

ATTACHMENT NO. 5

COMPANION TOPICS

The Planning Commission requested that staff identify companion topics to the County Gothard Property & Research and Technology Zoning project that would supplement the City's efforts to affect positive changes in the Northwest Industrial and Gothard Street subareas subsequent to adoption of RT land use controls and development standards. At their discretion, the Planning Commission could recommend these items as separate minute actions apart from action on the proposed GPA, ZMA, and ZTA.

A. Recommend the City Council Direct Staff to Update the City's Urban Design Guidelines

The City's current Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) were adopted by the City Council in 2000 as a supplement to the then Urban Design Element of the General Plan. The intent of the UDG is to improve the City's image and promote high quality development within the public and private realm. UDG Chapter 7 Industrial provides general design guidelines and concepts for industrial development encouraging the highest level of design quality and creativity.

Overall, a majority of the existing criteria provided for in Chapter 7 Industrial and the rest of the City's guidelines are relevant and applicable to the standards and expectations of new development in the Industrial districts. However, there is a need for an update to the design guidelines, as market trends and architectural practices have changed in the past 20 years. To support the implementation of the RT Zoning Amendment project and the goals and policies of the General Plan Land Use Element, the Planning Commission may recommend via minute action that the City Council direct staff to update the City's Industrial design guidelines, inclusive of the RT zone, separately from action on the proposed project.

B. Recommend Further Study of Wi-Fi, Broadband, & Fiber Optic Infrastructure

The Technical Background Analysis report prepared by RRM Design Group identifies high-speed internet access and supporting infrastructure as a critical element for the success of the envisioned technology uses of the new RT zone. Although not a part of the proposed project, broadband infrastructure is important to the attraction and success of the businesses the City desires for strengthening its industrial economic base. The City produced a Broadband Strategic Plan in August 2016 that explores options for maximizing the economic development benefits of the City's existing broadband infrastructure, integrating potential future broadband projects with the City's larger economic development planning, and meeting the broadband connectivity needs of businesses within the City.

To improve high-speed internet access, the Broadband Strategic Plan further recommends coordination of improvements with other capital projects for cost efficiencies, building networks to City-owned properties, potential pilot projects with private partners, and potential long-term revenue opportunities.

To support implementation of high-speed internet access, the City acquired 11,000 streetlights from Southern California Edison. These new assets provide opportunity for the installation of smart city initiatives and the installation of small cell wireless technology. In September 2017, the City revised the HBZSO to permit small cell installations within the public right-of-way and streamlined the approval process for installations that meet City design standards.

Further, the City has created a Fiber Master Plan that outlines priority areas for fiber optic network improvements. As of October 2018, fiber optic infrastructure within the RT designated areas has been installed along a segment of Gothard Street south of Warner Avenue and future phases are planned along additional segments of Gothard Street as well as Bolsa Chica Street, Springdale Street, Graham Street and Edinger Avenue in the Northwest Industrial area.

The Planning Commission may recommend via minute action that the City Council direct staff to develop a technical study of future infrastructure investment within the RT districts to increase high-speed wireless infrastructure as a means of new business attraction and retention.

C. Recommend a Policy to Implement Pedestrian Sidewalks in the RT Districts

In recognition of the need for safe pedestrian mobility options, a desire to enhance the existing streetscapes, and increase the connectivity of existing and future development, the Planning Commission directed staff to consider the feasibility of placing sidewalks in the RT Districts.

In response, Chapter 230.84 Dedication and Improvements of the HBZSO currently provides the City with both the legal nexus and authority to require dedication of private property for public easements set at a threshold of projects for new construction or interior building alterations that exceed one third (1/3) of the value of the building and which affect no change of occupancy. Further, the Public Works Department maintains a standard for the construction and installation of public curb, gutters, and sidewalks in the right-of-way.

If the City were to require new dedications in the RT districts for public sidewalk improvements (pursuant to HBZSO 230.84), the implementation would be piecemeal as properties transition between owners and/or uses and cost burden placed on private property owners. Under this circumstance, sidewalk improvements might not even happen on some properties, leaving a high degree of likelihood that sidewalks would remain disconnected from each other.

Without new building construction triggering the nexus to require dedication and construction of new sidewalks, the City could only achieve a comprehensive sidewalk improvement by acquiring private property. Acquisition of property for a public sidewalk need could be accomplished through eminent domain. However, eminent domain proceedings can only be initiated through City Council direction.

As it stands today, to achieve sidewalk improvements in future RT districts, the Planning Commission may consider the following options as separate minute action recommendations:

1. As described above, the Planning Commission may recommend that the City Council direct staff to initiate a program to require public easement dedications on properties located in RT districts pursuant to HBZSO 230.84. This program would require improvements during permitted construction phases.
2. The Planning Commission may recommend that the City Council direct staff to initiate a program to require dedication of public easement space *only*, without requiring improvements where curb, gutter, and sidewalk installations are completed a later date.
3. The Planning Commission may recommend that the City Council direct staff to develop a voluntary sidewalk improvement program where property owners may improve their yards with sidewalk spaces built to their own standards, not subject to a public easement dedication or building permits. In this scenario, private property owners that make such improvements would assume legal liability for such sidewalks and may consider forming building owner associations to mitigate said liabilities.
4. The Planning Commission may recommend that the City Council direct staff to begin eminent domain proceedings to acquire property and construct sidewalks throughout the RT zone.