

# **FINDINGS**

## **Drive-Through Design Guidelines**

### **Application No. 1902-09**

### **October 3, 2019**

The Long Beach Municipal Code does not have specific findings for the adoption of design guidelines. However, the Drive-Through Design Guidelines are consistent with and support the new drive-through use regulations (Drive-Through Zoning Code Amendments) adopted by City Council on July 16, 2019. Pursuant to California Government Code §65860, a zoning ordinance shall be consistent with the adopted General Plan. As part of the new regulations governing drive-through facilities, the new required findings reference conformance to design guidelines. The new regulations and the proposed design guidelines are intended to work in tandem to ensure future drive-through establishments are appropriately located, well designed, and minimize impacts to surrounding uses. The City of Long Beach makes the following finding in support of its adoption of the Drive-Through Design Guidelines.

**The Drive-Through Design Guidelines are consistent with and implement the objectives, principles, and standards of the General Plan.** Citywide, the number of existing fast food drive-through establishments totals 116. In addition to the existing number of fast food drive-throughs in the City, within the last five years, there has been an uptick in applications received. The number of recent fast food drive-through applications prompted concerns by members of the public and the Planning Commission due to potential impacts associated with the use on pedestrian safety; traffic and queuing; noise, light, and air pollution; and aesthetics.

The Drive-Through Design Guidelines will provide the Planning Commission with more tools to ensure that in situations where the new Conditional Use Permit (CUP) findings can be made for approval of a drive-through facility, the drive-through facility incorporates appropriate site planning and building design principles. Such principles include locating the building closer to the street and directing parking areas and drive-through stacking lanes away from public rights-of-way to foster a more pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment; minimizing pedestrian-vehicular conflicts; and incorporating landscaping, buffering, screening and other design features which minimize the visual impact of drive-throughs as well as other potential noise, air quality, and traffic impacts on neighboring uses.

The City's existing General Plan and, specifically, the Mobility Element of the General Plan guided the development of the design guidelines.

In October of 2013, the City Council adopted the Mobility Element and with it, a marked change in transportation policy for the City. The Element stresses a multimodal approach to mobility in the City, in contrast with a more-exclusively auto-centric focus prior to 2013. It is not possible to achieve Goal #1 of the Mobility Element, to create an Efficient, Balanced and Multimodal Mobility Network, without appropriate regulations. Multiple, closely spaced driveways associated with drive-through facilities inhibit efficient vehicle movement, create pedestrian hazards, and interrupt the multimodal

street experience for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders. To that end, the new findings require the Planning Commission to determine that the drive-through facility is sited in a manner that minimizes travel hazards and incorporates sufficient pedestrian amenities such as walk-up windows, separated pedestrian pathways and outdoor dining areas in order to grant a CUP for any new drive-through facility or expansion of an existing drive-through facility. Additionally, the design guidelines include standards that take into account pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and amenities, for example, in accordance with the City's Land Use strategies/policies and the 2013 Mobility Element. Such strategies in the Mobility Element, for example, include those that emphasize the use of urban design features to support active living (MOP IM-5); that call for ensuring that all planning processes identify where pedestrian, bike, and transit improvements can be made (MOP IM-30); and that encourage continued implementation of pedestrian streetscape designs (MOP IM-33).

Lastly, in 2018, the City Council adopted the PlaceTypes and Heights maps for the City's updated Land Use Element and that plan recently underwent a re-circulated environmental review. Among other provisions, the LUE seeks to accommodate the City's jobs and housing needs through the year 2040 through the carefully managed transformation of auto-centric commercial corridors into mixed-use environments with new jobs and housing located proximate to transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The LUE includes Policy 11-7 to diminish the impact of drive-through facilities on the pedestrian environment and implementation measures LU M-40 to discourage drive-through facilities and LU M-41 to impose overconcentration restrictions on drive-through facilities.