



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: AUGUST 24, 2020

ITEM NO: 6

SUBJECT: NORTHSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN AND PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT – PROJECT UPDATE

ISSUE:

Receive and file an update on the status of the Northside Specific Plan and related Program Environmental Impact Report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Public Utilities receive and file an update on the Northside Specific Plan and Program Environmental Impact Report.

BACKGROUND:

On April 28, 2015, Community & Economic Development Department (CEDD) staff provided the City Council (Council) with a summary of the status and history of City-owned properties within the Northside Neighborhood. The Council directed staff to develop a specific plan for the Northside Neighborhood. The Council also directed staff to engage the public as part of the Northside Specific Plan (Specific Plan) and Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) effort. The following reflects key dates of the project:

- June - November 2017 – Public outreach including workshops, meet the planner events and informational booths were conducted.
- October 2017 – A status update was provided to the Board of Public Utilities (Board), and the Board held a workshop to review and comment on three land use concepts.
- February 2018 – Land use concept for the Specific Plan was evaluated by the economic development sub-consultant consolidating community input, discussions with city staff, and existing Council policies. The “Consolidated Concept” was subsequently refined based on feedback from the project’s economic development consultant.
- June 2018 – A Draft Framework Plan and Draft Land Use Concept was presented at a community workshop.
- August 2018 – A joint meeting of the Board and Council was held to review the Draft Framework Plan and Draft Land Use Concept for feedback and direction.
- March 2019 – A Notice of Preparation and Initial Study was released for the Specific Plan.
- April 2019 – A Public Scoping Meeting was held with over 25 comment letters received.
- September 2019 - A status update was provided to the Board to review the Draft Land Use

Concept and alternatives being analyzed as part of the PEIR.

- March – May 2020 – [The Draft Specific Plan](#) and [Draft PEIR](#) are released for public comment. (A copy of the Draft PEIR may also be found at [Northside Specific Plan Website through this hyperlink or at http://northsideplan.com/.](#))

DISCUSSION:

Overview of the Northside Specific Plan

The Specific Plan and PEIR is an inter-jurisdictional plan covering approximately 2,000 acres within the City of Riverside, the City of Colton, and the unincorporated County of Riverside. The Specific Plan focuses on future development of both publicly and privately-owned properties and identifies future development potential for private properties to create a balanced community.

The Specific Plan identifies residential, commercial, industrial and open space land uses to result in a complete community. Land use breakdowns for the entire Specific Plan area includes:

- Residential
 - Riverside: 11,973 dwelling units (5,383 new dwelling units)
 - Colton: 2,430 dwelling units
- Commercial
 - Riverside: 2,200,000 square feet
 - Colton: 555,000 square feet
- Light Industrial
 - Riverside: 4,200,000 square feet
 - Colton: 1,500,000 square feet
- Industrial Research Park (which includes a portion of Pellissier Ranch)
 - Colton: 2,500,000 square feet

There are three (3) large property sites owned by the City of Riverside in the Specific Plan area. These include: 1) Pellissier Ranch, 227-acres of undeveloped land controlled by Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) located in the City of Colton; 2) the former Riverside Golf Course, 119 acres of undeveloped land of which 46% is controlled by Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) and 54% is controlled by the City; and 3) the Ab Brown Sports Complex, 56 acres of land formerly occupied by American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) and controlled by RPU. Combined, these properties total slightly over 400 acres. RPU has classified these properties either as “Required - In Use - Multi-use” properties or “Required - Future” properties.

“Required - In Use – Multi Use” properties are necessary for the production and delivery of water and power by RPU and/or associated with the operations and administration of RPU but whose use does not exclude other operations from taking place (e.g., vacant lots with wells). These properties can be placed under review for further development or other considerations. Multi-use properties may include land that has attached water rights (that in all cases will be retained by RPU).

“Required - Future” properties consist of any and all properties that may one day be used in the operations required of RPU by its mandate as a water and electric service provider or utilized in the fulfillment of RPU’s mission statement (e.g., properties with water rights or mineral rights).

RPU Owned Land Use Changes

The current Specific Plan proposes an open space, parks & trails base land use (OS) for all of Ab Brown Sports Complex and a large portion of the former Riverside Golf Course. The OS base land use would allow a variety of recreational opportunities. The Northside Village Center (NVC), at the northeast corner of Main Street and Columbia Avenue, is located on a portion of the site of the former Riverside Golf Course property and will serve as the key hub for the Northside neighborhood. Uses could include a local-serving grocery, other community-oriented stores, restaurants, and neighborhood service providers such as a dry cleaner, bank or medical clinic. To help support the growth of local retail stores, the Northside Village Center will include a mixture of new residential units, including apartments, townhomes, and office space for local businesses. The NVC will be an active and walkable mixed-use environment, in which residents are able to enjoy local stores, services and civic gathering spaces, such as plazas and a small park. This base land use would allow a variety of residential uses (densities between 30-40 units/acre – up to 1,200 units), commercial (up to 461,000 square feet) and support services for existing and future residents. These land use changes do not preclude RPU from putting these properties to a public utility purpose.

In the City of Colton, Pellissier Ranch proposed changes include a high density residential base land use (HDR) on the west, adjacent to the Santa Ana River, and a new light industrial base land use (IRP) on the east. The Transition Zone overlay allows for flexibility on future development of this site. There is also a small portion with a base land use of outdoor commercial recreation (OCR). Based on discussions with the City of Colton, the Specific Plan will reflect that the HDR will allow for densities of up to 36 units/acre. The IRP would allow for up to 2.5 million square feet with uses including energy production, laboratories and research, warehousing, manufacturing, offices, parks, restaurants, retail, farmers markets and recreational uses. These land use changes do not preclude RPU from putting these properties to a public utility purpose.

The Specific Plan includes potential land use options for the RPU properties within the Northside neighborhood that would ultimately benefit the City's utility ratepayers and taxpayers. The land uses and zoning identified for the RPU controlled properties allows for a variety of development options that will add value at the former golf course, Ab Brown and Pellissier Ranch. Strategies that could be considered for the RPU properties include: a negotiated sale; electric generation facilities; long-term lease; preservation and groundwater recharge; and/or other entitlement mechanisms that benefit the community while meeting the statutory requirements associated with the ratepayer investments of RPU.

Next Steps

Staff will bring the Specific Plan and associated General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan Amendment and Title 19-Zoning Code Amendment to the Planning Commission in September 2020. Council is expected to act on the Specific Plan and PEIR in November 2020.

Based on Council direction in September 2016, staff is also completing a reimbursement program consistent with California Government Code Section 65456 with options for reimbursements to the General Fund, Water Fund and Electric Fund for the preparation cost by Rick Engineering of the Specific Plan. This will be considered by the City Council following the adoption of the Specific Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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Attachments:

1. Draft Northside Specific Plan
2. Presentation