DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (PEIR)
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS (SOC) FOR THE
UPTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE
(PROJECT NUMBER 380611; SCH No. 2016061023)
(PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE §21081(b))

Pursuant to Section 21081(b) of CEQA and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15903 and 15043, CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks, when determining whether to approve the Uptown Community Plan Update (CPU) and associated discretionary actions (hereinafter referred to as the Project), as defined in the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). This statement of overriding considerations is specifically applicable to the significant and unavoidable mitigation measures identified in Chapter 6 of the Final PEIR. As set forth in the Findings, the Project will result in unavoidable adverse cumulative impacts related to transportation and circulation, noise, historical resources, and paleontological resources.

The City Council of the City of San Diego, having:

(i)   Independently reviewed the information in the Final PEIR and the record of proceedings;

(ii) Made a reasonable and good faith effort to eliminate or substantially lessen the significant impacts resulting from the Project to the extent feasible by adopting recommended mitigation measures identified in the Final PEIR; and

(iii) Balanced the benefits of the project against the significant environmental impacts, chooses to approve the project, despite its significant environmental impacts, because, in its view, specific economic, legal, social, and other benefits of the project render the significant environmental impacts acceptable.

The following statement identifies why, in the City Council's judgment, the benefits of the Project outweigh the unavoidable significant impacts. Each of these benefits serves as an independent basis for overriding all significant and unavoidable impacts. Any one of the reasons set forth below is sufficient to justify approval of the project. Substantial evidence supports the various benefits and such evidence can be found in the preceding sections, which are incorporated by reference into this section, the Final PEIR, or in documents that comprise the Record of Proceedings in this matter.

FINDINGS FOR STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

1.   The Community Plan Update provides a comprehensive guide for growth and development in the Uptown community consistent with the General Plan City of Villages Strategy.

Together with the General Plan, the proposed Uptown Community Plan Update (CPU) guiding principles, goals, and policies provide a long-range and comprehensive guide for the future physical development of the community planning area. Community identified needs formed the basis for the CPU's guiding principles, goals and policies.

Guiding Principles

- Multi-modal circulation and community access;
- Development diversity;
- Sustainability in development and in the environment;
- Business vitality and growth;
- Public facilities and recreation needs;
- Open space conservation; and
- Respecting cultural and historic resources.

Guided by the City of Villages growth strategy and citywide policy direction contained in the General Plan, the CPU goals and policies establish the following land use and multi-modal mobility strategies to cohesively guide growth and development in Uptown:

- Direct higher density residential mixed-use development along transit corridors, nodes and villages,
- Direct higher density residential in multifamily areas near the transit corridors emphasizing pedestrian connectivity,
- Foster walkable and transit-oriented neighborhoods,
- Maintain the low-density character of single-family neighborhoods,
- Create a high quality, reliable, multi-modal transportation network, and
- Promote a clean, sustainable environment.

The CPU focuses future growth and development on transit corridors, in multifamily areas in close proximity to the transit corridors, and community village areas. The CPU identifies:

- Community Villages are located in the Hillcrest neighborhood focused at :
  - Washington Street, University Avenue, 4th Avenue and 5th Avenue; and
  - Washington Street, University Avenue; Park Boulevard; 10th Avenue

- Neighborhood Villages located in the following neighborhoods:
  - Mission Hills at Goldfinch Street and Washington Street;
  - Middletown at India Street and Washington Street; and
  - Bankers Hill/Park West at Laurel Street and Fifth Avenue.

Single-family and low-density neighborhoods will remain intact. The CPU addresses the street and transit network with the development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that

improves pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility while also addressing vehicular traffic capacity consistent with "complete streets" principles. The mobility vision and multi-modal transportation network strengthens the land use vision and promotes a sustainable environment.

2. The Community Plan Update follows General Plan policy direction governing the preparation of community plans, including application and refinement of citywide policies, designating land uses, and making site-specific recommendations that address the needs of the Uptown community.

Based on General Plan policy direction, the CPU contains detailed land uses and site-specific policy recommendations. The CPU addresses community specific development aspects that include:

- Distribution and arrangement of designated land uses;
- Multi-modal function and design of the street and transit network;
- Location, prioritization, and the provision of public facilities;
- Community and site-specific urban design guidelines;
- Urban design guidelines addressing the public realm and development form; and
- Community and site-specific recommendations to preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources.

The CPU addresses General Plan topics of citywide importance such as housing capacity, appropriate implementation mechanisms, and a sufficient level of information for development review, including detailed policies and land use and mobility maps. The CPU supports the City of Villages strategy by focusing growth along transit corridors and multifamily areas adjacent to transit corridors while maintaining single-family, lower density neighborhoods.

The CPU provides detailed, site-specific recommendations for the village and mixed-use areas along transit corridors. The CPU contains policies that address density in proximity to transit stops, building orientation, pedestrian mobility improvements, land use compatibility, and location-specific land use policies.

The CPU identifies the location of new and expanded public facilities, including specific park and recreation opportunities and park equivalencies, and functional descriptions. A funding source and prioritization list is provided in the Impact Fee Study (formerly referred to as Public Facilities Financing Plan), which is a project component.

The CPU contains policies and guidelines that address community and site-specific design goals. The policies and guidelines define important features within existing neighborhoods, districts, and corridors, and addresses relationships of new buildings, groups of buildings, streetscapes and landscapes to adjacent lower density neighborhoods. The CPU provides direction to design new buildings that provide transitions from existing lower scale development.

The CPU addresses the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources by a precisely mapped open space boundary, and conservation policies related to preservation of landforms, natural vegetation, public views and sustainable development.

The CPU identifies cultural resources unique to Uptown in a historic context statement and survey. The CPU contains policies for the preservation and protection of historical resources, including the identification of potential historic districts.

Citywide zoning and the amendment to the Community Plan Implementation Zone (CPIOZ) will serve as the development regulations to implement the CPU. The citywide zoning will support streamlined permit processing and implement the CPU policies related to villages and transit-oriented development. The proposed amendment to CPIOZ will implement specific building heights within particular neighborhoods in the community.

3. **The Community Plan Update supports the City of Villages strategy through the implementation of additional housing and mixed uses near job/employment centers, and increase employment and economic growth opportunities for the Uptown community.**

The CPU will provide capacity for higher density residential housing and mixed-use use development. Currently, there are approximately 23,160 existing residential units within the Uptown Community Plan area. The CPU will provide capacity for 9,520 additional dwelling units in the community with a maximum of 32,680 residential units at buildout. The majority of these units will be within proximity to transit, advancing the City of Villages strategy. Major employment centers in Uptown include the Scripps-Mercy Hospital and UCSD Medical Center. Uptown is also located near major job centers in Mission Valley and Downtown. The CPU focuses future mixed-use development along transit corridors and in village and mixed-use areas in the community to allow residents to support transit use to employment centers. The CPU also contains policies that support the development of affordable housing adjacent to transit.

4. **The Community Plan Update supports employment and economic growth opportunities.**

The CPU provides for new and enhanced local commercial opportunities to increase jobs in the community along transit corridors. Future residential development will provide for increased demand for commercial goods and services that will support employment and economic growth while providing additional commercial and retail services within walking and bicycling distance for the surrounding residential community. The CPU maintains the Office-Commercial land use designation along First Avenue through Fifth Avenue, which will continue to support medical-related uses such as doctor's offices, clinics, and nursing facilities and contribute to employment and economic growth opportunities in the community due to their proximity to Scripps-Mercy Hospital and UCSD Medical Center, which are also major employment centers in the community.

5. **The Community Plan Update promotes neighborhood character and addresses design relationships between areas of growth and development and distinct character.**

The CPU establishes an urban design framework that provides policies and guidelines for new development that is sympathetic to the existing and evolving character of the community. The CPU provides design guidance for new development to retain and enhance the distinct attributes and scale of the neighborhoods. It also provides specific design guidance that acknowledges the design of the public realm through improvement of the streetscape, the function and design of various

street types and alleys, the promotion of urban forestry including specific tree recommendations for prominent residential and commercial streets, and community and neighborhood gateways.

The CPU acknowledges that the focus of new development will be in commercial/mixed-use areas as well as in multifamily designated areas with infill capacity and provides a broad range of policies that guides development form based on neighborhood context and character, pedestrian experience, building materials, functionality and sustainable design. The CPU provides policies that guide various aspects of urban form such as street wall articulation, windows, lighting, public space, public art, street orientation, height and massing, and sustainable building design. The CPU provides guidance to ensure development transitions between future higher scale buildings within higher density areas and the lower scale neighborhoods adjacent to these areas and includes guidelines to treat bulk and massing of higher scale buildings to minimize visual intrusiveness on neighboring lower scale buildings.

The CPU includes the specific buildings heights through the implementation of the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) for neighborhoods of Bankers Hill/Park West, Mission Hills, and Hillcrest. The CPIOZ also includes areas where ministerial review (CPIOZ Type A) and discretionary review (CPIOZ Type B) for building height are located.

6. **The CPU promotes a Complete Streets strategy by providing a balanced street environment that addresses the needs of public transit, walking, bicycling, and vehicles.**

The CPU mobility strategy focuses on a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users of streets for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the Uptown community and consistent with the General Plan multi-modal/complete streets policy. The CPU focuses growth and development on and adjacent to transit corridors. The CPU includes multi-modal goals and policies that support high frequency transit services, transit oriented development, and safe and integrated bicycle and pedestrian networks. It identifies pedestrian and bicycle improvements to increase connectivity. The CPU also encourages village design to be pedestrian-oriented and include enhanced public realm spaces such as pocket parks and public plazas.

The CPU identifies a pedestrian route network and includes policies addressing connectivity, amenities, and safety to encourage walking as a viable mode of transportation. The CPU identifies the installation of corner bulb-outs to promote pedestrian safety, and addresses mobility functions such as pedestrian access, bicycle parking, and transit stops.

The CPU supports the installation of bicycle share stations and corrals within transit corridors, and repurposing of right-of-way to provide improved bicycle facilities. The CPU bicycle network adds connections and access that provides a more comprehensive and complete network for bicyclists.

The CPU contains policies to expand transit services within the community and to adjacent communities. The CPU supports coordination with the San Diego Association of Governments and Metropolitan Transit System to provide improved transit amenities such as shade structures, benches and timetables at bus stops, implementation of electronic arrival schedules, and exclusive transit lanes. The CPU supports a future streetcar route from Downtown to Hillcrest.

The CPU supports the use of intelligent transportation systems solutions to manage the efficiency of the street grid network for transit and motorized vehicles. It also provides for the use of traffic calming measures and roundabouts to improve pedestrian safety while maintaining network efficiency.

7.   The Community Plan identifies recreation opportunities and new public open spaces.

The household population for the Uptown Community Plan at build out is estimated to be 55,700 residents. The projected population warrants two-recreation centers equivalent to roughly 37,910 total square feet, and approximately 1 aquatic complex. Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within Uptown are anticipated to come primarily through development of private and public properties and through the application of park equivalencies. While the City's primary goal is to obtain land for population-based parks, where vacant land is limited, unavailable or is cost-prohibitive, the General Plan allows the application of park equivalencies to be determined by the community and the City in order to assist in satisfying the community's population-based park needs.

Recreation Element Tables 7-1 and 7-2 summarize the existing and future parks, park equivalencies, and recreation facilities that have been identified in Uptown Community to supplement their existing population-based park and recreation facilities inventory. In addition to neighborhood and pocket parks, the table also includes recommendations for joint use of school property, new trails and improvements to existing trails, as well as recommendations generated by the community and City.

8.   The CPU contains strategies to protect historical resources.

The CPU calls for the identification and preservation of significant historical resources to encourage identification and preservation of the community's historical resources, as well as educating citizens about the benefits for historic preservation. Policies for protecting the community's historical resources in the CPU include the provision of supplemental development regulations to assist in preserving the overall integrity of potential historic districts until they can be brought forward for historic designation; intensely surveying and preparing nominations for potential historic districts identified in the Uptown Historic Resources Survey; prioritizing district nominations; and providing support and guidance to community members who wish to prepare and submit historic nominations to the City.

9.   The Community Plan implements strategies in the Climate Action Plan (CAP).

One of the five primary strategies identified in the CAP is to implement bicycling, walking, transit and land use strategies. These concepts are consistent with the General Plan and City of Villages Strategy, and include a focus on increased capacity in Transit Priority Areas (TPAs). The CPU provides recommendations consistent with these land use and mobility strategies, provides transit-supportive residential and employment densities in TPAs, and provides a comprehensive mobility network with added connections for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

The CPU directs growth and development into community and neighborhood villages and transit corridors with densities ranging from 44 dwelling units per acre to 109 dwelling units per acre within TPAs that are served by high frequency transit. The proposed mobility network complements the

transit-supportive density proposed in the village areas and along the major transit corridors with policies for increasing multi-modal opportunities and reduced reliance on single occupancy vehicles. The policies support improved access to transit through better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The CPU supports a future streetcar line to improve access to employment and activity centers, such as Downtown, the Hillcrest Business District, and Balboa Park. The policies complement mobility connections and options with streetscape elements to improve pedestrian walkability. The proposed land use and zoning associated with the CPU would support transit-supportive residential densities along and adjacent transit corridors, and would accommodate mixed-use village development.

Additional strategies within the CAP also relate to efficiency in water and energy use, waste management, and climate resiliency. While these issues are primarily addressed through Citywide programs, the CPU includes some community-specific climate change policies designed to promote sustainability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with General Plan and CAP. The CPU policies support employing sustainable building techniques that include adaptive reuse of existing buildings, the use of photovoltaic energy, energy storage installations, and electric vehicle charging stations; seeking opportunities for creating community gardens and locally produced food; and the use of recycled and/or gray water irrigation systems. The CPU includes policies related to urban forestry and expansion of the community's overall tree canopy that include retaining mature and healthy trees, the use of broad canopy trees to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment and reduce heat gain, and the use of street trees to manage stormwater runoff and improve air quality.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the City Council finds that the adverse, unavoidable environmental impacts are outweighed by the above-referenced benefits, any one of which individually would be sufficient to outweigh the adverse environmental effects of the Project. Therefore, the City Council has adopted this Statement of Overriding Considerations.