



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

October 20, 2021

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Lorena Barrera, Administrative Analyst (Shared services with Corte Madera)
Ben Berto, Director, Planning and Building Services

SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution Amending the General Plan to Replace the Terms “Community Character” and “Neighborhood Character” with more Specific Descriptions of the Intended Meaning of those Phrases

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and consider adopting a Resolution Amending the General Plan to Replace the Terms “Community Character” and “Neighborhood Character” with more Specific Descriptions of the Intended Meaning of those Phrases.

BACKGROUND

Mayor Ackerman asked that this item be added to the agenda for the Council’s consideration.

On July 1, 2021, the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee (RESJ) received a presentation from Shelley Hamilton proposing equity-related text amendments to the Fairfax General Plan. (To see the presentation, click [here](#).) The RESJ, at its August 5, 2021 meeting, reached consensus to recommend the proposal to the Council.

Hamilton is a Fairfax resident and former Planning Commissioner (2007–2016) who worked on the General Plan and served on the General Plan Advisory Committee. She has a professional background in non-profit real estate planning and development, strategic planning, and communication.

The Town Council may amend the General Plan up to four times in one year. Amendments must be done by resolution. Adoption of the attached resolution would not change the context and purpose of the Fairfax General Plan; only the text.

DISCUSSION

The proposed resolution (Attachment A) makes text amendments to the General Plan to replace the terms “community character” and “neighborhood character” with descriptions that are descriptive and that also provide clarification to the implementation of the General Plan. Exhibit A to the resolution is the General Plan with the text amendments in redline.

Attachment B contains a table prepared by Hamilton showing the searched instances of “Neighborhood/Community Character” or similar term in the Fairfax General Plan and the suggested alternative language for each instance.

Attachment C contains information, explanations, recommendations, and resources compiled by Hamilton for community members and Town leaders to familiarize themselves with General Plan equity-related considerations.

All of the attached documents were prepared by Hamilton, with staff modification of the resolution. Hamilton will make be a brief presentation at the meeting and be available to answer questions from Council.

FISCAL IMPACT

The financial impact is limited to costs associated with legal review by the Town Attorney and staff time.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Resolution with Exhibit A: General Plan with text amendments in redline
- B. Table with instances of "Neighborhood/Community Character" or similar term in the Fairfax General Plan
- C. Compilation of information/resources