

# Agenda Report

April 8, 2013

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Planning & Community Development Department

**SUBJECT: UPDATE OF THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE AND MOBILITY ELEMENTS**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

- A. Receive a presentation from staff identifying and describing the eight updated components of the Land Use and Mobility Elements.
- B. Receive public testimony and allow interested parties to comment on the material presented.
- C. Address questions or comments to staff related to the updated components of the Land Use and Mobility Elements.
- D. Continue this item to April 22<sup>nd</sup> for City Council to take action, by directing staff to analyze the environmental impact of the update to the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements.

## **ADVISORY BODY RECOMMENDATION:**

Prior to bringing the attached recommendations to the City Council, the following advisory bodies reviewed the major components of the update and offered recommendations to the City Council on the following dates:

- October 11, 2012                      Transportation Advisory Commission
- October 15, 2012                      Historic Preservation Commission
- December 6, 2012                      General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPUAC)
- February 27, 2013                      Planning Commission

Due to the number of advisory body recommendations, and the fact that the majority of the recommendations were in alignment with staff's recommendations, this staff report focuses on areas where there is a difference between a staff recommendation and that of an advisory body. Attachment B.3 provides a detailed list of the recommended actions of each advisory body.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In October 2012, the City Council received information on staff's preliminary recommendations on the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements including the

changes to the Guiding Principles, the new Policy Topic Areas, the new Land Use Policy Outline, the updated Mobility Element Objectives, the Mobility Supporting Initiatives Goals and Objectives, the changes to the Specific Plan Boundaries, the changes to the Land Use Diagram, and the new Development Caps. After meeting with the City Council, staff met with advisory bodies and received over 90 recommended changes. In most instances staff has agreed to these changes. In some instances staff either offers a modified recommendation or has studied the issue and continues to offer its original recommendation. The purpose of this discussion is to review the content of the eight updated components and to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on them as well. Once the Council is satisfied with the updated components of the Land Use and Mobility Elements, it will authorize staff to start the environmental impact report (EIR) process.

### **Guiding Principles**

Based on recommendations from advisory bodies, staff is recommending a revised Second Guiding Principle, "Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource." Taking into account recommendations by the Planning Commission and GPUAC, staff is recommending a revised eighth Guiding Principle, "Pasadena is committed to community planning that furthers a diverse educational system responsive to the broad needs of our community. Quality public schools are a shared community responsibility."

### **Policy Topic Areas**

The existing Land Use and Mobility Elements contain objectives and policies that relate to each of the seven Guiding Principles and provide guidance in making decisions. Based on feedback, staff identified gaps in a few topic areas that required revision and enhancement, including: environmental sustainability, urban design, historic preservation, arts and culture, mobility, economic vitality, and education. Staff either accepts or has suggested minor modifications to the recommendations made by the advisory bodies; see Attachment A.2 for staff's revised recommendation.

### **Land Use Diagram**

In regard to the recommendations made by the advisory bodies on the Land Use Diagram, staff offers the following recommendations.

- In the East Colorado Specific Plan, increase the designation of the Lamanda Park area (see area EC-6 in Attachment C.2) to Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75 FAR\*).
- In the East Pasadena Specific Plan, continue to move forward with creating a transit village by allowing mixed use throughout, while reducing the originally proposed intensity to provide appropriate

\*Floor Area Ratio (FAR): A figure used to control the intensity of development. The total lot square footage multiplied by the maximum FAR provides the maximum floor area allowed on a site. For example, a 10,000 square foot site with a maximum FAR of 2.0 would allow 20,000 square feet of building floor area.

transitions to single family neighborhoods.

- In the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan, reduce the designation of the area south of Arlington Drive to Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR).
- In the Central District, maintain the Medium Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) designation for the Old Pasadena area (CD-1), the Arroyo Parkway/S. Raymond Ave. study area (CD-8, 9, 10), the area around N. Los Robles Ave. and E. Walnut Ave. (CD-36), the north side of E. Green St. between S. Mentor Ave. and S. Wilson Ave. (CD-22-A), and the area on the east side of S. Hudson Ave. north of E. California Ave. and south of the Macy's site (CD-15). In these areas the Planning Commission recommended a minor reduction in FAR from 2.25 to 2.0. Staff recommends studying these finer grain reductions when updating the Specific Plan.
- In the Central District, do not limit future use of two of the City's surface parking lots (OS-4 and OS-5) by giving them a designation of parks; instead maintain the Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) designation. The Med Mixed Use designation allows for the development of both open space and off-site commercial parking.
- Reduce the designation of the area adjacent to the Central Library (CD-33 and CD-34) from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75).
- Reduce the designation of the S. El Molino Ave./S. Oak Knoll Ave./S. Hudson Ave. study area (CD-37) from its present designation of High Density Residential (0-48 Dwelling units/Acre) to Med-High Density Residential (0-32 Dwelling units/Acre).
- Repeal the West Gateway Specific Plan since many of the sites that the Plan oversees have been developed or have entitlements approved.

### **Development Levels/Development Caps**

The existing General Plan development caps set a maximum amount of new residential units and commercial square footage that can be constructed in each specific plan area. Based on continuing conversation with the advisory bodies and the community, staff now recommends keeping the existing system of development caps with two modifications. One, include a policy directing the City to provide updates on at least an annual basis on the amount of development remaining in each area with a development cap. Two, revise the General Plan so that the City does not have to go through a comprehensive General Plan Update in order to modify the caps, but instead allow the City Council to amend the development caps through a General Plan amendment instead of a comprehensive General Plan Update.

In regard to the number of residential units and commercial square footage proposed for each specific plan, the Planning Commission and TAC agreed to the numbers proposed by staff. The GPUAC proposed raising the residential unit development levels in the Central District from 3,750 to 5,000 and along Fair Oaks/Orange Grove from 325 to 500. Additionally the GPUAC recommended increasing the residential unit and commercial square footage development levels in the South Fair Oaks Ave. Specific Plan commensurate with their recommended increase in proposed FAR.

**BACKGROUND:**

Since October 1, 2012, when the City Council received an agenda report detailing staff's recommendations on the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements staff has met with the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, General Plan Update Advisory Committee, and Historic Preservation Commission. These bodies made more than 90 comments, all of which are listed in Attachment B.3. In addition, the Environmental Advisory Commission, Northwest Commission, and Human Services Commission received informational presentations. The Human Services Commission provided a letter to the City Council, Attachment B.2. In all, staff has attended 18 public meetings in order to inform the public and receive comments on the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Element recommendations.

**ANALYSIS:**

The following section describes and analyzes the differences between staff's revised recommendations and that of the advisory bodies. These areas of difference include the changes proposed to the Guiding Principles, the Draft Land Use Diagram and the Development Levels.

**Second Guiding Principle**

The second guiding principle originally focused on the subject of "change." Through the public outreach process, the community suggested modifying the text to focus on historic preservation. Through the advisory review process, there was nearly a consensus on the first two sentences, "*Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place.*"

However, there was a diversity of recommendations offered on the third sentence. The Planning Commission preferred the following statement, "*New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.*" The Historic Preservation Commission, approved language that included one of the principles of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, but did not refer to the Standards specifically, "*New construction within a historic district or adjacent to an individual resource will be compatible with, yet distinct from the existing historic resources.*" The General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPUAC) recommended removing the third sentence; the Committee was concerned that this language was too specific for a vision statement.

Staff agrees with the intent of the GPUAC and recommends removing the language about the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, agrees with the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation to cover the issue of compatibility and distinction, and agrees with the Planning Commission's language about the need to protect the integrity of historic resources.

Table 1: Second Guiding Principle – Third Sentence

	Recommendation
Planning Commission	New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.
Historic Preservation Commission	New construction within a historic district or adjacent to an individual resource will be compatible with, yet distinct from the existing historic resources.
GPUAC	Delete. Keep the principle more general; cover the issue in the policies.
Staff’s revised recommendation	New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource.

**Eighth Guiding Principle**

The community has expressed a profound interest in public education. This interest sparked the creation of an 8<sup>th</sup> guiding principle focusing on education. The Planning Commission and GPUAC have recommended an alternative to staff’s recommendation. Staff has revised its original recommendation to include the phrase “furthers a diverse educational system” from the Planning Commission and GPUAC recommendation

Table 2: Eighth Guiding Principle

	Recommendation
Planning Commission & GPUAC	Pasadena supports public education and is committed to community planning that furthers a diverse educational system responsive to the broad needs of our community.
Staff’s revised recommendation	Pasadena is committed to community planning that furthers a diverse educational system responsive to the broad needs of our community. Quality public schools are a shared community responsibility.

Staff’s recommendation includes the subject of “public schools” and recognizes that the community shares responsibility for them. The principle focuses on the City’s commitment to community planning and includes all educational resources including higher education and private schools. The Planning Commission and GPUAC proposed a more direct statement, “Pasadena supports public education.”

**Land Use Diagram**

The Land Use Diagram is the map that accompanies the Land Use Element and demonstrates, in general, the category of uses allowed on a property and the intensity of that use. The Land Use Diagram does not set heights, setbacks, or other development regulations; these are tied to the Specific Plans, Zoning Code, and Zoning Map. The City staff’s and the advisory bodies’ recommendations on the Land Use Diagram differed in the following specific plan areas: East Colorado, East Pasadena, South Fair Oaks, and the Central District. Attachments C.1-C.5 provide a series of maps showing where disagreement existed between staff’s original recommendation

and the advisory body's recommendations. Green callout boxes demonstrate areas where staff has modified its recommendation and now agrees with the advisory body. Purple callout boxes demonstrate areas where there continues to be differences.

#### *East Colorado Specific Plan*

For the Lamanda Park area of the East Colorado Boulevard Specific Plan (see EC-6 of Attachment C.2) staff originally recommended a designation of Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR). The GPUAC recommended increasing the designation to Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) in order to support reinvestment in this area and allow for vertical mixed use projects (buildings with residential units above ground floor retail). Staff agrees with the GPUAC's intent, but believes that a new category of Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75 FAR) would be more appropriate for this area.

Table 3 – East Colorado Specific Plan (EC-6)

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)
GPUAC	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Staff's revised recommendation	Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75)

*\*Planning Commission and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation*

#### *East Pasadena Specific Plan*

Staff's original recommendation for this area responded to community desire to protect single family areas, target growth around transit stations, and provide residents of East Pasadena with nearby services and amenities. The Planning Commission recommended further reducing the intensity of development near single family areas (see areas EP-5, EP-11, and EP-15 on Attachment C.3) and removing the possibility of mixed use on the east side of N. Halstead St., north of E. Foothill Blvd. and south of N. Rosemead Blvd. In the industrial portion of Lamanda Park (see area EP-3 on Attachment C.3), the Planning Commission recommended increasing the FAR from .9 to 1.25 to further support the growth of research and development/flex space uses.

Staff concurs with the Planning Commission's changes for EP-3 (Lamanda Park industrial area) and to reduce the maximum FAR from 2.0 to 1.0 on the north/east side of N. Rosemead Blvd. Staff also concurs with the Planning Commission's goal of improved transitions to single family neighborhoods. Staff recommends keeping the intensity of development higher along Halstead, but reducing the density further east and west. To do this, staff recommends reducing the designation on the west portion of EP-5, and all of EP-11 and EP-12 from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75 FAR). Staff continues to recommend a designation of Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) for EP-13 and the east portion of EP-5.

Table 4 – East Pasadena Specific Plan (see Attachment C.3)

Recommendation	Land Use Designation					
	EP-3	EP-5	EP-11	EP-12	EP-13	EP-15
Staff's original recommendation*	R&D Flex Space (0.9)	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Med Commercial (0.0-2.0)
Planning Commission	R&D Flex Space (1.25)	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)	Med Commercial (0.0-2.0)	Med Commercial (0.0-2.0)	Low Commercial (0.0-1.0)
Staff's revised recommendation	R&D Flex Space (1.25)	West side: Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75) East side: Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75)	Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0 – 1.75)	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)	Low Commercial (0.0-1.0)

\* GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff original recommendation

**South Fair Oaks Avenue Specific Plan**

Staff's original recommendation for this area included expanding the area's very tight focus on bio-medical uses to allow for a broader range of office uses, senior housing, and mixed use buildings with residential units to support the staff of Huntington Memorial Hospital and the staff and students of the Art Center. The General Plan Update Advisory Committee recommended increasing the land use designation for the South Fair Oaks area from staff's proposed Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to High Mixed Use (0.0-3.0 FAR). The GPUAC heard and agreed with testimony from community members suggesting that Raymond Avenue was a good place for new development given its proximity to the Gold Line Station and distance from established single family neighborhoods. The City staff continues to recommend a designation of Med Mixed use (0.0-2.25 FAR). The introduction of residential units along a formerly industrial corridor will be a significant change, and one better made in a moderate way.

Table 5 – South Fair Oaks Specific Plan

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
GPUAC	High Mixed Use (0.0-3.00)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*Planning Commission and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

**Central District**

One of the four foundation principles for the Land Use and Mobility Elements is to target growth into the Central District and around transit stations. The GPUAC and TAC supported staff's recommended land use designations for the Central District. The Planning Commission recommended eight changes to the Land Use Diagram with which staff differs. In general these changes would reduce densities from a Med-Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) designation to a lower Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0 FAR) or in some cases Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR) designation. The Planning Commission also recommended changing another area from mixed use to commercial, only. The GPUAC

and Planning Commission agreed on designating two public parking sites as open space.

Old Pasadena: The Planning Commission recommended reducing the designation of area CD-1 on Attachment C.5, generally Old Pasadena, from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to a new category of Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0 FAR). Staff believes that this type of fine-tuning is best done when a specific plan is being updated.

Table 6 – Old Pasadena

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

Arroyo Parkway & Raymond Ave. between Del Mar Blvd. and California Blvd.: In this area (designated as CD-8, CD-9, and CD-10 on Attachment C.5) the Planning Commission recommended its new category of Med-Low Mixed use (0.0-2.0 FAR). Staff continues to recommend a designation of Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR). Staff believes that this type of fine tuning is best done when a specific plan is being updated.

Table 7 – S. Arroyo Pkwy & S. Raymond Ave. between E. Del Mar Blvd. and E. California Blvd.

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

Central Library Area: Staff originally recommended a designation of Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) for the properties directly to the west, north, and east of the Central Library (see CD-33 & CD-33A on Attachment C.5). The Planning Commission, responding to concerns about the potential negative impacts of development surrounding the Central Library, recommended reducing the designation north and east of the Library to Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR) and west of the Library to Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0 FAR). Staff agrees with the intent of the Planning Commission but recommends reducing the designation of these properties to the new category of Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75 FAR).

Table 8 – Central Library Area

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)/Med-Low Mixed Use (0.0-2.0)
Staff's revised recommendation	Low-Med Mixed Use (0.0-1.75)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation



Fuller Seminary Area: This small area, shown as CD-36 on Attachment C.5, includes the Arco gas station, the First Congregational Church, and the University Club. The Planning Commission recommended changing the designation from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR). Staff affirms its original recommendation.

Table 9 – Fuller Seminary Area

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

Open Space: The Playhouse District has proposed that the two City owned parking lots at 100 N. El Molino Ave. and 44 S. Madison Ave. be converted to underground parking with a park at ground level (see OS-4 and OS-5 on Attachment C.5). In order to accomplish this, community members have requested that these sites be given a designation of Parks. Both the Planning Commission and the General Plan Update Advisory Committee have made a recommendation to designate these sites as Open Space. Staff continues to recommend a designation of Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR), this would allow for flexibility for future use of these sites. A designation of Open Space would prohibit commercial off street parking and thus the parks over parking idea.

Table 10 – Open Space

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Open Space
GPUAC	Open Space
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

North side of E. Green St. between S. Mentor Ave. and S. Wilson Ave.: This small area, shown as CD-22B on Attachment C.5, includes the north side of E. Green St. between S. Mentor Ave. and S. Wilson Ave. The Planning Commission recommended changing the designation from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0 FAR). Staff continues to recommend Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR). This area is one block from the intersection of Colorado Blvd. and Lake Ave., the intersection of the City's two most vital corridors. A designation of Low Mixed Use, with a suburban level FAR of 1.0, would be inappropriate given the community's goal of targeting growth where services, amenities, and transit exist.

Table 11 – North side of E. Green St. between S. Mentor Ave. and S. Wilson Ave.

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Low Mixed Use (0.0-1.0)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

S. Hudson Ave. between E. California Blvd. and the Macy's Site: The Planning Commission recommended changing the designation of this area, shown as CD-15 on Attachment C.5, from Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR) to Low Commercial (0.0-1.0 FAR). Staff continues to recommend Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25 FAR). The prospect of new commercial only uses in this area is highly unlikely and out of character with S. Hudson Ave. The west side of S. Hudson Ave. is developed with residential uses, making this area more suitable for residential development or the residential portion of a mixed use project.

Table 12 – S. Hudson Ave. between E. California Blvd. and the Macy's Site

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)
Planning Commission	Low Commercial (0.0-1.0)
Staff's current recommendation	Med Mixed Use (0.0-2.25)

\*GPUAC and TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

S. El Molino Ave. / S. Oak Knoll Ave. / S. Hudson Ave.: This area includes the east side of S. El Molino Ave., both sides of S. Oak Knoll Ave., and the west side of S. Hudson Ave. which have a designation of High Density Residential (0-48 dwelling units/acre) in the existing Land Use Diagram (an area generally north of E. California Blvd. and south of the Pasadena Unified School District's properties). The Planning Commission recommends that this area be designated Med-High Density Residential (0-32 dwelling units/acre) while the GPUAC recommends keeping the existing designation of High Density Residential (0-48 dwelling units/acre). Staff agrees with the Planning Commission's recommendation. This neighborhood has developed a distinct character and contains designated and eligible historic resources that merit protection from additional density.

Table 3 – S. El Molino Ave. / S. Oak Knoll Ave. / S. Hudson Ave.

	Land Use Designation
Staff's original recommendation*	High Density Residential (0-48 Dwelling Units/Acre)
Planning Commission	Med-High Density Residential (0-32 Dwelling Units/Acre)
GPUAC	High Density Residential (0-48 Dwelling Units/Acre)
Staff's current recommendation	Med-High Density Residential (0-32 Dwelling Units/Acre)

\* TAC agreed with staff's original recommendation

### Specific Plan Changes

Updating the Land Use Diagram also affords an opportunity to address changes to specific plan boundaries. Staff is recommending these changes to better support the vision for each area. Each of the advisory bodies agreed with staff's recommendations. See Attachment A.6 for a map of the changes described below.

The first change expands the East Colorado Specific Plan, providing more opportunity sites to create a College/University district. To do this, the East Colorado Specific Plan would expand south to include the area along East Green Street between South Wilson Ave. and South Hill Ave. This area is not currently in a specific plan.

The second change would move the boundary between the Central District and East Colorado Specific Plans east one block to South Wilson Ave. The existing buildings and the vision for this block of East Colorado corresponds more to the Central District than to the lower density, commercial development typical along the rest of the East Colorado Specific Plan area.

The third change would move Lamanda Park (the area generally north of East Colorado Blvd, east of North Altadena Dr. west of the 210 Freeway, and south of W. Foothill Blvd.) into the boundaries of the East Colorado Specific Plan. The East Pasadena and East Colorado Blvd Specific Plans previously functioned as corridor plans. This change is in recognition of the greater role that this research and development/flex space area of Lamanda Park can play with the retail and office uses on East Colorado Blvd.

The fourth change would expand the boundary of the East Pasadena Specific Plan south to include E. Colorado Blvd. between Kinneloa Ave and the City's eastern boundary. This change will allow the areas north and south of the Gold Line Station to share a more unified vision as a transit village.

The last set of changes would expand the boundary of the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan north to Del Mar Boulevard, east to Arroyo Parkway, and south to Arlington Drive. This change will allow the area to take on a new focus of becoming an employment center to serve major institutions in the area such as Huntington Memorial Hospital, the Art Center's South Campus, and other new medical and creative office uses. The area would also allow housing units in order to serve the needs of seniors, students and employees of the major institutions.

#### *West Gateway Specific Plan*

While taking these Specific Plan boundary changes to the advisory bodies for review, the Planning Commission recommended that the West Gateway Specific Plan be repealed. When the West Gateway Specific Plan was adopted in 1998, the area had a number of large development sites that needed special planning, such as the campus of the Worldwide Church of God, the Vista Del Arroyo Bungalows, and the Army Reserve Training Center. Since then the eastern portion of the Worldwide Church of God campus was moved to the Central District Specific Plan and has been developed. The remaining portions of the Worldwide Church of God campus (Ambassador West), the Vista Del Arroyo Bungalows, and the Army Reserve Training Center have been through their own development review process and in some cases have seen development move forward. For the few likely remaining development sites the Specific Plan has set detailed use and development standards. For this reason, staff joins the Planning Commission's recommendation to repeal the West Gateway Specific Plan. Staff recommends following a similar process to a specific plan amendment to repeal the

specific plan in order to ensure that the community's interests are carried over into any resulting Zoning Code changes.

### **Development Levels/Development Caps**

The existing General Plan provides a development allocation or cap on residential dwelling units and commercial square feet for each specific plan area and prohibits development over this amount. The General Plan states that the caps may be reviewed and revised only during the five-year updates of the General Plan.

Some community members have suggested moving away from these caps as they are inflexible and could place an artificial barrier on market forces that could constrain the City's ability to meet other community objectives, such as the provision of affordable housing, promoting economic vitality, and creating a city where people can circulate without cars. As an alternative to the existing system of caps, staff previously recommended a new policy that would set development levels to be evaluated in the General Plan environmental impact report (GP EIR).

After additional conversation with the community and advisory bodies staff has further studied the issue of development caps. Staff recommends maintaining the existing system of development caps with two modifications. One, include in the General Plan a policy that directs staff to return to the City Council periodically (at least annually) with a report demonstrating the original development cap, the amount of new construction, and the amount of development remaining in each specific plan area. Two, revise the existing General Plan so that the City Council can amend the development caps without having to initiate a comprehensive General Plan update.

The Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and GPUAC have generally supported the development numbers proposed by staff. GPUAC recommended three changes: increasing the residential development levels in the Central District from 3,750 to 5,000, increasing the residential development levels in the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan from 325 to 500, and increasing the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan area commensurate with the recommended increases in FAR. The Transportation Advisory Commission and GPUAC recommended the system of development levels. The Planning Commission recommended continuing with the existing system of development caps and their recommendations to reduce development intensities in East Pasadena resulted in a staff recommendation that reduced the total number of residential units proposed for the area from 1250 units to 850 units.

### **COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

The changes to the General Plan are based on four foundations (protect and preserve residential neighborhoods, historic resources, and open space; target growth; provide for economic vitality; and plan for walking, biking, transit, and accessibility). These foundations and the recommended changes to the General Plan support the City Council's strategic planning goals of supporting quality of life, increasing conservation

and sustainability, maintaining fiscal responsibility and stability, and improving mobility and accessibility,

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

An environmental impact report (EIR) will be prepared for the update to the Land Use and Mobility Element. The EIR will analyze the impacts of the new policy topic areas, goals and objectives for supporting mobility initiatives, updated Mobility Element objectives, a new Land Use Element policy outline, changes to the guiding principles, a revision to the specific plan boundaries, changes to the Land Use Diagram, and the development levels (see Attachments A.1-A.8). The action before the City Council is whether to modify any of the attached documents and then to start the EIR process.

The process of preparing the GP EIR (see Attachment E) will begin with a series of pre-scoping meetings. The purpose of these meetings will be to inform the public about the General Plan and to collect comments from the community on the potential environmental impacts. After those meetings, staff and consultants will prepare and release an initial study, post a notice of preparation, and host a set of meetings to collect feedback on the initial study. At this step staff will present possible alternatives to be studied in the draft EIR and ask the Planning Commission for feedback. Once the draft EIR is complete, staff will host meetings with the community and commissions to describe the impacts in the draft EIR and collect comments. After the Final EIR is prepared, staff will engage the community in a final series of meetings and then take the Final EIR to the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and City Council.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

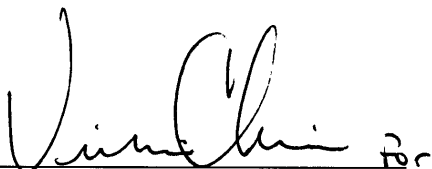
The General Plan is allocated \$200,000 for fiscal year 2014, the same amount allocated in previous years. Staff estimates that the EIR and additional work on supporting policies for the elements (including a workshop, writing, and preparation of graphics) will cost a total of \$300,000, or \$100,000 more than has been budgeted for fiscal year 2014. The final cost of the EIR will depend on how robust the analysis is. After additional work scoping out the cost of the EIR, the City Council will be asked to review an amendment to the contract to cover the additional cost of the EIR.

Respectfully submitted,



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MICHAEL J. BECK  
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Attachments:

**A – Staff’s Final Recommendations**

- A.1 Changes to the Guiding Principles
- A.2 New Policy Topic Areas
- A.3 Land Use Element Policy Outline
- A.4 Updated Mobility Element Objectives
- A.5 Mobility Supporting Initiatives Goals and Objectives
- A.6 Existing and Proposed Specific Plan Boundaries
- A.7 General Plan Land Use Diagram
- A.8 Development Levels

**B – Advisory Body Recommendations**

- B.1 Planning Commission Recommendations

B.2 Letter to the City Council from the Human Services Commission

B.3 Staff and Advisory Body Recommendations

**C – Advisory Body Change Maps**

C.1 Advisory Body Change Map – Fair Oaks Orange Grove

C.2 Advisory Body Change Map – East Colorado

C.3 Advisory Body Change Map – East Pasadena

C.4 Advisory Body Change Map – South Fair Oaks

C.5 Advisory Body Change Map – Central District

**D – Staff’s Original Recommendations**

D.1 Changes to the Guiding Principles

D.2 New Policy Topic Areas

D.3 Land Use Element Policy Outline

D.4 Updated Mobility Element Objectives

D.5 General Plan Land Use Diagram

D.6 Development Levels

E. General Plan EIR Road Map

**ATTACHMENT A:  
STAFF'S FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**