

## STAFF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

### October 24<sup>th</sup> Planning Board Workshop – Review and Comment on Draft Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Planning Board raised a number of issues and questions regarding the Plan. A summary of those comments and staff's responses are provided below.

1. The term “primarily residential” throughout the document is a shift from what other documents say when referring to Main Street.

**Response:** Staff agrees and has changed the language to referring to the Main Street Neighborhood (MSN) as a mixed-use neighborhood with diverse types of housing and neighborhood serving commercial, agricultural and open spaces and uses supportive of the Historic District.

2. Universal Design should be called out more prominently.

**Response:** Staff agrees and added a Universal Design section in the Administration and Enforcement section referencing the pending citywide ordinance currently in draft form. Staff has also eliminated provisions in the Plan that are in conflict with the new ordinance.

3. Show the public storm water detention basin as residential instead of using a new color for a single category that has only one use in the plan.

**Response:** Staff agrees and the color has been changed to the color used for Residential Mixed Use.

4. The Plan creates a blank slate where any number of uses are permitted, however it would be helpful to have more explicit guidance for the development community on the strategies to get what we want.

**Response:** Staff added additional guidance to create an architecturally diverse and unique mixed-use built environment with varying heights, lot sizes, shapes and building types and design esthetics that are visually appealing and add interest to the pedestrian environment.

5. Would like to see more encouragement about sustainability, such as solar, re-use of materials, plantings verses grass, net zero energy standards.

**Response:** The Plan contains a Sustainability section which addresses all of the above strategies. Additionally, the Administration and Enforcement section contains a section on Sustainable Design and Bay Friendly Landscape requires that all new building and renovation projects complies with Green Building Requirements.

6. There should be some flexibility in building heights, but also some principles that guide implementation and exceptions.

**Response:** Staff agrees and included language that allows the Planning Board to grant exceptions to the building height as part of any Design Review application if the Board is able to make a finding for 1) additional ceiling height for a well-designed ground floor commercial or institutional space in a vertically mixed-use building; or 2) as necessary and appropriate to improve the architectural design of the building.

7. The plan should create more affordable “workforce” housing that will be in the affordable range for middle-income families.

**Response:** Staff agrees and we’ve added a section on affordable and workforce in the Development Standards and Guidelines section of the Plan.

8. The feasibility of middle-income housing in the range of \$250,000 - \$300,000 should be considered.

**Response:** Analysis by the City’s financial consultant looked at a range of market-rate housing types from single family to apartments and found that the hard construction costs (not including soft costs or infrastructure) of each product type was higher than \$250,000. As a result, it would not be feasible to build market rate units and sell them for \$250,000 - \$300,000 unless they were heavily subsidized.

9. Comments about the impact of flooding in the phasing of development and how the perimeter levee will be built on existing streets to achieve the 24 inches of sea-level rise?

**Response:** Flooding impacts are more severe north of W. Midway and will be addressed primarily in the Phase 2 development, as discussed in Chapter 6, Phasing Principles. To build the perimeter levee on existing streets, the road would need to be elevated to create a high point that reaches the required minimum elevation of the levee. This would be accomplished as part of the reconstruction of Main Street. The road profile would be altered to have the high point with gentle slopes returning to the lower existing elevations on either side of the high point.

10. Concern about current residents living in the non-historic market rate housing and the desire to give them the first opportunity for any new housing developed.

**Response:** Disposition of these properties will be part of future disposition decisions made by the City Council.

11. Concerns about pedestrian and bicycle safety on the streets as designed

**Response:** Staff agrees and has tried to balance the needs and requirements for a safe and comfortable multi-modal street network with best practices from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and CalTrans to inform standards and guidelines, such as widths of bike paths, cycle tracks, sidewalk, raised medians for protection from cars, and landscaping and bioretention areas to collect and treat stormwater runoff.

12. Widening of streets with 8 feet of parking is not consistent with the MIP and makes the streets wider.

**Response:** The City Engineer is following Caltrans standards for on-street parking which states that parking should not be less than 8' in width. The Public Works department will be requiring 8' parking lanes for collector and local streets in a new policy. The reasoning is that the wider parking lane would translate into a safer environment for bicyclists and prevent trucks from driving over curbs into the sidewalk and create a sufficient buffer between bicycles and vehicles.

13. Shared street is the same width as the other streets.

**Response:** The Orion Shared Street around the three sides of the Central Gardens and the Neighborhood Shared Streets have rights of way measuring 54 feet and 50 feet respectively, which is less than the other streets in the neighborhood, which range from 60 feet to 81 feet.

14. In Figure 3.4 – What is a transit node?

**Response:** The transit node is a multi-modal transit center where people can easily transfer from one mode to another. Examples include Bike/bus to ferry, ferry to ride hailing services, etc.

15. Every street that says it is consistent with the MIP has been widened.

**Response:** The MSN Plan builds upon the framework of the MIP and incorporates best practices from NACTO and CalTrans to inform standards and guidelines, such as widths of bike paths, cycle tracks, sidewalk, raised medians for protection from cars, and landscaping and bioretention areas to collect and treat stormwater runoff.

16. Need more creative ways to calm traffic, like chicanes, rather than by adding parking which widens the street.

**Response:** Staff agrees and has added a discussion of chicanes as an alternative method for calming traffic, specifically around the Central Gardens (Chapter 3, Section 3.3 – Multimodal Transportation and Circulation Network). The discussion includes the limitations and trade-offs that might be necessary to include them in the Orion Shared Street area.

17. Concerns about the maintenance costs of green infrastructure

**Response:** Maintenance costs for streets, including green infrastructure are generally part of a larger package of public or private services that are paid for by new City tax revenue and/or by property owners as part of a special tax district.

18. Show Singleton Avenue cutting through the neighborhood between Ploughshares and the APC Farm

**Response:** Staff has added the Singleton Avenue cut-through.

**November 1<sup>st</sup> City Council Meeting – Review and Comment on Draft Main Street Neighborhood Plan**

Major comments raised by the City Council and staff's responses are as follows:

Affordability

19. Need a statement about goals for affordability (defined)

**Response:** Staff agrees and has added goals for affordable housing and workforce housing for all new development in Chapter 5, Section 5-54 Development Standards and Guidelines.

20. Displaced middle-income residents should have a way to stay in the neighborhood

**Response:** Staff agrees and has added requirements for workforce/middle-income housing to the Plan (see above).

21. There should be mostly middle-income housing with smaller amounts of affordable and luxury housing.

**Response:** Staff agrees and has added goals for affordable housing and workforce housing for all new developments in Chapter 5, Section 5-54 Development Standards and Guidelines. The City Council will ultimately decide on the desired mix of housing types and sizes through the disposition process. Feasibility may include consideration of trade-offs for infrastructure (e.g. size of park and open space, bicycle paths, green infrastructure); development impact fees (for sports complex, etc.); and size and type of housing.

22. Need a definition for workforce housing

**Response:** There are a number of different ways that workforce housing is defined:

- “Affordable to households of low, moderate and above moderate income in a range of 60-120% AMI.” (Urban Land Institute)
- “Affordable housing for households with earned income that is above the income limits for deed restricted or subsidized housing, yet insufficient to secure quality housing in reasonable proximity to the workplace” (Housing Land Trust Fund of San Francisco Bay)
- “Any housing, for-sale or rental, that is affordable to people ranging from a household with one member working full time for minimum wage to tenants earning up to 120% of AMI” (National Housing Conference)
- “Housing that generally serves families and households making 60% AMI and up to 120-150% AMI in high cost metropolitan areas”. (Wikipedia)

In the MSN Plan, workforce housing is defined as either rental or ownership housing that is in the range of 120-180% AMI, which is above the range for “affordable” housing which carries deed restrictions.

23. Wants to see an analysis for how different types and quantities of units that will be able to pay for the infrastructure costs. Include for-sale and for-rent middle income units

**Response:** Staff agrees. A feasibility analysis of the different mixes of housing types and size and costs will be included in the City Council staff report.

24. Not supportive of infill housing in the Historic District

**Response:** The infill guidelines are only intended to allow alterations to non-contributors in the Historic District and where previous Big Whites have been torn down to create a pattern consistent with the original neighborhood. They are not intended to facilitate new construction in and around the historic structures, except for where there is a missing element in the historic fabric.

25. There is a growing need for assisted living and it should be included in the creation of a diverse community

**Response:** Staff agrees and included assisted living as a conditional use under Commercial and Retail in the Land Use table.

Phasing of Development

26. Concern about the 67 units needed by the Collaborating and whether they should be built by another developer with a different housing product.

**Response:** The 67 units built by the Collaborating Partners will benefit the City by helping the market rate developer meet the Very Low/Low units and contribute towards meeting the requirements of the Renewed Hope Settlement Agreement. In return the developer would pay for the infrastructure and site prep needed for construction of the Collaborating Partners development and the entire south of Midway area. The ultimate disposition of the land proposed will be part of a future disposition discussion

27. Would like to see development opportunity for Big Whites to be refurbished individually with preferential status for people who currently live there.

**Response:** Disposition of these properties will be part of future disposition decisions made by the City Council.

28. Other development should occur simultaneously with the Collaborating Partners' construction of their campus

**Response:** Market rate housing development is needed to help fund infrastructure construction for the Collaborating Partner's site and so will be developed simultaneously.

#### Urban Agriculture and Sustainability

29. Wants to see discussion about the feasibility of agricultural practices in areas of possible contamination.

**Response:** Environmental studies indicate the all areas of the MSN are feasible for agricultural use based on review by the City's environmental consultant.

30. Use a "green" approach by reusing as many building and materials as possible

**Response:** Staff agrees and has included the reuse of building materials in the Plan, which is consistent with the MIP mandate for sustainable practices.

#### Access & Mobility

31. Would like to see more greenbelts and protected bikeways with greenbelts on both sides;

**Response:** All protected bikeways in the Plan located on primary and secondary bike routes have landscaping on the both sides. Street trees have been added to the plan along all of the interior streets.

32. Protected bikeways should be built in the first phase

**Response:** Costs for protected bikeways are assumed to be included in included in Phase 1 (South of W. Midway) cost estimates.

33. A path directly to the ferry terminal should be included

**Response:** Staff agrees and have added bicycle/pedestrian connections to Main Street in all figures in the Plan.

34. Would like to see more curvy streets and not just streets along the grid

**Response:** It is possible with interior streets that would be designed as part of a specific development plan for a specific project.

35. Include some non-motorized streets

**Response:** Staff agrees and has included the pedestrian/bike paths that connect interior streets to Main Street and create a north-south connection through the Central Gardens park.

36. Preference would be to not have bikes next to parking and cars; more set back to comfortably accommodate cars

**Response:** All of the primary and secondary streets, except West Tower Avenue (under agreement for Site A) have protected bikeways, separating bicycles from parking and cars in the travel line by a raised median or landscape/bioretenion areas.

37. Delivery truck routes should be shown on the map to ensure streets widths can accommodate them.

**Response:** Staff agrees

#### Land Use

38. Encouraging to see neighborhood-serving retail like cafés and boutiques where people don't have to drive

**Response:** Staff agrees

39. No big box retail

**Response:** Staff agrees and they are not included as a permitted or conditional use.

40. Agrees with the blend of heights throughout the Plan Area

**Response:** Staff agrees

41. Agreement with a mixed use neighborhood

**Response:** Staff agrees

**November 10<sup>th</sup> Recreation and Park Commission Meeting – Review and Comment on Draft Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan**

42. How are we assessing demand and viability for community gardens

**Response:** An assessment of the demand for community gardens will be a requirement of any development plan and be reviewed by the Recreation and Park Director

43. What are the mechanisms for the on-going maintenance of community gardens

**Response:** Alameda Point Collaborative has committed to maintain and operate the community gardens at the Central Gardens.

**November 17, 2016 Transportation Commission Meeting – Review and Comment on Draft Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan**

No Comments.