



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Councilmember Raul Peralez

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** November 24, 2021

Approved by:

Date: 11/24/21

**SUBJECT: General Plan 4-Year Review / Calle Willow NBD**

## RECOMMENDATION

Approve staff recommendation for *no change to uses allowed* within the Willow Street/Calle Willow Neighborhood Business District (NBD) and direct the City Manager to:

1. Change the General Plan land use designation on appropriate properties from Mixed Use Commercial, which already allows residential uses, to Neighborhood/Community Commercial to discourage redevelopment that could result in displacement of small businesses in Calle Willow.
2. Explore and return to council with recommendations for a policy that development projects be required to comply with future anti-displacement strategies resulting from efforts such as the Small Business Alum Rock Pilot Program.

## DISCUSSION

Willow Street between McLellan Avenue and Almaden Avenue, commonly known as Calle Willow, is a historical and cultural gem in the heart of the Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood. This NBD has long been home to small, predominantly Spanish-speaking businesses that have enlivened the community for generations.

During the process of the 4-year general plan review, I met with numerous small business owners along Calle Willow who were deeply concerned about the potential land use changes being contemplated for their neighborhood. Their concerns were rooted in the fact that introducing opportunities for residential development, while needed citywide,

could create a more serious consequence: the displacement of longtime small businesses and the community's identity at-large. A survey conducted by National Main Street Center found that overall, 63% of respondents in Calle Willow were opposed to the contemplated changes, with 70% of employers and workers concerned about displacement. I concurred with their concerns and was pleased to learn that city staff were also supportive of needing to preserve and protect this long-standing community.

Therefore, I urge my council colleagues to support the recommendation to make no changes to Calle Willow's existing NBD and to take further action in making land use changes and explore future policies that would prevent displacement of small businesses. Thank you to the Planning Department for hearing the concerns of the community, Sacred Heart Community Services for facilitating the discussions among business owners and neighbors and for all those who spoke up to preserve this beloved community.