



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: May 15, 2014

REPORT NO. 14-031

ATTENTION: Planning Commission  
Agenda of May 29, 2014

SUBJECT: Ocean Beach Community Plan Update (OBCPU). Council District 2.  
Process 5

REFERENCE: Planning Commission Report PC-13-072 (June 20, 2013). Planning Commission reports can be accessed online at <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning-commission/pdf/pcreports/>.

### SUMMARY

**Issue:** Should the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council **Approval** of the Ocean Beach Community Plan Update and Local Coastal Program?

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends that Planning Commission forward the Community Plan Update and Local Coastal Program to City Council with a recommendation of **Approval** based on the information contained in this report and the evidence offered as part of the public hearing.

### **Planning Commission Actions:**

1. Recommend to the City Council **Certification** of Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) Project No. 308424/Sch. No. 2011071082 and adoption of the Findings, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and a Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
2. Recommend to the City Council **Approval** of a resolution amending the Ocean Beach Community Plan and General Plan
3. Recommend to the City Council **Approval** of an ordinance rezoning 99 parcels from RS-1-7 to RM-1-1.
4. Recommend to the City Council **Approval** of the Ocean Beach Public Facilities Financing Plan (PFFP) for Fiscal Year 2014.

**Community Planning Group Recommendation:**

On August 7, 2013, the Ocean Beach Community Planning Board (OBPB) voted 11-0-0 to recommend approval of the draft Public Facilities Financing Plan. On October 2, 2013, the OBPB recommended public release of the draft OBCPU, the draft PFFP, and the draft Programmatic EIR by a vote of 9-0-0. On December 3, 2013, the board voted unanimously to accept changes to some of the policies based on public comment that had been received.

**Other Recommendations:**

On April 30, 2014, the Smart Growth & Land Use Committee voted 4-0-0 to forward the Ocean Beach Community Plan Update and associated actions to the full City Council for hearing.

On May 14, 2014, the Infrastructure Committee voted 4-0-0 to forward the Ocean Beach Public Facilities Financing Plan to the full City Council for hearing.

**Environmental Impact:**

On August 9, 2011, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) to the State Clearinghouse, local and regional responsible agencies, and other interested parties. The draft PEIR was released for public review on October 4, 2013, and the review period for the PEIR closed on November 19, 2013 (Attachment 1). The Peninsula Community Planning Group requested and was granted further time to submit comments, however, no comments were received by the City.

The evaluation of environmental issue areas in this Program EIR concludes that the proposed project could result in significant and unavoidable direct and cumulative impacts related to Transportation/Circulation. In addition, the EIR concludes that significant but mitigable direct and/or cumulative impacts to Land Use (MHPA), Biological Resources, Historical Resources (Archaeology and Built Environment) and Paleontological Resources would result from implementation of the proposed project. It is further demonstrated in the PEIR that the project would not result in a significant environmental effect in the following areas: Visual Quality/Neighborhood Character, Agricultural and Forest Resources, Air Quality and Odor, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Human Health and Public Safety, Hydrology and Water Quality, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services and Facilities, Public Utilities, and Geologic Conditions.

The Final EIR became available on May 8, 2014. Findings of Fact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations have been prepared for adoption of the community plan.

**Fiscal Considerations:**

Adoption of the public facilities financing plan (PFFP) would provide a portion of the funding for the required public facilities. Portions of project costs not funded by new development through Development Impact Fees, development project conditions, or other specified sources would need to be identified by future City Council actions in conjunction with the adoption of annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budgets.

**Housing Impact Statement:**

The OBCPU would change the zoning to allow up to 15 dwelling units (DU) per acre and would result in the maximum build out of approximately 315 units, or a net increase of 126 dwelling units. However, based upon land use assumptions used to calculate the development which could be reasonably anticipated, it was determined that the rezone could result in an increase of 62 units.

**BACKGROUND:**

The community of Ocean Beach is approximately one square mile in size. The community is bordered by the San Diego River and Mission Bay Regional Park on the north, the Pacific Ocean on the west, and the Peninsula Community Planning area on the south and east (Attachment 2).

The Ocean Beach Precise Plan (Plan) and Local Coastal Program was adopted by the San Diego City Council on July 3, 1975. The Plan was amended on November 25, 1980 to include the Ocean Beach Precise Plan Local Coastal Program, and again on February 15, 1981, to recognize construction of an excess reclaimed water outfall offshore from the mouth of the San Diego River.

The 1975 Ocean Beach Precise Plan was intended to establish as public policy a program for preserving and enhancing the community. Attachment 3 is the existing land use map, and the following table summarizes the land uses and acreages for the adopted plan.

**Adopted Land Use Plan Summary**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low-Medium Residential	135.2	21
Medium Density Residential	184.5	29
Neighborhood Commercial	14.4	2
Community Commercial	32.9	5
Open Space	18.9	3
Private/Commercial Recreation	13.8	2
Parks and Recreation	30	5
Institutional	6.1	1
Right of Way	205.5	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>641.3</b>	<b>100</b>



While the adopted Precise Plan's land use designations, goals for respecting the community's coastal environment, and addressing the scale and character of infill development are largely still relevant, the OBCUP addresses a broader range of issues faced by the community and City, and provides an up-to-day array of recommendations that will more effectively protect and enhance community character and quality of life.

### **Update Process**

The City embarked on the current update of the Ocean Beach Precise Plan in 2002. A community workshop was conducted in 2003 which identified issues to be addressed through the outreach and update processes. The outreach process included working with the community plan update subcommittee and full community planning group, and holding public workshops and community planning group meetings. The draft Plan includes land use recommendations derived through the public outreach process. The major theme that emerged was the need to maintain and enhance the existing development pattern of Ocean Beach while protecting public views and coastal resources.

After 2002, work on the Ocean Beach Community Plan Update diminished due to staff resources being dedicated to the update of the City of San Diego's General Plan. Planning efforts began again in 2006, a draft plan was presented to the community, and workshops were held in 2007. The workshops further refined the plan's goals and recommended that the Neighborhood Commercial designation be removed and a Community Commercial designation applied. In 2008, the determination was made that the Update would require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based on the existing traffic impacts and potential impacts to historic structures. Funding for the EIR was secured in 2009. Consultants for the preparation of technical reports were interviewed in 2010, and contracts for consultant services were signed in 2011.

The draft update, PFFP, and PEIR were released for public review in October 2013. The review period for the PEIR closed on November 19, 2013. The Peninsula Community Planning Group requested and was granted further time to submit comments, however, no comments were received by the City.

### **DISCUSSION**

The draft Ocean Beach Community Plan and Local Coastal Program applies existing citywide land use designations and zones. The project proposes only minimal land use changes to: re-designate the Voltaire Street and Pt. Loma Avenue districts from Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial (Attachment 4); and to rezone certain properties to correct an existing inconsistency between the zone and the residential land use designation (Attachment 5).

The Update identifies Ocean Beach as a small-scale coastal village and further expresses General Plan policies in Ocean Beach through the provision of site-specific recommendations that implement the City of Villages strategy (Attachment 6). The main issues addressed by the Plan

update are: park equivalencies, urban design, public view and coastal resource protection, and historic preservation.

### **Plan Update Highlights**

#### *Community Plan Update Guiding Principles*

Through the public outreach process for the update, the following guiding principles were generated. The Ocean Beach Guiding Principles are a refinement of the City of San Diego's General Plan Principles. The guiding principles for each of the Plan's elements are as follows:

- **Land Use and Community Planning:** Maintain and enhance the established nature of residential neighborhoods, and encourage mixed commercial/residential development in the commercial districts.
- **Mobility:** Improve transit services, encourage alternative forms of transportation, prioritize walkability, and maintain an effective vehicular circulation system.
- **Urban Design:** Foster the small-scale character of Ocean Beach, maintain an unobstructed and accessible beach frontage, and promote a pedestrian-friendly community.
- **Public Facilities, Services and Safety:** Improve police, fire and lifeguard safety services, ensure a reliable system of water, storm water, and sewer facilities, reduce and manage solid waste, , and minimize adverse impacts associated with utility services.
- **Recreation:** Maintain existing park facilities and actively pursue additional recreational opportunities.
- **Conservation:** Preserve and promote the natural amenities of Ocean Beach.
- **Noise:** Minimize impacts associated with excessive noise.
- **Historic Preservation:** Preserve the history of Ocean Beach, and encourage heritage tourism.

#### *Land Use Distribution*

The land use plan update will replace the existing Neighborhood Commercial Designation with the Community Commercial Designation. The proposed changes are reflected in the Plan Summary below. Note that the only change in acreage is the existing two acres of Neighborhood Commercial is proposed to be included as Community Commercial, with the total commercial acreage unchanged at 7 total acres.



### Proposed Land Use Plan Summary

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Low-Medium Residential	135.2	21
Medium Density Residential	184.5	29
Community Commercial	47.3	7
Open Space	18.9	3
Private/Commercial Recreation	13.8	2
Parks and Recreation	30	5
Institutional	6.1	1
Right of Way	205.5	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>641.3</b>	<b>100</b>

#### *Park Equivalencies and Park Land Deficiencies*

Ocean Beach is an urbanized coastal community with limited opportunities for providing new recreation facilities due to the lack of large vacant parcels. The community wishes to maintain existing parks and to expand opportunities for new facilities through park equivalencies. The park system in Ocean Beach is made up of population-based parks, resource-based parks and open space lands.

The projected population at full community development is 15,071 residents. Therefore, according to General Plan Guidelines for population-based parks at full community development, Ocean Beach should be served by a minimum of 42 useable acres of park land. Of the 42 useable acres, there should be 8 useable acres of Community Parks and 34 useable acres of Neighborhood, Mini and Pocket Parks.

Due to land constraints, the community and City staff evaluated the use of park equivalencies to help meet the park guidelines. Consideration of potential equivalency sites included an analysis of public accessibility, consistency with General Plan policies, and assessment of whether typical population-based park components and facilities could be provided. It was found that a variety of sites and facilities within and adjacent to the Ocean Beach community already do, or could, serve as park equivalencies. Attachment 7 includes an existing facilities map and a table that illustrates the existing population-based parks and facilities in the Ocean Beach community, as well as the existing deficit of parklands. A table that illustrates the potential Park Equivalency Credits with a Revised Population-based Park Inventory Summary at full community development, and a map showing the location of the potential park equivalencies are included in Attachment 8.

Through the process of using park equivalencies within the urbanized Ocean Beach community planning area, the population-based park lands deficit for the Ocean Beach community would be reduced from 40.57 acres, to 18.66 acres as shown in the table below.

<b>Revised Population-based Park Inventory Summary at Full Community Development</b>	
Existing Population-based Parks	1.42 acres
Park Equivalency Credits	21.92 acres
Population-based parks requirements for year 2030	42.00 acres
Population-based parks deficit for year 2030	18.66 acres

#### *Coastal Zone and Coastal Resources*

The Ocean Beach community is entirely within the Coastal Zone, with the California Coastal Commission retaining original permit jurisdiction within the area nearest the ocean (Attachment 9). The following table illustrates coastal issues and the corresponding plan element(s) where the issue is addressed.

<b>Coastal Issue Area and Community Plan Elements</b>	
<b>Coastal Issue</b>	<b>Ocean Beach Community Plan Element</b>
Public Access	Conservation Element, Land Use Element
Public Coastal Views	Urban Design
Recreation	Recreation Element
Marine Environment	Conservation Element
Land Resources	Historic Preservation Element, Conservation Element
Development	Land Use Element, Mobility Element
Sea Level Rise	Conservation Element

The community of Ocean Beach contains significant coastal resources that are illustrated in the Conservation Element (Attachment 10). Coastal resources include but are not limited to the Famosa Slough, the San Diego River, Dog Beach, Ocean Beach Park, the Ocean Beach Fishing Pier, tidepools and pocket beaches. The Plan update's goals include preservation of and access to the open space, coastal bluffs, beaches, tide pools and coastal waters for future generations. Recommendations include resource monitoring to ensure they are maintained in clean and healthy states and prohibition of coastal bluff development. Other recommendations include implementation of the Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan and expansion of educational opportunities through trails and interpretive signs. Physical coastal access recommendations include both lateral and vertical physical coastal access through building setbacks, establishing public access at street endings, and obtaining public access easements across private property.



### *Sea Level Rise*

Sea level rise caused by climate change is an issue of growing concern in California and in coastal communities around the world. The State of California projects a rise of 10 to 17 inches (.26 to .43 m) by the year 2050 and a rise of 31 to 69 inches (.78 to 1.76 m) by the year 2100 (State of California, Sea Level Rise Task Force of the coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team, *Sea Level Rise Interim Guidance Document*, October 2010).

Based on available research, if sea level rise reaches 1.4-1.5 meters (which is considered to be in the intermediate/high range of projections), San Diego could experience some loss of beaches and coastal habitat (Gersberg, R., San Diego Waters. Retrieved on July 2, 2013 from <http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org/learn/san-diegos-waters/>). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer shows that street flooding is another possible impact if the sea level rises to this level. The Conservation Element of the OBCPU addresses the sea level rise issue by including policies for the monitoring of sea level rise, evaluating vulnerabilities, and adjusting adaptation strategies over time.

### *Urban Design and Coastal Views*

The California Coastal Act requires both physical and visual access to the shoreline be protected and expanded. The coastline is Ocean Beach's greatest natural asset, and the topography and location provide expansive ocean views. Protected public views are an important goal of the Urban Design element, and the update defines and identifies "Scenic Overlooks," "View Cones" and "Framed View Corridors" throughout the community (Attachment 11).

Recommendations in the Plan are intended to protect public views and encourage new development which minimizes intrusions and maximizes public views. Such recommendations include utilizing upper story setbacks, gable alignment with view corridors, and avoiding "walling off" public views. Recommendations also place restrictions on landscape, street tree and fence heights.

### *Historic Preservation*

Ocean Beach has a rich history that has been shaped by its seaside location, natural resources, and economic booms and busts. The Ocean Beach Historic Preservation element contains specific goals and recommendations to address the history and cultural resources unique to Ocean Beach in order to encourage appreciation of the community's history and culture. The City of San Diego Historic Resources Board has designated 72 properties within the Ocean Beach Community Planning area. The designated resources included individually significant sites, and others that contribute to the Ocean Beach Cottage Emerging Historical District.



The plan update includes an Historic Context Statement and policies that encourage new construction to take design cues from historic buildings, and to respect the height, mass, articulation and materials of surrounding historic buildings.

### **Planning Commission Workshop**

At the June 20, 2013 workshop on the update, the Planning Commissioners voiced the following concerns and requested that staff address the concerns when returning to the Planning Commission:

- the Urban Design element;
- the variance language that was included in the plan;
- the change from Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial;
- no village designation;
- design of off-street parking;
- sea level rise;
- inclusion of the San Diego River Park Master Plan.

#### *Urban Design Element:*

The Planning Commission voiced concerns whether the Urban Design Element provided sufficient clarity and direction for staff and decision-makers to determine how future projects implemented or adversely affected the goals and recommendations of the plan. Staff met with several local architects and urban designers to get their input on how to improve the policies. Existing draft policies were reworked and additional policies were included in the Urban Design Element – Residential Neighborhood Recommendations (See Policies 4.2.1-4.2.9). These policies are intended to achieve transitions in scale between existing structures and new infill development, and are to be used when determining whether or not a proposed development would have an adverse impact on the desirable small-scale character.

#### *Variance Language*

The draft variance language has been reworded to reflect consistency with the City's ordinance and processing of variances. Staff worked with the OBPB subcommittee to revise the language to reflect the planning board's request to include some historical context of the reduced FAR within the Ocean Beach area that helps to protect the small-scale established character of the community (Attachment 12).

#### *Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial*

The redesignation of the Voltaire Street and Pt. Loma Avenue commercial districts from Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial reflect the evolution of the districts over the past 40 years. The change is proposed because over time the Voltaire Street and Pt. Loma Avenue commercial districts have added services and businesses which appeal to a larger market area, and to reflect consistency with the existing Community Commercial zoning.

### *No Village Designation*

The Planning Commission expressed concern whether without a village designation the City compromises its ability to receive grant funding. A foundation of the General Plan is the City of Villages strategy which encourages the development or enhancement of mixed-use activity centers, of different scales, that serve as vibrant cores of communities and are linked to the regional transit system. The Ocean Beach community, with its commercial districts, diversity of housing types, parks and public spaces, and interconnected street system, already functions as a village in the context of the General Plan. The OBCPU supports maintaining and enhancing these coastal village attributes. Future mixed-use village development would more than likely occur in the commercial districts, as the commercial designation and zoning allows for residential and commercial uses. Ocean Beach has two smart growth areas defined on SANDAG's Smart Growth Concept Map, which would assist the City in searching for grant funding. In addition, an edit to the draft community plan (Introduction section) was made to recognize that Ocean Beach is a small-scale, coastal village.

### *Design Of Off-Street Parking*

The Commission voiced concerns about off-street parking design impacting the pedestrian experience and walkable beach community. Section 4.2 of the Urban Design Element has been refined to include new and reworded recommendations that encourage site design that addresses the interaction of the off-street parking and the pedestrian experience.

### *Sea Level Rise;*

As noted above, Section 7.6 of the Conservation Element addresses sea level rise and provides a recommendation for monitoring and adaption to sea level rise. Staff has met preliminarily with Coastal Commission staff to review the plan, and is working cooperatively to address any concerns prior to the City Council Hearing.

### *San Diego River Park Master Plan*

The San Diego River Park Master Plan is mentioned in the introduction, and again in the Recreation Element. The San Diego River Park Master Plan recommends several projects to enhance the connection from the Ocean Beach community to the San Diego River including: creation of a San Diego River Park trailhead at Dog Beach and Robb Field, the initiation of a study to explore the benefits and impacts of connecting the trail at Famosa Slough to the San Diego River pathway and the re-vegetation of all areas adjacent to the San Diego River with appropriate native plant material. Two of the park equivalencies being considered with the update include an accessible ramp to the River Park and improvements to the Famosa Slough Open Space Trail.

### **Ocean Beach Public Facilities Financing Plan**

The draft Fiscal Year 2015 PFFP would supersede the Ocean Beach Facilities Summary approved on August 3, 1999 (Resolution No. R-302791) (Attachment 13). The facilities listed in



the draft Fiscal Year 2015 Public Facilities Financing Plan (Financing Plan) will be needed over the next approximately 17 years when full community development is anticipated. The Financing Plan is a guide for future development within the community and serves to determine the public facility needs reflected in this document. The City Council has adopted Development Impact Fees (DIF) to help mitigate the cost of the public facilities necessitated by development in the community. DIF for residential development was first adopted on August 4, 1987 by Resolution No. R-269019. DIF for nonresidential development were adopted on September 14, 1987 by Resolution No. R-269274. This document provides the basis for a revision of the DIF for the Ocean Beach Community.

#### **Community Participation and Public Outreach Efforts:**

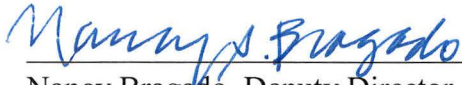
The Ocean Beach Planning Board (OBPB) created an update subcommittee that worked for several years with staff to generate the draft update. The draft plan was presented to the Ocean Beach Planning Board (OBPB) at their regularly scheduled June 5, 2013 meeting. The OBPB posted the draft plan to their website, and gathered many public comments. At the August 7, 2013 OBPB meeting, the Board recommended approval of the draft plan. The OBPB also formed a Facilities Financing subcommittee to provide input and review of the draft PFFP. The draft update and draft PFFP were released for public review in October 2013. At the regularly scheduled December 3, 2013 meeting, the board voted unanimously 8-0-0 to accept changes to some of the policies based on public comment that had been received.

The OBPB has made a comprehensive effort to reach out to affected property owners, residents, and business owners in and adjacent to Ocean Beach including the Peninsula community planning area, the Mission Bay Park Committee, the Ocean Beach Main Street Association, the Ocean Beach Community Development Corporation, the Ocean Beach Foundation, the Ocean Beach Historical Society, and the Ocean Beach Town Council.

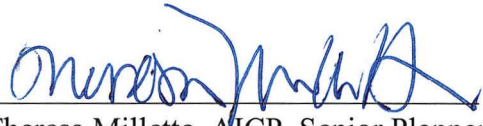
#### **SUMMARY**

The Ocean Beach Community Plan Update represents one of the significant planning efforts underway within the City of San Diego. The Ocean Beach Community Plan Update would be consistent with and further implement the adopted City General Plan as the update establishes policies that are in harmony with the underlying purpose of each of the General Plan's elements. The update advances each of the policies of the General Plan that the City considers mandatory and fundamental to achieving the General Plan's vision and principal goals. The community plan update provides guidance on future growth within Ocean Beach and provides comprehensive policy recommendations on land use issues that are sensitive to the public facilities needs and timely phasing of the infrastructure.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Attachments:

1. Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (separate CD distributed 5/15/14)
2. Ocean Beach Location Map (attached)
3. Existing (Current) Ocean Beach Community Plan Land Use Map (attached)
4. Proposed Ocean Beach Community Plan Land Use Map (attached)
5. Areas to be re-zoned (attached)
6. DRAFT Ocean Beach Community Plan and Local Coastal Program (CD)
7. Existing Population-based Parks (attached)
8. Park Equivalencies (attached)
9. Coastal Zone (attached)
10. Coastal Resources (attached)
11. Public Coastal Views (attached)
12. Draft Variance Language and Urban Design Element Section 4.2 Recommendations (attached)
13. Draft FY 2015 Ocean Beach Public Facilities Financing Plan (CD)
14. Draft City Council Resolution to amend the Ocean Beach Community Plan and General Plan (attached)
15. Draft City Council Resolution to certify the Environmental Impact Report and adopt the Findings, the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program and the Statement of Overriding Considerations (attached, Exhibits under separate cover)
16. Draft Rezoning Ordinance (attached)
17. Draft Planning Commission Resolution (attached)