



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO: 5a

MEETING DATE: December 6, 2016

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: December 2, 2016

From: William Meeker, Community Development Director – (650) 558-7255

Subject: “Envision Burlingame” – General Plan Buildout Analysis Discussion

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council provide direction on the ongoing update of the City’s General Plan, particularly the buildout analysis.

BACKGROUND

In March 2015, the City of Burlingame initiated a three-year process focused on a community-led effort to update the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, called “Envision Burlingame.” The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are the City’s two documents that regulate all land use, environmental and transportation decisions made by City leaders.

The City has engaged a consultant team led by MIG to conduct the public outreach process and create the new General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The outreach has involved a broad range of individuals providing information on current issues, encouraging ideas regarding a vision for Burlingame’s future, and receiving specific input on alternatives and policy concepts.

On September 7, 2016 the City Council held a study session to provide feedback on the General Plan Update, and particularly the “Emerging Land Use Concept.” The Emerging Land Use Concept was a synthesis of land use and circulation alternatives that had been vetted by the community through workshops, the Envision Burlingame Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Planning Commission. The MIG consultant team has since incorporated the City Council direction provided in the September 7th study session into a “Proposed Land Use Map” which is serving as the foundation for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) being prepared for the project.

DISCUSSION

Throughout the Envision Burlingame planning process, an important question has been the amount of residential and commercial growth the community may desire over the next 25 years. In its early decades, Burlingame developed as a quintessential commuter suburb, with neighborhoods organized along compact grids of tree-lined streets. In the latter half of the century, growth was spurred by proximity to the San Francisco International Airport, with

business and industry developing along the Bayfront, and residential neighborhoods developing in the hills of the Mills Estate. Since the completion of the Mills Estate neighborhoods in the 1960s, the City's population growth has been relatively modest. New development over the past several decades has been primarily commercial development, or relatively small-scale residential infill projects.

With its location on the Peninsula, Burlingame is within a region that is in the midst of strong economic growth. The economic growth has resulted in a sizable increase in new jobs, but communities throughout the area have had difficulty developing additional housing to keep pace with the job growth. According to the San Mateo County "Closing the Jobs/Housing Gap Task Force" between 2010 and 2014, 54,600 new jobs were created in San Mateo County while only 2,100 new housing units were built. In this context, Peninsula communities including Burlingame have been wrestling with the issue of how this regional growth dynamic relates to their local communities.

As communities weigh how to respond to growth pressures, there are important local considerations. These include infrastructure capacity, public facilities (particularly school capacity in Burlingame), transportation, and community character. The community engagement process conducted for Envision Burlingame has highlighted a wide range of opinions on this issue, and how it relates to the community's vision of its future.

For this study session, the Envision Burlingame consulting team together with staff have developed a presentation to address many of the issues involved in the discussions of potential growth. The intent is to return to the question of how the community wants Burlingame to look, function, and feel 25 years from now, with the particular emphasis on population and job growth.

The consideration of potential population and job growth is both philosophical and logistical. In terms of logistics, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) being prepared for the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance will need to identify a "buildout scenario." The buildout scenario will project the amounts and location of potential housing and jobs over the timeframe of the General Plan (defined as the year 2040), and the EIR will then evaluate the potential environmental impacts and mitigations.

As a practical matter, the buildout scenario does not obligate the community to accept the full extent of growth studied in the EIR if the community decides to choose a *lesser* amount of growth when the General Plan is adopted. Indeed, the EIR could help further inform the discussion as potential environmental impacts are studied in detail. The community may ultimately choose to include a growth cap or maximum buildout that is lower than that studied in the EIR, and could also consider such growth-control measures as a limit on new development that could be allowed each year.

However, at adoption of the General Plan the community would not be able to decide to choose a *greater* amount of growth than the buildout scenario evaluated in the EIR. From this perspective, the growth scenario in the EIR should be considered an upper limit or maximum growth scenario for purposes of study, but with the understanding that the community may choose a more modest amount of growth when the plan is adopted.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

Exhibits:

- Meeting Presentation Slides
- List of Burlingame Residential “Pipeline” Projects – Approved, Proposed, and Preliminary
- List of Burlingame Commercial “Pipeline” Projects – Approved, Proposed, and Preliminary
- Proposed Land Use Plan
- Proposed Land Use Designations Table