



Agenda Report

18-1022

Agenda Date: 9/18/2018

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Study Session: Tasman East Specific Plan

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan identifies the Tasman East Focus Area, bounded by Tasman Drive to the south, Lafayette Street to the west, the municipal golf course to the north and the Guadalupe River to the east, as a Focus Area intended to support new higher density residential development during the timeframe of the General Plan. The City began preparation of the Tasman East Specific Plan in 2016 in order to establish land use policies that will guide the implementation of new development consistent with the General Plan vision. The Specific Plan process has provided multiple opportunities for community input including previous City Council study sessions on April 11, 2017, June 6, 2017, February 6, 2018 and June 26, 2018 at which the City Council provided direction for the planning process.

Vision

The vision set forth in the Tasman East Specific Plan is to create a new, high-density residential neighborhood featuring an inviting streetscape and urban amenities, including retail uses with outdoor seating, urban-scaled parks that complement the built environment, and a network of greenways that allow for additional pedestrian connections through the neighborhood. Streets within the Specific Plan area will include wide sidewalks, park strips with large trees, and ample space for businesses to place tables, chairs and umbrellas. Parks, plazas and other open space amenities will have an urban character and be planned to support a wide variety of “placemaking” activities.

Land Use

Consistent with the envisioned urban character, residential densities in the neighborhood are planned to be a minimum of 100 dwelling units per acre, typically five to eight stories in height. The City has previously identified a goal for the Plan to support 4,500 dwelling units along with neighborhood serving retail and amenities. The Specific Plan area is approximately 45 acres in area, with 7 of those acres dedicated to road network and an additional 10 acres planned for useable open space, leaving approximately 28 acres of land available for development and suggesting an average density of 160 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC) in order to achieve 4,500 units.

As a part of the planning process, the staff is considering a recommendation to create a new General Plan land use designation, Transit Neighborhood, which would allow residential densities from 85-350 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC), along with supportive commercial uses. This General Plan designation could be applied to similar Future Focus Areas.

The Specific Plan Land Use Framework diagram (see Attachment 1) also identifies potential locations for park space, greenways, a mixed-use “main street”, and other public amenities. The main street,

at the center of the Specific Plan area, will be a focal point for the new neighborhood. A new Zoning District would be established with the Specific Plan to facilitate development of the Specific Plan area consistent with its vision.

DISCUSSION

Preparation of the Specific Plan is scheduled to be completed for City Council consideration in November of this year. The purpose of the September 18, 2018 study session is to further describe and receive input from the City Council regarding provisions for park spaces and greenways, multimodal connectivity, and affordable housing, a possible incentive to promote higher density, and community benefits provided in the Specific Plan.

Park Spaces and Greenways

Consistent with City Council input from February 6, 2018 study session, the Specific Plan establishes an ambitious Park Space and Greenways plan to provide 10 acres of open space area. These open spaces are distributed over smaller districts identified within the Specific Plan, with the open space areas in each district anchored by a publicly dedicated park. These parks will be connected to each other and to the Guadalupe River trail by a series of greenways, as shown in the Open Space and Greenways diagram, Figure 1. The combination of publicly dedicated parkland, publicly accessible greenways and open spaces, and private amenity spaces (given half credit per the parkland dedication ordinance) will account for the ten acres of outdoor amenity space under the plan.

Greenways will form a pedestrian network between park spaces. Greenways will include landscaping, and will be public in character, meaning that the greenways will be at grade, visually open, and easily understandable by a person on foot. These pathways extend beyond the Plan Area, and offer connections to nearby regional open spaces such as Ulistac, the future CityPlace Central Park, and the City of Santa Clara's Youth Soccer Park.

Multimodal Connectivity

The Specific Plan establishes a series of greenways and well designed streetscapes with active building frontages, retail at key locations, and sidewalks and bikeways to encourage walking within the Specific Plan and to the nearby light rail stations. Bicycle and pedestrian paths will connect the residents within the Specific Plan to nearby open space areas, the Guadalupe River Park Trail and employment and entertainment destinations, such as those planned in the City Place project.

Affordable Housing

The Specific Plan is proposed to include an affordable housing strategy for the Specific Plan area. The City's recently adopted Affordable Housing Ordinance includes a pipeline provision so that residential project applications submitted to the City prior to August 1 of this year are not subject to the new 15% inclusionary requirement provided they complete the entitlement process prior to December 1, 2020. As drafted, the Specific Plan would extend this deadline by one year to August 1, 2019, accounting for the extended timeframe of the Plan preparation coinciding with the preparation of the Specific Plan, but also commit all projects filed prior to that date to meet a 10% inclusionary requirement following the same terms as set in the Citywide ordinance. The City received a total of eight applications within the Tasman East Area prior to August 1, totaling 3,353 units that would fall under the pipeline provision and be expected to produce a minimum of 335 units of affordable housing per the Specific Plan. Other project applications may be submitted in the next year that could take advantage of the additional time proposed for the Tasman East Specific Plan should the Plan be adopted as proposed.

Incentives for High Density

The Specific Plan establishes an ambitious target of 4,500 new residential units. As previously discussed with the City Council, this would likely require some use of more expensive construction types (e.g. Type I or Type III which make use of steel and/or concrete) which may be infeasible under current market conditions. Other cities seeking to promote high-rise development have provided reductions in park impact fees and/or affordable housing requirements to offset higher construction costs. While all projects in the Plan Area are anticipated to be over 100 dwelling units/acre, the Council may want to consider an incentive for higher densities that require more expensive construction.

The active developers in the Specific Plan have proposed the following incentive for projects that provide densities greater than 120 dwelling units/acre or greater than 140 dwelling units/acre. The intent of this incentive is to increase both the total number of units and the total number of affordable units produced within the Plan area by better utilizing the available land.

Table: Proposed Incentive - Progressive Reduction in Affordability Requirements

Density Range	Phase 1: Required % Inclusionary (100% AMI)	Phase 2: Required % Inclusionary (100% AMI)
Up to 120 DU/AC	10%	15%
120 - 140 DU/AC	8% for portion of project over 120 DU/AC	12% for portion of project over 120 DU/AC
140+ DU/AC	5% for portion of project over 140 DU/AC	10% for portion of project over 140 DU/AC

All of the affordable units provided in each residential project in both Phases 1 and 2 would need to meet an average 100% Area Median Income affordability level.

As shown in the following table, the overall result of this incentive would be to produce both more market rate and more affordable units by encouraging developers to build at higher densities.

Table: Units and Affordable Units Produced by Example Project at Different Densities

Project Density	Total Units (1 Acre Site)	Total Affordable Units Phase 1 Project	Total Affordable Units Phase 2 Project
120 DU/AC	120	12	18
140 DU/AC	140	13	20
160 DU/AC	160	14	22

Community Benefits

As envisioned, the Tasman East plan area will deliver a significant number of housing units on a compact footprint and in a high-amenity urban environment. Providing public amenities will be an important part of the Specific Plan placemaking strategy. In addition to well-design public parklands, publicly accessible private open spaces, and an active urban environment, the project will deliver

some additional community benefits. As presented at the previous City Council study session, the Specific Plan would require that one community room (2000 SF) be made available and prioritized for use by the general public on weekday evenings and Saturday mornings (5:00 PM to 10:00 PM Monday - Thursday; 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM Saturday). In addition a proposed plaza area would be designed to support library services in the form of a docking station for a book mobile.

The Council expressed concern at that study session that one Community room would be insufficient to meet public demand and also that a more substantial facility is needed for library services. In addition to making a room available to the broader Santa Clara community, active developers within Tasman East have provided input that each project would typically include common area for use by building residents and their guests to meet this need for their own residents. Further, one developer has indicated that they could include a book sharing area within a proposed retail space (e.g., café).

Next steps

The Specific Plan and associated EIR will be brought to the Planning Commission for recommendation and to the City Council for adoption in October and November 2018.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4) in that it is an informational report that does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potential significant impact on the environment.

PUBLIC CONTACT

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>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

Reviewed by: Andrew Crabtree, Director, Community Development Director

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Tasman East Specific Plan Land Use Framework Diagram