



**CITY OF CARSON**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** June 25, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** SCAG Grant deliverable: Neighborhood Villages Plan  
**APPLICANT:** City of Carson  
Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
701 E. Carson Street  
Carson, California, 90745  
**REQUEST:** Receive and file the Neighborhood Villages Plan prepared for the City by the Arroyo Group & Iteris team as part of a SCAG Grant.  
**PROPERTY INVOLVED:** City-wide

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**COMMISSION ACTION**

| <b>AYE</b> | <b>NO</b> |                            | <b>AYE</b> | <b>NO</b> |  |
|------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------|-----------|--|
|            |           | <b>Chairman Pimentel</b>   |            |           | <b>Palmer</b>  |
|            |           | <b>Vice-Chair Cainglet</b> |            |           | <b>Rahman</b>  |
|            |           | <b>Fe'esago</b>            |            |           | <b>Rashad</b>  |
|            |           | <b>Madrigal</b>            |            |           | <b>Rahman</b>  |
|            |           | <b>Mitoma</b>              |            |           | <b>Alt. Diaz</b><br><b>Alt. Hellerud</b><br><b>Alt. Zuniga</b> |

***Item 5B***

## **I. BACKGROUND**

In 2016, the City applied for a Sustainability Planning Grant by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The application was submitted to fund and prepare a community plan that reflects changing population and demands, focusses growth around transit and livable corridors, supports sustainability and integrates planning best practices. This grant application was envisioned to directly support the City's efforts to comprehensively update the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

In 2017, the City was awarded a \$193,000 grant by SCAG and in 2018 the Arroyo Group was selected as the lead consultant. The consultant team was charged with preparing a Sustainability Indicators Report, Preferred Mobility Plan, Traffic Demand Management & Off-Street Regulations (TDM) and Neighborhood Mobility Area Concept Guidelines. Given the gap in timelines for the ending of this SCAG Grant and the General Plan update, this plan is presented as a policy document only. Staff will incorporate the recommendations from the Sustainability Indicators Report, Preferred Mobility Plan and Neighborhood Mobility Area Concept Guidelines into the 2040 General Plan and the Traffic Demand Management & Off-Street Regulations (TDM) into the Comprehensive Zoning Code Update.

## **II. ANALYSIS**

### Neighborhood Villages Plan Process

The purpose of the Neighborhood Villages Plan (Plan) is to create more sustainable, vibrant and complete neighborhoods that reduce Green-House Gas (GHG) emissions and Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT). Neighborhood Villages is the City of Carson's name for "Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMA)", a land-use strategy defined in SCAG's 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/SCS) to provide options for short vehicular trips and reduce VMT in suburban contexts. NMAs have the following characteristics:

- 1) Largely residential neighborhoods with small to medium-lot single-family homes (<8000 sf)
- 2) Accessibility to neighborhood retail establishments
- 3) Developed between the late 1890's and early 1960's
- 4) Denser grid network of local roads
- 5) High intersection density
- 6) Lack of convenient access to high frequency transit options

Six Neighborhoods in the City of Carson were evaluated against these criteria. Of these six areas, only East Carson met all of the 2016 RTP/SCS criteria. Southwest Carson, Downtown West and Dolphin Park's street networks are built upon large grids which have lower intersection densities. Portions of Southwest Carson and Downtown West are also considered to be within existing High Quality Transit Areas (HQTA's), though transit service is relatively limited and transit mode share is low. That said, because they met the majority of criteria and because they can benefit from Neighborhood Village planning, they were included in the Plan.

Two areas in North Carson, namely, University-Adjacent residential and Broadway/Main Industrial area were not included in the plan since they did not meet the majority of 2016 RTP/SCS criteria.

### Neighborhood Villages Plan Overview

The plan is structured in two parts. First part of the plan discusses overall strategies and programs for neighborhood villages that would enhance walkability and reduce VMT and GHG emissions. The second part of the plan discusses the same strategies in context of the four areas of the City studied and provides specific guidelines to establish them as neighborhood villages. Overall strategies for the City include:

- **Urban Design Framework:** The primary land-use and transportation strategy employed to establish neighborhood villages in the City of Carson is the definition of *mixed-use neighborhood nodes* and *neighborhood corridors* that are connected to lower density neighborhoods through *pathways* and *multimodal transportation*. Neighborhood nodes, neighborhood corridors and mixed-residential clearly form the land-use framework to establish neighborhood villages. These are complemented by the multimodal streets and pathways including the multimodal boulevards, multimodal connectors and separated slow speed paths to complete an urban design framework. The plan discusses each of the elements of the urban design framework at length.
- **Guidelines:** The plan recommends general design guidelines for new private developments. These guidelines include green roofs, tree canopy and industrial and residential edge treatments in addition to guidelines for location and design of buildings and parking. In addition, the plan also discusses slow speed networks and guidelines to establish it within the City.
- **Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV) Planning:** The plan also discusses an approach to establishing an NEV network in the neighborhood villages.
- **Street Environment Design:** The plan discusses the functions of complete streets and street trees in creating a walkable street environment. In addition, methods such as traffic calming, wayfinding, branding, public art, wall & façade improvements have also been discussed.
- **Supportive Programs:** The plan suggests several established supportive programs that can be used by the City to implement the plan. Programs such as shared mobility, bicycle regulations, mobility hubs, shared parking districts and open street events have been suggested, to name a few.

### Public Participation

The initial direction of the plan was provided by the planning team based upon the results of the stakeholder interviews held at the onset of the 2040 General Plan preparation process. Additionally, walking tours of each proposed Neighborhood Village were held in May 2018 with GPAC and City staff.

Finally, feedback on potential improvements and programs was sought at three events including Youth Commission meeting, Black History month event and a Planning Commission meeting spanning from February to April 2019. At each of these events, a summary of NMA

strategy and locations was provided. Additional methods of gathering input varied based on the type and size of the group and included breakout discussion groups and “dot voting” for the prioritization of programs and improvements. Generally, the community was very supportive of the plan’s intent. A summary of the specific feedback about programs and improvements received during these events are provided in Appendix B of the plan.

### **III. ALIGNMENT WITH 2040 GENERAL PLAN**

The plan furthers several guiding principles set forth for the upcoming 2040 general plan. These guiding principles have evolved from input by the community, stakeholders and decision makers including stakeholder interviews, a community workshop, pop-up outreach, General Plan Advisory Committee meetings, City Council and Planning Commission workshops, and online community survey.

- a) The plan supports the guiding principle of promoting **“vibrant, walkable mixed-use districts and neighborhoods, and revitalized corridors”** by proposing
  - Increased growth in High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs),
  - Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per trip,
  - Undertaking investments and establishing zoning and development standards to promote walkable mixed-use neighborhoods and multimodal corridors, and
  - Developing citywide parking management program to ‘right-size’ parking in the City
- b) The plan supports the provision of **“a diverse array of housing types to meet the needs of all segments of the community”** by encouraging the construction of attached single-family and moderately-scaled multifamily housing along neighborhood commercial corridors.
- c) The plan encourages **“development of regional-scale destinations, as well as neighborhood-serving retail and amenities”** by proposing the development of neighborhood nodes with retail and local-serving amenities.
- d) The plan contributes to improving **“public health and sustainability”** by
  - Encouraging land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and non-motorized transportation
  - Investing in engineering, enforcement, and education to ensure safe travel, focusing on improving dangerous locations
  - Increasing tree canopy in NMAs and ensuring adequate maintenance.
- e) The plan **“enhances the public realm and promotes quality design”** by ensuring pedestrian-friendly design of new development in neighborhood villages and beautifying streetscapes in concert with adjacent development and corridor active transportation improvements
- f) The plan emphasizes **“a diversity of transportation modes and choices”** by:
  - Increasing miles of bicycle/slow-speed facilities in the City

- Ensuring an adequate level of protection for new on-street bicycle/slow-speed facilities
- Creating a network of off-street paths for pedestrians, bicyclists and Neighborhood Electric Vehicles along waterways, utility right-of-ways and other opportunity locations
- Facilitating the development of shared mobility programs
- Encouraging the viability of Neighborhood Electric Vehicles as a transportation mode

#### **IV. Environmental Review**

Pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) the proposed policy document is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The policy document will generate no direct significant environmental impacts.

It is important to note here that any zone text amendment stemming out of this policy document is expected to be folded into the 2040 General Plan. As part of the General Plan's preparation process, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be done and impacts from this policy will also be analyzed.

#### **V. Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission:

- **RECEIVE AND FILE** the Neighborhood Villages Plan document

#### **VI. Exhibits**

1. Neighborhood Villages Plan document available at <https://www.carson2040.com/reports-and-products-1>

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