REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
TO THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: Oct 5, 2015 REPORT NO. 102

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board
Agenda of October 15, 2015

SUBJECT: SOUTHEASTERN SAN DIEGO AND ENCANTO NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATES – RECREATION ELEMENT

SUMMARY

Issue –

1. Should the Park and Recreation Board recommend approval to adopt the Recreation Elements of the draft Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods community plans?

Director's Recommendation –

1. Approve the recommendation to adopt the Recreation Element of the draft Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods community plans.

Other Recommendations – The following groups have reviewed and considered the item.

- September 29, 2014 - Southeastern San Diego Community Planning Group voted 9-0-1 to recommend approval of the draft community plan.
- October 7, 2014 - Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group made multiple motions to approve components of the draft community plan. Overall, the draft plan was supported by the majority of the Encanto Neighborhoods planning group.
- September 9, 2015 - Community Forest Advisory Board voted 6-0-1 to recommend approval of the Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods Community Plan Urban Forestry sections.

Fiscal Impact – Not Applicable

Water and Energy Conservation Status – Not applicable.

Environmental –Southeastern San Diego Community Plan Update – A Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Project No. 386029/SCH No. 2014451075) has been prepared

for the community plan update. (Available on the City's website: http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/ceqa/2015/150708seandencantopublicreviewdeir.pdf

BACKGROUND

The Planning Department embarked on the SESD Community Plan update in April 2013 with public outreach efforts centered on individual community meetings that included workshops where community members identified park opportunities, and meeting with the planning groups. The plan update work program has resulted in a comprehensive update of the 1987 SESD community plan and the creation of a new independent community plan for the Encanto Neighborhoods The work program also included the drafting of two impact fee studies (formerly known as public facilities financing plans) that form the basis for proposed new impacts fees for both communities. Additional actions are to rescind the existing SESD Planned District Ordinance and Mount Hope Planned District Ordinance (PDO), and replace them with citywide zoning in order to streamline development and allow for mixed-use development where it is currently prohibited; and create Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zones (CPIOZ) for both communities.

While the City's primary goal is to obtain land for population-based parks, in some communities where vacant land is not available or is cost-prohibitive, the General Plan allows for the use of park equivalencies to be determined by the community and City staff through a set of guidelines. The recreation elements for these communities include park equivalency categories: joint use facilities; trails located in open space; and non-traditional park sites.

Also studied in the update process is the park equivalency category for trails within city-owned open space. This type of equivalency provides the community with hiking/running trails, interpretive panels, trail kiosks and scenic overlooks. The trails identified in each community will meet the Needs Assessment priority of expanding and enhancing existing trails in and around existing communities.

Joint Use facilities and non-traditional park sites as park equivalencies were also studied and identified in the draft recreation elements. San Diego Unified School District elementary school sites have been identified as future joint use areas. Non-traditional park sites include future parks on excess Caltrans right-of-way and the conversion of city street right-of-way to park land. Through the effort of identifying future parks and park equivalencies each of the community plan areas increased their population-based park acreage and identified the type of park amenities that would best serve their community.

The updates were presented to the Park & Recreation Board as an information item, Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods Community Plan Updates-Recreation Element, Item 201, on June 9, 2014. See Attachment 3 for issues discussed with responses and follow up information.

Southeastern San Diego Recreation Facilities

Located just east of Downtown San Diego, the Southeastern San Diego (SESD) is surrounded by several other community planning areas: Golden Hill and City Heights to the north and

Encanto Neighborhoods to the east. It also lies near major recreation facilities in Balboa Park and San Diego Bay. The SESD community lies south of State Route 94 (SR-94), between Interstate 5 (I-5) and Interstate 805 (I-805), and north of the city limits of National City. The SESD Planning Area is home to over 57,000 people.

The SESD planning area is primarily residential, with a mixture of single-family and multi-family housing in all neighborhoods. Commercial development is concentrated along commercial corridors west of State Route-15 and at shopping centers to the east. Industrial uses are found on both sides of State Route-15 south of State Route-94 (Gateway West and East) as well as along Commercial Street. The residual acreage is comprised of community facilities, including schools, churches, parks and open space, community centers, fire and police stations, commercial uses, including offices and parking, and industrial uses (including utilities). Mount Hope Cemetery is in the planning area's eastern section.

The park system that currently serves Southeastern San Diego includes four community parks; Memorial, Southcrest, and Mountain View and Willie Henderson Sports Field Complex. These parks provide active and passive recreation, multi-purpose fields, children's play areas and picnic areas. The Willie Henderson Sports Field Complex at the eastern edge of the Planning Area features nearly 17 acres of sports fields and multi-purpose courts. The community includes three neighborhood parks: Grant Hill, Dennis V. Allen, and Dorothy Petway. There are six existing pocket parks considerably less than one acre in size. These pocket parks are the only public parks within walking distance for many residents. Five Joint Use facilities, Cesar Chavez, Kimborough, Rodriguez, Sherman Heights Elementary Schools and King/Chavez Primary Academy provide turf multi-purposed playfields. There are four existing recreation centers located at Memorial (Dolores Magdaleno), Southcrest, Mountain View Community Parks, and Stockton Joint Use Facility that serve the community's indoor recreational needs. The one aquatic complex is located at Memorial Park.

Encanto Neighborhoods Recreation Facilities

The Encanto Neighborhoods is surrounded by several other community planning areas: Mid-City to the north, Southeastern San Diego to the west, and Skyline-Paradise Hills to the southeast. The cities of Lemon Grove and National City share boundaries to the east and south, respectively. The community is surrounded on two sides by freeways, providing good access to local and regional designations

The Encanto Neighborhoods planning area is composed of primarily residential neighborhoods. The commercial core is located around the intersection of Imperial Avenue and Euclid Avenue, the community's primary east-west and north-south corridors. Neighborhoods west of Euclid Avenue are somewhat older and characterized by gridded streets and a mixture of land uses. Neighborhoods to the east have informal residential character, interspersed with hillsides and canyons. Encanto has seen very little development in recent years, despite an in-city location and accessibility by the freeway and transit systems.

The park system which currently serves Encanto Neighborhoods includes two community parks: Encanto Community Park in the northeast and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Community Park in the southeast. The community includes three neighborhood parks: Emerald Hills Park, Gompers Park and John F. Kennedy Park. All provide children's playgrounds, comfort stations, and passive recreation. Emerald Hills Park also includes tennis

and multi-purpose courts. Walls of Excellence is a pocket park/plaza recognizing outstanding local residents for contributions to the community. Three joint use facilities, Chollas-Mead, Kennedy-Porter and Valencia Park elementary schools provide turf multi-purposed playfields. There are two existing recreation centers located at Encanto and Martin Luther King Memorial Community Parks. The one aquatic complex is located at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Community Park.

Two master plans have been developed in coordination and concurrently with the community plan updates. The first master plan is the Euclid Avenue Gateway Master Plan focuses on the segment of Euclid Avenue between SR-94 and Guymon Street in the Encanto Neighborhoods Planning Area. This master plan updates the mix of land uses and building densities, and recommends balancing the needs of all travel modes along the corridor to improve safety and connectivity with nearby housing, schools, shopping, and transit. The mix of land uses and densities in this master plan has been proposed to create welcoming roadway that enhances connectivity to residential areas, schools, parks, recreation, shopping and other commercial activities.

The second master plan is the National Avenue Master Plan. This Master Plan focuses on a 1.8-mile segment of National Avenue between Interstate 5 (I-5) and 43rd Street in the Southeastern San Diego Community Planning Area. It proposes an updated mix of land uses and building densities, and recommends balancing the needs of all travel modes along the corridor to improve connectivity with residential areas, schools, parks, recreation, shopping, and other commercial activities. Urban design recommendations enhance National Avenue's "Main Street" character, with streetscape improvements and more community gathering places. This plan's recommendations are illustrated in urban design concepts and include the conversion of the industrial park west of State Route 15 into an approximately 11.5 acre active park facility.

These master plan recommendations are included in each of the recreation elements.

The proposed recreation elements of the community plans include specific goals and policy recommendations for addressing population-based park and recreation facilities, preservation, protection and enhancement of those facilities, accessibility to the facilities, and open space lands. These recommendations, along with goals and policies of the General Plan, provide a comprehensive parks strategy intended to serve the recreational needs of the two communities through the next twenty years.

Due to the scarcity of park amenities in the Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods, the recreation elements include park equivalencies, such as joint use and open space trail enhancement, as shown in Table 7-2, Population-based Parks and Park Equivalencies Inventory, in the draft community plans (Attachment 1 & 2).

DISCUSSION

The proposed recreation elements contain goals and policy recommendations that are intended to result in increased and enhanced public recreation opportunities and facilities throughout the Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods for all users. As such, opportunities for additional parkland and recreation facilities within the Southeastern San Diego and Encanto

Neighborhoods are anticipated to come primarily through the redevelopment of private and public properties, and through the application of park equivalencies.

Southeastern San Diego

The draft community plan provides the potential for approximately 149 acres of park facilities (including park equivalencies), of which approximately 82 acres already exist as parks and open space within the community. Application of the General Plan standard of 2.8 usable acres per 1,000 residents would result in potential 2035 demand for 196 acres if future development exercised their full zoning capacity under the plan. It has been the City's experience that development, for a variety of reasons, often does not utilize 100% of the full zoning capacity, which would result in less demand for new park facilities.

Encanto Neighborhoods

The draft community plan provides the potential for approximately 129 acres of park facilities (including park equivalencies), of which approximately 61.8 acres already exist as parks and open space within the community. Application of the General Plan standard of 2.8 usable acres per 1,000 residents would result in potential 2035 demand for 215 acres if future development exercised their full zoning capacity under the plan. It has been the City's experience that development, for a variety of reasons, often does not utilize 100% of the full zoning capacity, which would result in less demand for new park facilities.

These potential deficits would be difficult to rectify in Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods since they are older communities without many land opportunities for providing new facilities. These deficits will need to be fulfilled in the future by land acquisitions/donations or park equivalencies. The Recreation Element identifies existing parks, potential parks, and new recreation centers that will provide for the community's recreation center and aquatic complex needs. These park and recreation proposals represent significant achievements towards implementing the community's goals and needs. Staff will continue to work with community members to seek future opportunities for provision of parks and recreation facilities through grants and other funding sources for project implementation.

Collection of fees based on the General Plan standard for potential opportunistic parkland acquisition and/or development during the next twenty years would be directly related to the projected park and recreation needs identified in the community plans. It is important to note that the per unit development impact fee (DIF) amount is determined based on the infrastructure needs of the entire community; however the DIF is collected only through future building permits to satisfy the infrastructure requirements for the new residents generated by the new development. Therefore, funding to implement the proposed parks and recreation facilities specified in the community plans and companion Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods Impact Fee Studies (IFS) would need to be supplemented by different funding sources other than DIF, such as CDBG, grants and donations, other jurisdictions, a future voter-approved bond measure, etc.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods community plans provide the vision, guiding principles, and policies to guide future growth and development in these

distinctive and vibrant communities, consistent with the City's General Plan. Southeastern San Diego and Encanto Neighborhoods community plans specifically recommend the inclusion of park equivalencies which will be counted towards meeting population-based park and recreation standards, and tracked in the community's park inventory in accordance with General Plan guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:
1. Draft Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, Recreation Element
2. Draft Encanto Neighborhoods Community Plan, Recreation Element
3. June 9, 2014 Park and Recreation Board Information Item issues and responses

The full draft plans can be accessed at this website:
http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/southeasternsd/index.shtml#cpu
http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/encanto/index.shtml#cpu

cc: Herman Parker, Director, Park and Recreation Department
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JUNE 9, 2014 PARK AND RECREATION BOARD INFORMATION ITEM ISSUES AND RESPONSES

Previous Park and Recreation Board issues and responses *(indicates a follow up response)* received at the June 9, 2014 Park and Recreation Board meeting:

- Accessibility to the community.
  - Accessibility will be a combination of walking and driving.
- Is Chollas Creek being created as a regional park? Can that be folded into this community plan update process? If not, why and is it worth doing it now?
  - This is a new avenue for the City to create an actual regional park from nothing. Groundwork San Diego is spearheading the regional park aspect and will provide a comprehensive study to identify goals, and what elements Chollas Creek has that would meet the definition of a regional park. The study will come before the Park and Recreation Board.
  - *On March 9, 2015 the Park & Recreation Board approved, on consent, the Initiation of a Comprehensive Study for Designation of Chollas Creek as Regional Park. It is anticipated that the study will be presented to the Park & Recreation Board at its November meeting.*
- Take a look at Market Street and Imperial Avenue. It is important to include these areas in the planning process.
  - *The Planning Department prepared the Commercial/Imperial Corridor Master Plan. The goals and objectives of this master plan have been incorporated into the draft Southeastern San Diego Community Plan.*
- The use of cemeteries could add to the resource in those communities.
  - *The cemetery was analyzed for potential population-based park equivalencies, but was determined to be needed exclusively for cemetery purposes.*
- Chollas Creek could become a catalyst as to how this area is viewed; as it is special and unique.
- What is the water quality in Chollas Creek.
  - The area is a highly impaired water body at this time and is listed on various State of California agencies. One of the goals is to attempt to clean that up by installing new storm water improvements. Also doing improvements to the adjacent areas as well.
- What the current build out is of these communities?
  - Encanto has 13,184 existing residential dwelling units; Southeastern has 15,032 existing residential dwelling units. The current community plan, which was prepared in 1987, allows for 18,371 units in Encanto; 18,587 for Southeastern. Approximately 5,000 more units in Encanto would be allowed in the community plan and, 3,500 in Southeastern when the communities are built out.
- Maps should not be prepared that show trail systems across privately owned property.
  - *To ensure a comprehensive trail system with connectivity, potential trail alignments have been identified on private property where needed. Trails on private property can only be implemented through land development, or acquisition of property or easements from willing sellers.*