

CITY COUNCIL

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Agenda Item No.: 14
Date: August 19, 2009

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Jonathan Brindle, Director of Community Development
SUBJECT: Citizen Input on General Plan Update Issues (Case No: PHG 09-0020)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That each Council Member appoint three members to serve on an Ad Hoc, Citizen Committee;
2. Direct Staff to schedule two to four Citizen Committee meetings to obtain their input on the proposed Goals and Objectives and Project Description that will guide the process, and;
3. Continue to advise the City Council of issues that develop during the update process that could benefit from additional Committee Meetings and Discussion.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

None. No consultant expenditures or payments to citizens are proposed. Input from citizens with specialized input could reduce future consultant costs.

GENERAL PLAN ANALYSIS:

Obtaining input from citizens would assist the General Plan Update and potentially broaden citizen support. The Council's Action Plan seeks to identify potential Land Use and policy alternatives for study and solicit public input by the end of August and obtain direction on the land use alternatives, policies, facility and infrastructure needs by the end of September.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

On June 10, 2009, the City Council directed staff to return with a list of issues that could benefit from focused citizen input.

BACKGROUND:

The General Plan Update relies on a successful vote of the people in November of 2012. The effective use of a Citizen Committee would broaden input and opportunities and could enhance chances of a positive vote. The Council has directed staff to solicit a wide range of public input, maintain a timely schedule, and minimize consulting costs.

The selection of a Citizen Committee would not alter other public comment opportunities as public meetings, staff presentations, the General Plan Website, and email list would continue to be used to solicit public input.

DISCUSSION

The last General Plan Update benefited from two citizen's committees that met approximately 45 times. Past Citizen Committees were involved throughout the process and dealt with many details. A less extensive form of citizen involvement is warranted in light of their past efforts and general satisfaction with the current plan. A more focused approach would utilize a Citizen Committee to provide input on the scope of the Update and the nature of the amended Goals and Objectives. Getting a clear handle on the desired policy direction will expedite the process and minimize costs.

Once the Goals and Objectives are set, a detailed project description can be developed that would allow staff to issue the Notice of Preparation for the EIR, and develop a detailed Scope of Work and Cost Estimate.

Based on input to date, staff has prepared a list of considerations that could comprise the scope of the General Plan Update. We have attached this list that could ultimately form the Goals and Project Description. We have not attempted to wordsmith either the Goals and Objectives or Project Description until we get feedback on each item. Although we would seek to gain a consensus of the Committee, we would not propose any formal system of voting.

The attached list of Sample General Plan Considerations would be distributed to the Citizen Committee and public in advance of the meetings. The document would contain a rating scale for each line item. This would allow respondents to express their support or opposition. The document would also provide an opportunity for open ended comments. All input would then be tabulated in advance of the meeting and presented during the facilitation process. We believe it would be easier for the Committee to respond to a list of considerations rather than ask them to start with a blank sheet.

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Under the scenario described above, we would expect to hold 2-4, three-hour meetings, on a weekly basis, beginning in early September. The Council may wish to alter the composition or number of Committee Members.

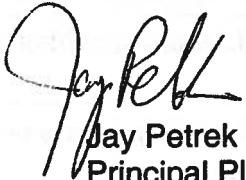
The Agenda Description has been drafted broadly enough to allow the Council to consider other options for the composition and utilization of the Citizen Committee. Another option would be to ask the Committee for input on specific topics such as one or more Quality of Life Standards, or specific land use or policy changes. Staff believes the scope of the Citizen Review should be kept at the policy level as opposed to becoming involved with many of the implementation details. It should be noted that the larger the group, the more difficult it might be to fully solicit input from all members.

Following the meetings, staff would schedule a Council Workshop to review all comments received. At that time, the Council may identify other topics or Committee consideration or wait for issues to develop during the update process.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jonathan Brindle
Director of Community Development



Jay Petrek
Principal Planner

Sample Considerations that will Formulate the Goals and Project Description of the General Plan Update

<p>The following sample General Plan Update considerations will be ranked by the Committee. The results will be tabulated and used to formulate the project description and goals.</p> <p>Proposed Consideration:</p>	<p><i>Rank your support for each consideration</i></p> <p>-5 = very strongly disagree 0 = neutral +5 = very strongly agree</p>
A. Population and Neighborhood Character	
<p>1) Plan for Escondido's fair share of regional growth as defined through the Regional Growth Process.</p> <p>Note: Escondido's fair share is anticipated to be between 4,000 and 6,000 dwelling unit above the current General Plan (12,500 – 18,800 population).</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>2) Guide planned growth to the urban core in locations that will benefit from existing of infrastructure, transit, and support services.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>3) Preserve the character and densities in existing neighborhoods.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>4) Create exciting places with a mix of uses that appeal to a wide range of residents and visitors.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>5) Increase intensities in the urban core without compromising historic character.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>6) Identify additional neighborhoods with potential historic status.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>7) Evaluate clustering provisions to clarify provisions pertaining to:</p> <p>a) Yield</p> <p>b) Open Space</p> <p>c) Lot Width</p> <p>d) Surrounding Neighborhood Character</p>	<p>-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5</p> <p>-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5</p> <p>-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5</p> <p>-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5</p>
B. Quality of Life Standards	
<p>1) Maintain established Quality of Life Standards outside the Downtown and Smart Growth Areas.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>2) Modify Quality of Life Standards for the Downtown and Smart Growth Areas but maintain equivalent measures.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
C. General Plan Boundaries and Land Use	
<p>1) Discourage boundary expansions and re-examine urban densities in outlying areas.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<p>2) Amend the Housing Element by December 2012 to meet state mandated deadlines.</p>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5

3) Expand the amount of employment lands to provide jobs for local residents.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
4) Establish clear intensity/capacity assumptions for each land use category.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
5) Confine consideration of land use changes to a limited number key properties such as the swap meet site, Del Dios school site, Nutmeg / I-15, Nordahl Interchange, City Corporate Yard, swap meet area, etc.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>D. Municipal Facilities and Services</i>	
1) Ensure that the HARRF and supporting infrastructure are appropriately sized for Escondido's planned development.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
2) Establish clear sewer service boundaries.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
3) Develop wastewater treatment facilities that recognize the value of water and maximize its re-use.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>E. Growth Management</i>	
1) Refine thresholds allowing limited development to proceed when non-critical deficiencies exist.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
2) Define an urban service boundary to limit the extension of urban service standards.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>F. Sustainability</i>	
1) Implement sustainable planning and building policies focused on maximizing energy efficiency, reducing generated waste, incorporating renewable power, and enhancing recycling and reclaiming measures.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>G. Proposition "S"</i>	
1) Evaluate the appropriateness of Proposition "S."	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>H. Mobility</i>	
1) Expand mobility and connectivity between different modes of travel to offer more transportation choices.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
2) Evaluate the extension of NCTD's rail service from the Transit Center to Westfield North County.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
3) Monitor state and local efforts to implement high speed rail service in Escondido.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
<i>I. Parks & Open Space</i>	
1) Preserve ridgelines, steep slopes and habitat and incorporate MHCP principles and policies.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
2) Provide passive and active recreational facilities in the urban core in an efficient and sustainable manner to respond to the changing needs of the community.	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5