



City of South Gate
TWEEDY BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN

DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN

Community Workshop #3
Wednesday, December 14, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

DISCUSSION NOTES

The third Community Workshop for the Tweedy Boulevard Specific Plan was held on December 14, 2016, in the Community Room at the Leland R. Weaver Library, 4035 Tweedy Boulevard. Spanish translation was provided at the workshop. The workshop was well attended with nearly thirty participants. The intent of this event was to present the Draft Tweedy Boulevard Specific Plan document, which was released for public review in November 2016, and get feedback from the community. Another opportunity for feedback is also available to the community with a Study Session with the Planning Commission scheduled for December 20, 2016.

After introductions, the consultant team presented PowerPoint slides showing the Specific Plan area boundaries, background and purpose of the Specific Plan, goals and policies, vision, the process and work accomplished to date, and a detailed review of the Specific Plan's recommendations. Following the presentation, the community had the opportunity to ask questions and provide input regarding the Specific Plan. The following is a summary of the questions and comments received.

The Public Review Draft Specific Plan document, an Executive Summary (in both English and Spanish), the PowerPoint presentation and the meeting agenda are all available on the website.

Land Use and Zoning

The presentation included a description of the two mixed use zones as well as six commercial/industrial and residential zones. For each of these zones, the intent of the zones as well as information regarding permitted densities and height limits were presented. Also, included were photo examples representing high-quality and appropriately-scaled development in each of these zones. An overview of the design standards and guidelines provided in the Plan were also highlighted. Several photo-simulation examples illustrating the application of the design guidelines were also presented.

Comments from participants were wide-ranging, covering topics such as the need for adequate lighting and special paint to reduce graffiti. The consultants noted that adequate exterior lighting was required for all new projects. Additional pedestrian scaled lighting is also planned for Tweedy Boulevard, north-south streets, parking lots and alleys. The Plan also requires graffiti-resistant paint. Another observation related to the need for buffer zones between the Light Industrial Zone and the future Legacy Middle School complex at the east end of the Specific Plan area. The light industrial area near the river contains several existing uses – a steel manufacturer and some trucking companies – and these uses are “grandfathered” in. For any new businesses that locate in this zone, the Specific Plan requires landscape buffers to protect the adjacent residential and educational uses.

Further explanation was requested regarding the requirement for active ground floor retail uses on Tweedy between Elizabeth and Bowman. The consultant team clarified that any new project would be required to provide active ground floor retail uses with other uses (such as residential, office or medical) in upper stories. Medical uses on the ground floor are currently prohibited in Tweedy Mile. Existing medical and office uses would continue as non-conforming uses, until they voluntarily leave.

An attendee questioned how the size and scale of new developments covering several properties would look next to the existing small-scale retail on Tweedy. The consultants explained that the design standards and guidelines contained in the Plan would ensure that the Boulevard maintains a cohesive look and feel; even as new projects are developed. As an example, the height limit is up to three stories, even if developers avail of any density bonuses for providing community amenities.

Clarification regarding the City’s obligation for the city to consider density bonuses for affordable housing was requested. The consultants explained that unlike some other cities in Southern California, the City of South Gate does not mandate affordable housing. While some participants expressed a preference for affordable senior housing instead of Section 8 housing, it was noted that the City did not designate particular sites for any specific type of affordable housing. Other questions regarding this topic included applicability of State Law AB 2222 (Housing Density Bonus), which among other provisions, requires replacement of existing affordable housing units in a project before qualifying for additional density bonuses.

Mobility – Pedestrians, Transportation, Bicycles, Parking

The mobility and parking part of the presentation overviewed the goals for improving mobility in the Specific Plan area. The existing street network, improvements to the pedestrian system with improved highly-visible crosswalks for enhanced pedestrian safety, expanded bulb-outs and information regarding the expanded bicycle network, and a proposed Tweedy Shuttle that runs along the length of Tweedy Boulevard was presented. In addition, the parking strategy for Tweedy Mile was described in detail.

Several participants asked questions regarding traffic calming and pedestrian safety on Tweedy Boulevard including designating Tweedy Boulevard as a safety zone with double fines for speeding. Other requests included lighted crosswalks such as those found in the City of Santa

Monica. It was also noted that there are a lot of intersections along Tweedy Boulevard that warrant such an improvement.

A large portion of the discussion included questions and observations regarding parking, shared parking and the “park once” concept being recommended for Tweedy Mile. Mayor DeWitt also noted that in the 1980’s, under the auspices of the Redevelopment Agency, the City had acquired multiple residential properties throughout Tweedy Mile thru voluntary acquisition and established public parking lots. The City needed to be more creative now that redevelopment is gone, which is why The City has undertaken the Specific Plan and finding creative mechanisms for improvements. It was also explained that the Specific Plan was not recommending metered or paid parking.

Open Space and Streetscape Improvements

The Specific Plan includes extensive recommendations to improve the public realm in the Specific Plan area. It includes an extensive street tree planting program, “garden rooms” along Tweedy Mile, new street furniture and pedestrian-scaled lighting, and a comprehensive wayfinding and signage program. Another important aspect of the Specific Plan recommendations is to create strong pedestrian and bicycle linkages with South Gate Park, Los Angeles River and Los Angeles River Bike Path. These connections will improve access for residents to these open space resources as well as attract users of these open spaces to Tweedy Mile retail.

Attendees made observations about littering, necessity for more frequent trash pickup, and need for “no littering” signs. The role of a Property-based Business Improvement District (PBID) in achieving these aspirations was discussed by the consultants. Other comments included the need to further conversation for areas near schools, and the need for play areas for kids and places for youth. The Specific Plan recognizes that while the Leland Weaver Library is a gathering place for students, additional areas are desirable. The Plan recommends that the City work with the owner of the Allen Theater to create a youth center in that historic building.

Infrastructure

The Specific Plan evaluates the existing utility systems for water, stormwater, sewer and dry utilities such as electricity, gas, etc. With the exception of a few water line upgrades the existing systems are adequate to accommodate the maximum development projected in the Specific Plan. A participant complained about debris collection in the storm drain inlets. It was clarified that while the storm drain system is maintained by the County of Los Angeles, the City has gone to great lengths to annually clean the catch basins. In addition, the City had installed wire grates at the openings to the catch basins; however, some covers have been stolen and others get blocked by debris. More maintenance is needed.

Implementation

The Specific Plan identifies comprehensive implementation measures that will result in the desired changes articulated in the Specific Plan. Elements of this strategy include a comprehensive capital improvements program, possible value capture public financing and

economic incentive methods such as EIFDs and Business Improvement Districts, and a phased list of implementation actions.

Phasing and maintenance (tree care, trash pickup, graffiti, etc.) of the recommended improvements was discussed. Options for financing these improvements are included in the Plan. The Specific Plan also contains a phasing priority for the capital improvements as well as an annual estimated budget for operations and maintenance of these new improvements. PBID collections and general fund revenues are two potential funding mechanisms.