

City of Irvine: Irvine 2045 General Plan Update

Land Use Workshop Summary

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Prepared by Kearns & West in coordination with Harris & Associates

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Introduction & Overview

The City of Irvine (City) is updating its General Plan, a state-required document representing the City's vision for the next 20 to 25 years. The 2045 General Plan Update will include goals and policies to help the City reach its long-term vision of preserving and enhancing Irvine's high quality of life as the city matures. As part of the General Plan Update, the City is holding a series of community workshops on specific elements of the General Plan to gather feedback from the public.

During this iteration of the General Plan Update, the City is requesting feedback on the Land Use, Circulation, and Safety & Noise elements. To do this, the City and consultant team organized three workshops, with one workshop dedicated to each element. This summary is for the Land Use Element workshop and includes the workshop format, engagement activities, and major themes.

Objectives

The objectives of the Land Use Element workshop were to:

- Inform community members and stakeholders about the General Plan Update process
- Share ways to get involved in developing the public's vision for Irvine's General Plan Update
- Gather input to inform the development of the Land Use Element
- Gather information to understand community priorities and concerns

Format

The project team held an in-person workshop for the Land Use Element on Wednesday, October 25, 2023. Thirty-six members of the public attended the workshop at Quail Hill Community Center. The workshop followed an "open house" structure. Members of the public were invited to engage in the activities at the four stations, each staffed by the project team. The first station provided an overview of the General Plan Update and community members were invited to ask questions and engage with City staff (see Figure 1). At Station Two, a 15-minute city was defined, and participants were encouraged to design their 15-minute city within Irvine. For Station Three's activity, participants were asked to share preferences on building typology. At Station Four, participants were provided the opportunity to submit public comments.

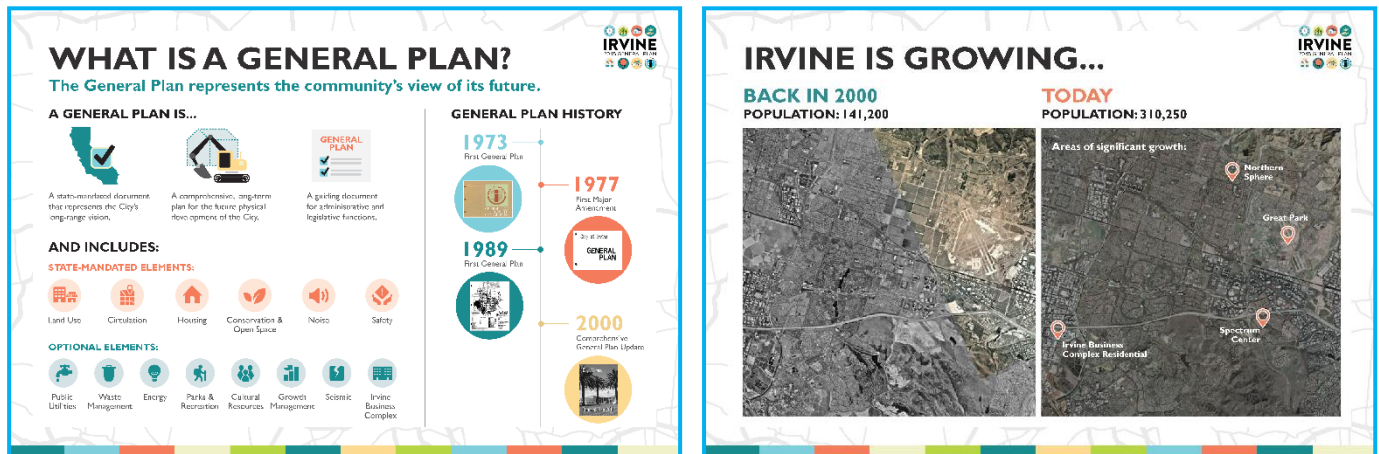


Figure 1. General Plan overview.

Major Themes

The major themes from the workshop are provided below:

- Integrate transit-oriented developments for housing and retail.
- Prioritize bike safety and walkability
- Incorporate greenery and landscaping to beautify any spaces
- Create center spaces for residents to use as ‘third-places’
- Add pedestrian bridges and walking paths to avoid car traffic



Engagement Activities

Station Two

In a 15-minute city, essential services such as housing, employment, shopping, healthcare, and recreation are all located within a 15-minute walk, bike ride, or public transit ride from any point within the city. Participants were asked to design a 15-minute city within Irvine that was an inclusive, sustainable, and livable environment where residents enjoyed greater convenience, improved well-being, and a stronger sense of community (see Figure 2).

Participants were provided with a few examples, blocks, and a map. The map was placed flat on a table, allowing participants to indicate where they would like different features. A legend was provided to indicate different building or feature types by blocks: low-density residential, high-rise nonresidential, low-rise nonresidential, parks, medical, bridges, medium density, very high rise, community center, schools, and high rises.

15-MINUTE CITY ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

Design a 15-minute city using the blocks and map in the activity table. Your goal is to design a city inclusive, sustainable, and livable environment, where residents enjoy greater convenience, improved well-being, and a stronger sense of community. In a 15-minute city, essential services, such as housing, employment, shopping, healthcare, and recreation, are all located within a 15-minute walk, bike ride, or public transit ride from any point within the City.

Activity Site

Building Blocks

- Low Density Residential
- High-Rise Non Residential
- Low-Rise Non Residential
- Parks
- Medical
- Bridges
- Medium Density
- Very High Rise
- Community Center
- Schools
- High Rise

Activity Examples

Figure 2. 15-minute city activity directions.

15-Minute City Activity Key Themes

The key themes from participant responses to the 15-minute city activity are listed below. Full responses are provided in Appendix A, along with example photos of the map activity.

Key themes:

- In-fill strategies that include greenery and parks to add open space
- Landscaped pedestrian bridges across major intersections and to the Spectrum to create connections between different spaces
- Limited car access in specific roadways to prioritize other modes of transportation
- Transit-oriented development to increase train, bus, and trolley usage
- Bike parking and safer bike paths

Station Three

At this station, participants were asked to review the prototypes of potential housing and retail buildings and share with the City and consultant staff what types they preferred (see Figure 3). Participants reviewed the example buildings. Major themes are listed below:

- Add housing with retail options
- Prioritize walkability
- Integrate greenery around housing developments
- Swap concrete with more aesthetic design features

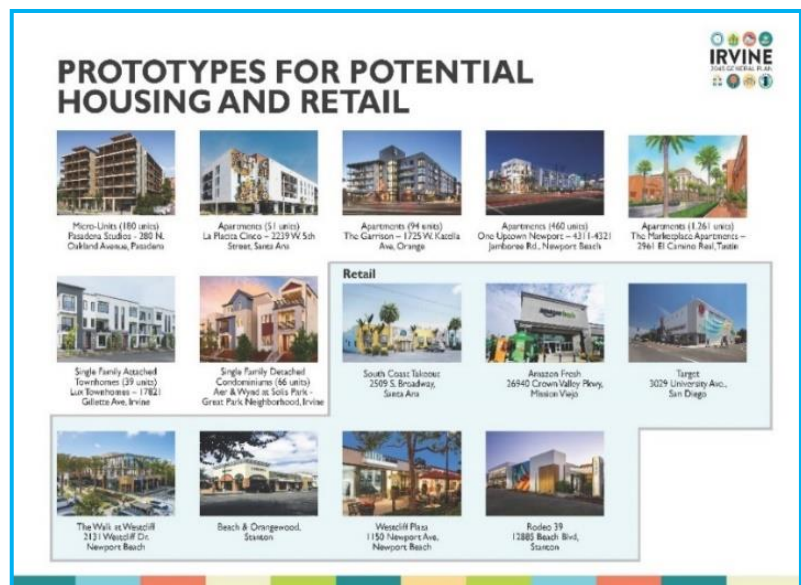


Figure 3. Building prototypes.

Station Four

At this station, participants were offered an opportunity to leave any final thoughts or questions before leaving the open house. One comment was received. The comment asked the project team to provide the acreage for the area used in the 15-minute activity.

Appendix A

Below are the complete responses received on sticky notes and flip charts from Station Two.

Station Two: 15-Minute City Activity Priorities

Bikes

- Separated bike lanes
- Secure bike parking
- More bike paths
- Bike parking in front of sidewalk by entrances to housing/shops
- Bike paths for commuting and recreation
- Bike accessibility/safe lanes
- Pedestrian/bike bridge to the Spectrum
- Highline pedestrian bridge to connect to the Spectrum
- Bike and pedestrian bridges

Transit

- Connect trains and the community to the Great Park
- Transit-oriented development
- Better metro or light rail
- Housing near transit
- Circulation through buses and shuttles
- Transit-oriented development
- Intercity trolleys
- End car dominance/car-centric city design
- Offer easy alternatives to not using a car
- Look at European cities and create circular streets around the city center
- Trolley to connect the area

Developments

- Small-scale retail
- Mix of residential and commercial
- Housing for younger generations and seniors
- Human-scale environment
- Create a third place
- Create a third place and a truly public space
- First-floor retail and residential above
- Community gathering spaces
- Mixed-use
- Small-scale retail
- Structures have to offer public parking (for free) so capacity is available to all
- Local, community developers prioritized over outside, large developers
- Shared wall buildings that open onto that sidewalk with no parking, parking in the back

- Ground floor retail, upper floor residential or offices
- Traditional urban fabric
- Bottom floor retail with residential on top
- Small retail shops
- Light retail
- Human-scale buildings and development
- No high rises
- High rises along the freeway
- Empowering local businesses

Walkability and Pedestrian Focus

- Increase walkability
- Pedestrians should never have an unprotected crossing over an on-ramp
- Add cross streets across Technology Ave and Alton Parkway
- Pedestrian bridges with no cages and add greenery
- Pedestrian-friendly
- More walkability
- Emphasize walkability

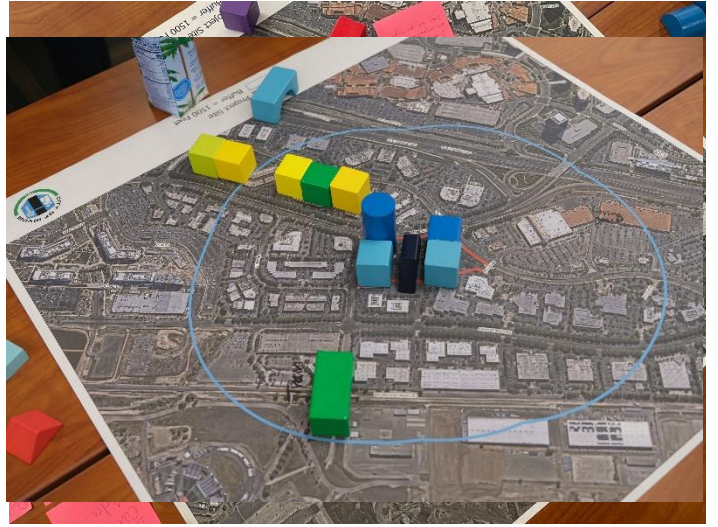
Cars

- Car-free walkability to amenities
- Car-free, walkable neighborhoods with mixed-use
- Ban cars on Ada
- Car-free or car light on Ada
- Green [landscaped] bridges
- Abolish parking minimums

Landscaping

- Green spaces
- More greenery and trees
- Less concrete landscaping
- A lot of green
- Permeable surfaces
- Add parks to the center
- Integrate California native plants
- Combine green space, living spaces, and business
- Integrate satellite green spaces
- High-line skyline such as in New York City

Station Two: Activity Photos



Appendix B

Below are the photos of the workshop.

