



MILLCREEK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3330 SOUTH 1300 EAST

MILLCREEK, UTAH 84106

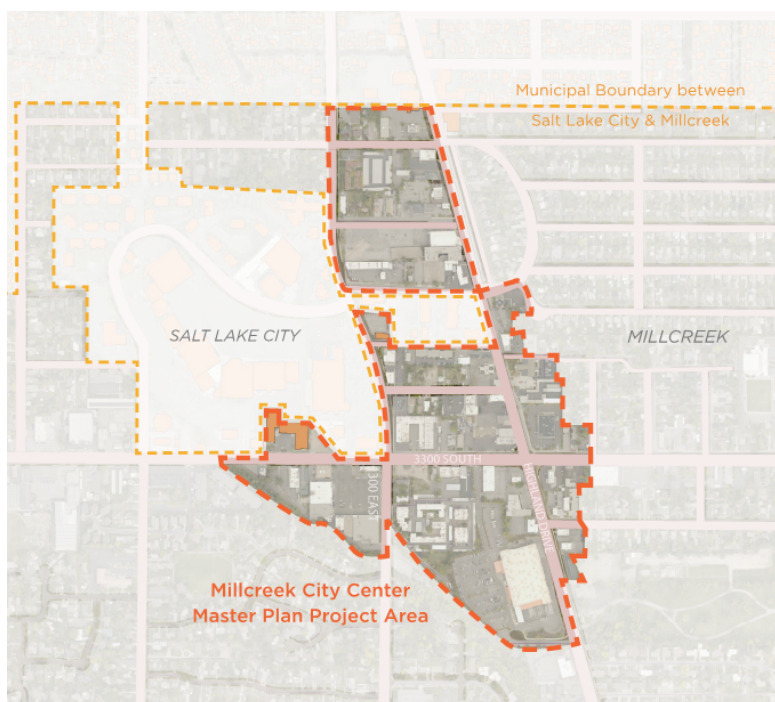
MEMORANDUM

To: **Community Councils**
From: **Francis Xavier Lilly, AICP, Director**
Date: **25 April 2019**

Re: **GP-19-001 – Adoption of a City Center Master Plan**

Summary

Attached is a proposed master plan for Millcreek's City Center area, which encompasses the area between Highland Drive and Richmond Street, and Elgin Avenue, and approximately 3400 South, as indicated in the map below:



The purpose of the City Center plan is to harness anticipated development in a manner that accomplishes the following, pursuant to the *Millcreek Together* General Plan:

- creates a diverse mix of land uses, including restaurants, community facilities, and multifamily residential.
- Establishes space for local community events and daily socialization.
- Plans for a walkable and pedestrian-scaled activity center.
- Induces redevelopment and infill.
- Provides employment opportunities.



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General Plan Considerations

The *Millcreek Together* General Plan, adopted in February of this year, is not the first master planning effort to suggest that the area centered on Highland Drive and 3300 South would be a good location for a city center. The Millcreek Township General Plan, dating from 2010, indicated that the area was a good candidate for “moderate change” and identified the City Center area as an ideal site for redevelopment. *Millcreek Together* expands on the idea first mentioned in the 2010 plan, by calling out the area as a potential city center. Our current General Plan states, on pages 51-52:

The City Center would be the highest concentration of development found anywhere in Millcreek. It is the focal point for the City, the center of government, cultural, office, commercial, financial, transportation and other activities with a variety of day and night activities that attract visitors from throughout the City and region. Major arterials provide access and the City Center is envisioned to have both local and regional transit connections. Pedestrian access and movement would be high, and consideration for pedestrians is paramount. New development should be sensitive to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods and districts, and build on the strengths and character of these established areas.

The City Center is Millcreek’s most intense development area, envisioned as a regional center for commerce and culture. The City Center should evolve into a vibrant, mixed-use area with a range of employment, services, and housing. It should be highly walkable and well-connected by multiple types of transportation and transit. It should have a balanced mixture of jobs and housing, and contain amenities that support residents, workers and employers within the center and also throughout the City. It is also envisioned that the City Center would be a central public gathering place, and home to many of Millcreek’s entertainment and cultural institutions. The Center should also highlight and celebrate historic signage and landmarks in the area, such as the Villa Theater.

Zoning History

The idea of the city center area being a site for higher intensity residential and commercial uses goes back at least to the enactment of the first zoning ordinance in 1953, as indicated in Figure 2 below:

Zoning regulations in what is now the City Center area historically allowed higher density multifamily uses and heights of up to 75 feet in the C-2 and C-3 zones, and 35 feet in the R-3 and R-4 zone. The base zoning has not changed much since 1953, except for the addition of commercial zoning on the corner of 1300 East and 3300 South, and the addition of some additional residential multifamily zoning in the interior of the project area.

In these zones, there were limited or no design standards, few requirements for open space, no requirements for on-street parking, no streetscape enhancements, no height transitions or buffering requirements, and no requirements for mixed use buildings.

While the zoning allowed for relatively dense development in this area for nearly 70 years, market interest in taller mixed use or multifamily development only emerged in the last several years. The City Center Master Plan is designed to focus that market demand into productive and durable uses, beautiful buildings, a street grid that supports walkability and other modes of transit, and a unique legacy open space for the benefit of all Millcreek



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residents. In 2018, the City enacted a Town Center Overlay Zone as a holding zone to allow the city to begin to implement the public process of planning a City Center.

Figure 2: Salt Lake County Zoning Ordinance – 1953 – City Center Area Highlighted in Red



Elements of the City Center Master Plan

The City Center Master Plan is best understood as the implementation of a series of visions and goals, which are discussed below:

A Walkable Urban Space that is Iconic

The City Center envisions much of the new development to be built around a new, large open space to be constructed along an existing fault line. This open space will provide internal circulation for pedestrians and vehicles, and hundreds of stalls of on-street parking. The open space – a long, narrow linear urban park, is unlike anything attempted in Utah. In addition to the park, the plan envisions breaking up the existing large blocks with pedestrian paths or shared laneways where vehicle traffic is designed to move slowly.

Walkability also requires appropriate connections: The City Center plan envisions pedestrian activated stop lights on at least two locations crossing 1300 East and Highland Drive, and a street and sidewalk standard that requires streetlights and a 10 foot sidewalk on all updated streets.

An Amenity and Gathering Place for the Whole City

The plan envisions as its principal amenity the creation of the linear park. Not only does it improve access to the site, but it will become a front yard and a celebration place for the entire community. The plan also envisions the use of



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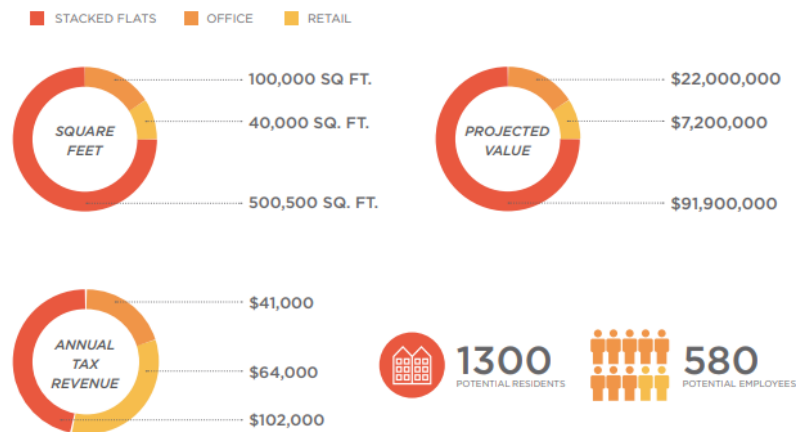
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existing parking lots and other areas to utilize as temporary event space. The plan emphasizes arts and culture, and encourages the city to consider opportunities for street fairs, outdoor markets, and food trucks.

An Engine of Employment, Population and Tax Base to Help Keep Taxes Low for Millcreek

One of the goals of the City Center Master Plan is to update historic zoning regulations to support and require additional mixed use space in the City Center. Adding population to the area will support additional retail and restaurant opportunities, which the community indicated it desires. But it is essential to avoid the creation of a high-density residential village. To that end, the City Center Master Plan recommends adoption of a form-based code that requires retail and other commercial uses for the full length of each building along the planned open space and along all major thoroughfares. The assumptions guiding the development of the Master Plan are as follows:

Figure 3: Market Assumptions



Financial Data Source: Zions Public Finance

The planned improvements will add significant additional property values, which will be used to fund public improvements, and will result in additional annual tax revenues to the City of just over \$200,000. While a majority of the square footage of the new development will be allocated for residential uses, just over half of the projected revenue will be from commercial uses – which is why the plan recommends a mixed use requirement for residential buildings in most areas of the City Center.

Design Should Support Transportation Alternatives

The City Center Master Plan includes street sections for all roads in the City Center. As redevelopment occurs on these roads, developers will be required to develop in accordance with adopted street standards. In addition, the Plan recommends that Highland Drive between Elgin Avenue and 3300 South be converted into a three-lane section, allowing for one lane in each direction and a combination of landscaped medians and left turn refuges. This section will allow for bike lanes and on-street parking on the west side of Highland Drive. In addition, the plan is recommending pedestrian infrastructure to encourage greater pedestrian access into and within the site.



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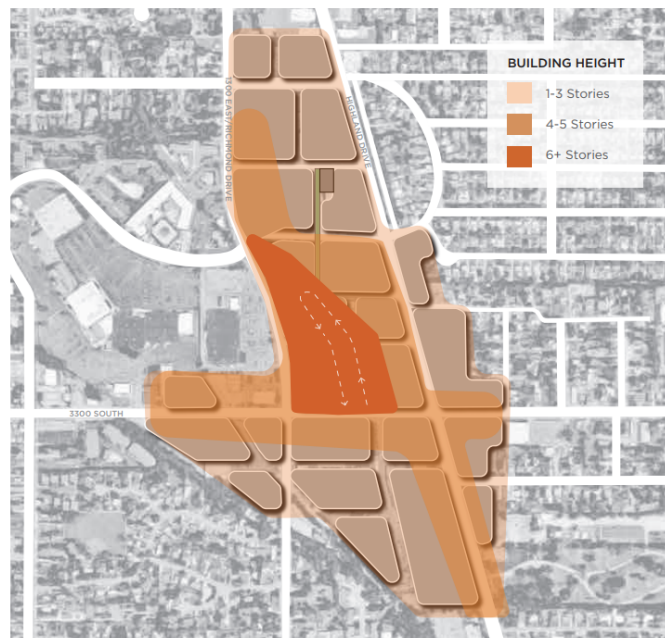
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Respect Surrounding Existing Residential Neighborhoods

The City Center Plan does not incorporate any existing single-family neighborhoods. Moreover, the Master Plan recommends adoption of an ordinance that establishes height limits for areas that are adjacent to or immediately across the street from existing single-family neighborhoods. The height limits modify existing height limits and are in keeping with long-standing policy on building heights in the area. **Figure 4** illustrates proposed height limits in the City Center area:

Figure 4 – Recommended Building Height Limits



The Master Plan also recommends appropriately managing parking to prevent spillover parking the single-family neighborhoods on either side of the project area. In addition, the Master Plan indicates that critical views to the east and west should be protected.

Guiding Principles from the Master Plan

The Master Plan adopts four guiding principles to guide future ordinance development, municipal investments, public-private partnerships, and land use decisions:

1. The City Center Should Emphasize Walkability, and Minimize Internal Traffic and Parking Demand.
2. The City Center should include Municipal Property owned by the City and designated for public use.
3. The design of Millcreek's City Center should represent the city in ways that are distinctive from other cities and unique to Millcreek.



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4. The City Center should emphasize culture, art, ideas, and interaction between citizens.

All of the elements that the plan recommends are intended to fulfill these principles. Of particular concern to the City is the creation of a place that is distinctive from either Sugar House or Holladay, which are two successful regional precedents for mixed use development. This City Center proposal offers something that builds on the successes of other centers, including:

1. An integrated street grid with pedestrian connections throughout the City Center.
2. Redevelopment that is built around a major open space.
3. A balance of residential and commercial uses that will support activity in the City Center for at least 18 hours a day and 250 days a year.
4. Intuitive placement of on-street parking.
5. Preservation of historic signage and iconic buildings, including the Villa Theatre, Tres Hombres Restaurant, and the iconic midcentury commercial buildings on Highland Drive.

Form Based Code Elements

Staff is preparing a new ordinance that is specific to the City Center, to be adopted after the Master Plan. The ordinance will address heights, uses, building types, and setbacks by *subdistrict* – and the Plan envisions three – a neighborhood district that emphasizes residential development north of Miller Avenue, a higher-intensity Millcreek Center district between Miller Avenue and 3300 South, and a City Marketplace district that emphasizes compatible commercial development south of 3300 South.

The code will also establish allowable building materials, open space and plaza requirements, implementation of laneways and other streetscapes, street furniture and signage, and sustainable design elements. Some of the recommendations for building form are shown below in Figure 5. These include building overhangs on the ground floor to support walkability in inclement weather, building step-backs, and transparency and storefront requirements.

Figure 5 – Potential Form Based Code Elements





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Traffic and Parking Considerations

As part of the City Center Master Plan and ordinance update, and in anticipation of future development, staff commissioned a traffic study that examined turn movements, delays, and other impacts of the development, particularly on Highland Drive and 1300 East. This work is still ongoing, but a preliminary analysis prepared by Fehr and Peers indicates that signal optimization will be warranted at the intersection of Richmond Street and Highland Drive, just south of 2700 South, and that pedestrian actuated signals with landscaped pedestrian refuges be installed along Highland Drive and Richmond Street. The study is recommending a three-lane section for Highland Drive, and is indicated that it will not have a significant impact on travel times. In fact, the study indicates that, at build-out, the average travel time along Highland Drive traveling southbound between Elgin Avenue and Luck Lane will change from 2 minutes to 2 minutes 30 seconds. No change is anticipated to northbound travel times. At this point, the traffic study is not recommending roundabouts on Highland Drive.

In contrast with both Sugar House and Holladay's Town Center, the Millcreek City Center project area benefits from a robust street grid including two parallel arterial roads, and a series of interconnected streets. This characteristic can better accommodate growth because it provides multiple points of access and several ways to get to other locations in the city – particularly when that growth is intended to replace vehicle trips with walking, bicycling or transit trips.

Implementation Strategy

Between now and the end of 2020, the City's goal is to create a temporary gathering place for residents to enjoy. This could be a food truck rally or even an outdoor movie series in a parking lot. The goal is to bring people to the City Center, even as it is being developed. The City will also begin to assemble property for the Mill Park open space, and will complete the lilac streetscape along Highland Drive, to include the construction of a welcome monument.

In the long term, the City's strategy is to support the necessary relocation of utilities and other public investments, and to otherwise let the market dictate the redevelopment of the City Center, as private landowners are willing to sell or redevelop property. Our strategy does not plan for wholesale redevelopment: in fact, adaptive reuse and improvement of existing structures in many locations will be encouraged. The City plans to have the open space under construction by 2022.

Request

Staff is requesting a FAVORABLE recommendation to the City Council for the adoption of the City Center Master Plan.

The Planning Commission will be discussing this matter on 15 May 2019. We request your recommendation in advance of that meeting.

Attachments

1. [City Center Master Plan Hyperlink](#)