



# PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION COMMENT SHEET

Regular Meeting Date: 09.24.2019

## CITIZEN COMMENT SIGN UP SHEET

*"Please **PRINT** all information."*

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Circle one: written or oral comments Comment on Agenda # 4 (Housing Action Plan) + 5 (Redwood Rezoning)

Dear Planning and Zoning Commissioners:

### Agenda Item 4: Housing Action Plan

I write today to express my support for the SMTX4All Housing Action Plan and encourage you to recommend adoption of the diverse set of strategies put forth by this plan. San Marcos currently faces many housing-related struggles and needs more diverse, affordable, transit-accessible housing to improve quality of life for all residents, retain and attract new long-term residents, and allow residents to better age in place.

The action plan shows its intelligence by not relying on one silver bullet but instead puts forth a robust menu of strategies to help address the many facets of San Marcos' housing challenges. Of those, I support taking steps to create new incremental housing throughout the city, including in both existing neighborhoods with more historically-derived missing middle housing infill (granny flats, townhouses, duplexes - quadplexes), as well as in the intensity zones designated in the comprehensive plan. Creating more diverse infill housing stock is key to making San Marcos less car and fossil-fuel dependent, less land-hungry, and more of an independent, people-oriented place. After all, housing policy is not only social policy, it is climate policy. If you were to ask the Central Texas ecoregions and the flora and fauna that inhabit them where they'd like to see more housing, how do you think they would respond? I can assure you they wouldn't reply on the outskirts of town where most new housing stock has been created in recent decades due to lack of appropriate land use tools.

As someone that grew up here and now delves into the Land Development Code regularly, I believe there is much we can do to improve all San Martians' overall quality of life if we actually use the tools we have at hand. The code lays the foundations to deliver more housing options; and this action plan, comprised of much thoughtful, holistic research and input, provides further guidance for its affordable, sustainable delivery, including the preservation of existing housing stock. For these many reasons, I encourage you to recommend the adoption of all of its complimentary components.

### Agenda Item 5: Redwood

Following up on the previous public hearing for the rezoning of the Redwood tracts, I encourage you to consider recommending a rezoning to a Planning Area District, which given its large acreage, would require a regulating plan with a more nuanced allocation of Character Districts, including percentages in CD-1 (preserved open space) through CD-4 / CD-5 to ensure open space, as well as the possibility for walkable amenities to the neighborhood itself. I have attached the relevant pages from the code for your reference and in it you will find more info on creating a more complete neighborhood via Planning Area District (vs. a mostly singular rezone of 200 acres).

Thank you for your service and review of these matter,  
Sarah Simpson

**Section 4.1.2.6 Character Districts**

- A. Character districts are intended for infill development and new development in both high and medium intensity zones on the Preferred Scenario Map.
- B. Character districts provide for higher density residential and commercial uses in well planned areas where utilities and infrastructure are designed and constructed to support intense development in a walkable and mixed use environment.

**TABLE 4.6 CHARACTER DISTRICTS**

ABBREVIATED DESIGNATION	DISTRICT NAME	DISTRICT INTENT	SEC.
CD-1	Character District -1	The CD-1 District is intended for the preservation of open space and to protect the most sensitive natural resources in San Marcos. It may include widely dispersed rural single family homes but is primarily characterized by extensive, undisturbed landscapes.	Section 4.4.3.1
CD-2	Character District -2	The CD-2 District is intended for the development of single-family and agricultural uses in a rural setting. Characterized by primarily agricultural uses with woodlands, wetlands and scattered buildings.	Section 4.4.3.2
CD-3	Character District -3	The CD-3 district is primarily intended to accommodate one and two family houses. Uses that would substantially interfere with the residential nature of the district are not allowed.	Section 4.4.3.3
CD-4	Character District -4	The CD-4 district is intended to accommodate a variety of residential options including single-family, two-family and multifamily with limited commercial or mixed use on the corners.	Section 4.4.3.4
CD-5	Character District -5	The CD-5 district is intended to provide for a variety of residential, retail, service and commercial uses. To promote walkability and compatibility, auto-oriented uses are restricted. CD-5 promotes mixed use and pedestrian-oriented activity.	Section 4.4.3.5
CD-5D	Character District -5 Downtown	The CD-5D district is intended to provide for mixed use, pedestrian-oriented development in downtown. To promote walkability and to encourage street level retail activity, auto-oriented uses are restricted. CD-5D should be applied in areas where the existing or proposed land use pattern promotes the highest levels of pedestrian and mixed use activity in the community.	Section 4.4.3.6
PA	Planning Area District	PA is intended for larger greenfield tracts in low to medium intensity areas or in employment areas where residential uses are incorporated into a corporate campus or similar employment type use. The planning area district creates urban environments with a mix of housing, civic, retail and service choices within a compact, walkable environment. These walkable environments are defined by an area encompassed within a one-quarter to one-half-mile radius. This distance is the average most pedestrians will walk before they consider other modes of transportation.	Section 4.4.3.7

PA

SECTION 4.4.3.7 PLANNING AREA DISTRICT



TABLE 4.14 PLANNING AREA DISTRICT ALLOCATION

PREFERRED SCENARIO AREA	PLANNING AREA DESCRIPTION	DISTRICT	% ALLOCATION (BUILDABLE LAND)
Employment Center	Employment Planning Area. The intention of the employment planning area is to accommodate large employers or a corporate campus that can incorporate some residential or mixed use.	CD-4 CD-5 EC LI	0 - 10% 10 - 40% 60 - 90% 0 - 30%
High Intensity Zone	High Intensity Planning Area. The intention of the high intensity planning area is to accommodate high intensity and high density infill development within a compact mixed use area.	CD-1, 2, or 3 CD-4 CD-5	0 - 10% 10 - 30% 60 - 90%
Medium Intensity Zone	Medium Intensity Planning Area. The intention of the medium intensity planning area is to accommodate new master planned communities with diverse housing types developed around a 5 minute walk to all services.	CD-1, 2, or 3 CD-4 CD-5	10 - 30% 30 - 60% 10 - 30%
Low Intensity Area	Conservation Planning Area. The intention of the conservation planning area is to preserve large areas of environmentally sensitive or prime agricultural lands while providing for clustered residential development in appropriate areas.	CD-1 or 2 CD-3 CD-4 CD-5	50% min. 20 - 40% 10 - 30% 0 - 5%



**A. Establishment of a Planning Area District.** A Planning Area is a zoning district approved in accordance with Section 2.5.1.1 that allows the assignment of specific character and/or employment districts within the planning area in accordance with this Section 4.4.3.7.

1. **Development Standards.** Development within a planning area district is subject to the development standards in effect at the time of regulating plan approval in accordance with Section 2.5.6.1.
2. **Comprehensive Plan.** A Planning Area District is not permitted within an Existing Neighborhood Area on the Preferred Scenario Map of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. **Development Plan.** Approval of a Planning Area District requires the submission of a development plan including the following:
  - a. **Buildable Land.** Identification of buildable unconstrained land including any land area classified as a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the City's Land Use Suitability Map.
  - b. **Pedestrian Sheds.** Planning area districts shall be composed of one or more pedestrian sheds including:
    1. **Standard Pedestrian Shed.** A standard pedestrian shed may be no more than 160 acres and is based on a one-quarter mile radius around a node.

FIGURE 4.20 STANDARD PEDESTRIAN SHED



**2. Linear Pedestrian Shed.** A linear pedestrian shed may be a maximum of 200 acres and is based on a one-quarter mile radius around a series of block lengths.

FIGURE 4.21 LINEAR PEDESTRIAN SHED



- c. **Public Facilities.** Identification of emergency services and school facilities to serve the proposed development including any additional facilities proposed to serve the development.
- d. **Utilities Plan.** Identification of how the site will be served with water and wastewater facilities including any needed off-site improvements.
- e. **Transportation Plan.** Identification of the major transportation network proposed to serve the development including any off-site improvements.
- f. **Neighborhood Transitions.** Neighborhood Transitions under Section 4.4.4.2 shall be applied to the development plan when a planning area boundary is adjacent to an Existing Neighborhood Area on the Comprehensive Plan.
- g. **Overlay Districts.** Corridor and environmental overlay districts shall be identified on the development plan where applicable.

**Section 4.4.3.8 Regulating Plan**

**A. Regulating Plan Required.** After City Council approval of a planning area district and prior to commencement of any

development, the owner shall submit and must obtain approval of a regulating plan under Section 2.5.6.1

**B. Contents of Regulating Plan.** Each Regulating Plan or any amendment thereof, shall reflect the following, all in conformance with the applicable standards and requirements set forth in this Section 4.4.3.7:

1. Transportation plan, including:
  - a. New street designations;
  - b. Existing street designations;
  - c. Bicycle, greenway, or pedestrian passages;
  - d. Transit stops; and
  - e. Block perimeters.
2. Pedestrian sheds;
3. Parkland or civic buildings and the maintenance responsibility;
4. District allocations to regulate use and development of the planning area;
5. Vicinity map;
6. Major utilities plan;
7. Watershed protection plan phase I;
8. Phasing plan, if more than one phase is contemplated.

**C. Additional Development Standards**

1. **Parkland Requirements.** Planning area districts shall:
  - a. Include parkland constructed to the general neighborhood park standards in Section 3.10.2.1 within 800 ft. of the center of the pedestrian shed.
  - b. Include parkland designed as a playground under Section 3.10.2.1 within 1000 ft. of any residential lot.
2. **Affordable Housing.** Planning area districts shall:
  - a. Make a minimum of 10% of the units conform to the requirements for affordable housing under Section 4.3.1.1. These units are eligible to any incentives

associated with the provision of affordable housing in this development code.

**D. Regulating Plan Amendments.** Any amendment to an approved regulating plan shall follow the same procedures required for initial approval with the following exceptions:

1. District allocations may not be amended for any area where a plat has been recorded.
2. Proposed changes to district allocations following recordation of a plat shall follow the zoning change procedures in Section 2.5.1.1.