

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 13, 2019

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ITEM: GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION -- ZONING CODE UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is for information only and is to inform the Planning Commission of the Zoning Code Update component of the General Plan Implementation work program.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the work effort to implement the General Plan through the updating of seven Specific Plans and creating one new Specific Plan (Lamanda Park), it is also necessary to update the City's Zoning Code to codify, or put into Zoning Code form, these updated/new specific plans. This effort also provides the opportunity to update the Zoning Code for better efficiency of use, including new concepts, regulations, and best practices in Zoning Code administration. In order to update the Zoning Code, the City has hired the consulting firm of Dyatt & Bahtia to work with the firms working on the specific plan updates and with City staff. Dyatt & Bahtia brings many years of zoning code expertise to the effort.

It is expected that updates to the Zoning Code will be brought through the Planning Commission for recommendation to the City Council in manageable batches with the initial amendments focusing on zoning code administration/organization and citywide amendments, while later amendments will be those needed to codify the updated/new specific plans.

Reorganization and Efficiency of Use:

The last two significant revisions to the Zoning Code (Title 17 of the Pasadena Municipal Code) were in 1985 and 2005. Since 2005 there have been numerous individual Zoning Code amendments, either focused on specific issues or topics (e.g. second units (2006), mansionization (2006, 2009, 2016, 2017), recycling centers (2015), accessory dwelling units (2017, 2018), etc.), or on general clean-up and/or corrections.

As with any dynamic or evolving document such as the Zoning Code, individual amendments over time can potentially lead to inconsistencies and/or duplicative regulations. A holistic analysis of

the Zoning Code allows for areas of potential confusion to be identified. Addressing these areas will allow for more efficient and accurate use of the Zoning Code.

Some of the amendments that fit into this category include:

- Organizing rules for measurement (e.g. size, height, rounding, etc.) into one location;
- Separating land use definitions from definitions of terms; and
- Additional graphics and tables to make it easier to understand regulations governing the development and use property.

Citywide Amendments:

Another benefit to updating the Zoning Code is the opportunity for including new or updated concepts and regulations. For example, the 'creative office' type of business (such as *WeWork* or *Cross Campus*) is a relatively new business concept, one that does not operate the same as a traditional business administrative office. Although the zoning code allows interpretations of its current regulations when it is unclear how a proposal may or may not fit into its regulations, a Zoning Code amendment can create new land use categories such as 'creative office'. Similarly, 'fast casual dining restaurants' that are prevalent now, do not always neatly fit into 'fast food' or 'sit down' restaurant categories. By amending the Zoning Code to include land uses that were not previously considered, other relevant regulations, such as parking, can be customized for the new land use.

Similarly, there may be other regulations that can be updated or modernized based on the experiences of other communities. Whether these regulations govern how much parking is required for a business, or how to best regulate home occupations or research and development businesses, or even the most effective way to process a land use entitlement, a comprehensive examination of the Zoning Code allows for a citywide analysis of what is appropriate.

Some of the amendments that fit into this category include:

- Updating land use definitions to better account for new types of businesses;
- Codifying existing Zoning Administrator Interpretations;
- Updating parking ratios; and
- Revising standards for specific uses such as alcohol sales and automobile repair shops to ensure they address community issues and concerns.

Specific Plan Update Amendments:

The updated/new specific plans will establish policies and land use and development regulations for specific geographic areas of the city, based on the unique characteristics of these areas. For example, a particular type of business may be deemed appropriate for one area of the City, but inappropriate for another area, or even within a specific plan sub-area. Similarly, reduced building setbacks may be desired in one area, while generous setbacks are more appropriate elsewhere. The regulations in the specific plans will be codified for inclusion in the Zoning Code.

As part of the adoption of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the City Council authorized the elimination of the West Gateway Specific Plan (where the Ambassador Auditorium is located). In order to eliminate this specific plan it will be necessary to create new zoning districts or apply existing districts to sites within the specific plan area to implement the Specific Plan policies.

Some of the amendments that fit into this category include:

- Regulations that specify which uses are allowed and conditionally allowed with requirements to ensure they are compatible with existing and proposed uses within the new district and with uses in adjacent areas;
- Appropriate regulations governing the height, size and setbacks to fit with existing and proposed development;
- Establishing new districts or revising existing districts as appropriate to replace the West Gateway Specific Plan.

Schedule:

It is expected that batches of Zoning Code amendments that are unrelated to the Specific Plans will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council by the end of 2019, with additional amendments to follow as the Specific Plans are brought forward for adoption in 2021.

CONCLUSION:

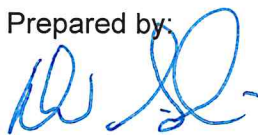
The Planning Commission will participate in the update of the City's Zoning Code by reviewing staff's recommended amendments as they are brought to the Commission. The Commission's own recommendations on the amendments will be presented to the City Council as part of its review.

Respectfully Submitted,



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