

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Tustin Red Hill Avenue Specific Plan

The following are responses to questions posed at the first community workshop held on July 21, 2016 about various aspects of the project. This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated with additional information as questions arise.

What is a Specific Plan?

A Specific Plan is a comprehensive planning and zoning document used to guide orderly development and urban design for a defined geographic region of the City. The City of Tustin has used Specific Plans throughout the city to guide urban design and land use decision-making. Both the City Code and State law provide the legal basis for the preparation of specific plans, as well as required contents.

The Specific Plan will address the following topics:

- Permitted land uses and development standards (height, allowable land uses, setbacks, intensity, density etc.)
- Market potential and development opportunities
- Access, circulation, and parking
- Infrastructure (required water, sewer, and drainage provisions/improvements)
- Design standards and guidelines (urban design, architecture, landscape/streetscape)
- Streetscape and wayfinding (signage) concepts
- Implementation strategies

How will the Specific Plan be prepared?

A consultant team comprised of land use planning, environmental, economic, and transportation professionals and technical specialists are working with City staff to prepare the Specific Plan. The project involves the following components:

1. Project initiation and analysis of “baseline” conditions within the area
2. Public outreach and community engagement through a series of public workshops
3. Creation of conceptual design features
4. Preparation of draft and final Specific Plan documents
5. Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (which will include a traffic study and other studies to determine environmental impacts of the project)

By employing a variety of community engagement programs, including the feedback and comments received at the public workshops, city website content, social media, and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council, input from the public will be used as a guide for each phase or component and help develop the ultimate Specific Plan.

Who is on the Project Team?

The project team is made up of staff from the City's Community Development Department and a consulting team led by Kimley-Horn, who specializes in land use, environmental, and transportation planning. Kimley-Horn serves as the prime consultant, managing and collaborating with a team of professionals that will assist in the preparation of technical reports and provide specialized services for the project team. The project team also includes Kosmont Companies, a real estate, financial advisory, and economic development services firm. Other City Departments will also serve as part of the project team.

The project team works for the City and is not associated with any developer or landowner in the project area.

What is the schedule for completion of the Specific Plan?

The Specific Plan is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2017. The Planning Commission and City Council will review the Specific Plan document and its environmental analysis and will make a decision on its approval.

What is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and why is it being prepared?

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is a comprehensive assessment of the environmental effects that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. It will be prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For the Red Hill Avenue Specific Plan, a Program-level Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) will be prepared. The Program EIR will provide the basis for future environmental review of site-specific development and/or public improvement projects that are consistent with the project's goals, policies, and environmental thresholds. In addition to addressing potential impacts related to community concerns such as air quality and traffic, the Program EIR will also identify mitigation to reduce or avoid significant impacts. Topics typically analyzed in an EIR include:

- Land Use
- Traffic
- Noise
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas
- Aesthetics
- Public Facilities and Services

A public meeting on the proposed contents of the Program EIR will be held before the document is prepared. The meeting, called a Scoping Meeting, allows public agencies and the public to express topics of special interest for inclusion in the environmental analysis.

What role does the Specific Plan play in future development applications?

All development applications will be required to comply with the standards, guidelines, and requirements of the Specific Plan within the project area.

How will the community be involved in the project?

The City of Tustin is committed to a comprehensive and inclusive planning process, guided by community outreach and public participation. Public notification will be sent to affected area property owners, tenants and interested parties prior to each community workshop and public hearing. A variety of in-person and online community outreach opportunities will also be used to involve as many community members and stakeholders as possible, including:

- Community workshops
- Website area on the City's web page
- Informational materials
- Media outreach and social media marketing
- Planning Commission and City Council public meetings

Has the City Council already approved changes in the Specific Plan area?

The study area has been part of a number of past planning study efforts, all of which only looked at opportunities and recommendations on a parcel-by-parcel basis for parcels within the area and/or other areas in the vicinity. This Specific Plan will look specifically at the proposed study area (in its entirety) and make specific recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council related to land use and urban design. No preconceived plan has been worked on or agreed to by City staff, the consultant team, or the Planning Commission/City Council.

To date, the Specific Plan effort has included analysis of the existing conditions within the study area and will be entering into the design phase during the next several months. No plan has been written or is in place, proposed, or approved at this time.

Does the City have the power of eminent domain to acquire all or part of properties within the Specific Plan area? Will the City take my property?

Eminent domain is the power of the government to take private property for a "public use" so long as the property owner is paid "just compensation." A "public use" is a use that confers public benefits, like providing public services or promoting public health, safety, and welfare.

There are many statutory requirements that must be met in order for a City to acquire property by eminent domain. Among these are requirements to make "every reasonable effort" to acquire property through negotiation, property appraisal, establishing property value, extending an offer of purchase and adopting a resolution of necessity in accordance with California Code of Civil Procedure.

In previous years, as part of a City's Redevelopment options, a city was able to use eminent domain, however, in the State of California, Redevelopment Agencies and their use of eminent domain to acquire properties for economic or private development purposes is no longer allowable.

How can I stay informed and updated on the status of the project?

Please visit the City's website at www.tustinca.org often for the latest project updates and announcements about community engagement opportunities. If you have any questions or would like to be added to the projects' interested party list, contact Erica H. Demkowicz, AICP, Senior Planner at the City of Tustin, at (714) 573-3127 or edemkowicz@tustinca.org