

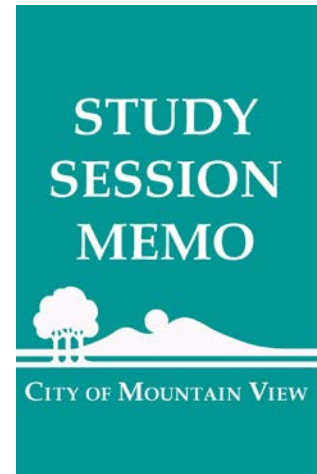
DATE: July 8, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Rebecca Shapiro, Associate Planner
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VIA: Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

TITLE: **San Antonio Precise Plan – Continued Study
Session**



PURPOSE

The purpose of this Study Session is for the City Council to provide input on housing and office policy options for the San Antonio Precise Plan (Plan) and the four draft Plan material topics discussed in the June 24, 2014 City Council Study Session memo (see Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

The Council and the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) have each held three Study Sessions related to the Plan. At the June 24, 2014 Study Session, the City Council took public testimony, closed the public hearing, and continued the hearing to the July 8, 2014 City Council Study Session. Council requested staff return with information on options to increase housing and possibly decrease office uses in the Plan area and the implications of these options.

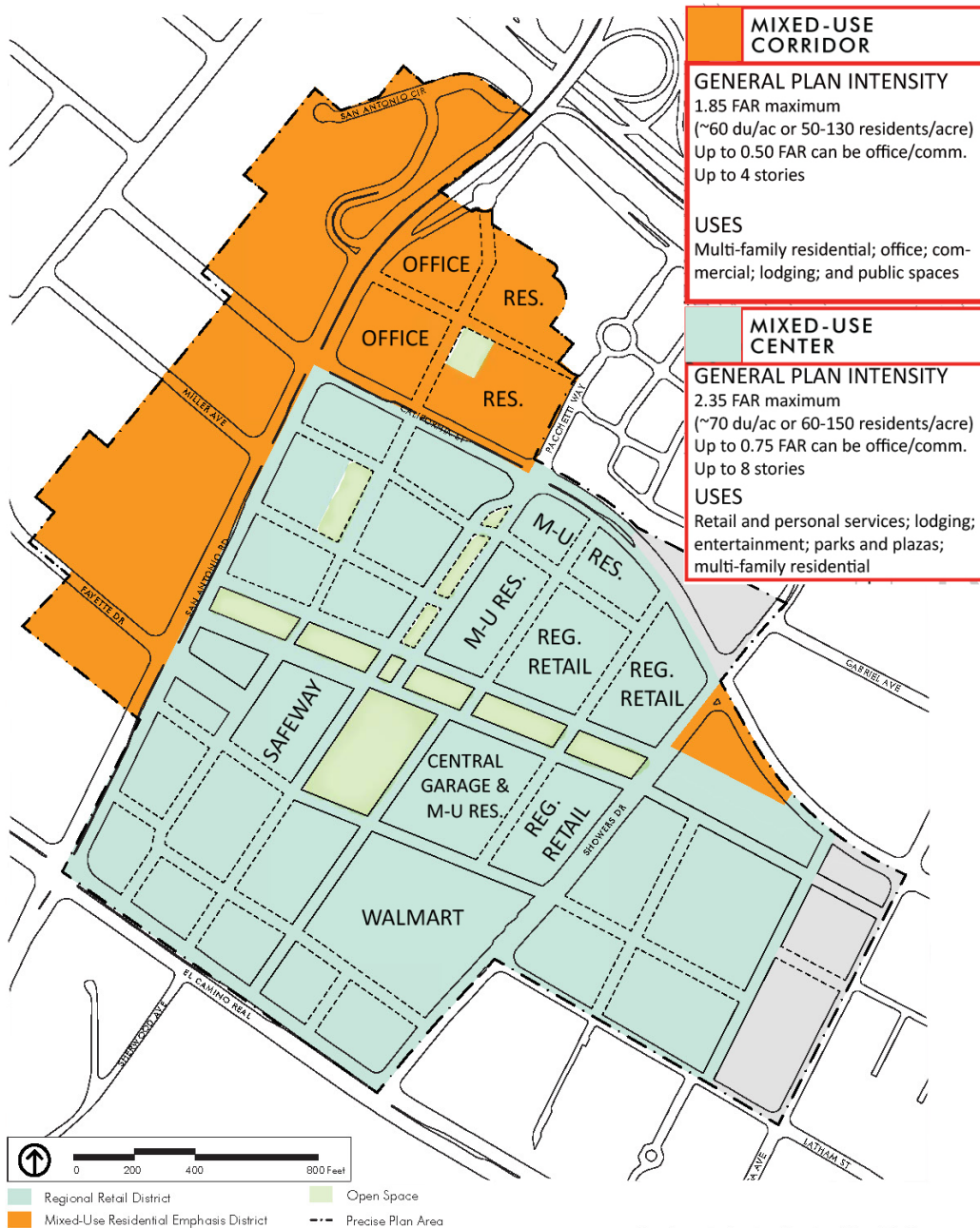
DISCUSSION

Precise Plans provide regulatory direction for new development, and typically include:

- overall objectives or principles;
- specific policies for topics such as land use and circulation;
- site and building development standards;

- required improvements to achieve plan principles or to mitigate plan impacts; and
- procedures for reviewing new development proposals.

The San Antonio Precise Plan includes draft principles for a range of allowed land uses in the Plan area. At the February 4, 2014 Study Session, the City Council provided land use objectives for two key areas of the Plan subareas (see map below).



San Antonio Precise Plan Land Use Districts
 FIGURE 3-1

Within the mixed-use center core (blue), Council prioritized the preservation and enhancement of regional commercial uses, allowing other uses if they do not supersede the area's function as a regional commercial destination.

Outside the mixed-use center core (orange), there would be more flexible land uses. This includes residential, commercial, and office uses throughout the subarea, with the exception of a specific mix of office and residential uses supported on the parcels at the northeast corner of San Antonio Road and California Street, given their proximity to Caltrain.

The Precise Plan team proceeded with the Plan preparation process based on this direction.

Options to Increase Housing

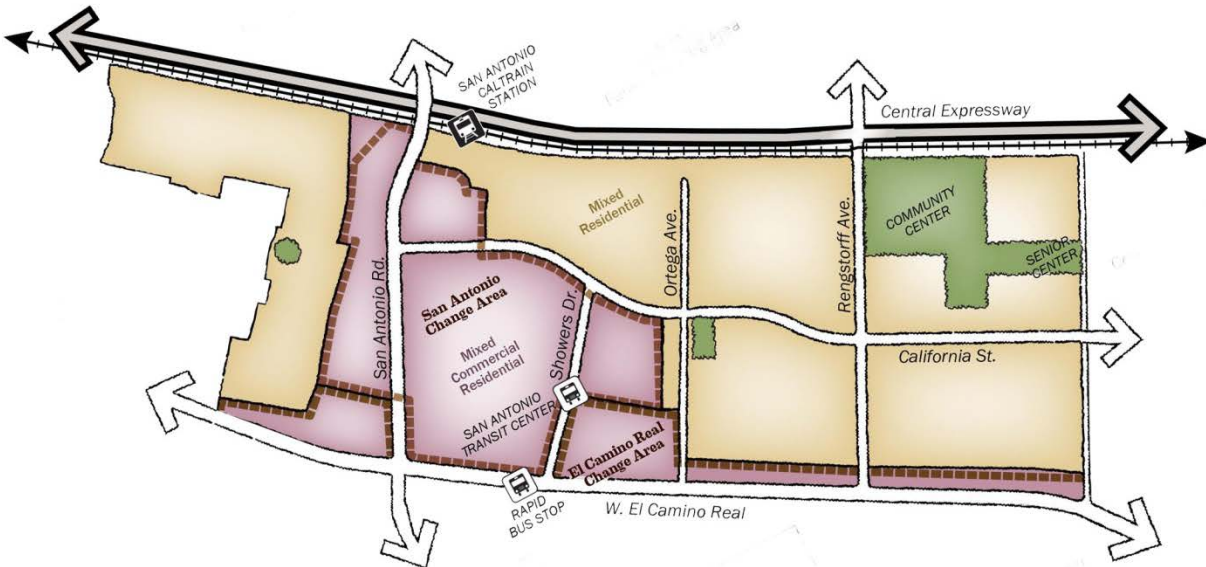
As requested by Council at the June 24, 2014 Study Session, staff has identified options to emphasize or increase housing and decrease office. For reference, existing and projected development data is included below. As requested at the June 24, 2014 Study Session, additional data was added for the broader San Antonio Planning Area (see map below), which includes El Camino Real frontage.

Table 1 – Projected Growth, San Antonio Precise Plan Area

Development Type	Pre-General Plan Conditions (~2009)	2030 General Plan SEIR Analysis for the Precise Plan Area	Net New Development	San Antonio Planning Area (2009) Includes ECR
<i>Residential</i>	195 units*	1,770 units*	1,575 units*	6,160 units (2009)
<i>Retail/Commercial</i>	895,000 s.f.	1,315,000	420,000 s.f.	1,286,000 s.f.
<i>Office/Industrial</i>	205,000 s.f.	1,084,000	879,000 s.f.	542,500 s.f.
<i>Lodging</i>	—	170 rooms	170 rooms	365 rooms

* The Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) and net new development data include the 330 housing units in Merlone Geier Phase I. The pre-General Plan data does not factor in the Phase I housing units.

San Antonio Planning Area (General Plan)

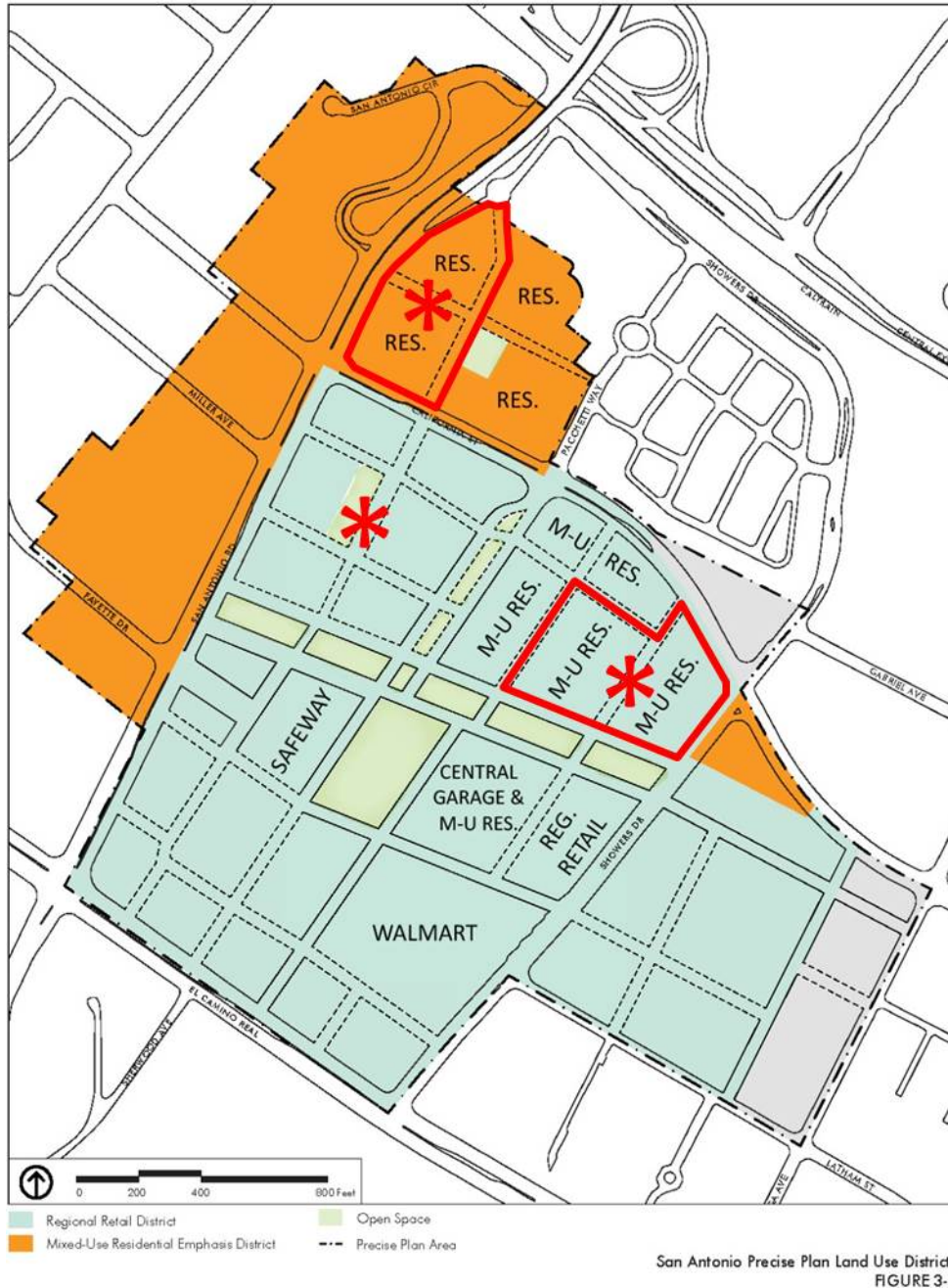


Increased Housing Options

The current draft Plan includes flexible land use policies, with the exception of requirements for ground-floor active frontages and prioritized land uses in the two areas noted above. The approaches discussed below would increase housing opportunities in the Plan area. Processes and implications for implementing these strategies are discussed separately.

1. **Increase Land Use Policy Flexibility:** This approach would soften or remove currently drafted priorities for regional commercial uses in the regional core and/or office development north of California Street. Since the General Plan allows residential development in both subareas, this option would provide additional locations where residential development could be allowed.
2. **Prescribe Residential Uses:** This approach would require residential uses in specific locations. Alternatively, the Plan could prioritize rather than mandate residential uses in specific locations.

These approaches would primarily affect the areas where nonresidential uses were previously prioritized, with potential land use changes noted in the map below. Staff estimates that roughly 500 to 600 additional housing units could result from replacing office and regional retail with housing development in these locations. Staff previously estimated that an additional 150 housing units could result from Council direction for the Merlone Geier Phase II development project at the July 1, 2014 public hearing.



Precise Plan Process

The San Antonio Precise Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is studying the development projections noted in Table 1, and this work is nearly complete. Reducing office square footage and increasing housing units above the original projections would require revisions to the EIR analysis and Plan content, resulting in an approximate six-month delay in the Precise Plan process.

In order to meet the current December 2014 deadline for Plan adoption, staff recommends the following approach to accompany either of the housing policy alternatives discussed above:

- Continue to study the potential environmental impacts, consistent with the previous Council direction. This consists of 1,575 net new housing units; 420,000 square feet of net new retail/commercial; 879,000 square feet of net new office; and 170 lodging rooms, and include the following implementation strategies in the Plan to:
 - Require a specified amount of housing units be developed in the Plan area before a specified amount of additional office development is permitted. As part of this phasing strategy, Council could effectively cap office development below the 879,000 square feet being studied in the EIR.
 - Identify a process in the draft Plan to review the potential effects of housing development exceeding the EIR's development projections but consistent with land use policy direction.

This strategy would allow development to occur in the area based on Council land use policy direction. In the future, if additional housing exceeding the 1,575 projected net new housing units is desired, the City would have better information to evaluate the potential effects of increased growth, including, but not limited to, data on the benefits of the newly established Transportation Management Association (TMA), real data on trip reductions from Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs, and, potentially, the benefits of interagency operational improvements to the San Antonio Road Corridor.

If Council would like to study additional housing development through the current Precise Plan process, revised environmental analysis would be needed. This would result in an estimated delay of approximately six months, and the Plan would not be ready for adoption until mid-2015. If Council elected to go this route, projected office square footage could also be adjusted.

Additional Considerations

The above approaches require Council to decide whether to increase land use flexibility to support increased housing or revise land use objectives to specifically require additional housing development locations in the Plan area. The following is some additional information that Council may wish to consider:

- Increased housing, above development projections, will create additional impacts on schools and parks.
- The San Antonio market study found potential growth opportunities for all of the land uses considered in the Plan.
- Increasing housing units, above development projections, without a decrease in office or commercial development, would increase average daily trips in the area.
- Different land uses tend to have different trip generation, peak travel times, and directional characteristics, including, but not limited to:
 - Retail uses (regional shopping) typically generate the highest amount of vehicle trips.
 - Office uses tend to generate more trips than residential uses, particularly during peak commute hours, but are better able to reduce trips when located in proximity to transit and through TDM programs.
 - Residential uses create trips throughout the day and are most likely to generate fewer vehicle trips when located close to retail/commercial uses.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Council provide direction on the following topics:

1. Whether or not to modify land use policy options to increase housing and/or decrease office in the San Antonio Precise Plan area. If so:
 - a. Allow flexibility for additional housing in areas currently designated for office or retail.
 - b. Substitute (require) housing in areas currently designated for office or retail.

- c. Establish a cap on office square footage in the Plan area below what is studied in the General Plan SEIR.
2. Key topics and questions from the June 24, 2014 Study Session memo, in the revised order noted below:
 - a. Circulation Plan – The EPC recommended alternative bicycle-improvement options for:
 - (1) North-South Connectivity
 - (2) East-West Connectivity
 - b. Draft Principles – The draft principles are summarized in this memo and included in full within Attachment 1, which incorporates EPC recommendations.
 - c. Draft Standards – As recommended by the EPC, draft standards are identified in this memo for:
 - (1) Street Network and Active Frontage Locations
 - (2) Block Length
 - (3) Minimum/Maximum Setback Lines
 - (4) Maximum Height Between Setback Lines
 - d. Precise Plan Implementation – As discussed in this memo, staff recommends including a Master Plan process as one tool to coordinate implementation for the identified Plan land use objectives, infrastructure improvements such as central open space and circulation facilities, and public benefits.

NEXT STEPS

The Precise Plan team will develop the draft Precise Plan based on Council direction at this meeting. Council input at this meeting on the issues listed in the Recommendations Section is essential to complete the Plan by the end of the year. Revising content may result in a slight delay in the release of the public draft Precise Plan and may require use of contingency funds. However, the Precise Plan team would still target a public

draft Plan and EIR by the end of August 2014. A Council Study Session to review and provide final direction on the Plan will be scheduled in the fall.

If Council decides to revise the scope of the EIR, the Plan would not be completed by the end of 2014, and additional budget may also be needed to revise and run the additional environmental analyses.

PUBLIC NOTICING – Agenda posting. Courtesy notices were sent to all property owners and residents within 300' of the Precise Plan boundary, City neighborhood associations, and interested parties. E-mail notices were sent to the project's interested parties list, and a notice was placed in the local newspaper.

RS-MA-TB-RT/7/CAM

803-07-08-14SS-E

Attachment: 1. June 24, 2014 Study Session Memo ([link](#))