



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: July 26, 2007 REPORT NO. PC-07-118

ATTENTION: Planning Commission Agenda of August 2, 2007

SUBJECT: Initiation of an Amendment to the San Ysidro Community Plan and the General Plan to redesignate an approximately 3.27-acre site from Low-Medium Residential (10-15 du/ac) to Medium Residential (15-29 du/ac).

OWNER/
APPLICANT Ito Girard & Associates

SUMMARY

Issue(s) - Should the Planning Commission INITIATE an amendment to the amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan and the San Ysidro Community Plan pursuant to Municipal Code Section 122.0103? The amendment has been requested to allow for an increase in density from Low-Medium Density Residential (10-15 du/ac) to Medium Density Residential (15-29 du/ac)?

Mayor's Recommendation – Initiate the plan amendment process.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - At the regularly scheduled June 19, 2007 meeting of the San Ysidro Community Planning Group, a motion by the group to recommend approval of the initiation passed with an 11-0-0 vote (Attachment 1).

Environmental Impact – If initiated, the proposed plan amendment and future discretionary actions will be subject to environmental review.

Fiscal Impact – If the amendment is initiated, processing costs would be paid for by the applicant.

Housing Affordability Impact – If initiated, the proposed general/community plan amendment would analyze the potential to increase residential development on the approximately 3.27-acre site. Currently, 33-49 dwelling units could be developed on the site in the Low-Medium Residential designation. The proposed increase in density would allow for potential development of 49-95 dwelling units in the Medium Residential designation. As part of the analysis, City Staff would provide direction to the applicant to

develop a proposal that includes the provision of on-site affordable housing. The proposal would help the City address its shortage of affordable housing during a time when the City Council has determined that the City of San Diego is in a Housing State of Emergency.

This initiation request does not constitute an endorsement of the proposed project. If initiated, a staff recommendation will be developed once the project has been fully analyzed. Approval of this action would allow the staff analysis to proceed

BACKGROUND

The subject area of the proposed amendment is located in the San Ysidro Community Planning Area (see Attachment 2). San Ysidro is an urbanized community bounded by the Tijuana River Valley on the west, Otay Mesa-Nestor to the north, Otay Mesa to the east, and the United States-Mexico international border to the south.

The San Ysidro Community Plan designates the proposed initiation site Low-Medium Residential which would allow for the development of 33-49 dwelling units (see Attachment 3). The proposed Medium Density Residential would allow for the development of 49-95 dwelling units on the approximately 3.27-acre site. The subject properties constitute approximately 3.27 acres located southwesterly of the trolley tracks and west of Cypress Drive. Onsite uses include a mixture of 5 single dwelling units and 4 duplex dwelling units. Adjacent existing land uses include a mixture of single and multi-family dwelling units, trolley tracks to the north, and a trolley stop immediately to the northeast.

The subject properties are further defined in the Residential Element as being within the El Pueblito Viejo Neighborhood (see Attachment 4). Objectives for this neighborhood include the establishment of an historic district or a special character design area, and requiring discretionary review of development proposals to preserve and enhance the historic single family, small scale character of the neighborhood, and to designate the neighborhood as Low Medium Residential. The Urban Form Element objectives include orientation of development to the pedestrian, promotion of user territoriality, preservation of existing character, landscaping as a major element of any project, and multi-family development as long as single-family architectural styles are maintained.

Recent general/community plan amendments within the community include the Beyer Boulevard Affordable Housing Amendment which redesignated approximately 2.5 acres from Industrial to Medium-Density Residential (15-30 du/nra). An amendment that was initiated and is still in process is the Vista Lane Amendment, where the applicant submitted 13 properties totaling approximately 9.5 acres along Vista Lane and Blackshaw Lane for redesignation from Low-Density Residential (5-10 du/ac) to Low-Medium Density Residential (10-15 du/ac). The amendment would permit an increase in density and allow for smaller lot development. The Mi Pueblo Pilot Village General/Community Plan Amendment was initiated through an amendment to the Las Americas Development and Disposition Agreement, and is one of the Pilot Village projects. The Mi Pueblo General/Community Plan Amendment anticipates identifying all text and graphics within the San

Ysidro Community Plan where the current community plan's goals and objectives may not support the intensity of development proposed. The Mi Pueblo amendment would bring forward recommendations for all appropriate changes to the San Ysidro Community Plan that will support the intensity of development proposed by the Mi Pueblo Pilot Village.

DISCUSSION

Before a community plan amendment can be initiated, Section 122.0104 of the Municipal Code requires that any one of three initial criteria or all four supplemental criteria specified in the code must be met. The City Planning & Community Investment Department does not believe that any of the following three initial criteria can be met:

- (1) The amendment is appropriate due to a mapping or textual error or omission made when the original land use plan or local coastal program was adopted or during subsequent amendments;**
- (2) Denial of initiation would jeopardize the public health, safety or general welfare;**
- (3) The amendment is appropriate due to a material change in circumstances since the adoption of a land use plan or local coastal program whereby denial of initiation would result in a hardship to the applicant by denying any reasonable use of the subject real property.**

The City Planning and Community Investment does, however, believe that all of the following supplemental criteria can be met:

- (1) The proposed land use plan amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Progress Guide and General Plan and the San Ysidro Community Plan.**

The proposed amendment would allow for development of 49-95 dwelling units where currently 33-49 dwelling units could be developed. The proposed amendment would help implement the Progress Guide and General Plan Housing Element's goal for the provision of adequate and affordable housing by allowing the development of multifamily dwelling units. The Progress Guide and General Plan Urban Design Element's goals for improving the neighborhood environment and increasing personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity could be implemented through the development of multifamily dwelling units for homeownership opportunities while activating the area adjacent to the trolley stop. The proposed amendment would allow for redevelopment of an underutilized site and help implement the Urban Design Element's recommendations to promote pride, personal safety, and improvement to the urban environment.

The Transit Oriented Development Design Guidelines recommend maximizing the use of existing urbanized areas accessible to transit through sensitive infill and redevelopment and protecting the community character. Further recommendations include the provision of a diversity of housing types and fostering a more vital, interactive, and secure community. The proposed amendment would help fulfill the recommendations through the infill development of multifamily dwelling units on vacant property on an underutilized site which is serviced by public transit.

The proposed amendment would help implement the San Ysidro Community Plan's recommendations to create a safe and healthy living environment, to link residential development to the provision of adequate community facilities and services, to develop a more physically cohesive San Ysidro community, and to improve the appearance of dilapidated structures. If initiated, the amendment would allow development of multifamily dwelling units with proximity to schools, transit, and commercial services on underutilized properties.

(2) The proposed land use plan amendment appears to offer a public benefit to the community or City.

The proposed amendment would benefit the community by accommodating increased residential development at a time when the City of San Diego has declared a housing state of emergency. The proposed amendment would allow for a higher concentration of residences in close proximity to public transit and established commercial areas.

(3) Public services appear to be available to serve the proposed increase in density or intensity of use.

All needed public services (water, sewer) are available as the San Ysidro community is an urbanized community. Full analysis of public services and facilities (schools, fire stations, police stations, libraries, parks, etc.) will be conducted with the review of the community plan amendment, if initiated.

(4) City staff is available to process the proposed land use plan amendment without any work being deferred on General Fund supported programs or ongoing plan updates.

Staff is available to process the plan amendment request without delaying general fund programs or ongoing plan updates, as the City Planning & Community Investment Department's work program includes staff time for non-general fund development projects. However, delays in processing the plan amendment could occur based on staff levels and workload. The costs associated with processing this amendment will be paid for by the applicant.

CONCLUSION

As outlined above, the proposed plan amendment meets all of the supplemental initiation criteria as described; therefore, the staff recommends that the amendment to the San Ysidro Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan be initiated.

The following land use issues have been identified with the initiation request. If initiated, these issues, as well as others that may be identified, will be analyzed and evaluated through the community plan amendment review process:

- Appropriate land use designation and density range for the site;
- Compatibility and integration of new development with adjacent development;
- Impact of potential residential development on public services and facilities;
- Availability of transit;
- Traffic impacts;
- Housing availability and affordability;
- Walkability and pedestrian connectivity;
- Opportunity to provide Affordable Housing Units onsite in order to comply with the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance;
- Incorporation of sustainable design and building materials.

Although staff believes that the proposed amendment meets the necessary criteria for initiation, staff has not fully reviewed the applicant's proposal. Therefore, by initiating this community plan amendment, neither the staff nor the Planning Commission is committed to recommend in favor or denial of the proposed amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary P. Wright, AICP
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TM/TMILLETTE

Attachments:

1. June 19th, 2007 San Ysidro Community Planning Group Minutes
2. Location Map
3. San Ysidro Community Plan Land Use Map
4. Residential Neighborhoods Map
5. Aerial Photo
6. Owner Disclosure Statement