



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Planning Commission

DATE ISSUED: March 5, 2019

REPORT NO. PC-19-015

HEARING DATE: March 14, 2019

SUBJECT: Mira Mesa Community Plan Update Workshop

SUMMARY

This is a workshop for the Planning Commission to provide early input on the Mira Mesa Community Plan Update. No action is required on the part of the Planning Commission at this time.

BACKGROUND

Mira Mesa is a major suburban employment center and a residential neighborhood located in the north central portion of the City of San Diego. The Mira Mesa Community Planning Area is one of San Diego's largest communities in terms of area, population and employment. The community consists of 10,729 acres located between Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar on the south and Los Peñasquitos Canyons open space on the north, and between Interstate 805 and Interstate 15 (Attachment 1). The community is home to approximately 76,000 people and its businesses employ over 83,000 people in 2016.

The northeast portion of the community is primarily single and multi-family residential with large shopping centers along Mira Mesa Boulevard. There are three sub-areas within the community. Sorrento Mesa, in the northwest portion of the community, contains high intensity (29 jobs/ac) cluster of high-tech, biotech, and research and development facilities. Qualcomm, a Fortune 500 semiconductor and telecommunications equipment company, has a concentration of offices in this sub-area. In the center, the Carroll Canyon area includes Fenton Technology Park, Carroll Canyon Business Park, and large quarry sites. There are two proposed master plans – 3 Roots and Stone Creek – that intends to convert this area into a mixed-use transit oriented development with over 6,000 housing units and 1.2 million square feet of non-residential uses. In the southern portion of the community is the Miramar industrial area (12 jobs/ac), which contains a cluster of manufacturing, warehousing, breweries, office and commercial uses.

DISCUSSION

The Community Plan Update (CPU) for Mira Mesa is a collaborative effort with community members and stakeholders to guide long-term development, so the area continues to thrive as a collection of residential neighborhoods and a major regional employment center, while capitalizing on the regional transit and infrastructure investment.

What is prompting the community plan update?

The current Mira Mesa Community Plan was adopted in 1992. Since then, there have been nine amendments to the Community Plan. Mira Mesa is a major regional employment and population center and has a strong potential for future growth to better accommodate existing residents and businesses, while creating opportunities for high-growth companies and diverse housing types.

The Mira Mesa Community's needs are changing. Although the current community plan includes a mixed-land use within the Carroll Canyon area to support the General Plan's City of Villages strategy, improved connectivity and revitalization of older properties, especially along Mira Mesa Boulevard are needed to better align with the implementation of the Climate Action Plan. The CPU also provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the needs of employers in industrial lands, the character of activity centers, mobility enhancements, and the location of new transit-oriented development. During this process, the City will consider development standards that provide opportunities for employment growth while offering more options for employees to live closer to work and use alternative modes of transportation.

The General Plan identifies Sorrento Mesa as a Subregional Employment Area due to its industrial land use base supporting scientific research, office and manufacturing uses. The community's location and proximity to the University of California San Diego, also make it an attractive area for future growth. An updated community plan will establish goals and policies to address more sustainable land use, mobility, urban design, and public facilities.

What are the Community Plan's Key Objectives?

The CPU process will assist in the implementation of the General Plan City of Villages strategy and Climate Action Plan by addressing the following key objectives, as well as others that arise through the update process:

- Increasing density and intensity of residential and employment land uses within Transit Priority Areas to:
 - Facilitate the implementation of Smart Growth Areas;
 - Revitalize major activity centers as walkable destinations;
 - Identify appropriate locations to support a diversity of employment and mixed-use land uses; and
 - Address Climate Action Plan strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Strengthening Mira Mesa as a major employment area;
- Improving walking, biking, and transit connectivity to housing, jobs, and amenities;
- Preservation of open space areas; and
- Addressing public facilities, parks and recreation, and infrastructure needs.

What is the status of the community plan update?

In fall 2018, the Planning Department launched the plan update process by reviewing existing conditions, hosting an open house, forming an advisory committee, attending major community events, and conducting an online survey to:

- Better understand community issues and priorities;
- Establish a vision and principles for the plan area; and
- Explore specific ways to achieve it.

The Mira Mesa Community Plan Update Advisory Committee was formed in August 2018 and have met six times to discuss existing conditions, and preliminary goals and policies related to Sustainability, Climate Action, Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation, and Public Facilities, Services, and Safety.

A **Community Atlas: Existing Conditions Report** was prepared to illustrate mappable resources relating to land uses, economic setting, natural resources, urban form, and mobility infrastructure. It also details major constraints and opportunities for future development.¹

An informational open house was held in October 2018 to kick-off the plan update process to present findings of existing conditions report and gain input from the community members. There were about 45 members of the public who attended the event.

Overall, more than 1,000 people - representing a broad cross-section of people that live, work, study, and visit Mira Mesa - participated in the phase one outreach effort via an online survey, open house, stakeholder interview, location-specific (pop-up) outreach, and monthly advisory committee meeting.

The Planning Department staff synthesized and mapped over 1,440 comments and 14,322 data points and summarized the findings into a Phase I **Community Engagement Report**, released in January 2019. The top five community priorities were:

1. Traffic and Travel Time;
2. Parks and Open Space;
3. Housing;
4. Urban Design; and
5. Economic Vitality.

The results from community engagement, technical studies, and citywide policies were encapsulated to draft the initial community vision and guiding principles.

How will the SANDAG grant be used to support the Community Plan Update?

The City has received a Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) grant from SANDAG which will be used to support the basic principles of smart growth by building upon the community's

¹ The Mira Mesa Community Atlas is also available for review on the project website at this link:

https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/mm_community_atlas_final_web.pdf

role as a major employment, retail, education and housing center interconnected by an expanding regional transportation system. Funds will be utilized to inform the community plan update and how to best capitalize on the community's role as a smart growth area and identify opportunities to increase housing choices near one of the country's leading high-tech and life sciences centers.

Where should opportunities for change be focused in Mira Mesa?

An important part of the update is identifying areas of transition and obtaining input on focus areas for increased employment uses and housing opportunities through land use recommendations consistent with a smart growth strategy. The 5.5-mile transit corridor along Mira Mesa Boulevard is located within a Transit Priority Area with a potential to better integrate transit and land use. The Mira Mesa Community Atlas details land use siting constraints and opportunities for future development. Attachment 2 illustrates potential opportunities for change.

Where are additional recreational opportunities for the community?

Based on a 2016 population of 76,000, the community needs 213 acres of parkland to meet General Plan population-based park requirements. With 147 acres of existing population-based parkland, the Mira Mesa community has an existing park deficit of 66 acres. As part of the CPU, additional parks and recreational opportunities will be identified such as mini parks, plazas, urban greens, and open space trails.

How does the MCAS Miramar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan constrain land use?

The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for MCAS Miramar, adopted in 2008, establishes land use compatibility policies and development criteria to protect MCAS Miramar's operations and minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards. The ALUCP does not allow residential use in noise contour 65+ CNEL and Accident Potential Zone 1 and 2. It also limits the number of people allowed per acre for non-residential development in Transition Zone, Accident Potential Zone 1, and 2. The City implements the ALUCP with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay Zone. Any proposed changes to land use or intensity or density inconsistent with the ALUCP would require the City Council to overrule the Airport Land Use Commission. Attachment 3 illustrates the airport influence areas.

What is the role of the Prime Industrial Lands (PILs)?

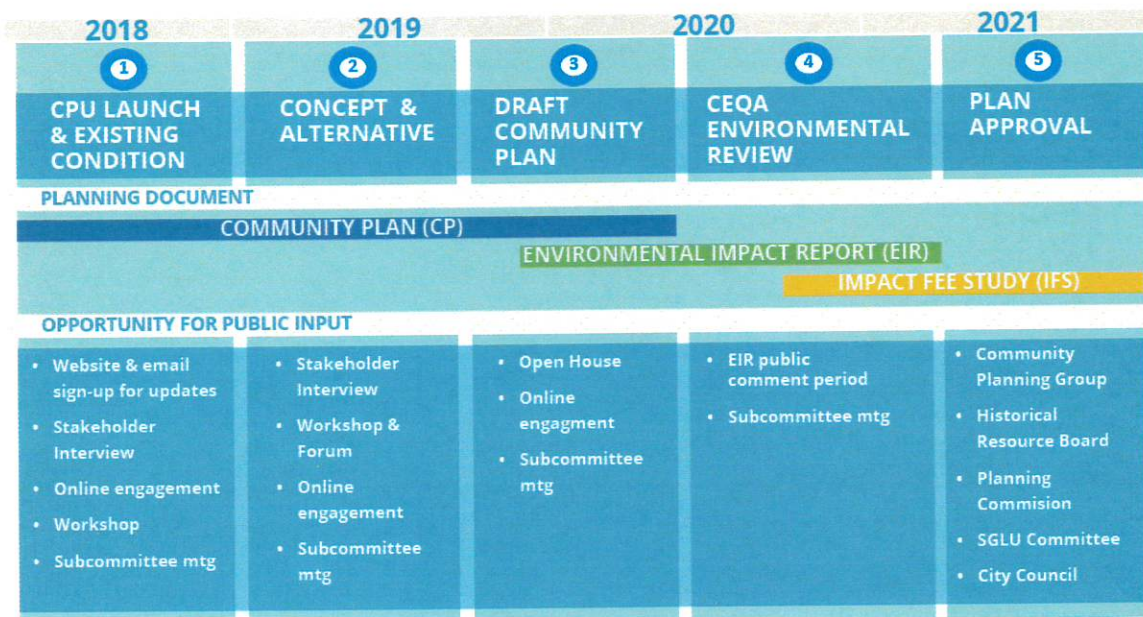
The General Plan identifies Prime Industrial Land as areas that support export-oriented base sector activities such as corporate headquarters, manufacturing, research and development, assembly and distribution. The General Plan includes policy direction to protect these lands through:

- Maintaining or expanding industrial land use designations;
- Preserving or applying strict industrial zoning;
- Limiting public assembly and sensitive receptor uses;
- Providing incentives for job growth; and
- Requiring a General Plan amendment to remove properties from the PIL map.

The General Plan policy (EP-A.12) recommends reviewing the applicability of the Prime Industrial Land designation during a comprehensive community plan update. Attachment 2 shows the location of Prime Industrial Lands in Mira Mesa Community Planning Area.

What are the next steps for the community plan update?

The community plan update process is now entering phase two with a focus on more business stakeholder engagement, market study, mobility existing conditions report, and the exploration of land use, urban design, and mobility concepts and alternatives. The Planning Department is also convening a Forum on Subregional Employment Area in June 2019 to address issues related to economic prosperity.



CONCLUSION

The Planning Department is presenting this first workshop for the Mira Mesa CPU to seek early input from the Planning Commission. Staff will continue to conduct outreach to obtain community input and work with the Advisory Committee in developing the community plan. All community plan update documents are available on the project website: www.PlanMiraMesa.org.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

1. Mira Mesa Community Planning Area
2. Smart Growth, Transit Priority, and Focus Areas
3. Airport Influence Areas

