



## City of National City Focused General Plan Update

### Webinar #1 Questions

Monday, August 24, 2020, 1-2:30PM

#### Q & A

1. How many participants are involved with this today?
  - Thank you for your question, we currently have 24 attendees watching.
2. Will landlords raise rent if ADU's are added to properties?
  - We will be striving for communities and neighborhoods all throughout National City that are inclusive of all incomes. We do not want anyone to be displaced, so all of these methods together help provide housing for a variety of income levels, and variety in choice of housing type. Ideally, the ADU provides a more affordable housing option because it is much smaller than the single-family home that it is next to. We will look into this more.
3. Are you going to require architectural uniformity that beautifies the city?
  - We are going to be creating objective design standards. Neighborhoods are different from each other and have different characters, and a single-family neighborhood might have a much different character than a medium-density or a high-density neighborhood. The design guidelines will be reflective of the neighborhood character that is already established. There will not be architectural uniformity throughout the entire city.
4. High rise construction doesn't work in National City. What will the City do to accommodate more micro-units? What bonuses? What incentives?
  - That is correct, constructing high-rise buildings is not financially viable in most parts of the city, but in downtown it has proven to work and mid-rise density has worked along the mixed-use corridors. Micro-units can be built with the existing Municipal Code. There is a project under construction in downtown right now that includes essentially all micro-units. We will look at how to incentivize them and make them easier for developers to build.
5. You are giving multiple webinars and it stands to reason that people attend at different times because of their work/life schedule. How will you account for their input reflecting different needs?
  - The questions will be different for each webinar. All of those questions will be answered. We will be taking notes which will be posted online. If you are interested in questions asked at other webinars they will be on the website. You can also call us and we can discuss what was covered in the other webinars through the Q&A.



6. Does the homeowner need to live in the main house or the ADU in order for the ADU to be allowed?
  - There has been a lot of news lately about whether Airbnb's should be allowed. Cities are in the process of determining policies. The City of San Diego is in the process of this now. Currently, if you build an ADU you can rent it out without living in the residence, however, you must have at least a 30-day lease. This prevents renting out the ADU for short-term rental, i.e. daily rental. The point of ADU's is not to become vacation rentals but are meant to help the supply of housing. This will be something we will investigate throughout this process.
7. Is there a plan to facilitate ownership instead of leasing a dwelling unit to residents that rent an apartment?
  - There are plans in place now that help people become homeowners, whether that is help with a down payment or first-time loan for first-time homeownership. These types of programs will continue and we will look into what we can do to enhance them. Part of the equation is getting more people to own homes so that they can build equity and wealth through homeownership.
8. Could new homes be built west of Freeway 5? Why is this so heavily Industrial zoned?
  - The City needs industrial zones that help in regional manufacturing needs. These industrial uses provide jobs for area residents and also support local businesses. It is also important to note that the industrial zones support the National City Marine Terminal, which is a major economic engine for the City, the region, and the Navy. While the City needs additional housing, it is important to maintain a healthy mix of zoning classifications in order to preserve a healthy home/job/sales tax ratio. That being said, the main reason for less housing in our industrial zones is due to safety. This is both related to proximity to industrial uses (e.g. hazards, air quality, etc.) and because this area is in the Coastal Zone, which is potentially subject to flooding and sea level rise issues.
9. Traffic is already congested due to traffic islands. More homes are a safety hazard during emergencies. For me I don't have a driveway and people come from other blocks to park here. Will people like me be able to get assigned spaces?
  - We will be looking at parking. Currently the City does have some reserved parking so that only a neighborhood's residents can park in those spots. We will be considering the potential to develop more of those zones throughout the City.
10. Will the minimum size for a single-family lot change, allowing homeowners to split their lot?
  - Currently, parcels that are zoned to allow multi-family, can be subdivided if they meet all of the requirements of the Municipal Code and the State's Subdivision Ordinance. Parcels that



are zoned single-family currently cannot be subdivided. Although we cannot answer this question at this time, but we will be looking into ways to increase housing supply.

11. How would street parking be handled with ADU's? High density development usually includes on-site parking. The only concern with a lot of ADU's would be lack of on-street parking, especially adjacent to existing or future low-mid density development already lacking on-site parking.
  - California housing legislation allows cities to reduce or eliminate parking requirements for ADU's, but the team and City are still working to determine what these requirements may be in National City. Parking can certainly be provided in the form of tandem spaces in a driveway. Research has not shown that ADU's cause parking shortages, as ADU's tend to have fewer occupants (and thus fewer cars) than main units.
12. Can we have a session where we can just talk instead of typing questions? Not fair to be able to ask questions since answers are truly vague.
  - Thank you for your input and your participation. We will be hosting other webinars and posting answers to questions collected, but you can also call in during office hours to ask your questions verbally and get more details. We will post the phone number again soon. We are sorry to hear that you are finding the answers to be vague. We are early in the process so some questions we do not have the answers for yet because we are currently working on those issues and there are some questions that we need to coordinate with other staff in different departments to get answers. These answers will be posted to the website.
13. Can we build apartments on top of commercial zones like Downtown 8th St?? 3-4 stories could work.
  - The team is reviewing existing zoning requirements and considering ways to amend them in order to accommodate new housing units. We will look into this.
14. Will there be loans offered to landlords to build an ADU or multifamily units for low-income individuals?
  - The team is considering ways to incentivize new housing production through ordinances and building requirement streamlining. This process aims to meet the housing allotments for each income level developed in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The team is conducting a comprehensive analysis to determine how best to incentivize development of new housing in the RHNA allotments.
15. Will National City consider waiving onsite parking requirements for multifamily zoned properties in transit priority areas similar to City of San Diego?

- As part of the Mobility Element, the team is considering what other cities have successfully done to improve transportation. The team will build on these efforts, as well as previous plans and research specific to National City, in order to create a transportation plan that meets the needs of all National City residents. Parking requirements are being considered as part of the Land Use, Housing, and Mobility Element updates.
16. Will the requirements to qualify to build an ADU change? Right now ADUs can only be approximately 30 percent of square footage of the existing home.
- The team is currently determining the best language and requirements to incorporate in an ADU Ordinance. The regulations for ADU construction will be consistent with the most recent California housing legislation.
17. Activating the streetscape downtown with food and beverage venues is crucial to success. Will there be development incentives, reduced fees, relaxed zoning regulations, etc. to enable developers to entice retailers to come in?
- We agree that activating the streetscape downtown is important to its success. We will be looking at all of these tools as well as others to incentivize developers to build this kind of retail.
18. Back in the 1980's National City offered a program for planting city trees in residential neighborhoods. Could we see some beautifying of our neighborhoods with this type of program or similar type.
- The City is currently conducting a tree canopy study to determine potential areas for growth.
19. The key is for National City to reduce cost and then development will start to happen. Has the City discussed fee reduction, fee elimination, or fee deferral programs?
- The team is actively considering multiple ways to encourage and incentivize development and we will consider these tools.
20. The city is already dense and full of trash. Are you concerned about more crime, more trash on streets, more traffic, and more parking congestion?
- The team is concerned about crime, trash, traffic, and parking congestion. The policy recommendations that will evolve out of this process are intended to balance the needs of National City now and into the future.
21. An important incentive for development is to reduce processing time for submitted projects. What programs will be enacted to expedite the review and building permit process in National City?

- We agree that an important incentive for development is to reduce processing time for submitted projects. The team will be looking at a variety of tools, policies, and requirements that can forward this directive. ADU and Objective Design Standard Ordinances are two such tools being considered. These Ordinances would expedite the review process for new developments by prioritizing development by right. This process bypasses planning commission review and makes the approval process more streamlined and uniform. These Ordinances would also incorporate recent California legislation that sets standards for development request processing times.
22. I heard another transit plan for National City shows housing being built near the transit stop?
- It sounds like you are speaking of the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Transit Oriented Development Overlay (TODO) Plan. This is a plan that is creating a future vision for the area surrounding the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Transit Center. The TODO plan is intended to facilitate the enhancement of the public realm through transit-supportive land uses and improved mobility and parking options. This plan is in its initial phases and the staff and consultants are working with the public on ideas for housing around this transit stop. Please visit this website for more information about this project: <http://24thstreettodo.com/24street/index.php/project-documents/>
23. There is a plan from the Regional Plan 2021 and is planned to establish a mobility hub. How is this in line with the RTP and the new bold vision for the only two trolley stations and the congestion on Mile of Cars Way and Wilson Avenue? And the connection with east NC Boulevard and 24<sup>th</sup> Street?
- There is a regional plan update going on right now led by the metropolitan planning organization SANDAG; referred to as the 5 Big Moves. A mobility hub with many connections to the local community will maximize the usefulness of the two existing trolley stops and the proposed transit. This plan will continue to be refined over the coming months. We will be working closely with SANDAG to address nearby and regional improvements. Transit and new ways of people getting where they need to go will help lower the amount of congestion. If transit is faster and more convenient, some people might choose it over taking a car to work.
24. What safety plan are you going to implement to stop human trafficking along 5<sup>th</sup> and Roosevelt since that will put the new eateries and visitors in danger if not stopped?
- This is a very serious issue and concern, however, this is outside the scope of what is addressed in the Safety Element of the General Plan. We will bring this issue back to City staff to help resolve this.
25. What are the plans for the 24th Street Trolley Station (MTS site)? Does the Westside Specific Plan envision a mixed-use development on the MTS site?



- The TODO plan has just finished existing conditions and is starting to look at potential uses at the sites within the study area (the MTS site is within the study area). Please go to the TODO website for more information:  
<http://24thstreettodo.com/24street/index.php/project-documents/>
26. We have one traffic lane reduced from 2 to 1 lane. If u add bike lanes what are we left with?
- We are unclear what street you are referring to but a bike lane can possibly be accommodated within an existing street right-of-way that currently has a travel lane in each direction. The team will be balancing the needs of all users and will also be addressing the City's climate goals.
27. Glad to hear there will be coordination between what you're doing and SanDag TODO plan.
- Thank you for your comment! We will pass this along to the Team.
28. The 8th Street Trolley station seems so isolated from residential and local business areas. Walking at night under freeway 5 underpass also seems less safe due to homeless campers. What can be done to make the station less isolated and safer?
- The General Plan is a policy document and the team will be looking at creating policies that guide increasing safety in areas such as this. We will forward your comment and question on to our capital projects team as they are the ones that will be implementing projects to improve safety.
29. We don't have signaling with natural disasters that provides information on exit routes. We urge to have signaling with several languages, or images that allow people to properly evacuate in case of an earthquake or tsunami treat. Not seeing why there is any if we are a quake area and flood area? Can this plan make it happen?
- Typically, evacuation routes are identified within communities and are labelled, especially within coastal communities. We will be addressing emergency response and preparedness. This is also addressed through the County's Multi Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, and we will ensure that any updates to the Safety Element are coordinated with that plan along with any existing emergency response and evacuation plans. We will address increased signage with City staff.
30. The 18th Street Basin has been allowed to flood since the City started developing the Mile of Cars. The lack of investment to help buildings move back out of the flood plain and reconfigure the street is an Environmental Justice issue. Habitat restoration and a natural corrective drainage plan is needed to allow us to coexist with the creek. It is time for a solid plan to close 18th Street from Coolidge or Harding to NC Blvd and build a multipurpose open space.
- This is something that will be discussed. The Safety Element looks at flooding hazard risk areas and is intended to identify policies that result in tangible improvements. Changing the



land use and closing a street transcends just the Safety Element and becomes a land use and circulation issue as well. We will look into this.

31. What is your plan for crime?

- The scope of the Focused General Plan Update will not include the assessment of crime or include a plan for crime. Please visit the National City Police Department website at <https://www.nationalcityca.gov/government/police> for more information on policing and crime prevention.

32. Are there any plans regarding better police training?

- The scope of the Focused General Plan Update will not include the assessment of police training or include a plan for changing current police training procedures. Please visit the National City Police Department website at <https://www.nationalcityca.gov/government/police> for more information on police training and police training policies.

33. Is there an existing Incident Response Plan with the city? If there is, there's a need to reevaluate especially after the US Navy Ship Fire incident.

- The City of National City has a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan which includes a Continuity of Operations Plan. Please contact Walter Amadee, Management Analyst III, with the National City Fire Department at (619) 336-4556 to get more information on the Emergency Operations Plan.

34. What plan(s) do we have in terms for solar panels? Will the city offer home owners rebates or incentives for opting for Solar Panels?

- We will be addressing those types of incentives and putting forth what may work for the City. We will consider these incentive programs.

35. What plans do you have in place for water conservation?

- We will be developing these strategies. The City encourages drought-tolerant landscaping. There are more water conservation measures that the City can choose to implement or require. We will be evaluating a number of those. If the community has specific ideas for programs or incentives for water conservation, we would like to hear about them.

36. Please coordinate with the County's APCD AB617 Committee and their Community Emission Reduction Program (in development) for the latest update on strategies to improve our health and climate.

- Noted, thank you.



37. Is there a plan that will support the pollution of Paradise creek? Educating residents beautifying the city? And take ownership?

- The City has a currently adopted policy in the General Plan Open Space Element (Policy OS-6.2) to evaluate opportunities to improve public access to Paradise Creek and Las Palmas Creek. Several projects from the City’s adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP) have also been completed to upgrade the area near Paradise Creek: [Paradise Creek Educational Park](#) (completed in 2017), [Kimball Park/Paradise Creek Restoration](#) (completed in 2017), [Paradise Creek Educational Park Remediation and Improvements](#) (completed in 2019), and [Paradise Creek Water Quality and Community Enhancements](#) (completed in 2020). The [Paradise Creek Educational Park Expansion](#), which constructs additional pedestrian and bicycle pathways to upgrade Paradise Creek Park, is nearing completion.

38. Tara Lake, do you have a contact email for media questions?

- Tara can be contacted at [Tara.Lake@WSP.com](mailto:Tara.Lake@WSP.com).