



DATE ISSUED: May 24, 2011

REPORT NO. PC-11-052

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of June 2, 2011

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO INITIATE AMENDMENTS TO THE CENTRE CITY
PLANNED DISTRICT ORDINANCE

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC)

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission (“Commission”) initiate consideration of amendments to the Centre City Planned District Ordinance (CCPDO)?

Staff Recommendation: Centre City Development Corporation (“Corporation”) staff recommends that the Commission initiates CCPDO Amendment 2011-01 for the preparation of potential amendments to the CCPDO including, but not limited to, amendments resulting from the Downtown Design Guidelines (“Design Guidelines”) and Centre City Green (CCG).

Community Planning Group Recommendation: None. If the initiation is approved, the proposed amendments will go forward for consideration before the Centre City Advisory Committee (CCAC) and Corporation prior to being scheduled for a public hearing by the Commission.

Environmental Review: This activity is not a “project” under the definition set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Therefore, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3), the activity is not subject to CEQA. The appropriate environmental review will be completed as part of the amendment study and presented at later hearings for the proposed amendments.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None.

Code Enforcement Impact: None.

Housing Impact Statement: None.

BACKGROUND

In 2006 the City Council of the City of San Diego (“City Council”) adopted the Downtown Community Plan (DCP), amendments to the Redevelopment Plan for the Centre City Redevelopment Project, and major amendments to the CCPDO, the regulatory framework for downtown land development. To further enhance the physical character and livability of downtown, the Corporation initiated the process to develop the Design Guidelines and CCG.

The Design Guidelines are intended to provide a best practice framework for the design of downtown’s major streets, buildings, and public realm. Implementation of the Design Guidelines consists of two phases. The first phase includes the development of design guidelines and criteria that will apply generally throughout downtown. The Draft Design Guidelines are complete and out for public review and are anticipated to be presented to the Commission in July. The second phase will begin shortly after completion of the first phase and will include more focused, neighborhood-specific design guidelines.

In 2010 the Corporation adopted CCG, the sustainability master plan for downtown. CCG identifies long-term goals and policies to meet sustainability standards and proposes a voluntary Green Building Incentive Program, a Green Streets’ Program Concept to expand sustainability to the public realm, and a revised Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Design Guidelines and CCG build on work that has already been completed to establish new baseline goals for urban design and sustainability, and will update policies and vision for downtown by supplementing the DCP and CCPDO. To avoid duplication between documents and further downtown’s sustainability goals, staff is preparing a series of amendments to the CCPDO including, but not limited to, amendments resulting from the Design Guidelines and CCG. In addition, following up on previous amendments adopted in 2007 and 2010 to further refine and enhance the CCPDO, Corporation staff is preparing additional refinement amendments to better implement the goals and policies of the DCP. The proposed amendments will create consistency, avoid duplication between documents, further downtown’s sustainability goals and enhance the legibility of the CCPDO.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE CCPDO

1. Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are composed of four major sections; Urban Design Framework, Street Corridor Guidelines, Blocks and Buildings, and Public Art. The Design Guidelines are more specific than the DCP, but offer greater design flexibility through the guidelines versus the regulations of the CCPDO. Many of the principles and guidelines contained in the Design Guidelines, particularly in the Blocks and Buildings section, currently exist within the CCPDO and will be removed as part of the amendments. Due to their subjective nature they are more appropriately contained in the Design Guidelines than the more objective, regulatory CCPDO.

2. CCG

CCG builds on the sustainability policies in both the DCP and CCPDO and provided for greater flexibility in earning development incentives. The proposed amendments can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Green Building Incentives – CCG defines two paths to earn development incentives for applicants that exceed California Building Code requirements for energy and water conservation. The *Performance Path* allows applicants to participate in an existing voluntary green building rating system and certification process (such as LEED and Cal Green). The *Prescriptive Path* allows applicants to select from a menu of green building measures that are based on energy and water conservation.
- (b) Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Bonus Programs – CCG proposes amending the Eco-Roof FAR bonus program to allow the total additional FAR not to exceed 1.0 FAR. A development may achieve a FAR bonus up to .50 FAR for an Eco-Roof and may achieve an additional .50 FAR provided the Eco-Roof is accessible to building occupants.
- (c) TDM Plan – The existing TDM menu of options will be revised to provide for alignment with new standards and green building rating systems.

3. Other Amendments

The proposed additional modifications to the CCPDO focus on refinements and clean-up items to the wording and the on-going implementation of the CCPDO. The proposed revisions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Setback Requirements – Eliminates the minimum three foot and maximum 1-10 foot setback for projects containing ground level residential units and projects located within the Residential Emphasis District.
- (b) Maximum Living Unit Size – Increases the maximum living unit size from an average of 300 square feet to 350 square feet to align with the State affordable housing guidelines.
- (c) Small Lot Exemption – Allows small lots of 5,000 square feet or less within the Residential Emphasis District to apply for deviations from the minimum 80 percent residential/maximum 20 percent non-residential land use mix requirements of the District through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process to allow greater flexibility for small infill projects.
- (d) Planned Development Permit (PDP) – Establishes a process whereby a PDP allowing deviations to the development regulations of the CCPDO may be approved by the Corporation Board of Directors in lieu of the Commission as part of the Design Review process.
- (e) Below-Grade Parking Requirements – Decreases the requirement to provide at least three levels of below-grade parking prior to allowing any above-grade parking to two levels if all above-grade parking is encapsulated along street frontages.
- (f) Clean up and organization – A variety of minor edits will occur throughout the text to enhance the organization and clarify the language in the CCPDO.

The following is a tentative schedule for processing of the proposed amendments:


Date of Approval	Action or Approval
June 2011	Commission consideration of initiation
June/July 2011	CCAC and Corporation Board consideration of proposed amendments and Commission consideration
September/October 2011	Land Use and Housing and City Council consideration

The above timeline reflects the determination that the proposed amendments do not require additional environmental review beyond the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the DCP. If additional environmental review is warranted, additional time would be required for the preparation of the appropriate environmental documents.

Conclusion:

Corporation staff recommends that the Commission approves the initiation of CCPDO Amendment 2011-01 for the preparation of potential amendments to the CCPDO including, but not limited to, amendments resulting from the Design Guidelines and CCG.

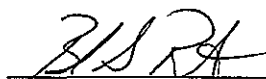
Respectfully submitted,



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