



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Christopher Burton

SUBJECT: General Plan Four-Year
Review Policy Framework

DATE: August 5, 2026

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission voted 11-0 to recommend the City Council take the following actions:

(a) Residential Capacity

1. Increase residential capacity in the Envision San José 2040 General Plan through the following actions:
 - i. Modify the density range of the Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN) land use designation from up to 30 DU/AC (dwelling units per acre) to 20-50 DU/AC and increase the height to 4 to 5 stories.
 - ii. Modify the density range of the Urban Residential (UR) land use designation from 30-95 DU/AC to 50- 95 DU/AC
 - iii. Modify the General Plan land use designation and zoning of certain parcels in The Alameda Corridor as shown in Exhibit B.
 - iv. Modify the General Plan land use designation and zoning of Mixed Use Commercial (MUC) designated parcels using the criteria shown in Exhibit C.
 - v. Evaluate and modify the General Plan land use designation and zoning of "SB 1333" parcels.
2. Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) Lands: Develop a framework in which the City could consider certain land use changes on PQP sites while maintaining consistency with General Plan Policy LU-1.9. The PQP framework approach would define and consider the following:
 - i. Develop criteria for determining the appropriate amount and distribution of PQP land and/or sites throughout the city based on demographic, economic, and other data.
 - ii. Evaluate requests and changes in land use based on the framework criteria to unlock housing potential on certain sites while ensuring that adequate community space exists throughout the city.

(b) Small Multifamily / Missing Middle Housing

1. Prohibit small multifamily projects for the following types of sites:
 - i. Very High and High Fire Severity Zones
 - ii. Airport Safety Zones
 - iii. Environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, conservation areas, or habitat areas.
 - iv. Sites with rent-stabilized or rent-regulated units or sites subject to the City's Ellis Act Ordinance.
2. Develop a ministerial approval process for small multifamily development in the Residential Neighborhood land use designation. Projects on historic sites of "lesser significance" (Structures of Merit, Identified Structures, and Contributing Structures to Conservation Areas) would be eligible for ministerial permitting but subject to a set of objective development and design standards for historic properties.
3. Require discretionary approval for small multifamily housing that meets any of the following site parameters:
 - i. Within certain flood zones
 - ii. In riparian corridors
 - iii. Designated City Landmarks
 - iv. Candidate City Landmarks
 - v. City Landmark district properties

(c) Urban Village Strategy

1. Regional Transit Urban Villages: Remove the Blossom Hill Road/Hitachi Urban Village from the list of unplanned Urban Villages.
2. Local Transit Urban Villages:
 - i. Consolidate the unplanned Local Transit Urban Villages into four Urban Village plans, so that each plan encompasses multiple Urban Villages along a single transit corridor.
 - ii. Defer planning of the Local Transit Urban Villages that are within SB 79 buffer zones.
 - iii. Apply an overlay to the unplanned Local Transit Urban Villages within the SB 79 buffer zones to incentivize commercial development.
 - iv. Move the Oakridge Mall (Cambrian/Pioneer) and Oakridge Mall (Edenvale) Urban Villages to the Commercial Corridor and Center Urban Villages category.
 - v. Move the East Capitol Expressway/Silver Creek Road and The Alameda (West) Urban Villages to the Neighborhood Urban Villages category.
 - vi. Remove the Arcadia/Eastridge Urban Village area from the list of unplanned Urban Villages.
3. Commercial Corridor and Center Urban Villages:
 - i. Prioritize the development of comprehensive plans of the unplanned Commercial Corridor and Center Urban Villages.
 - ii. Move the Santa Teresa Boulevard/Bernal Road Urban Village area to the Neighborhood Urban Village category.

4. Neighborhood Urban Villages:
 - i. Change the land use designations and zoning districts of properties within the unplanned Neighborhood Urban Villages as part of a single planning effort, rather than developing individual plans for each.
 - ii. Move the Hamilton Avenue/Meridian Avenue and Kooser Road/Meridian Avenue Urban Village areas to the Commercial Corridor and Center Urban Villages category.
 5. Urban Village Plan Outreach Strategy: Define a standard outreach strategy for urban village planning that consists of a limited number of public workshops, online resources, and additional outreach to community groups, elected officials, and others as needed.
 6. Urban Village Plan Documents: Simplify Urban Village plan documents by minimizing the inclusion of unique development and design standards that are not already in the Zoning Code and/or the Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines.
 7. Mobile home Parks: Remove three mobile home parks from unplanned Urban Village area boundaries.
- (d) Jobs-to-Employed Residents (J/ER) Ratio
1. Maintain the current target J/ER ratio of 1.1.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to recommend the City Council take the following action:

- (e) Small Multifamily / Missing Middle Housing
1. Develop a small multifamily housing program that includes necessary modifications to the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance with the following parameters:
 - i. Increase the density in the Residential Neighborhood land use designation from 8 DU/AC to 32 DU/AC.
 - ii. Allow a maximum building height of 35 feet and 3 stories in Residential Neighborhood.
 - iii. Consider other development standards that may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR)
 - ii. Appropriate setbacks
 - iii. Maximum lot coverage
 - iv. Maximum lot size
 - iv. Evaluate and implement additional development and design standards specifically for historic properties

Since the following motions failed to sustain a majority vote, there is no recommendation from the Planning Commission on the following staff recommendation:

No. 1.a.iii: Modify the General Plan land use designation and zoning of certain parcels in the Winchester Boulevard Corridor as shown in Exhibit A.

1. Motion to adopt the staff recommendation with the following amendment: Designate all parcels recommended as Urban Residential as Mixed Use Neighborhood. (Vote 5–6).
2. Substitute motion to approve the staff recommendation. (Vote 5–6).
3. Substitute motion to approve the staff recommendation with the following amendment: Designate 826 N. Winchester as Mixed Use Neighborhood. (Vote 3–8).
4. Motion to reconsider and approve the staff recommendation with the following amendment: Designate 826 N. Winchester as Mixed Use Neighborhood. (Vote 5–6).

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

This memorandum presents the recommended policy framework for the third General Plan Four-Year Review. The Four-Year Review evaluates and updates key General Plan policies in response to changing community needs, State law, and City Council direction. The proposed policy framework addresses four City Council-directed areas:

- 1) Increasing residential capacity,
- 2) Creating Missing Middle housing opportunities,
- 3) Updating the Urban Village implementation strategy, and
- 4) Evaluating the General Plan's Jobs-to-Employed Residents Ratio.

Approval of the recommended policy framework will allow Planning staff to prepare General Plan land use diagram and text amendments, and Zoning ordinance changes, that will increase the General Plan's residential capacity, establish a Small Multi-family/Missing Middle housing program and streamline the Urban Village implementation strategy.

BACKGROUND

On June 24, 2026, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider the proposed General Plan Four-Year Review Policy Framework. A complete background of this proposed policy framework is included in the attached Planning Commission staff report dated June 17, 2026 (Attachment).

ANALYSIS

A complete analysis of the proposed policy framework is included in the attached Planning Commission staff report dated June 17, 2026.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Based on direction given by City Council, staff will prepare draft general plan amendments and ordinance updates to implement the policy framework regarding residential capacity, missing middle housing, the urban village strategy and J/ER. Staff will also conduct appropriate environmental analysis to support these changes.

These proposed changes will be brought back before the Planning Commission and City Council in the December 2027 timeframe. Staff will also engage with the community and interested stakeholders on the proposed changes.

COORDINATION

The preparation of this memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Pursuant to City Council direction and the revised Outreach and Engagement Plan¹, the Planning Division conducted outreach for the General Plan Four-Year Review starting in December 2025. For additional background and staff analysis on outreach efforts, including a summary of community input, please review the "Outreach Summary Memo" for Task Force meeting #8.²

Staff followed City Council Policy 6-30: Public Outreach Policy, in order to inform the public of the project. This memorandum will be posted on the City Council's Agenda website for the City Council hearing scheduled for August 18, 2026, and staff has been available to respond to questions from the public.

BOARD, COMMISSION, COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

Staff provided a presentation on the policy framework, which was followed by public comments and commission discussion.

Public Comment

Twelve members of the public spoke during the public comment portion. Below is a consolidated overview of questions and comments raised by members of the public.

¹ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/125535/638967278721170000>

² <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/132591>

Eight speakers from the Cory Neighborhood spoke generally in support of additional housing but opposed the proposed Urban Residential designation, stating that Mixed Use Neighborhood designation would provide a more appropriate compromise by allowing sufficient growth while better balancing neighborhood character, small businesses, and livability. Comments focused on concerns about traffic, pedestrian safety, existing parking spillovers from Valley Fair Mall, and lack of amenities such as transit service, and grocery stores, and the potential displacement of neighborhood-serving businesses. Speakers also contrasted Winchester Boulevard with The Alameda, suggesting that Winchester corridor area was being asked to absorb greater development intensity, and urged the Commission to avoid changing to high-density designations.

A representative from the California Faculty Association, San José State University chapter, stated that the General Plan update should reconsider Growth Areas, where housing is currently prohibited, and housing opportunities on Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) lands. Representatives from San José YIMBY and SPUR supported staff's recommendations regarding increased residential capacity, including increased density, small multifamily housing, and no parking mandates to improve feasibility and affordability.

A representative from SV@Home referred to a letter signed by school districts, faith organizations, housing advocates, and community-based organizations, and supported expanding permitted uses on school and faith-based Public/Quasi-Public lands citywide, rather than limiting changes to selected sites. The speaker stated that a limited or uneven approach could create equity concerns, discretionary approvals prolong approval timelines and would make it harder for school districts and faith organizations to retain their properties. She added that broader permitted uses in the PQP designation could support affordable workforce housing and other community-serving and neighborhood-serving uses, while helping these organizations remain financially sustainable.

Commission Discussion

Commissioners discussed and voted on each policy item separately. The following is a summary of the discussion by topic and includes the motion(s) and votes of the Commission.

Residential Capacity

Recommendations 1.a.i to 1.a.vi (except 1.a.iii)

Vice Chair Bickford made a motion to approve staff recommendations for items 1.a.i to 1.a.vi, setting aside item 1.a.iii for separate discussion, which was seconded by Commissioner Cantrell. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Recommendation 1.a.iii

Commissioner Casey inquired why 825 N. Winchester Boulevard was recommended for a change to Urban Residential despite being discontinuous from the other proposed Urban Residential parcels. Staff explained that it was recommended because the site was currently vacant and after a denial at an Early Consideration hearing for a change to Transit Residential, City Council directed staff to examine a possible land use designation with less density on the site. Staff explained that Urban Residential was recommended because it is better suited for sites near transit and amenities, while Mixed Use Neighborhood would likely result in lower-density townhome development. Commissioner Casey responded that, based on his site visits, he supported the other Urban Residential recommendations but not the designation for 826 N. Winchester.

Commissioner Casey additionally questioned whether a residential permit parking program could help address parking impacts in the Corey neighborhood, including spillover parking from Valley Fair Mall. Staff explained that residential permit parking programs are generally not expanded because of enforcement costs and certain policy considerations and are typically intended to address spillover parking from major regional destinations rather than new residential development in the neighborhood since it will be applicable to the current residents as well.

Commissioner Cantrell expressed support for redesignating the Winchester corridor sites proposed for Urban Residential to Mixed Use Neighborhood. He stated that the community had demonstrated a willingness to accommodate additional housing and that Mixed Use Neighborhood would provide a reasonable first step while respecting neighborhood concerns. He questioned whether the additional density achievable under Urban Residential designation would result in a meaningful benefit compared to Mixed Use Neighborhood. He made a motion to adopt staff recommendations with an amendment that all sites recommended for Urban Residential instead be designated as Mixed Use Neighborhood, which was seconded by Commissioner Oliverio.

Commissioner Young then made a substitute motion to approved staff's recommendation, which was seconded by Commissioner Casey.

Commissioner Bhandal expressed concern over the Urban Residential designation at the 826 N. Winchester Boulevard site, explaining he thought it was too dense but supported the Urban Residential designation for the sites closer to Valley Fair.

Commissioner Bhandal made a substitute motion to accept staff's recommendations with an amendment that 826 N. Winchester instead be designated as Mixed Use Neighborhood, which was seconded by Commissioner Casey.

Commissioner Young acknowledged the Cory neighborhood residents for their active participation throughout the process and their concerns. He said that the Winchester Boulevard corridor was conducive to adding more housing, which is needed during this housing crisis, and was supportive of staff's recommendations.

Vice Chair Bickford expressed that the Commission's responsibility was to balance the needs of both the City and its residents. She appreciated that neighborhood residents supported additional housing and had expressed their concerns in a reasonable manner.

Commissioner Cantrell asked staff to compare the potential unit yield for the site with the Urban Residential and Mixed Use Neighborhood designations. Staff explained that the potential unit yield will depend on the parcel size and density bonus percentage. Staff further stated that assuming a one-acre parcel and a 50% density bonus, maximum unit yield could increase from approximately 100 dwelling units under Mixed Use Neighborhood to approximately 200 dwelling units under Urban Residential. Commissioner Cantrell commented that those additional 100 units yielded with the Urban Residential designation did not justify undermining public trust.

Commissioner Barocio questioned Commissioner Bhandal on why he was making exception for 826 N. Winchester and Commissioner Bhandal explained he thought that lower density at this site would balance the needs of the city and the community.

Commissioner Oliverio expressed support for Commissioner Cantrell's motion, citing the Cory neighborhood's consistent and constructive participation throughout the process. He also noted that the neighborhood already experiences impact from its proximity to Valley Fair Mall and stated that State Density Bonus law would continue to allow additional residential density where applicable.

In response to Commissioner Cao's question about the transit hub, staff explained that while there was no longer a transit hub near the corridor, several bus lines still run along Stevens Creek Boulevard and Winchester Boulevard.

In response to Commissioner Cao's questions, staff explained that the proposed Urban Residential designation would better position the City to meet future Regional Housing Needs Assessment obligations and that Mixed Use Neighborhood designations typically result in townhome development rather than higher-density housing near a Growth Area and good transit.

Commissioner Cao further asked staff to clarify the use of State Density Bonus in Mixed Use Neighborhood sites and staff explained that while developers have the option, it has not been staff's experience that they do so when they can build townhomes because townhomes are the most desirable building type currently. Commissioner Cao expressed support for staff's recommendations, citing the need to increase the City's housing capacity and noting the challenges younger residents face in being able to afford housing in San José.

Commissioner Casey expressed concern about the maximum height allowance of Urban Residential designation at the Winchester corridor location and staff clarified that the height limit is proposed to be modified to 85 feet for the subject sites.

Commissioner Escobar expressed support for Commissioner Cantrell's motion, citing that Mixed Use Neighborhood balanced the needs of more housing and the quality of life for the existing neighborhood, and also how the designation could affect the neighbors in the City of Santa Clara across the street.

Chair Rosario held a vote on Commissioner Bhandal's substitute motion to approve staff recommendation except for the 826 N. Winchester site to change to Mixed Use Neighborhood. The motion failed 3-8 (Bhandal, Casey, and Nguyen in favor, all others opposed).

Commissioner Young stated that allowing townhome development on the Winchester corridor would preclude the opportunity to accommodate higher-density and affordable housing.

Chair Rosario held a vote on Commissioner Young's motion to approve staff recommendation. The motion failed 5-6 (Barocio, Cao, Casey, Young, and Rosario in favor, all others opposed).

Chair Rosario held a vote on Commissioner Cantrell's motion to approve staff's recommendations except all sites proposed for Urban Residential to be designated as Mixed Use Neighborhood instead. The motion failed 5-6 (Bickford, Cantrell, Escobar, Nguyen, and Oliverio in favor, all others opposed).

Commissioner Bhandal re-introduced his motion. Commissioner Young seconded it. Commissioner Cantrell questioned whether Mixed Use Neighborhood would necessarily result in townhome development on the Winchester corridor, suggesting the area's strong market conditions could support higher-density development. Commissioner Oliverio acknowledged staff's experience about townhomes being the likely outcome on Mixed Use Neighborhood sites, but noted that future development outcomes are uncertain and may vary depending on market conditions.

Chair Rosario held another vote on Commissioner Bhandal's motion, and the motion failed 5-6 (Cao, Casey, Nguyen, Young, and Bhandal in favor, all others opposed).

Public/Quasi-Public Lands

Commissioner Casey supported staff's methodical approach to evaluating Public/Quasi-Public lands, stating that the City should ensure an appropriate distribution of these lands across all communities. While recognizing the challenges facing some school districts and faith-based organizations, he said the broader needs of the community should take precedence over individual organizations.

Commissioner Oliverio stated that the closure of a public school could have a significant long-term impact on the community if the school-age population grows again, whereas the implication of closing a church site may be different. Staff responded that although both school and church uses are in demand, the key concern is maintaining adequate supply for public school sites.

Commissioner Oliverio asked if the framework criteria staff proposes to develop would allow more uses on PQP lands. Staff responded that the criteria would be used to evaluate individual sites proposed for conversion to residential uses, with the goal of ensuring there is an adequate number of PQP sites distributed throughout the city. Staff clarified that since there is significant variation in PQP sites, the evaluation would consider aspects such as site size, location, and context.

Secretary Burton explained that from a land use perspective, it's important to understand the distribution and availability of PQP lands in the city. He noted that while the General Plan calls for preserving lands for public use, it doesn't state how much land should be preserved or how it should be distributed throughout the city. He stated that the proposed framework would establish criteria for staff to base their recommendations concerning future General Plan Amendment applications seeking to convert PQP lands to other uses.

In response to Commissioner Oliverio's final question, staff confirmed that the evaluation criteria would be further developed during the General Plan Four-Year review process and would be presented along with recommendations for specific sites, as staffing resources allow.

Commissioner Oliverio made a motion to accept staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barocio.

Commissioner Young acknowledged the need to balance preserving public and quasi-public lands with addressing the city's housing crisis, but expressed concern that a case-by-case evaluation process would create uncertainty, increase costs and processing time, and could result in inconsistent treatment of similar PQP sites in different parts of the city.

Commissioner Young also questioned whether potential future demographic changes should be a determining factor in evaluating school sites, stating that school districts are better positioned to assess their long-term facility needs. He noted that representatives

from several community organizations, including SV@Home and Somos Mayfair, have provided a letter in support of expanding allowable use in PQP designation, suggesting that the need for housing may outweigh concerns about reducing community gathering spaces.

Commissioner Young made a substitute motion to recommend expanding the uses of PQP-parcels with faith-based and education-based uses to include affordable housing, senior housing, educator and workforce housing, childcare centers, and community-based health centers, instead of the staff recommended framework. Vice Chair Bickford seconded the motion, stating the importance of staff-proposed framework, amending the motion to retain staff recommended actions in addition to Commissioner Young's motion.

Staff clarified that the framework is focused on allowing residential uses within PQP, as most other uses referenced in the motion are already permitted under the existing designation. Staff also clarified that if residential uses became allowed within PQP generally, as proposed by the motion, the framework would not be necessary because it would enable residential projects to proceed without discretionary review.

Vice Chair Bickford sought clarification on whether the framework criteria will change the City's current approach regarding uses on PQP lands. Staff responded that the framework would enable a new approach to evaluating potential residential conversions by allowing the City to expeditiously identify appropriate sites while preserving community-serving uses where appropriate. Staff noted that this approach would help retain local discretion in areas where State housing laws limit the City's ability to impose additional requirements once residential uses are allowed.

Vice Chair Bickford withdrew her second of Commissioner Young's motion. Chair Rosario seconded the motion. After further discussion, it was clarified that the motion did not include the proposed framework because it would be redundant once housing is allowed in PQP land. Chair Rosario withdrew his second. The substitute motion failed in the absence of a second.

Commissioner Bhandal expressed support for developing a framework to evaluate potential residential conversion of PQP sites, emphasizing that decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis because the needs of school districts and other public facilities vary across the city and may change over time. Commissioner Barocio agreed, explaining that lower-income neighborhoods are experiencing more school closures and

warning that a blanket, citywide approach to converting PQP land could disproportionately reduce community-serving land in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Commissioner Cantrell asked if the Planning Commission would have another opportunity to review the details of the PQP framework criteria, whether projects on PQP lands would be considered through a ministerial process, and how the City would ensure that the cost of a General Plan amendment is not prohibitive for applicants.

Staff confirmed that the framework details would be brought to the Planning Commission and City Council for consideration, that any General Plan amendment to change uses on a PQP site would remain discretionary, and that the City could initiate amendments to keep costs low for applicants. In addition, staff said the City is committed to collaborating closely with school districts and community organizations in developing the framework and considering individual sites.

Commissioner Oliverio noted that school districts already can build certain types of housing on their lands and stated his support for city-initiated General Plan amendments as a way for the City to ensure that a certain amount of land is available for public uses.

Chair Rosario stated that school districts generally understand their own property needs and support providing them with flexibility. He expressed support for developing the framework while ensuring it does not unnecessarily prevent housing opportunities.

Chair Rosario called a vote on Commissioner Oliverio's motion to approve staff recommendation. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Small Multifamily/Missing Middle Housing

Commissioner Cantrell made a motion to approve Item 2, Small Multifamily/Missing Middle Housing, in its entirety. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Casey.

Commissioner Bhandal proposed an amendment to the motion to approve items 2.b, 2.c, and 2.d, and remove Item 2.a. for separate discussion. The amended motion was seconded by Commissioner Cantrell. Chair Rosario called a vote and the motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Recommendation 2.a.

In response to Commissioner Bhandal's question, staff clarified that the proposed 32 dwelling units per acre density would be the maximum density allowed and that there

would be no minimum density and that the density allowed by the Residential Neighborhood land use designation would prevail over regulations in Planned Development (PD) zoning districts.

Commissioner Cantrell made a motion to approve staff recommendation 2.a. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Casey. The motion passed with a 9-2 vote (Rosario and Oliverio opposed).

Commissioner Oliverio stated that increasing density in single-family neighborhoods could undermine public trust. He noted that increasing density in single-family neighborhoods is relatively rare around the country, and that the outcomes are still unknown. He also stated that the proposal to increase density in Residential Neighborhood areas was unnecessary because State housing laws already allow increased density near transit, which, he said, is more consistent with the General Plan's intentional growth strategy and environmental goals.

Urban Village Implementation

There was no discussion of staff's recommendations related to the Urban Village Strategy. Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve Item 3., Urban Village Strategy, in its entirety. Commissioner Oliverio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Jobs-to-Employed Resident (J/ER) Ratio

Commissioner Oliverio made a motion to approve staff's recommendation on item 4.a. and Commissioner Barocio seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cantrell asked why the City should continue targeting a J/ER ratio of 1.1 if it has never reached that goal. Commissioner Bickford responded that the target is intended to be aspirational and that lowering it could create the perception that the City is no longer committed to strengthening its employment base.

In response to Commissioner Cantrell's question, staff clarified the calculation methodology of the ratio. Staff also stated that lowering the ratio would reduce the overall job capacity planned for in the General Plan, even though the target is aspirational.

Commissioner Cantrell questioned whether the J/ER ratio could limit residential development or preserve commercial uses that are no longer economically viable. Staff explained that the J/ER ratio is primarily a long-term policy goal intended to support fiscal health, meet climate goals, reduce commute trips, and create more vibrant communities. Staff also clarified that most planned job growth would occur in existing

Growth Areas and Employment Areas, and that maintaining the ratio does not constrain residential development.

After receiving some clarification on whether hybrid workers count towards the J/ER ratio, Commissioner Bhandal expressed his support towards maintaining the current J/ER target, stating that the City should continue working toward the goal because it reflects the City's desired trajectory of strengthening its employment base relative to surrounding cities.

The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-007. Preliminary direction to staff and eventual action requires approval from decision-making body.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/

Christopher Burton, Secretary
Planning Commission

For questions, please contact Ruth Cueto, Principal Planner, at ruth.cueto@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-7886 or Jerad Ferguson, Principal Planner, at jerad.ferguson@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-7847.

ATTACHMENT:

Attachment – Planning Commission Staff Report, June 24, 2026



Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION**FROM:** Christopher Burton, Director of
Planning, Building and Code
Enforcement Department**SUBJECT:** General Plan Four-Year Review
Policy Framework**DATE:** June 17, 2026**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** CITYWIDE

Project Description	Proposed policy framework developed through the Task Force process for the Envision San José 2040 General Plan Third Four-Year Major Review
Project Planners	Ruth Cueto, Jerad Ferguson
CEQA Clearance	Not a Project, File No. PP17-007. Preliminary direction to staff and eventual action requires approval from decision-making body.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the City Council directing staff to prepare General Plan amendments and ordinances that implement the following recommendations from the General Plan Four-Year Review Task Force process:

1. Residential Capacity

- a. Increase residential capacity in the Envision San José 2040 General Plan through the following actions:
 - i. Modify the density range of the Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN) land use designation from up to 30 DU/AC (dwelling units per acre) to 20-50 DU/AC and increase the height to 4 to 5 stories.
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 - vi. Evaluate and modify the General Plan land use designation and zoning of "SB 1333" parcels.

- b. *Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) Lands*: Develop a framework in which the City could consider certain land use changes on PQP sites while maintaining consistency with General Plan Policy LU-1.9. The PQP framework approach would define and consider the following:
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- iii. Designated City Landmarks
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3. Urban Village Strategy

- a. Regional Transit Urban Villages: Remove the Blossom Hill Road/Hitachi Urban Village from the list of unplanned Urban Villages.
- b. Local Transit Urban Villages:
 - i. Consolidate the unplanned Local Transit Urban Villages into four Urban Village plans, so that each plan encompasses multiple Urban Villages along a single transit corridor.
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- f. Urban Village Plan Documents: Simplify Urban Village plan documents by minimizing the inclusion of unique development and design standards that are not already in the Zoning Code and/or the Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines.
- g. Mobilehome Parks: Remove three mobile home parks from unplanned Urban Village area boundaries.

4. Jobs-to-Employed Residents (J/ER) Ratio

- a. Maintain the current target J/ER ratio of 1.1.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Envision San José 2040 General Plan is a comprehensive and forward-thinking policy document that lays the framework for becoming a fiscally-sound and environmentally sustainable city of great places, while also accommodating a projected population growth of over 470,000 new residents and aspiration of 382,000 new jobs.

Pursuant to General Plan Policy IP-2.4, the City is required to conduct a review of the General Plan every four years. The purpose of the General Plan Four-Year Review (Four-Year Review) is to evaluate significant changes in the planning context and achievement of key General Plan goals, provide community and stakeholder engagement in reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the General Plan, and recommend any mid-course actions needed to achieve its goals.

Since the adoption of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan in 2011, two Four-Year Reviews have been completed. Together, these reviews resulted in significant updates to the General Plan, including adjustments to the City's jobs and housing growth assumptions, changes to growth area strategies, expanded opportunities for housing development and affordable housing, revisions to Urban Village implementation policies, and updates to transportation and environmental review policies. The reviews also responded to changing market conditions, state housing laws, and evolving City priorities while maintaining the overall vision and framework of the General Plan.

Two major drivers of this current Four-Year Review are maintaining compliance with the current Housing Element and laying the groundwork for timely completion of the 7th Cycle Housing Element. Given the Council focus on *Building More Housing*, programs under the current Housing Element (completing the Missing Middle strategy and updating the Urban Village strategy) and potential penalties for producing a late 7th Cycle Housing Element such as Builder's Remedy, the work of the Four-Year Review is focused on housing production .

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On June 3, 2025, the City Council approved¹ the scope of work for the third General Plan Four-Year Review. Additional items were added to the scope of work as part of the 2025 Mayor's March Budget Message² and the City Council action on Early Consideration hearings for two privately-initiated General Plan Amendment requests with File No's GP23-001³ (June 10, 2025) and GP25-002⁴ (September 30, 2025).

The scope of this Four-Year Review included the following:

1. Increasing Residential Capacity—Adding residential capacity beyond the General Plan's current capacity of 120,000 units.

¹ [City Council Hearing Memoranda for Scope of Work Approval](#)

² [Mayor's March Budget Message for Fiscal Year 2025-2026](#)

³ [City Council Hearing Memoranda for File No. GP23-011: Early Consideration for 826 N Winchester Blvd](#)

⁴ [City Council Hearing Memoranda for File No. GP25-002: Early Consideration for a vacant parcel on Emory & The Alameda](#)

2. Creating Missing Middle Housing Opportunities—Implementing the “Missing Middle” program from the current 6th Cycle Housing Element work plan.
3. Modifying the Urban Village Implementation Strategy—Updating the Urban Village planning process to reduce the number of overall plans and streamline the planning process and plan documents to more efficiently complete the planning of the remaining Urban Village areas.
4. Evaluation of General Plan’s Jobs/Employed Resident (J/ER) Ratio—Reviewing target job growth and population projections to evaluate any potential modifications to the J/ER ratio.

Task Force Process & Next Steps

The Task Force process began in October 2025 with the Planning Commission serving as the Task Force for this Four-Year Review. A total of eight meetings were held (concluding June 17, 2026) where staff presented technical analyses, policy options, and public feedback related to the scope of work items listed above (See Table 1 for dates, topics and meeting recordings).

Table 1. GP Four Year Review – Task Force Meetings, Topics, Recordings		
#1	Wednesday, October 15, 2025	Introduction/Background
#2	Wednesday, November 12, 2025	Urban Village Strategy
#3	Wednesday, January 21, 2026	Residential Capacity #1
#4	Wednesday, March 4, 2026	Missing Middle/Small Multifamily
#5	Wednesday, April 1, 2026	Residential Capacity/Jobs-to-Employed Resident Ratio
#6	Wednesday, May 20, 2026	Missing Middle/Small Multifamily #2
#7	Wednesday, June 3, 2026	Residential Capacity
#8	Wednesday, June 17, 2026	Urban Village Strategy, Environmental Review

The Task Force meetings provided a forum for public discussion, allowing Commissioners to review data, discuss policy tradeoffs, and refine recommendations. These meetings also served as an opportunity for staff and the Task Force to receive public feedback. All public correspondence received was posted on the website and shared with the Task Force. In addition, each meeting provided time for public comment, which was typically heard before the Task Force engaged in discussion.

The policy framework presented in this report as staff recommendations was developed after a nine-month iterative process. The framework will guide the next phase of work, which will include general plan amendments and ordinance changes that implement a Council-approved policy framework resulting from the Four-Year Review process. The background and analysis for these recommendations can be found in the “Overview Memos” for each Task Force meeting [website](#).

Should the City Council approve the recommended policy framework on August 18, 2026, staff will initiate work on General Plan and Zoning Code amendments, continue work on required environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and identify outreach opportunities as development standards are further refined. Staff's final recommendations are targeted to be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council by December 2027 for approval.

The table in Exhibit D provides a complete list of scope of work items, strategies to address each of them, and the corresponding recommendations.

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Residential Capacity

The scope of work pertaining to Residential Capacity was as follows: *Increasing Residential Capacity—Adding residential capacity beyond the General Plan's current capacity of 120,000 units.* While staff initially considered creating new growth areas that could accommodate middle density housing, that strategy became redundant with the subsequent proposed changes to RN densities (from 8 DU/AC to up to 32 DU/AC). Additionally, SB 79—which will take effect on July 1, 2026, and overrides local zoning on eligible sites—creates a substantial amount of new theoretical housing capacity in San José by allowing higher-density residential development within one-half mile of qualifying transit stops. San José has [56 transit stations and roughly 40,000 properties](#) that could be impacted by SB 79.

The recommended strategies to achieve the outcome of increasing residential capacity are:

1. Modifications to the density ranges of specific General Plan Designations.
2. Targeted general plan amendments; and
3. Developing a framework for PQP lands.

For additional background and staff analysis on each of these strategies please review the "Overview Memo" for Task Force [meeting #3](#), [meeting #5](#) and [meeting #7](#).

1. Modifications to Density Ranges

As further described below in the Missing Middle Housing section, staff recommends an increase in the permitted density for the Residential Neighborhood land use designation, from 8 DU/AC to 32 DU/AC. This density increase in the RN designation to 32 DU/AC creates conflict with the Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN) land use designation, which is currently capped at 30 DU/AC. To maintain a land use hierarchy and allow for additional housing types throughout the city, staff proposes to increase MUN density parameters to 20 to 50 DU/AC, which includes a newly established 20 DU/AC minimum density. Because this new MUN density conflicts with the existing UR density of 30 to 95 DU/AC, staff is recommending an increase in the minimum density of UR to 50 DU/AC. These changes reestablish the density hierarchy, provide a proper transitional buffer between land use designations to promote a variety of housing types. The new minimum density for MUN also creates a viable path for townhomes and condominiums, that currently is the most financially feasible development type in the city. Table 2 below shows the current and proposed densities of these land use designations. Staff is also proposing corresponding height increases for RN (35 feet and 3 stories, discussed below) and MUN (from 3.5 stories to 4 to 5 stories).

Table 2. Current and Proposed Densities: RN, MUN, UR*		
	Current Density (DU/AC)	Proposed Density (DU/AC)
<i>Residential Neighborhood (RN)</i>	0 - 8	0-32
<i>Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN)</i>	0-30	20-50
<i>Urban Residential (UR)</i>	30-95	50-95
* State Density Bonus Law also allows for additional density and concessions and waivers to development standards when a project includes affordable units.		

2. Targeted General Plan Amendments

Per Council direction on Early Consideration hearings in June and September of 2025, staff evaluated the areas of Winchester Boulevard and The Alameda for sites that can support housing growth. In addition, staff evaluated sites with a Mixed Use Commercial (MUC) designation as candidates for redesignation, as well as some sites initially reviewed as part of the SB 1333 rezoning process. The following section describes staff's approach and recommendations for each category.

Winchester Boulevard

For the Winchester Boulevard corridor, between Forest Avenue and Newhall Street, staff conducted a site-by-site analysis of 20 parcels (see Exhibit A – Map of Winchester Boulevard Corridor). Located near the Santana Row Urban Village, the corridor contains a mix of commercial and office uses interspersed with single-family residential areas and a small number of multifamily properties. Many sites continue to support active commercial uses, and overall vacancies remain low, with only a few properties experiencing prolonged vacancies.

In evaluating potential redesignations to residential or mixed-use designations, staff considered factors such as site size, existing uses, surrounding neighborhood context, development intensity, and business vacancies. Staff's recommendations seek to balance the preservation of viable commercial uses with opportunities to provide additional housing near an existing Growth Area.

During Task Force meeting #7 some Task Force members supported a less dense land use designation for those sites proposed for Urban Residential. Questions were raised as to why the Urban Residential designation was proposed on these sites, instead of MUN and MUC. One of the goals of this Four-Year Review process is to facilitate the housing opportunity sites that will be needed to achieve the City's Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) goals for the 7th Housing Element cycle, which is yet to be determined. Given that background, staff is focused on identifying sites and densities that can maximize the utility of the limited developable land in the city.

Additionally, when comparing the opportunity between projects across these three designations (MUN, MUC and UR), it is important to consider the type of project that would likely be built on a given site. Assuming MUN densities will be modified to 20-50 DU/AC, and the subject sites are designated as MUN instead of UR, the likely scenario is that townhomes and less dense condominiums will be built. While staff is supportive of this housing type (see Missing Middle section below on expanding these opportunities citywide), sites along a transit route or major transportation corridors with proximity to amenities and jobs are more appropriate for denser

housing. This strategy also helps the City achieve multiple General Plan goals related to environmental sustainability, increased transit use, and pedestrian activity. The MUC designation is also inappropriate for these sites as it does not have a minimum residential density and has not resulted in primarily commercial, mixed-use projects as envisioned.

The following table compares the maximum unit yield for the seven sites (3.1 acres) that staff proposes to change to UR along the Winchester Corridor. Re-designating site with UR would allow for more units and optimal land utilization.

Table 3. Unit yield by designation on proposed UR sites along Winchester Corridor		
	Density (DU/AC)	Unit Yield
Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN)	20-50	44-114
Mixed Use Commercial (MUC)	Up to 50	0-114
Urban Residential (UR)	50-95	114-220

Recommendation: Staff proposes land use designation changes, as described below and shown in Exhibit A:

1. Certain sites with existing residential uses are proposed to change to Residential Neighborhood (RN) or Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN) designations to reflect current conditions or allow for modest increase in residential density.
2. Sites with commercial/office uses located closer to Valley Fair and Stevens Creek Boulevard, and 826 N. Winchester are proposed to change to Urban Residential (UR), a higher density mixed-use designation, due to their proximity to commercial amenities and transit access. Staff proposes to limit heights for these parcels to 85 feet, consistent with height limitations in the adjacent Santana Row/Valley Fair Urban Village Plan area.
3. One site at N. Winchester Blvd. and Woodland Rd. is proposed to change to Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN), which will support the continuation of commercial uses on the site but add potential for residential or mixed-use developments in the future.

The Alameda

For *The Alameda* corridor, between Interstate 880 and Pershing Avenue, staff conducted a site-by-site analysis of 74 sites (see Exhibit B – Map of The Alameda Corridor) considering site size, existing land uses, building age and type, historic context, business vacancy rates, and surrounding neighborhood conditions. The Alameda corridor contains a unique historic and urban design context, with a street pattern that distinguishes it from many other commercial corridors in the city and includes a substantial number of structures listed on the City's Historic Resource Inventory. The analysis found that the corridor is primarily characterized by office uses, including larger office buildings and older single-family residences converted to office use. These smaller office sites often provide affordable and flexible space for small businesses and professional services. While some properties have experienced vacancies, *The Alameda's* office vacancy rate of approximately 9% remains significantly below the citywide office vacancy rate of 17.5%. The corridor also continues to attract public and private investment, including the recent establishment of an Improvement District by the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs. *The Alameda* also contains several older multifamily residential properties

subject to the Apartment Rent Ordinance and Ellis Act Ordinance.

Recommendation:

Given the corridor's strong office market, historic resources, and limited opportunities for dense infill development, staff is proposing only two sites for redesignation from non-residential to a mixed-use designation. They are as follows:

1. One site with an existing hotel is proposed for change to the Urban Residential designation due to the larger site size.
2. One site with a Public/Quasi-Public designation is proposed for change to the Urban Residential designation for the portion of the site that contains a parking lot due to the larger size of the parking lot.

Mixed Use Commercial (MUC) Sites

The Mixed Use Commercial (MUC) designation was established to accommodate residential development while maintaining a strong emphasis on commercial activity. However, since the adoption of the General Plan, market conditions and state and local housing policies have significantly reduced the feasibility of mixed-use projects with substantial commercial requirements. The goal of staff analysis was to evaluate whether certain MUC sites should be redesignated to residential or mixed-use designations (such as MUN, UR or Urban Village) that support, but do not require, commercial uses.

Staff evaluated MUC-designated parcels using several considerations, including redevelopment feasibility, existing commercial activity, corridor context, parcel size and configuration, surrounding land use patterns, and broader policy considerations. Based on these factors, staff identified a set of criteria that can be used to identify differing levels of opportunity and constraint for residential conversion, or stronger commercial preservation. Overall, staff identified that many MUC parcels continue to provide important neighborhood-serving commercial functions within active commercial corridors. Many MUC corridors also exhibit low retail vacancies and strong commercial demand, supporting continued commercial preservation in certain locations.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends a targeted, site-specific approach that balances preservation of vibrant commercial corridors with opportunities for residential capacity, using the criteria outlined below for sites with the following characteristics:

Criteria for commercial re-designation, such as NCC:

1. Low commercial vacancies
2. Importance to corridor continuity and local commercial function
3. Presence of neighborhood-serving commercial uses that provide convenience to local community
4. Contribution to an established commercial corridor or business district
5. Site's location within a broader commercial node, corridor, or mixed-use area

6. Consistency with Urban Village implementation objectives
7. Existing horizontally integrated mixed-use developments, where the existing commercial uses are at risk of conversion

Criteria for residential re-designation:

1. Surrounding land use context – such as the presence of residential uses that allow for better integration on new residential development
2. Size of adjacent parcels and potential for assembly of sites which can provide opportunities for larger sites, and higher unit yield
3. Transit access and proximity to services, such as within half a mile

General Plan Amendments: parcels identified through SB 1333 Rezoning Work

In 2018 with the passage of [Senate Bill 1333](#) (SB 1333), charter cities were required to align and match zoning districts and General Plan land use designations. As part of the ongoing work to bring parcels into alignment, staff has so far identified 173 parcels whose General Plan land use designation does not align with the existing longstanding developed use. Staff evaluated these parcels based on surrounding land use pattern, current and historical land use, parcel size and future conversion potential and broader policy context. Based on this analysis, staff proposes to change the General Plan designation of some of these parcels in order to match existing conditions and zoning and reduce mapping inconsistencies. These parcels already require General Plan Amendments, so they were identified as opportunities for residential capacity. There are approximately 15 parcels citywide that could be converted from commercial or lower density residential use and could increase capacity by 122 units or 237 units with the proposed densities for RN and MUN.

Since SB 1333 work is ongoing, it is expected that more parcels needing to change the General Plan designation will be identified, therefore additional sites may be added to the list.

3. Framework for Public/Quasi-Public Lands

As part of the effort to identify areas to increase residential capacity, staff evaluated parcels with a Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) designation. These sites are typically used for public, private, or nonprofit institutional land uses, such as schools, religious institutions, hospitals, corporation yards, homeless shelters, governmental offices, and airports, that may be regional in nature or uses providing neighborhood-level amenities and services. This designation also allows for one hundred percent affordable housing with twenty-five percent of the units reserved as permanent supportive housing.

Recent state law (SB 79) changes that allow for residential uses near transit have unlocked housing potential on approximately 30% of total PQP lands. Given strong interest from some members of the Task Force and housing advocacy organizations to explore residential uses at the remaining PQP sites, specifically at schools and faith-based institutions, staff recommends developing a PQP framework as part of the General Plan amendments. This framework would allow for conversions of PQP sites, while still maintaining consistency with the General Plan's PQP preservation policy LU-1.9 This policy focuses on the importance of maintaining an adequate supply of community supportive functions throughout the city.

For additional background and staff analysis on PQP lands, please review the “Overview Memo” for Task Force [meeting #3](#), [meeting #5](#), and [meeting #8](#).

Recommendation:

The PQP framework approach would define and consider the following:

- a) Develop criteria for determining the appropriate amount and distribution of PQP land and/or sites throughout the city based on demographic, economic, and other data.
- b) Evaluate requests and changes in land use based on the framework criteria to ensure that adequate community space exists throughout the city.

Small Multifamily / Missing Middle Housing

Small multifamily (“missing middle”) housing is built at a medium level of density between single-family detached houses and large apartment buildings. This category encompasses a variety of building types, including triplexes and fourplexes, small apartment buildings, townhomes, cottage courts, and small lot subdivisions. Missing middle housing already exists throughout San José, most commonly in the city’s older neighborhoods.

Currently, the General Plan and Zoning Code prohibit housing at this medium density in single-family neighborhoods, which comprise about 85% of the city’s residential land area. To address the exclusion of small multifamily housing in such a large area of the city, Strategy P-35 of the 6th Cycle Housing Element directs the Planning Division to make land use and zoning changes to allow four to 10 housing units on sites throughout the city. Secondarily, the strategy requires consideration of such changes in areas around urban villages to create a “gentle” density buffer between the high-density development allowed in urban villages and single-family neighborhoods. Several California cities, including Sacramento and Berkeley, have already implemented missing middle ordinances.

At the state level, accessory dwelling unit (ADU) laws, Senate Bill 9, and Senate Bill 1123 have focused on increasing the development capacity of low-density neighborhoods. One ADU and one junior ADU (JADU) are already permitted on single-family parcels. Senate Bill 9 has created a pathway for construction of two primary units or subdivision of a single-family parcel into two parcels through a ministerial approval process, without discretionary review or a public hearing. This allows a total of four units on an existing single-family lot. Finally, Senate Bill 1123 authorizes up to 10 units on eligible single-family parcels through a ministerial subdivision and development permit process.

A local missing middle ordinance would allow San José to define the development and design standards applicable to these housing projects, to promote project feasibility and compatibility with surrounding development. At both Task Force meetings on the proposed density increase on RN properties, parking was cited by some Task Force members as an important factor to consider. The City removed its minimum parking requirement in 2023, allowing project developers to determine the amount of parking they will provide. In addition, state law prohibits local jurisdictions from imposing parking minimums for development projects located within ½ mile of public transit, which includes all rail and rapid bus stops and intersections of two bus routes with a frequency of 20 minutes or less during peak hours. Based on staff analysis, the experience so far without required minimums is that developers of small multifamily projects (20 units or less) in San José are providing parking at a rate of about 1.6 spaces per unit.

For additional background and staff analysis on the Missing Middle housing strategy please review the “Overview Memo” for Task Force [meeting #4](#) and [meeting #6](#).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends increasing the allowable density in the General Plan land use designation of Residential Neighborhood (RN) from 8 DU/AC to 32 DU/AC. This would allow additional units on single-family parcels without the constraints present in existing state laws, such as the subdivision requirement of SB 1123. This change in density in RN would be applicable wherever the designation currently exists, which includes the city’s single-family neighborhoods. Staff does not recommend the creation of middle density buffer zones around urban villages for two reasons. First, many areas surrounding urban villages are characterized by irregular street grids and significant variation in block size, which makes it difficult to map out buffer zones that follow existing street patterns. Second, the proposed approach of increasing the allowed density to 32 DU/AC in RN would distribute housing capacity more equitably throughout the city.

While the increase in RN density to 32 DU/AC is the core of the proposed missing middle strategy, implementation would require development of project elements aimed at streamlining the permitting process and ensuring that these projects will not be out of scale with surrounding development thus providing an alternative path to state law provisions that preserve neighborhood character. These elements include:

1. Development standards: Allow a maximum building height of 35 feet/3 stories and recommend other development standards that may include, but would not be limited to, maximum floor area ratio (FAR), appropriate setbacks, maximum parcel coverage, and maximum lot size.
2. Implement additional development and design standards for missing middle projects on historic properties, similar to the Zoning Code regulations for projects using SB 9 on historic sites.
3. Disqualify certain types of properties from eligibility for small multifamily projects. These include sites in very high and high fire severity zones, airport safety zones, environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, conservation areas, or habitat areas, and sites with rent-stabilized or rent-regulated units or sites subject to the City’s Ellis Act Ordinance.
4. Require discretionary approval for small multifamily housing projects located on sites that require additional review, such as certain flood zones, sites in riparian corridors, City Landmark properties and Candidate City Landmark properties, and properties within City Landmark districts.

Urban Village Strategy

One of the 12 Major Strategies of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan is to concentrate future growth in 62 designated Urban Villages throughout the city by converting existing commercial areas into vibrant, mixed-use hubs for commercial and housing development. The General Plan establishes a process for preparing a comprehensive plan for each Urban Village that includes land use and transportation policies and standards for development and design. However, until a plan is adopted for an Urban Village, residential and mixed-use development is restricted to 100% affordable residential projects and Signature projects, which are mixed-use projects with specific commercial space requirements. Due to the large number of Urban Village

plans and the comprehensive nature of the Urban Village planning process, plan adoption timelines are lengthy and 46 urban villages remain unplanned.

The scope of work for this topic is to update the Urban Village planning process to reduce the number of overall plans and streamline the planning process to more efficiently complete the planning of the remaining Urban Village areas (Strategy P-40 of the Housing Element). For additional background and staff analysis on the Urban Village Strategy please review the “Overview Memo” for Task Force [meeting #2](#) and [meeting #8](#).

Recommendation:

After evaluating the Urban Village planning process, staff recommends the following six streamlining strategies:

1. Consolidate 12 Local Transit Urban Village plans into four plans that encompass multiple urban villages on the same transit corridor. Because these urban villages are located within SB 79 zones where state density and height allowances for residential development will supersede local zoning regulations starting July 1, 2026, staff also recommends:
 - a. Development of a commercial overlay program to preserve long-term employment and commercial capacity; and
 - b. Deferral of the urban village planning process for these villages until the impacts of SB 79 on local areas are better understood.
2. Streamline the Neighborhood Urban Village planning process by making targeted land use and zoning changes, instead of developing individual plans for each one.
3. Utilize a defined outreach process for the conventional Urban Village planning process with a specified number of outreach events.
4. Simplify Urban Village plan documents by utilizing development standards in the Zoning Code and the Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines to the extent possible and minimizing development of unique standards for each urban village.
5. Reclassify, consolidate, or remove certain urban villages to better align the Urban Village framework with redevelopment potential, existing development patterns, and current planning priorities.
6. Protect mobile home parks by removing the remaining ones from the boundaries of unplanned urban village boundaries, to reinforce the City's ongoing mobile home preservation efforts.

Collectively, these recommendations seek to modernize the Urban Village implementation program, respond to changing state housing laws, preserve economic development opportunities, and focus limited planning resources on areas where they can have the greatest impact on housing and community development goals.

Jobs-to-Employed Residents (J/ER) Ratio

The Jobs-to-Employed Resident (J/ER) ratio is an indicator of how well a city balances employment opportunities with its residential base. A higher ratio indicates that more residents can work locally, while a lower ratio suggests that many residents commute to jobs outside the city. San José historically developed as a predominantly residential community, resulting in a larger share of residents commuting to jobs in other cities. This imbalance contributes to traffic congestion, greenhouse-gas emissions, and longer travel times for residents, while limiting access to opportunity for residents and precluding fiscal benefits to the City from local jobs. Improving the balance between jobs and employed residents has therefore been a longstanding objective of the City's General Plan (including in the two previous general plans) because it enhances both economic sustainability and quality of life for its residents.

At the time of adoption in December 2011, the J/ER ratio stood at 0.87 and the Envision San José 2040 General Plan established a goal of achieving 1.3 J/ER ratio by 2040, with a target of 839,450 total jobs and 429,350 total housing units by 2040. This job target was based on a 1.9% job growth every year and was extremely ambitious as it sought to improve the City's fiscal health and transform San José from a suburban "bedroom" community to a job based center for the Bay Area with livable neighborhoods.

During the first General Plan Four-Year Review in 2015, the City modified these assumptions using updated economic forecasts. Under the revised projections, total employment capacity in the city was expected to reach approximately 543,000 jobs by 2040. Based on these updated forecasts, the General Plan was amended to establish a more realistic target of 1.1 jobs per employed resident by 2040, with a short-term goal of achieving 1 job per employed resident by the year 2025.5

Since the adoption of the General Plan, the actual J/ER ratio has not exceeded 0.85, and the average has been 0.82, although over 400,000 out of Santa Clara County's 1 million total jobs (40%) are located in San José. In contrast, San José is home to approximately 51% of the county's population. For additional background and staff analysis on the Jobs-to-Employed Resident (J/ER) ratio, please review the "Overview Memo" for Task Force [meeting #5](#).

As part of the Four-Year Review, the City Council directed staff to re-examine the General Plan's Jobs-to-Employed Resident (J/ER) ratio and how additional housing capacity (beyond the currently adopted 120,000 new units) could affect the J/ER ratio. Increasing the City's residential capacity does not necessarily translate into proportional population growth of *employed residents*. J/ER is calculated using projected future jobs and population growth and discounted by the percentage of the population aged 16 and over and the unemployment rate. Based on available projections from the Department of Finance and MTC-ABAG, San José is not expected to see population or job growth significantly greater than what was projected as part of the 2015 analysis cited above.

Recommendation

Based on these considerations, staff recommends maintaining the current J/ER target of 1.1. The J/ER target does not require adjusting downward or adjusting the job goals to keep the ratio same as now, solely due to increases in theoretical housing capacity. Housing supply increase alone also does not create population growth, but it can enable or accommodate growth when other factors attract people to a region. Maintaining the current J/ER will support the City's efforts to achieve fiscal sustainability, address environmental concerns and help create more complete communities with housing and jobs.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Based on direction given by City Council, at their upcoming meeting on August 18, 2026, staff will prepare draft general plan and ordinance updates to implement the policy framework regarding residential capacity, missing middle housing, the urban village strategy and J/ER. Staff will also conduct appropriate environmental analysis to support these changes.

These proposed changes will be brought back before the Planning Commission and City Council in the December 2027 timeframe. Staff will also engage with the community and interested stakeholders on the proposed changes, particularly around development standards in the RN neighborhoods.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

Not a Project, File No. PP17-007. Preliminary direction to staff and eventual action requires approval from decision-making body.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Pursuant to City Council direction⁵ and the [revised Outreach and Engagement Plan](#), the Planning Division began outreach for the General Plan Four-Year Review in December 2025 with a virtual community meeting; approximately 25 people were in attendance. Per City Council direction, from October through December 2025, staff held meetings with groups representing community partners, housing advocates, and labor groups to share the scope of work and seek input on the Four-Year Review.

Planning staff also created short videos describing the General Plan and the Four-Year Review topics. These videos were posted on the General Plan Four-Year Review project webpage and YouTube and were shared across social media platforms.

Staff engaged directly with the community through eight task force meetings, five community meetings including four open houses, sixteen stakeholder meetings, four meetings with intergovernmental agencies, and six leadership and neighborhood meetings. Additionally, staff collaborated with the Office of Racial and Social Equity (ORSE) to organize three community specific focus groups centered on lived experiences. This included one focus group with San José for All Advisory Group, and two focus groups facilitated in partnership with disability advocacy consultant. The purpose of these focus groups was to broaden participation and ensure communities historically underrepresented in City planning conversations had multiple opportunities to shape the review process.

For additional background and staff analysis on outreach efforts, including a summary of community input, please review the “Outreach Summary Memo” for Task Force [meeting #8](#).

Staff followed [City Council Policy 6-30: Public Outreach Policy](#), in order to inform the public of the project. The hearing agenda and staff report were posted on the City website, and staff has been available to respond to questions from the public.

Project Managers: Ruth Cueto and Jerad Ferguson

⁵ City Council meeting, June 3, 2026, Item 8.5: Memorandum from Mayor and Councilmembers Foley, Campos, Cohen, and Casey.

Please click on the title of each exhibit to view the document:

ATTACHMENTS:	
Exhibit A:	<u>Winchester Corridor - Proposed land use and zoning designation</u>
Exhibit B:	<u>The Alameda Corridor - Proposed land use and zoning designation</u>
Exhibit C:	<u>Criteria for Mixed Use Commercial (MUC) sites</u>
Exhibit D:	<u>Summary of scope of work items, strategies, and corresponding recommendations.</u>

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