be scheduled with the City Council individually prior to the adoption hearing scheduled for November 17.

A public hearing will be held by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) on October 15, 2020 to determine if the proposed General Plan update is consistent with the Airport Environs Land Use Plan. Staff will provide an update to the Planning Commission and City Council on the ALUC's decision, as well as the next steps in the process should the ALUC find the General Plan inconsistent with the Airport Environs Land Use Plan.

The Planning and Building Agency remains committed to completing the General Plan update. Based on the work effort, staff anticipates the General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report will be presented for adoption to the Planning Commission on November 5th and to City Council on November 17th, with potential follow-up actions regarding the ALUC's determination of October 15, 2020 in early December.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Submitted By: Minh Thai, Executive Director – Planning and Building Agency