

## **IDEAS TOO GOOD TO LOSE**

### **PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER**

#### ***TRRG Initiative of Sustainable Neighborhoods through Planning***

Identified during neighborhood associations' self-assessment of area and neighborhood plans  
Spring/Summer 2018

#### **I. Threats**

- A. Decrease in owner-occupied residencies as properties are repurposed or become rentals
- B. City-owned properties not following same rules as private-owned ones
- C. New uses within residential zone which change the single-family ambiance: assisted living home; student housing/group housing; short term airbnb rental of property; investment in houses with intent to gentrify area or to dominate the rental market
- D. Infill projects of greater density, lot coverage, and different construction materials incompatible with existing housing patterns
- E. Lot splits enable property owner to change fundamental nature of area
- F. Residential structures rezoned to accommodate nonresidential uses
- G. Derelict properties (abandoned, condemned, in total disrepair) remain untouched on site
- H. Inappropriate choice of construction site or inadequate buffering of new, more intense development destroys quality of life for those who already live in the immediate vicinity
- I. Recognition that changes in adjacent neighborhoods impact those in the vicinity

#### **II. Contributors**

- A. Possibility of historic designation for neighborhood
- B. Preserve adequate vacant land for public and private recreation areas; revisit Flexible Lot Option (FLD) to assess if these projects with cluster-housing are meeting this goal
- C. Ensure that new residential projects are compatible in scale and architectural style with existing residential development
- D. Limit high-density residential uses to locations along arterial streets at sites identified for commercial or office uses
- E. Utilize "defensible space" concepts
- F. Effective use of buffering, choosing among architectural features, setbacks, landscaping, walls, fences, etc, which best fit into the existing neighborhood

- G. Recognition that buffering is needed between residential uses and zones within the neighborhood (single family and multi-family units) as well as on the borders between commercial/office uses and abutting residential uses
- H. Mitigation of new more intense development needs to preserve the current light and sound conditions of the adjoining residential area
- I. Use of appropriate architectural features in taller buildings to protect the privacy (both indoors and outdoors) of those who already reside at lower levels.
- J. Developers of new projects in the neighborhood are asked to contribute money or products to bring new assets to the broader neighborhood.

**Major Topics—Each neighborhood has a unique character. The purpose of planning should be to stabilize, protect or enhance that character. This raises a question: has a neighborhood given consideration to what that character is? Exactly how new development in the area contributes to that has become more critical and controversial as the City has encouraged infill development. The role of the general plan, the area plan and the neighborhood plan in providing guidance is uncertain; the problem is real.**

**Area plans may cover so much territory (Ex. University Area Plan—11 neighborhoods) that the unique character and priorities of each get lost. Need to break down into smaller subareas, or neighborhoods (Ex. UAP-Section 3G p.19)?**

**Area plans may be dominated by a major institution's impact, so specific neighborhood needs are not addressed (Ex. Arcadia-Alamo Area Plan's focus on TMC) Need to focus on the interior needs of the neighborhood.**