

FINDINGS

UPLAN Zoning Districts – Zoning Code Amendment

Application No. 2002-06

June 4, 2020

Pursuant to Section 21.25.106 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, the Planning Commission shall recommend approval of a change of text of zoning regulations and/or rezoning property if it complies with the State and Local regulations. The zoning change can be granted only when positive findings are made consistent with the following criteria set forth in the municipal code.

1. THE PROPOSED CHANGE WILL NOT ADVERSLY AFFECT THE CHARACTER, LIVABILITY OR APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SURROUNDING AREA;

The proposed project establishes 12 new zones that implement three General Plan Land Use Element PlaceTypes and a new Title 22 of the Zoning Code to facilitate the comprehensive update of the City's Zoning Code, as well the rezoning of select properties on the Artesia Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue corridors in North Long Beach. The establishment of the proposed zoning districts and rezoning aim to foster vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and compact mixed-use areas on major transit-served corridors. The proposed zoning districts and rezoning will accommodate housing units to address the City's housing shortage and homelessness, foster job creation and facilitate the location of new businesses to reduce vacancy and improve access by nearby residents to daily goods and services. By increasing the housing supply and improving access to jobs and local shopping and amenities, the proposed zone changes will improve livability through the promotion of complete neighborhoods. It will allow for local essential services, and improve multimodal transportation options and shorten trips between where community members live, work, and play. The proposed zone changes are guided by a community Vision Statement which focuses on four topics: people, streets and mobility, buildings, and open spaces and incorporate regulations that aim to achieve development outcomes that are consistent with community vision.

Specifically, the proposed districts will improve livability by expanding the public realm and sidewalk access throughout major corridors and addressing blighted land and vacant buildings. The revised land use regulations will improve and address incompatible and unsustainable land uses while promoting healthier, community-serving uses, such as grocery stores and educational facilities. The districts also allow for a greater mix of uses and establish more flexible parking regulations to spur investment and equitable housing growth to address existing overcrowding in the area. Once implemented the districts will provide additional housing, retail, services, and employment opportunities that foster a more livable environment for all. The proposed districts also incorporate design and development standards, such as requirements for active ground-floor uses and pedestrian-friendly, ground-floor design that improve safety and ensure neighborhood cohesion and compatibility with surrounding area. Future development will be complementary to and synergistic with existing residential and commercial uses to ensure minimal adverse impacts.

2. THE PROPOSED CHANGE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PROVISIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN;

The proposed zoning districts are compatible with the general goals, policies and designations within the City's new General Plan Land Use Element (LUE). The LUE shifts away from land use districts and instead established PlaceTypes for the City, which emphasize flexibility and allows for a mix of compatible uses. The General Plan Land Use Element identifies the PlaceTypes for the areas that are to be rezoned as Neighborhood Serving Corridor-Low (NSC-L), Neighborhood Serving Corridor-Moderate (NSC-M), and Community Commercial (CC) PlaceTypes (LUE map grid 29, 31, & 32). For each PlaceType, corresponding zoning districts have been developed that are consistent with and implement the LUE PlaceTypes. NSC-L and NSC-M are both mixed-use PlaceTypes that allow for a variety of residential and commercial uses, while the CC PlaceType only allows for commercial uses. The proposed zoning districts allow uses and development densities, intensities and scales that are consistent with their respective PlaceTypes, and therefore correspond to those PlaceTypes.

The proposed zoning districts are compatible with the goals and policies of the City's General Plan Land Use Element update and the specific goals and policies of their respective PlaceTypes. The General Plan Land Use Element identifies the areas that are the subject of the proposed rezoning as Neighborhood Serving Corridor-Low (NSC-L), Neighborhood Serving Corridor-Moderate (NSC-M), and Community Commercial (CC) PlaceTypes (LUE map grid 29, 31, & 32). For each PlaceType, corresponding zoning districts have been developed that are congruent with the allowable uses and scale of development contemplated by the PlaceType. The proposed Residential Mixed Use zones (RMU3 and RMU4) and the Mixed Use zones (MU1, MU2, and MU3) correspond to the NSC-L and NSC-M mixed-use PlaceTypes and both the zones and the PlaceTypes allow for a variety of residential and commercial uses, while the proposed Commercial Zone (C3) corresponds to CC PlaceType and only allow for commercial uses. These uses are consistent with Tables 2-A, 2-B, and 2-C of the proposed Zoning Code Update, which establishes permitted uses in the proposed zoning districts. Multiple Land Use Element goals are also advanced by the proposed zoning districts, including but not limited to: healthy, active, and complete neighborhoods, increased economic development and shared economic prosperity, new housing construction and more varied housing types, improved environmental health through reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), enhanced mobility choices, and safe and secure living environments (LUE p. 4-6). The zones are also consistent with the overarching goals of the Land Use Element which is to encourage mixed-use in significant centers and along major corridors accommodating higher density housing and increased commercial activity to achieve more sustainable development patterns (LUE p.13-14, 27).

The proposed project would be consistent with General Plan goals that aim to protect and preserve historic resources. Projects that may be facilitated by the proposed project that may affect historic resources will be required to comply with the following relevant Land Use and Urban Design Element (UDE) policies. Specifically, the UDE includes strategies aimed at the preservation of the aesthetic character of existing historic

resources (UD Strategy No. 9, Policy UD 2-1, Policy UD 9-1, Policy UD 9-2, Policy UD 9-3, Policy UD 10-1, Policy UD 10-3, Policy UD 19-4, and Policy UD 20-5), while the proposed LUE aims to preserve existing historic structures and neighborhoods throughout the City (LU Goal No. 4, Strategy No. 3, LU-M-3, and LU-M-43). Historic resources are further protected through regulation via the City's General Plan Historic Preservation Element (2010) and the City's Cultural Heritage Ordinance.

The proposed zoning districts include standards for on-site open space and for setbacks and other design and development standards that aim to functionally expand the public right of way and allow space for landscaping and other pedestrian amenities and thus focus on enhancing existing open space and creating new open space opportunities through private open space, plaza and event space, parklets and flexible spaces adjacent to public sidewalks. This is consistent with the Open Space Element goals of adding recreation open space and recreation facilities in the areas of the City that are most underserved (OSE see Goal 4.3 at p. 25), increasing recreation resources and supplementing publicly owned recreation resources with privately owned, publicly accessible recreation resources (OSE Goal 4.6), and assuring General Plan and zoning protections for open space (OSE Policy 4.4).

The goals of the General Plan Mobility Element have been integrated into the proposed zoning districts by prioritizing multimodality options, updating land uses to allow for complete neighborhoods, and developing innovative design guidelines to expand the public realm and walkability in areas where the districts are implemented. Specifically, the districts further various Mobility Element policies, including improved pedestrian access and multimodal options (MOP 1-1, MOP 1-3, MOP 1-4, MOP 1-9, MOP 1-14, MOP 2-18), sustainable land use policies that reduce VMT (MOP 1-17, MOP 5-2, MOP 6-1), and innovative parking regulations to address and shift existing demand (MOP 6-5, MOP 6-6, MOP 6-10, MOP 6-13).

Implementation of the proposed zoning districts will result in new housing opportunities for all types of families, consistent with the Housing Element Goal 4 of providing increased opportunities for the construction of high-quality housing (HE p. 104). Housing Element Policy 4.5 explicitly targets transit corridors for new housing, as well as Policies 5.3 and 5.4 which relate to flexible zoning and streamlined approval processes (HE p. 105). The proposed zoning districts are crafted to facilitate shorter trips within neighborhoods and promote complete communities where people can live, work and play in close proximity and where more trips are feasible by foot, bicycle and transit. These efforts will eliminate vehicle trips and reduce VMT consistent with the City's Air Quality Element (AQE p.7) and the Mobility Element goal of creating an efficient, balanced, multimodal mobility network (ME p. 72).

The proposed zoning districts are established Citywide and are thus within the Coastal Zone; however, the only areas that are being rezoned by this City-initiated zone change is outside of the Coastal Zone. The City will seek a future amendment to the Local Coastal Program to certify the Municipal Code Amendment that will affect the areas in the Coastal Zone at a later time. The proposed zone change areas are not a scenic route or highway, and do not contain significant mineral resources, therefore the

Conservation and Urban Design General Plan elements do not apply. The proposed zoning districts include provisions for lighting, orienting new development to sidewalks, activating vacant storefronts and encouraging the development of vacant lots, all of which are expected to increase street activity to promote public safety, consistent with the Public Safety Element goal of promoting the redevelopment of areas, which may present safety problems. (PSE p.14). New projects will also meet current seismic safety regulations consistent with Seismic Safety Element goal of providing a safe urban environment (SE p.9).

Based on the preceding, the findings required in Zoning Code Section 21.25.106 can be made in the affirmative and thus the proposed project conforms to the criteria laid out in the Zoning Code for changing the text of zoning regulations and for rezoning properties. Additionally, the proposed project. The proposed zoning districts and zone changes are consistent with the levels of development analyzed in the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) EIR 03-16 State Clearinghouse No. 2015051054 prepared for the General Plan Land Use Element Update and Urban Design Element. The EIR Addendum analyzed the proposed project in accordance with the PEIR and determined that the project will not result in any new significant impacts that exceed those analyzed in the PEIR. The PEIR found significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality, global climate change, noise, and transportation. However, none of the conditions requiring a new subsequent or supplemental environmental impact report, as stated in Section 21166 of the Public Resources Code or in Sections 15162 or 15163 of the CEQA Guidelines, are present. Thus, the addendum was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164. Together the comprehensive Program EIR and addendum satisfy the requirement that the proposed change will not adversely affect the character, livability or appropriate development of the surrounding area. The main focus of the proposed districts is to improve the quality of the built environment in the project area and specific protections are in place to assure safety, livability and quality design and to protect historic structures.