



AGENCY:	City Council
MEETING DATE:	02/06/2017
DEPARTMENT:	CDD
PRESENTED BY:	M. Jones

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

**TITLE:**

**RECEIVE REPORT AND DISCUSS THE GEORGIA PACIFIC MILL SITE SPECIFIC PLAN AND REUSE PROCESS**

**ISSUE:**

The Georgia Pacific lumber mill closed in 2002. The City of Fort Bragg and the property owner, Georgia Pacific (GP), engaged in a collaborative process to plan for the eventual redevelopment of the property for other uses between the closure of the lumber mill in 2002 and 2012. The Mill Site planning process stopped in 2012, when GP withdrew its Specific Plan application to rezone the site, in order to focus its attention on the remediation of the site, and because the City was drawn into a lawsuit between GP and OfficeMax regarding cost-recovery for the cleanup of the Mill Site. Prior to 2012, GP funded all City and consultant costs associated with preparation of the Mill Site Specific Plan and associated studies and documents because they had an application into the City to rezone the Mill Site.

Between 2012 and 2016, GP completed a number of milestones in the remediation of the Mill Site including completion of Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) for Operable Units C and D (OUC and OUD) and a Remedial Action Workplan (RAW) for OUE. GP will continue to focus its attention on the remaining remediation activities required for the Mill Site over the next few years, which will include implementation of the OUE RAW and the OUC and OUD RAPs in the fall of 2017, and preparation of the OUE RAP in late 2017. At this time, GP is not interested in submitting an application for or paying for rezoning the Mill Site. However, GP has expressed support for the City to proceed with Mill Site rezoning, and they would like to remain involved in the rezoning conversation.

Over the past two years, City staff has been approached by several local businesses who would like to relocate on the Mill Site. The current zoning, coupled with the Local Coastal Program requirement to complete a Specific Plan prior to rezoning the site, has impeded the ability of these local businesses to relocate to the site, thereby depriving the community of needed jobs. Additionally, as the economic recovery continues, other businesses and housing developers may also seek to reuse portions of the Mill Site and likewise be thwarted by the site's current zoning.

With this staff report and workshop, staff seeks to provide the City Council, the Planning Commission and the community with some background on the Mill Site Specific Plan process and content to date in order to set the stage for subsequent workshops during which Council, the Commission and the community can consider and provide direction regarding how the City should proceed with the rezoning process for the Mill Site, and the content of its eventual zoning.

There are many items of community interest with regard to the Mill Site that will be discussed in upcoming meetings as well. Specifically the Maple Creek daylighting topic was initially discussed in the 2009 community meetings. Subsequently, in 2011 Arcadis prepared the Draft Conceptual Design for the Mill Pond Complex Restoration project. This topic has also been discussed at various City Council meetings over the years since that time. Maple Creek Daylighting and discussions about the OUE Lowlands deserve and require a separate joint City Council Planning Commission meeting

dedicated specifically to this topic. The City anticipates holding a Special Meeting in March to discuss creek daylighting and receive direction from the City Council and the Planning Commission.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

No action is recommended at this time. This report is designed to begin the discussion and bring the community, the Planning Commission and the City Council up to speed on the status of the Mill Site planning process and potential strategies for moving forward with the planning process

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):**

None

**ANALYSIS:**

This staff report addresses the following topics regarding the Mill Site rezoning and Specific Plan process and content:

1. How and why our current Local Coastal Program (LCP) requires a Specific Plan to rezone the Mill Site;
2. A brief overview of the requirements of a Specific Plan and the pros and cons of using a Specific Plan to rezone an area versus other techniques;
3. An overview of the City's Mill Site planning process, including early planning efforts in 2004 and the later Specific Planning process;
4. A brief discussion of two alternative paths to rezone the Mill Site;
5. An overview of the community and Council's past goals for the reuse and rezoning of the Mill Site;
6. A detailed account of the draft Specific Plan and related documents, which can be utilized whichever route the Council and the Planning Commission choose to take with the rezoning process;
7. A chapter by chapter breakdown of the contents of the draft Specific Plan; and
8. Major planning issues that require further consideration as Council, the Planning Commission and the community discuss how to proceed with the reuse process.

Hopefully this distillation of four years of work and countless documents into this 14-page staff report will provide sufficient detail and analysis to begin to inform City Council, the Planning Commission and the Community in order to start a dialogue on this critically important planning process to the future of Fort Bragg. This is the first step in a long delayed and very important journey for our community.

**1. The City's LCP and Specific Plan requirement**

In 2004, after closure of the GP lumber mill, the City Council adopted a General Plan Update which included Policy LU-7.1 and LU-7.2 which require a Specific Plan for the rezoning of Timber Resources Industrial property as follows:

Policy LU-7.1 Changes in Industrial Land Use: Require that any Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendments and rezoning of lands which are designated Timber Resources Industrial be subject to a specific plan process. The portions of a Specific Plan that meet the definition of "Land Use Plan" as defined by Coastal Act Section 30108.5 and "Implementing Actions" as defined by Coastal Act Section 30108.4 shall be submitted to, and effectively certified by, the Coastal Commission as an LCP amendment before those portions of the Specific Plan become effective.

Policy LU-7.2: In order for LCP amendments and rezoning of lands designated Timber Resources Industrial to be considered, a specific plan shall be prepared which addresses, at a minimum, an area approximating one or more of the subareas as shown on Map LU-4: Specific Plan Areas in the Timber Resources Industrial Land Use Designation. Specific plans shall meet the following minimum criteria:

- a) The specific plan shall make provisions for existing and future infrastructure connections such as roads, utilities, and coastal access to surrounding developed and undeveloped areas.
- b) The specific plan shall contain financing methods to provide infrastructure and public amenities based on a nexus between development exactions being imposed and the development-induced needs being met by those exactions, establish an orderly phasing of development, and include other measures as needed to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the community.
- c) The specific plan, and environmental studies required for that plan, shall be paid for by the applicant who may be repaid by future developers of other portions of the specific plan area on a pro rata basis.
- d) The specific plan shall be consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

The intent of this policy was to require a comprehensive planning process for the reuse of the GP Mill Site that: 1) discouraged piecemeal development; 2) included a detailed analysis of the cost of City services in order to ensure that future development pays for itself in terms of City services; 3) resulted in a comprehensive infrastructure plan; and 4) established a financing plan for infrastructure and other public services for the plan area.

## **2. What is a Specific Plan and what are its pros and cons?**

Specific plans are described by State planning law (CA Gov't Code §65450 et seq.), and the purpose of a specific plan is the "systematic implementation" of the general plan for a specific place. A specific plan is not a component of a general plan: it is a separately adopted general plan implementation document. According to Gov't Code §65450, a specific plan process must provide:

- (a) Text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:
  - 1. The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
  - 2. The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
  - 3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
  - 4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).
- (b) The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

The specific plan is a good tool for developing a comprehensive and detailed set of policies and regulations to ensure that new development conforms with a community's vision and "sense of place." Future development proposals often benefit from the extensive detail of a Specific Plan regarding infrastructure requirements and phasing, which are not available in an Area Plan. Most importantly, if a Program EIR is adopted to fulfill the plan's CEQA obligation, this will often streamline the processing of development projects by eliminating or reducing additional CEQA requirements.

Specific Plans also have disadvantages. These include:

- 1. The time, cost, and obligation of staff resources to prepare and implement the plan. To be effective, the plan requires the collection and analysis of significant amounts of detailed data. Most plans require the involvement of outside consultants. Additionally, implementation of the

plan may require the commitment of additional staff time, particularly if the plan establishes regulations which are only applicable to the area affected by the plan.

2. Specific plans prepared for a single project may become obsolete if the project is not implemented, thereby requiring extensive future revisions and/or repeal.
3. The adoption of a specific plan does not vest development by right. A specific plan may be amended as often as necessary, unless the City enters into a Development Agreement and a vesting tentative Map with a developer which allows the City to seek concessions from the developer in exchange for freezing the entitlement structure (Specific Plan) going forward. There are no assurances to residents and project proponents that the plan will not be subject to future revisions without a Development Agreement. A Development Agreement requires a developer to be part of the planning process.

### **3. Overview of Mill Site planning process including early planning efforts**

In 2004, the City of Fort Bragg obtained \$125,000 in grant funding from the State Coastal Conservancy to support a community visioning process and development of strategic alternatives for the reuse of the GP Mill Site. The City hired the consulting firm MIG (with subconsultants: Economic Planning Systems (EPS) and Marie Jones Consulting) to help facilitate a community-based planning process for the reuse of the Mill Site. The goal of this Mill Site Reuse Study was to develop a basic framework and market study for reuse of the site along with some specific tools to assist in that endeavor. Five reports were prepared, presented to and accepted by City Council, including:

- Volume I: Land Use Principles and Concepts – MIG
- Volume II: Demographic and Market Analysis – Economic & Planning Systems
- Volume III: Economic Development Strategy – Marie Jones Consulting
- Volume IV: Economic Development Tools and Resources – Marie Jones Consulting
- Volume V: Community Survey and Focus Group Results – Marie Jones Consulting. This survey identified the Coastal Trail and a marine research facility as the top priorities for the reuse of the Mill Site and the City has made significant progress on both accounts, with the acquisition, construction and opening of the North and South Coastal Trail and the acquisition of a site for the Noyo Center, relocation of the Crows' Nest building and establishment of the Noyo Center non-profit. Other top priorities identified in the survey include affordable housing, a museum, an art center.

This work formed the basis for later work on the Specific Plan which started in 2007 with the submittal of an application by GP and an agreement to reimburse the City for its costs in preparing and processing the Specific Plan and the associated EIR.

In 2008, the City and GP jointly selected RRM Design to prepare the Specific Plan. This initiated a collaborative planning process between the City and GP for reuse of the Mill Site. The collaborative process was intended to establish a general consensus between the City, the community and GP regarding the key components and policies of the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan process included the following:

1. Three well-attended community meetings were conducted early in the process, setting the tone, land use groupings, and policy objectives of the Specific Plan.
2. Seventeen workshops and meetings with City Council and/or the Planning Commission were held to get feedback on and assist in the preparation and drafting of the Land Use Map, the Development Limitations, the Citywide Design Guidelines for the Mill Site Specific Plan, the Mill Pond Complex Restoration Project, and the Mill Site Specific Plan.

3. From 2008 through 2012, the City Council and Planning Commission received periodic oral and written reports and provided direction regarding the status and the content of the Mill Site Specific Plan.
4. Additionally, the Council's Mill Site ad hoc committee provided input and served as a sounding board for City staff throughout negotiation and preparation of the Specific Plan. The ad hoc committee met on numerous occasions during the four-year planning process.
5. City staff met with GP and the consultant team on a monthly basis over the four-year Specific Plan drafting period to help shape and focus the plan so that GP's Specific Plan application would best respond to the needs and wishes of the City and its residents as represented in the many meetings mentioned above. This process was at times difficult, as GP's team did not always agree with the City's input and suggestions. As the Specific Plan was GP's application; GP's team did not have to make changes based on staff, community, Council or Commission input. However, recognizing that the final Specific Plan would have to be approved by the Planning Commission, City Council and the Coastal Commission, GP made significant changes to their initial plan based on input received.
6. The draft Specific Plan was presented to the California Coastal Commission on three occasions. Coastal Commissioners offered important insights regarding the proposed level of development and the land use map. On all three occasions, a majority of Coastal Commissioners requested less development and more land committed to open space and wildlife corridors, even as the amount of development was decreased and the amount of open space was increased as the plan evolved. (See **Attachment 1** – Coastal Commission Input.)

A draft Mill Site Specific Plan was completed in early 2012. On January 18, 2012, the City Council and Planning Commission conducted a joint work session to receive public input and provide feedback on the first four chapters of the Specific Plan. At both the January 18, 2012 Mill Site workshop and the January 17, 2012 community scoping session, some members of the City Council, Planning Commission and the public again expressed concerns about:

- 1) The amount of development that would be allowed;
- 2) The geographic extent of the development shown on the proposed Land Use Map; and
- 3) Other changes to specific policies and standards in the Specific Plan.

**Attachment 2** provides the minutes from this meeting.

On February 29, 2012, a joint City Council/Planning Commission work session completed the review on the remaining five chapters of the preliminary draft Specific Plan (Chapters 5 through 9).

**Attachment 3** includes the minutes from this meeting.

The Mill Site Specific Plan process was suspended shortly after this meeting because GP withdrew its application and terminated its cost-reimbursement agreement with the City. GP withdrew the Specific Plan application when GP entered into a three-part lawsuit with the City of Fort Bragg regarding the allocation of remediation costs between Georgia Pacific, OfficeMax and the City of Fort Bragg. (The lawsuit was settled in 2014, with the entire cost of remediation allocated to GP and OfficeMax.) However, at the time of the application withdrawal, the Specific Plan was not yet complete and over the intervening years the Specific Plan and the rezoning process for the Mill Site has languished, as the City has not have the financial resources to finish it. Specifically, the financing plan, infrastructure plan and the EIR were not yet completed for the Specific Plan. The cost to complete these remaining components of the Specific Plan was estimated at around \$500,000.

The stalling of the Specific Planning process is problematic for a number of reasons.

1. The community, City Council and staff have lost continuity with and understanding of the Specific Plan as the plan has languished. This means that a significant work effort is getting stale and will potentially need to be repeated in some form in order to effectively complete the planning process for the Mill Site.
2. State and federal laws continue to change, further proscribing the redevelopment of the Mill Site. For example, Water issues may become a major development limiting factor. Additionally, State law has changed with regard to cultural resources sites, which may result in a portion of the proposed residential zone becoming undevelopable. Additionally, new State law requires the City to engage in Native American consultation with regard to the redevelopment of the site, because of Traditional Cultural Property and cultural resource deposits found on the site.
3. The existing zoning of the site, Timber Resources Industrial, is extremely limiting and effectively precludes reuse of portions of the site by local businesses which are actively seeking opportunities to expand and grow. This has meant that new economic development and job growth opportunities have been lost. Specifically, some local business owners want to expand onto the Mill Site, but they are stymied by the extremely limited Timber Resource Industrial zoning.

The City can proceed with a rezoning of the Mill Site without GP as the applicant, as described below.

#### **4. Potential future avenues for the Mill Site rezoning process**

Staff has identified two alternative paths forward for the rezoning and eventual reuse of the Mill Site.

1. The City could pick up the Specific Plan where it was left off, using staff to update it to reflect current City Council priorities. This effort would probably take six months to a year. Upon completion of the Specific Plan, the City would need to fund and prepare an EIR prior to adoption of the Specific Plan. The cost to prepare the Specific Plan EIR is estimated at \$350,000, with an additional \$150,000 required to update various resources studies. The EIR process would likely take about 16 months, and it would be followed by the submission of an LCP amendment to incorporate the proposed policies and regulations from the Specific Plan into the LCP. This process would take an additional two years. Conservatively the Specific Plan adoption process and LCP amendment process would take 4+ years and cost around \$500,000. These costs are potentially recoverable through a Specific Plan fee which would be paid by future developers as the site is redeveloped over time.
2. Alternatively, the City could revise General Plan Policies LU-7.1 and LU-7.2 so that a comprehensive planning process is required rather than a Specific Plan. The City could then rework the Land Use Map, policies and regulations in the Specific Plan (per City Council and community input) into a Local Coastal Plan (LCP) amendment. The LCP amendment can be as comprehensive as the City Council desires. As an applicant to the Coastal Commission, the City can submit the LCP amendment without completing an EIR. The Coastal Commission would be the Lead Agency under CEQA and would complete the Coastal Act's "functional equivalent" of an EIR for the application. This would allow the City to complete the planning for the Mill Site, without the need to complete a costly EIR. However, the City would still have to provide many background studies, which would cost an estimated \$150,000 (staff estimates that the following background studies would be required: traffic, tsunami, sea-level rise, water/wastewater, and geotechnical). This approach would give the Coastal Commission a more direct and possibly larger role in shaping the final zoning for the site. They would have the ability to revise and shape the application through the LCP Amendment process and the associated environmental review. This approach would require a two-step process. First the City would have to modify its current LCP through an LCP amendment, so that a Specific Plan would no longer be needed for the rezoning of the Mill Site; and a second LCP amendment

would rezone the site and include policies and regulations for the development of the site. This entire process would take two plus years and cost approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000. See **Attachment 4** for a detailed step-by-step breakdown of the LCP Amendment process.

City staff has conferred with Coastal Commission staff and the Coastal Commission staff is amenable to either approach.

It should also be noted that no matter which approach the City Council and the Planning Commission select to the rezoning of the mill site, the rezoning of the Mill Site would allow and prohibit different uses in different area; it does not make any project happen. The amount of actual development that occurs on the site will depend on development feasibility and a business or non-profit interested and capable of completing a development project. Development feasibility includes many intersecting factors such as: 1) the market demand and prices for the land, housing, industrial and office space; 2) the cost of capital (interest rates); 3) the cost of the land; 4) the cost of construction; 5) the cost to install infrastructure such as streets, utilities, water and wastewater improvements; 6) the zoning regulations and requirements; 7) the decisions of Planning Commission, City Council, the Coastal Commission and other regulatory agencies on each specific application for development permits (CDP, UP and CEQA).

The City was awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$50,000 to start this process. The grant funds will become available in March of 2017. Additionally, the Coastal Commission will likely release a round of grant funding later this year for Local Coastal Plan (LCP) amendments, which the rezoning of the Mill Site will require. The City could apply for up to \$200,000 from this funding source. If awarded, these funds would help to cover staff time and consultant costs associated with preparation of an LCP amendment and background studies.

#### **Discussion Point 1**

City Council, the Planning Commission and the community should ask questions, discuss and understand the pros and cons of the Specific Plan/LCP Amendment and the LCP Amendment only approach before the City Council commits to a specific direction. It would be helpful to understand the range of Council and community questions and concerns regarding each approach.

In order to understand and discuss the options, it is important to also understand the community's Mill Site reuse goals and the breadth and scope of the work effort and work products to date.

### **5. Community's & City Council's Key Mill Site Reuse Goals**

In 2008, the City identified guiding principles for reuse of the Mill Site through numerous community and City Council workshops. These principles include:

1. Extension of the City street grid onto the site;
2. Retention of views to the ocean;
3. Creation of new job opportunities on the Mill Site;
4. Extension of the downtown commercial district onto the Mill Site;
5. Establishment of a coastal park with a multi-use trail and other park amenities;
6. Zoning for residential uses in the Northern District; zoning to extend the Central Business District, visitor serving uses, and compact mixed use residential development in the Central District; and zoning for job-generating uses such as light industrial, education, and office space in the Southern District;
7. Establishment of an Urban Reserve to preserve an area of the site for a future Specific Plan process and to allow future residents/City Council the opportunity to shape redevelopment of a portion of the site.

8. Implementation of sustainable practices in conjunction with future development on the Mill Site, such as low impact development, green building, storm water catchment, etc.;
9. Incorporation of “smart growth” practices such as compact design, mixed-use development, and higher density residential development adjacent to the City’s central business district;
10. Incorporation of high quality design criteria for all development in the Specific Plan area; and
11. Daylighting of culverted Maple Creek.

### Discussion Point 2

City Council, the Planning Commission and the community should review the guiding principles from the last planning process and determine if they still resonate for the community and the Mill Site. Perhaps there are new guiding principles that should be added and others that should be modified or deleted.

These guiding principles were used to inform and structure the drafting of the Specific Plan. Any new guiding principles would similarly be used to inform this planning process for the Mill Site.

It will be instructive to review the previous work effort and the final work product from that effort, before beginning a new planning effort.

## 6. Draft Specific Plan & Related Documents

As of early 2012 when work on the Specific Plan ceased, the draft Mill Site Specific Plan was about 85% complete. City staff had worked with GP and numerous consultants over an intensive three-year period to prepare the following documents for the Mill Site rezoning process:

- 1) Draft Mill Site Specific Plan (the “Specific Plan”) – See **Attachments 5 and 6**.
- 2) Revised Citywide Design Guidelines – The Fort Bragg Citywide Design Guidelines were revised to (1) promote a desired level of quality for future development on the Mill Site; (2) clarify expectations for high-quality design; (3) establish evaluation criteria for project review; (4) provide a method to help ensure objectivity, consistency, and predictability in the design review process; and (5) promote a clear identity and sense of place for the Mill Site.
- 3) Master Tentative Map – A Tentative Subdivision Map, pursuant to Government Code Sections 66489.1 to 66498.9, was prepared for the Plan Area.
- 4) Utility Master Plan – Defines all street, drainage, water and sewer improvements and costs that would be required to support the proposed development that would be possible under the Specific Plan.
- 5) Numerous background and resource studies for the EIR, including:
  - a. Botanical study, wetland delineation, avian habitat study
  - b. Traffic study
  - c. Archaeology study
  - d. Geotechnical study

Additionally, quite a bit of leg work was completed to define and understand related issues, including:

- 1) Market Analysis, which identified future demand for new office, retail, industrial and residential development in the City as a whole and on the Mill Site

- 2) Evaluation of GP and City water rights, resources, storage, treatment and distribution system
- 3) Alternative concepts for daylighting the Alder and/or Maple drainages
- 4) Potential Mill Pond reconfiguration
- 5) Preliminary draft Development Agreement
- 6) Draft Development Impact Fee Study

This list of studies and analyses that went into the production of the Mill Site Specific Plan and related required documents provides a sense of the breadth and extent of the effort. Additionally, it is useful to understand the content and purpose of the Mill Site Specific Plan itself.

## 7. Mill Site Specific Plan Content

The Specific Plan is organized into nine chapters. The Specific Plan policies, maps and tables are intended to be incorporated in the Coastal General Plan and the Coastal Land Use and Development Code, which together make up the City's LCP. If adopted as a Specific Plan and/or rolled into an LCP amendment, the policies, maps and tables would have regulatory authority over all redevelopment activities on the Mill Site. The Specific Plan narrative provides context for understanding the Mill Site and the rationale for the policies. The nine chapters of the Specific Plan (see **Attachment 5**) include:

**Chapter 1: Introduction** describes the purpose of the Specific Plan and provides an overview of the planning process, the community vision for the three districts of the Mill Site, and the regulatory context for the Specific Plan.

**Chapter 2: Land Use Development Standards** provides the land use framework and sets forth development limitations, policies, and development standards for Mill Site development.

- The Land Use Plan identifies the preferred future site zoning for residential, commercial, industrial, visitor serving, parks, open space and urban reserve.
- The development limitations table, as currently written, would allow for the development of 520 residential units, 795,500 square feet of commercial and industrial development, and 450 hotel rooms.
- Policies about development phasing reflect the vision to accommodate development from east to west and to retain flexibility to accommodate "the big idea" (i.e., a major job-creating use) in the Southern District and allow for density transfers within the Central District.
- Chapter 2 defines the permitted uses within each zoning district and sets policies that would result in a mix of lot sizes and densities and the establishment of parks.
- Chapter 2 sets permissible parcel size and configurations for future subdivisions, as well as development regulations such as setbacks, site coverage, height limits, and development density.

Note that, as currently written, each zoning district has a relatively low amount of permitted development or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) relative to the land dedicated to each zone. This arose because the amount of permitted development in the Development Limitations Table was reduced based on Coastal Commission comments but the land use map and the amount of land dedicated to each use remained unchanged based on GP's unwillingness to reconfigure the land use map. Consequently, as drafted, the Specific Plan would result in very low density spread out over a relatively larger area. However, policies were added to the Specific Plan to provide for density transfers and the designation of density by block at the subdivision stage in order to promote good urban form and distribution of open space. See Policies LU-4, LU-16, LU-17 and LU-25. Alternatively, the relatively low FARs could be addressed more effectively by reducing the land areas zoned for each type of development, which would also satisfy Coastal Commission concerns.

**Chapter 3: Multimodal Circulation, Streetscape, and Stormwater** describes the circulation plan (including the roadway, bicycle and pedestrian network for the Specific Plan Area) and parking management and design. This chapter also includes policies and guidelines that address the design of streets, sidewalks, landscape treatments, storm water management, street furniture, and street lighting in the Plan Area. Chapter 3 sets forth:

- Street standards with travel lane dimensions, design speeds, and parking configurations; street sections for the primary streets within the Plan Area, and roadway policies that will ensure that development is pedestrian friendly and provides effective connectivity and the extension of the existing grid system onto the site.
- Bicycle parking and bike facilities on the Mill Site.
- Streetscape design features required for pedestrian access and safety and sidewalk standards for key pedestrian streets on the Mill Site.
- A parking management strategy focused on minimizing the construction of parking and requiring shared parking where possible to encourage people to walk. New parking standards are also proposed (please see Appendix A of Specific Plan) which will be directly folded into the Coastal Land Use and Development Code).
- A variety of standards and policies related to street landscaping, parking lane treatments, curb extensions, street furniture, and lighting.
- A storm water management approach that emphasizes Low Impact Development techniques such as rain gardens, permeable paving, and bioswales.

**Chapter 4: Sustainable Design addresses energy, water and green building.** Chapter 4 sets forth policies that reduce energy use by requiring the use of passive strategies for heating and lighting, encouraging the use of renewable energy, implementing design strategies that reduce energy use, and the use of district heating for larger projects. Water policies are focused on water conservation in the Specific Plan area. Green building policies focus on requiring compliance with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or an equivalent green building certification for new construction. Policies also address recycling and preservation of site trees.

**Chapter 5: Open Space, Parks and Resource Conservation** describes the open space, park facilities and resource conservation opportunities on the Mill Site. The chapter provides policy guidance for minimum design requirements, project phasing, and operations issues for open space, park facilities, and wetlands. It includes policies requiring the daylighting of Maple Creek (see policy MSOS-17 &18). The chapter also addresses minimum maintenance and safety requirements for undeveloped portions of the Mill Site that may function as a kind of open space until they are developed. Finally, the chapter identifies existing and new policies related to cultural and natural resource conservation on the site.

**Chapter 6: Hazards** provides a discussion of potential hazards associated with development and future use of certain portions of the site which have recorded Land Use Covenants restricting future uses as a result of the environmental remediation process. This chapter also addresses tsunami hazards.

**Chapter 7: Utilities & Public Services** and the related Master Utility Plan describe the backbone water, sewer, storm drainage and other infrastructure systems necessary to serve anticipated development within the Mill Site and provide policies regarding development of that infrastructure. The Chapter also provides policies regarding police, fire, hospital, emergency and the provision of solid waste services on the Mill Site. If Council chooses to complete the Specific Plan, this chapter will need further refinement and additional information.

**Chapter 8: Implementation and Phasing** sets forth: 1) the regulatory framework for site development; 2) the procedures to approve, finance and manage development and public facilities (infrastructure, streets, parks, etc.); and 3) phasing policies for the Specific Plan. This chapter is incomplete, because significant portions are contingent on completion of the following work products: review of the Master Utility Plan, financing plan, fiscal impact study, and Development Agreement. If Council directs staff to complete the Specific Plan, this chapter will require additional work by staff and consultants.

**Chapter 9: Glossary** provides definitions of key terms that are important for effective implementation of the Specific Plan regulations and policies.

The first six chapters and the glossary of the Specific Plan were intended to be integrated into the Coastal General Plan and Coastal Land Use and Development Code through a Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendment. Development on the Mill Site would thus be guided by the policies of the existing Coastal General Plan, the new policies from the Specific Plan, and the regulations of the Coastal Land Use and Development Code. Development will also be subject to the Citywide Design Guidelines. Proposed modifications to the adopted Citywide Design Guidelines were presented to the City Council and the Planning Commission for input in May 2011. All City Council and Planning Commission comments were addressed in the final draft of the Citywide Design Guidelines. However the adoption of the revised Citywide Design Guidelines halted when GP withdrew their Specific Plan application, as there was no CEQA document for the adoption of the new Citywide Design Guidelines and there was no reason to proceed as the Specific Plan was not going forward.

## **8. Major topics for further considerations for the reuse of the Mill Site**

The draft Specific Plan has many well-articulated policies that will ensure that new development on the Mill Site conforms to the City Council/Planning Commission and community vision and goals for the site. However, given the passage of time since it was drafted, it may need a refresher. City Council/Planning Commission, and the community will have many choices going forward with the Specific Plan process, and staff has identified some of the fundamental choices below as further points of discussion:

### **Discussion Point 3**

**Reduce the amount of development and/or the size of the plan area.** The draft Specific Plan would rezone sufficient property to absorb all new development in Fort Bragg for at least 30 years. This is a very long development time horizon for a planning effort. City Council could consider rezoning a smaller portion of the site and provide for land with new zoning that could be developed and absorbed by the market in a shorter time frame, such as 10 to 20 years.

Further, it is clear from 2012 presentations to the Coastal Commission that the current plan was too ambitious in terms of the amount and extent of development it accommodated. The amount of development could be reduced either by reducing the amount of development allowed through the development limitations table and/or by reducing the land area rezoned through this planning effort.

Finally, as previously noted the recent drought and ongoing pressures on water supply that result from Climate Change will likely necessitate a smaller development foot print than was envisioned in the draft Specific Plan.

#### Discussion Point 4

**How much of the site should be rezoned at this time?** The land areas rezoned at this time could be decreased to reduce the time horizon for the plan, and leave more of the site un-zoned for new development (as Urban Reserve), which could be rezoned by a future City Council at a later date. Fort Bragg grows and changes very slowly, due to its geographical remoteness and limited market demand. The Specific Plan could be recalibrated to reflect this fact, perhaps downsizing the geographic area of the Land Use Map that is designated for rezoning.

#### Discussion Point 5

**Identify an appropriate balance between feasibility and regulation.** The Specific Plan was written to foster environmental sustainability and community cohesion, while development feasibility received less focus. The plan has many policies focused on job generation and many focused on environmental protection and community appropriateness. An updated planning effort may define a new balance amongst these various priorities.

#### Discussion Point 6

**Enable smaller projects with fewer requirements.** When the Specific Plan was originally prepared, the City Council and GP envisioned one or a few large developers purchasing large portions of the site and completing their projects in compliance with the plan. However, as time has passed, it has become increasingly clear that there is limited interest by major developers in the site. City staff and the Mill Site ad hoc committee have met with a couple of larger developers over the past five years, and while they initially expressing interest in the site, they lost interest due to weak local market demand and the high level of uncertainty and risk associated with redevelopment of the site, in particular with regard to Coastal Commission requirements, water availability and infrastructure costs. It appears more likely that the site will be developed more slowly by a variety of small local developers and business owners seeking to expand their operations. Small local developers and local businesses will not have sufficient capital or margins required for many of the “bells and whistles” in the envisioned plan. Council will need to provide direction on how to balance development feasibility for smaller local developers and business owners with the community desire for the some of the costly policy requirements established by the plan.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The City has obtained a CDBG grant of \$50,000 to restart the Mill Site planning process. The City could also seek an additional \$200,000 in funds from the next round of the Coastal Commission’s Local Coastal Plan (LCP) amendment grants. If awarded, these funds can be used to cover staff time and consultant costs associated with the preparation of an LCP amendment and background studies. If Council decides to go forward with a Specific Plan, an additional \$300,000 in funding will be required to fund the preparation of an EIR. Additional funds would need to be identified for preparation of an EIR.

Once the site is rezoned, City Council can adopt policies that specifically require that new development has a net positive fiscal impact on the City of Fort Bragg (see Chapter 8, Policy IF-2 of the Specific Plan).

**CONSISTENCY:**

The City's 2014 Economic Development Strategy specifically includes rezoning and the eventual reuse of the Mill Site as a high priority project. The project must comply with the City's Coastal General Plan in order to be certified by the Coastal Commission. This may require modification of one or more policies of the Coastal General Plan prior to submittal of an LCP amendment.

**IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:**

Preparation, adoption and implementation of a Mill Site Specific Plan could be accomplished in the following general timeframes:

- 1) 2017: Hold workshops and update draft Specific Plan as needed to reflect new Council and community priorities, market realities and conformance with new State law.
- 2) 2018 & 2019: Obtain funding for and update resource studies for EIR and update/complete related reports required for the adoption of the Specific Plan.
- 3) 2020: Obtain funding for EIR, complete EIR RFP process; hold EIR Scoping Sessions; prepare Draft EIR.
- 4) 2021: Hold public hearings on Mill Site Specific Plan and EIR. Adoption of Mill Site Specific Plan. Prepare and submit LCP Amendment to Coastal Commission.
- 5) 2022: Coastal Commission Action on LCP Amendments.

Alternatively, City Council may decide to forego completion of the Specific Plan and instead modify the current document and submit it directly to the Coastal Commission as an LCP amendment, in which case the timeline would proceed as follows:

- 1) 2017: Hold workshops and develop an LCP amendment, from the draft Specific Plan, with revisions that address new Council and community priorities, knowledge of the site, and conformance with new State law.
- 2) 2018: Update resource studies for submittal of the LCP Amendment. Hold public hearings on LCP Amendment and submit the Local Coastal Program Amendment to the Coastal Commission.
- 3) 2019: Coastal Commission Action on Local Coastal Program Amendment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Input from Coastal Commission Meeting regarding Specific Plan
2. Minutes from January 18, 2012, City Council and Planning Commission joint workshop on Mill Site Specific Plan
3. Minutes from February 29, 2012 City Council and Planning Commission joint workshop on Mill Site Specific Plan
4. LCP Amendment Process
5. Mill Site Specific Plan, 2012 Draft
6. Land Use Plan Map
7. Glossary

**NOTIFICATION:**

1. Georgia Pacific Site Plan Notify Me Subscriber List
2. Georgia Pacific Site Remediation Notify Me Subscriber List
3. Downtown Businesses Notify Me Subscriber List
4. Affordable Housing Notify Me Subscriber List
5. Economic Development Notify Me Subscriber List

- 6. Community Development Notify Me Subscriber List
- 7. Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Tribal Chairman Mike Knight & THPO Misty Meadlin
- 8. Coastal Commission staff, Cristin Kenyon & Bob Merrill
- 9. Fish and Wildlife staff, Angela Liebenberg

**City Clerk's Office Use Only**

Agency Action <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Approved as Amended Resolution No.: _____    Ordinance No.: _____ Moved by: _____    Seconded by: _____ Vote: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred/Continued to meeting of: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to: _____
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