THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: February 11, 2009 REPORT NO. 09-018

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of February 19, 2009

SUBJECT: General Plan Action Plan, Process Five

REFERENCE: City Council Report Nos. 08-019, 08-091
Planning Commission Report No. 08-153, 07-158

SUMMARY:

Issues – Should the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt the General Plan Action Plan, a comprehensive implementation program for the 2008 General Plan?

Mayor's Recommendation –
Recommend that the City Council adopt the General Plan Action Plan.

Community Planning Group Recommendation –
On January 27, 2009, the Community Planners Committee voted 23-1 -1 to provide a prioritized ranking of eighth key implementation actions (Attachment 2).

Environmental Impact –
The preparation of the Action Plan was anticipated at the time of the General Plan Update and was analyzed in the Program Environment Impact Report No. 104495 prepared for the General Plan and certified on March 10, 2008.

Fiscal Impact –
The preparation of the General Plan Action Plan was completed with existing staff funded through the General Fund.

The rate at which implementation will occur is dependent upon the City budget process. Specific actions may have fiscal impacts due to staffing and budgetary needs. Through the budget process, decisions will be made to prioritize staffing and funding levels for projects and programs citywide. As such, it may not be possible to complete each of the actions within the timeframe specified. The General Plan monitoring report will be used

DIVERSITY

to track implementation progress and adjust implementation timeframes or priorities as needed.

Code Enforcement Impact –
None.

Housing Impact –
The Action Plan does not directly impact housing supply or affordability. However, there may be indirect impacts due to specific actions. As an extension of the policy vision of the General Plan, the Action Plan provides an implementation program to direct housing into areas supported by public facilities and transit, which would provide opportunities for the development of housing at densities considered affordable. Additionally, specific actions may result in new policies or regulations, which may affect housing supply and/or affordability. These actions would be analyzed at the time of adoption for housing impacts.

BACKGROUND

General Plan Update

On March 10, 2008, the City Council adopted an update to the General Plan, which sets out a long-range vision and comprehensive policy framework for how the City should plan for projected growth and development, provide public services, and maintain the qualities that define San Diego over the next 20 to 30 years. The policies within the General Plan provide guidance for the physical development of the City and are used to: guide community plan updates; review discretionary permits; and provide direction for public projects, master plans, and other implementation programs. The next step to achieve implementation of the goals and policies in the adopted General Plan will be through the adoption of a General Plan Action Plan, which will provide a comprehensive implementation program for the General Plan and outline the strategies and tools needed to bring together policy and action. After City Council approval, the General Plan Action Plan (Action Plan) will be deemed incorporated into the General Plan by reference. The implementation measures identified in the Action Plan must be consistent with the policies in the General Plan.

General Plan Implementation

After the adoption of a General Plan, the planning agency is required per California State Law to identify and make recommendations to the local legislative body on reasonable and practical implementation measures. The State of California General Plan Guidelines (2003) identify that a general plan is typically implemented through zoning, subdivisions, and capital improvement programs. The Action Plan has been prepared to provide a broad range of actions to implement each of the adopted General Plan policies.

Action Plan Development

The Action Plan has been developed collaboratively with the assistance of many City Departments. Those with key roles in implementation have been actively involved in reviewing drafts of the Action Plan and crafting implementation measures for policies related to their department functions and work programs.

DISCUSSION

General Plan Action Plan

The Action Plan is structured consistent with the General Plan and organized into nine tables that correlate with the adopted General Plan elements: Land Use & Community Planning; Mobility; Urban Design; Economic Prosperity; Public Facilities, Services and Safety; Recreation; Conservation; Noise; and Historic Preservation. The implementation program for the Housing Element is included within that element under separate cover due to mandatory compliance requirements. Each General Plan policy is identified by number and associated with an implementation action(s).

Each of the nine tables contains ongoing, short-, mid-, and long-term actions associated with the implementation of General Plan policies. Ongoing actions are defined as those with no definite completion date and which are part of the ongoing City work program or standard City practices. Short-term actions are those anticipated to be completed within 0-3 years, mid-term actions within 3-5 years, and long-term actions within 5-10 years. Some General Plan policies will be implemented through City processes currently in place such as the development review process. However, other policies will need to be implemented through specific actions such as amendments to the Land Development Code. The Action Plan also identifies which departments are responsible for carrying out each action. Often, multiple departments may share implementation responsibility.

The Action Plan will need to be periodically updated to reflect progress on implementation or to reflect shifting budget priorities. Changes to the Action Plan that further the goals and policies of the General Plan and do not obstruct their attainment will be considered consistent with the General Plan and will not require an amendment to the General Plan. Any changes to specific actions will be recorded to ensure that a clear record is maintained.

Key Issue

Resources & Staff
One of the key issues for the implementation program outlined in the Action Plan is completing the actions within the timeframes specified with existing staffing and resources or possibly with reduced staffing and resources due to budget impacts. Most actions are identified within reasonable timeframes for completion considering existing work programs; however, some actions such as the Land Development Code amendments have been identified often as short-term actions because of their immediate importance in implementing the General Plan vision. Additional resources and/or staffing will need to be identified to complete these actions within the timeframes specified. Due to the comprehensive nature of the Action Plan, funding issues have only been identified for key implementations actions (see page AP-5).

Key Implementation Actions

The February 9, 2009 draft of the Action Plan highlights eight key actions which are critical to General Plan implementation. Additional details on funding, timeframes and description of the seven key actions are provided due to their importance in implementing the General Plan.

- Community Plan Updates
  The implementation and refinement of citywide goals and policies as applied to individual communities will be accomplished primarily through the update of the City's community plans. A table provided on page AP-6 of Action Plan identifies community plans that are in the update process or scheduled to begin in the near future. Additional community plans are also in need of update. As staffing and funding becomes available to begin additional updates or as plan updates identified below are completed, updates of the remaining community plans will commence. Funding for community plan updates will be drawn from a variety of sources including: grants, a portion of the General Plan Maintenance Fee revenue, redevelopment funding, the general fund, contributions from other agencies, other sources, and Community Development Block Grants in eligible communities.
- Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments
  LDC amendments will take place to provide zoning packages to implement land use designations or site-specific recommendations, as part of the regular Land Development Code update process, or as stand alone amendments needed to implement specific policies in the General Plan related to the Conservation, Mobility, and Urban Design elements. The amendments identified throughout the Action Plan have been assigned a timeframe according to priority. Additional funding will need to be identified to provide for staffing or consultant services to accomplish the amendments in the timeframes specified.
- Public Facilities Finance Strategy
  The Public Facilities Financing Strategy will be a companion document to the General Plan and will establish a plan of action to address the provision of public facilities within the City. The purpose of the strategy is to identify practical financing mechanisms and reasonable methods for providing currently needed and future public facilities. Facilities Financing staff has begun initial work on developing the strategy.
- Economic Development Strategic Plan
  The Economic Development Strategic Plan will further refine the goals and policies of the Economic Prosperity Element, report on economic trends, describe targeted industry clusters, inform infrastructure and land use priorities, develop strategies for addressing near- to mid-term economic issues, and identify new initiatives for public and private partnership. The Plan is currently being updated and will be completed with existing staffing.
- Parks Master Plan
  The Parks Master Plan will be a comprehensive, citywide plan to guide park and open space acquisition, design and development, recreational programming and needed maintenance over the next 20-30 years. The preparation of a Parks Master Plan will require consultant services and funding will need to be allocated to complete this work within the timeframe identified.

- Historic Preservation Incentives
  The Historical Resources Board has established an Incentives Subcommittee to research and evaluate specific incentives, including proposals for a TDR program. The Incentives Subcommittee has begun meeting monthly and will refer specific proposals to the full Board and onto the City Council for implementation. Existing Historical Resources staff will work with the subcommittee to develop the program.
- Climate Change Initiatives
  Climate change has been a growing concern for the City of San Diego and other cities around the world. The City of San Diego General Plan incorporates policies, which address local Greenhouse Gas Emission (GHG) mitigation strategies. The Action Plan identifies some of the steps that the City can take to help meet state and local targets. However, more detailed implementation will need to be developed through the update of the City's Climate Protection Action Plan.
- Water Supply & Conservation Efforts
  In accordance with CPC's recommendation, staff supports the inclusion of an eighth key action item on water supply and conservation. This action will cover the multiple efforts by the City to address the water shortage for current and future residents through increasing water supply and promoting conservation.

General Plan Monitoring

In compliance with state law, an annual progress report on general plan implementation and progress on meeting housing element goals must be prepared and submitted to the state Office of Planning & Research and the Department of Housing & Community Development. After the adoption of the Action Plan, annual monitoring through the progress report will take place to evaluate General Plan implementation. Monitoring of specific actions will focus on those actions identified as short-, mid-, or long-term. Ongoing actions are included to provide a comprehensive plan for implementation but because they are part of current city practices or programs, there will not be detailed annual monitoring on those actions.

Environmental Analysis

The preparation of the Action Plan was anticipated at the time of the General Plan Update and was analyzed in the Program Environment Impact Report No. 104495 prepared for the General Plan and certified on March 10, 2008.

The Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) included within the Final Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan provides a Mitigation Framework to address potential impacts that could result from implementation of the General Plan. The General Plan Action Plan will provide a bridge between the Mitigation Framework in the MMRP and more specific, refined mitigation measures.

Actions identified in the Action Plan will be subject to separate environmental analysis, pursuant to CEQA, to identify any potentially significant direct, indirect and/or cumulative impacts.

Planning Commission Comments

The public hearing on the General Plan Action Plan began on December 4, 2008 and was continued until February 19, 2009. At the December 4th hearing Planning Commissioners heard the staff report and public comment, offered initial comments on the Draft Action Plan, and made requests for additional information. Planning Commissioners generally agreed that the items identified as the seven key implementation actions in the Draft Action Plan were the highest priority action items, and specifically sought CPC's review of these seven items. The Planning Commission's additional comments and staff responses are as follows:

1) *Provide a Table of Community Plans that lists: Adoption Date, Targeted Timeframe for Update, and Analysis of Variance between the Community Plan and General Plan.*

A list of community plans and the adoption date was included as Appendix A to the Action Plan. A list of factors considered when prioritizing community plan updates was added to the discussion section on page AP-6. A timeframe has not been designated for each community plan to be updated due to the lack of dedicated funding source for community plan updates. Additionally, a discussion on the consistency of community plans and the General Plan was added on page AP-7.

2) *Discuss the list of tools being considered for the Public Facilities Financing Strategy*

This will be addressed during the presentation.

3) *Provide a summary of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission sources and tools being considered to mitigate or reduce emissions*

The Energy Policy Initiatives Center at the University San Diego School of Law has created a San Diego County Greenhouse Gas Inventory report. The Executive Summary of the inventory report has been provided as Attachment 3 to this report. The report provides an overview of the region's GHG emission sources. The second phase of the inventory report is underway and will focus more on strategies to meet reduction targets.

4) *Identify a list of tools or opportunities available to implement the General Plan on a project basis.*

A list of General Plan policies which have applicability for discretionary projects including those proposing community plan amendments has been included as Appendix B to the Action Plan. The degree to which policies will be implemented on a project-by-project basis will depend upon the individual project.

5) *Provide more information, or a map, on the plans for expansion of the purple pipe (recycled water) system.*

A map depicting the existing and proposed recycled water distribution system is included as Attachment 4. Additionally, an action item was added to address recycled water on page AP 32.

6) *Discuss how water rates are applied to development projects with multiple uses.*

This will be addressed during the presentation.

Recent Edits

In response to comments at the December 4, 2008 Planning Commission hearing, and the November 25, 2008 and January 27, 2009 Community Planners Committee (CPC) meetings, edits were made to the Action Plan. A new draft dated February 9, 2009 has been prepared (see Attachment 1). Edits include:

- An eighth key implementation action was added to encompass efforts by the City to address water conservation and supply (pages AP-5&10). CPC recommended the inclusion of this eighth action due to the concern that additional growth is being planned for without an adequate future water supply.
- The introduction was revised to include additional content on the purpose of preparing an Action Plan, the timeline for implementation, and how changes to the Action Plan will be handled (pages AP-3&4).
- In the section discussing community plan updates, the list of issues for each community plan was condensed into a list of actions that will be covered in the upcoming community plan updates; additional discussion was added on the factors considered when prioritizing community plans; and the consistency of community plans and the General Plan was addressed (pages AP-6&7).
- Two tables were provided as an appendix to the Action Plan. The first table is a list of all the community plans in the City and the second is a list of policies useful when evaluating discretionary projects or community plan amendments (pages AP-39&40).
- The Noise Element actions were restructured to provide a more discrete connection between the General Plan policy and associated action (page AP-35).
- The discussion of Climate Change Initiatives was updated to expand the discussion of Senate Bill 375 (page AP-9).
- An action on the San Diego Clean Generation Program was added on page AP-29.
- An action on the expansion of recycled water distribution and use was added on page AP-32.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS

The Action Plan has been distributed for public review through the General Plan e-mail interest list, presented to citywide committees and other interested parties, and posted to the City's website since the fall of 2007. The Land Use & Housing City Council Committee held an informational workshop on the action plan on June 18, 2008. An update was provided to the Natural Resources & Culture Committee on January 28, 2009. Additionally, the Action Plan was presented or discussed at the following meetings: Community Planners' Committee on May 27, 2008, November 25, 2008, and January 27, 2009; Technical Advisory Committee on May 14, 2008, November 12, 2008, and February 11, 2009; Community Forest Advisory Board on June 11, 2008 and October 15, 2008; AIA COTE Subcommittee on July 11, 2008; Sustainable Energy Advisory Board Subcommittee on August 2, 2008; Council of Design Professionals on August 12, 2008; and the Historic Preservation Incentives Subcommittee on August 11, 2008.

CPC Recommendation

On January 27th, 2009, the CPC recommended a prioritized ranking of the key General Plan implementation actions by a vote of 23-1-1). Each CPC member cast a vote for their top three implementation actions. The results were tallied and the actions ranked in order of voting totals. Community Plan Update, Climate Change Initiatives; and the Parks Master Plan were ranked as the top three priorities. The results were provided by CPC as Attachment 2 of this report. CPC also recommended that an eighth key implementation action on water conservation be added to the list.

ALTERNATIVES

The Action Plan is based on General Plan adopted on March 10, 2008 by the City Council and provides implementation measures for the adopted policies. The Planning Commission could recommend that the City Council adopt the Action Plan with recommended edits or recommend that the City Council does not adopt the Action Plan

CONCLUSION

The Action Plan has been prepared as envisioned during the General Plan Update process to provide a necessary link between General Plan Policy and implementation tools. The Action Plan as a compilation of implementation actions will be a tool to annually assess progress on General Plan implementation. Staff requests that the Planning Commission recommend approval and forward the Action Plan to City Council.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:

1. February 9, 2009 General Plan Action Plan
2. CPC Recommendation
3. San Diego County Greenhouse Gas Inventory available at_http://www/sandiego.edu/epic/ghginventory/
4. Recycled Water Distribution Maps