The City of San Diego

DATE: December 17, 2014

TO: Roger Millar, Smart Growth America

FROM: Lara Gates, Planner, City of San Diego Planning Department

SUBJECT: Smart Growth America Sustainable Land Use Code Audit – 1 month report

The City of San Diego Development Services and Planning Departments have been actively addressing and implementing the recommendations that were developed from the Smart Growth America audit conducted in October 2014. The purpose of the code audit was to identify revised regulations and policies to encourage mixed-use and transit-oriented development as envisioned in the 2008 General Plan. The 2008 plan adopted the “City of Villages” strategy as its central organizing theme. This strategy envisions dozens of compact, walkable mixed-use nodes centered on the city’s existing community centers connected with regional transit and defined by open space networks. As such the City is aggressively moving forward on a number of code revisions which include and are discussed in the memo:

1. Community Plan Implementation Ordinance
2. 9th Update to the Land Development Code which includes revisions to the zoning code in order to streamline certain permit processes
3. Amendment to the Land Development Code to create small lot subdivisions

Community Plan Implementation Ordinance

The purpose of the Community Plan Implementation Ordinance is to create a wider selection of base zones and will modify existing regulations to implement the ongoing community plan updates. The Implementation Ordinance has been developed to provide additional land use tools to assist in the community plan update process that is in process for several community plans. The Planning Department has identified regulations that needed to be created and regulations that needed to be modified in order to implement the visions for the new community plans. The package creates new mixed use commercial zones that allow for increased residential density; expands the types of commercial uses currently permitted in specified multi-family zones, and removes limitations on the amount of ground floor commercial; creates an exception for calculating height for mixed use buildings 45 feet in height and greater; and creates a new residential use of "Shopkeeper", that would be permitted in residential/commercial mixed use zones. Other amendments are proposed in this package as well. See attachment 1, for specific
details. These changes are moving through the decision-making process and are proposed to be adopted in Spring 2015.

9th Update to the Land Development Code

This is a package of code amendments that are part of a comprehensive update and regular maintenance of the code. There are a total of 57 amendment issues included that address processing for various permit and land use types, definitions and measurement, parking, signs, and minor corrections. The majority are regulatory reform items intended to improve the development process and to implement the City's economic development strategy in support of industrial development and the growth of local manufacturing (i.e. craft beer manufacturing). The most significant changes address the City's previously conforming regulations to establish greater consistency in application of the regulations for a more predictable outcome, increase certainty for reconstruction following fire or natural disaster, and increase opportunities for reinvestment in, and protection of, the City's older neighborhoods. The following link provides an overview and additional information on the proposed regulations: http://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/industry/landdevcode/index.shtml#code. These changes are moving through the decision-making process and are proposed to be adopted in Spring 2015.

Amendment to the Land Development Code to Create Small Lot Subdivisions

The purpose of the Amendment to the Land Development Code to Create Small Lot Subdivisions is to allow for the subdivision of existing multi-family zoned lot(s) into smaller lots in order for them to be developed with single family homes. The intent is to provide development alternatives to large scale condominiums/apartments, maintain density within the range of community plan and base zone, preserve pedestrian scale in urban neighborhoods and encourage new housing w/o HOA fees. Attachment 2 provides an overview and additional information on the proposed regulations. These changes are moving through the decision-making process and are proposed to be adopted in Spring 2015.

The City of San Diego is committed to implementing the recommendations formulated by the Smart Growth America Sustainable Land Use Code Audit over the next year. Please contact Lara Gates at 619-236-6006 or at lgates@sandiego.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,

Lara Gates

Supervising Plan Update Project Manager