



Agenda Report

21-1070

Agenda Date: 9/28/2021

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Acceptance of the Preferred Framework Plan for the Downtown Precise Plan.

COUNCIL PILLAR

Promote and Enhance Economic, Housing and Transportation Development

BACKGROUND

Over the course of the last year, the City and the Downtown Community Task Force (DCTF) have solicited community input and crafted and refined a preferred land use “framework plan” for achieving the community vision for a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented Downtown that, in alignment with community input, is “authentic, adaptable, and affordable”. The vision for the design of Downtown emphasizes a restored street grid, open spaces for community gathering, human scale and pedestrian comfort, building height variation and a diversity uses.

At their June 17, 2021 meeting, the DCTF accepted the Preferred Framework Plan for the Downtown Precise Plan. The Preferred Framework Plan includes the attached diagrams for Streets and Public Spaces, Ground Floor Uses, and Urban Form. These diagrams will be the basis for developing portions of the Precise Plan, including goals and policies and design standards and guidelines, as well as serving as the project description with which to start the environmental review process.

DISCUSSION

The development capacity under the existing General Plan Downtown Focus Area includes areas designated as High Density Residential, Community Mixed Use, and Downtown Core. The Downtown Core development capacity is estimated to be 396 housing units and 130,000 square feet of non-residential development, not including civic uses.

The Preferred Framework Plan for the Downtown Precise Plan would provide increased development capacity for Downtown. The Framework Plan has been developed with a focus upon building form and height, and includes a base allowable height limit and a bonus height limit. The maximum base heights are established with financial feasibility in mind and range from three stories along Benton Street to eight stories in the central area, and are typically five stories on the eastern blocks with four stories on the western blocks. These allowable building heights will determine the ultimate development capacity for the Downtown.

Bonus height is allowed for buildings that provide additional community benefits. Community benefits may include, but are not limited to, affordable housing (up to the State affordable housing maximum bonus of 80% over the number of units allowed) Office use (on certain blocks), and additional streetscape contributions.

With the Preferred Framework Plan, the development capacity for Downtown would be 1,612,600 square feet of building space, with the potential to add 844,800 square feet of bonus spaces, for a total potential development capacity of 2,457,400 square feet of building space. As this is a form-based Plan and land uses are flexible, the projected development capacity in terms of the number of residential units and amount of commercial/office space is based on an assumed development scenario for this square footage. While there is flexibility for the allowed uses, the Plan will require 197,300 square feet of ground floor retail / retail ready space. The Development Capacity table is attached to this report and provides a full breakdown of the analysis. The numbers represented in the table provide a maximum development potential.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Downtown precise plan will undergo environmental review and an environmental document will be brought to the City Council at the time when the Council considers adoption of the plan. No environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") is required at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the City other than administrative staff time and expense to prepare this report.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Over the course of the Downtown Precise Plan planning process thus far, the planning team has gotten feedback from community members and stakeholders in the following ways:

- 19 Downtown Community Task Force (DCTF) meetings. Details of each meeting, including meeting materials and summaries can be found under the Task Force page of the Downtown Precise Plan website.
- An online Survey on the topic of Land Use Concepts during May 2020
- Two "Meeting in a Box" activities distributed to the community in January/February 2020 and June 2020.
- A lunchtime student engagement workshop at Santa Clara University on January 29, 2020.
- Downtown Retail 101 Community Workshop (January 16, 2020)
- Meetings with stakeholders and technical advisors from January through March 2020.

Summaries of all the community engagement activities can be found on the Downtown Precise Plan website at: <https://www.santaclaraca.gov/downtown>

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>>.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Preferred Framework Plan for the Downtown Precise Plan.

Alternative: Do not accept the Preferred Framework Plan for the Downtown Precise Plan and direct

staff to make modifications.

Reviewed by: Andrew Crabtree, Director, Community Development Department

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Streets and Public Spaces
2. Ground Floor Uses
3. Urban Form
4. Development Capacity