



Cover Memo

To:	City Council
From:	Planning & Development Services
Date:	July 23, 2018
Re:	Summary of the History of the Preferred Scenario Amendment Process

The following memo provides a summary of how the Preferred Scenario Amendment process was created.

Prior to Vision San Marcos:

Prior to the adoption of Vision San Marcos the City was operating with a Future Land Use Map which was adopted with the Horizons Master Plan. Changes in zoning often resulted in a concurrent request to change the future land use of the property. The frequent changes to the Future Land Use Map (Comprehensive Plan) were noted.

- *At the height of development in San Marcos, 29 Future Land Use Map Amendments were processed with an average of 20 applications processed between 2010 and 2012*

Vision San Marcos

Following multiple meetings with the Public and the Comprehensive Plan Committees, the Preferred Scenario Map was formed. This map is not “use based” like the Future Land Use Map, but is focused more on where the community wished to see density. The community and Committees hoped that this change in focus would result in fewer requests to amend the Comprehensive Plan Map and in turn, the following language was added to the Plan.

- *In order to ensure the intent of this plan and the community driven preferred scenario are upheld, it is recommended that amendments to this plan be limited...Amendments should be permitted, at a maximum, twice a year at a time determined by city staff....The review time for applications for amendments should be sufficient to allow staff time to study the requests for trends and utilize appropriate models and tools offered with this plan...*
- *Since the adoption of Vision San Marcos an average of 4 applications has been processed each year (2013-2017).*

Incorporation of Vision San Marcos into the LDC

Almost immediately following the adoption of Vision San Marcos in March, 2013, City staff proposed amendments to the Land Development Code as a stop-gap measure to ensure that the Plan was an enforceable document to guide future development. It was always anticipated that an entire rewrite of the Land Development Code would soon follow.

The initial incorporation of the Plan into the LDC included:

- *Changing all references to the Horizons Master Plan and Future Land Use Map to Vision San Marcos and Preferred Scenario Map, respectively.*
- *Creating a Zoning Translation Table to assist in allowing the Comprehensive Plan to be enforced with zoning districts that “spoke a different language”*
- *Codifying the twice-per-year preferred scenario amendment processes*
- *Requiring that Preferred Scenario Map Amendments be processed separately from Zoning Changes to allow thoughtful consideration of the Comprehensive Plan change absent of a future proposed use.*

Pre-CodeSMTX

In 2015 staff was directed to amend the Land Development Code to require that zoning change requests be submitted concurrently with a Preferred Scenario Amendment request. This change allowed the decision makers to consider the final use of the property along with the request to amend the Comprehensive Plan.

Finding that the procedures for processing a Preferred Scenario Amendment did not provide as much outreach as was anticipated under the Comprehensive Plan, staff was directed to amend the timeline and include an additional public hearing at City Council. This LDC Amendment was passed by Council in 2016.

In 2017 staff, and Council, was approached with a potential economic development opportunity and following discussion and direction, allowed staff to process Preferred Scenario Amendments three times. The third cycle was not necessary as there were no applications received.

Post-CodeSMTX

The new San Marcos Development Code largely maintained the procedures for processing a Preferred Scenario Amendment. Items that were amended in the new code include:

- *Increased notification requirements*
- *Allowing economic development related requests to be considered more often than twice per year*