

2013 Council Study Issue

CDD 13-08 Review General Plan Amendment Initiation Process

Lead Department Community Development

History **1 year ago** None **2 years ago** None

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

As a charter city, Sunnyvale can develop its own rules for managing changes to the General Plan. Accordingly, in order for property owners and developers to propose a change to the City's General Plan, the code requires that the City Council initiate the request. This initiation can be done any time of the year, and gives the Council a chance to review a request and let an applicant know whether they would consider a formal application to amend the Plan. If the Council has a majority vote to initiate the amendment, the applicant must then file a formal application, along with related applications (i.e. rezone and development plans). If the Council denies the initiation request, the amendment option dies. The initiation does not grant any approval, but merely grants an applicant the opportunity to file a formal application. Beyond the posting of the City Council agendas, initiation requests are not posted, published or sent to nearby owners or residents.

The information necessary to initiate a GP request consists of general information and preliminary project plans. Formal plans and documents would be required if the initiation is approved by Council.

This study would provide options for considering the review of requests to change the city's General Plan. Those options could include providing public notification of the request and other efforts to solicit public feedback. Additionally, there is currently no limit on the number of requests that can be considered by the Council each year. This study would consider option such as limiting or grouping these requests throughout the year, or consider requests at set intervals (e.g. quarterly). This could allow for a universal perspective as opposed to intermittent changes to one of the City's major planning documents.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Council Policy- Legislative Management:

Goal 7.3A Assess community conditions and make appropriate changes to long range, mid-range and short-range plans.

Policy 7.3A.1 Utilize the General Plan as the City's principal long-range planning tool; utilize the Resource Allocation Plan and Program Outcome Statements as the City's principal mid-range planning tool; and utilize the Council Study Calendar as the City's principal short-range planning tool.

3. Origin of issue

City Staff Staff

4. Staff effort required to conduct study Moderate

Briefly explain the level of staff effort required

Review State law concerns, review other city processes, and conduct outreach with the community.

5. Multiple Year Project? No Planned Completion Year 2013

6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
 Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? Yes
 If so, which? Planning Commission
 Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

7. Briefly explain if a budget modification will be required to study this issue

Amount of budget modification required 0

Explanation

8. Briefly explain potential costs of implementing study results, note estimated capital and operating costs, as well as estimated revenue/savings, include dollar amounts

Are there costs of implementation? No

Explanation

9. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation Support

If 'Support', 'Drop' or 'Defer', explain

The City has the authority to establish how to consider changes to the General Plan. The current method gives applicants an opportunity to appear before the Council with a proposal to change the General Plan without first preparing the large amount of information typical for a development application. Notification is not used because no project approval results from the initiation. Recently, concern has been raised about the level of public input into the initiation process. This study could resolve those concerns with clear, understandable direction from Council on how to proceed with these proposals in the future.

Reviewed by


 Department Director

10/12/12
 Date

Approved by


 City Manager

10-15-12
 Date