



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



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Director

July 14, 2016

TO: Doug Smith, Vice Chair
David W. Louie, Commissioner
Laura Shell, Commissioner
Curt Pedersen, Commissioner
Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: David McDonald, Senior Regional Planning Assistant
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**SUBJECT: ALTADENA COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT UPDATE
PROJECT NO. R2016-000348-(5)
ADVANCE PLANNING NO. 2016000640
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 2016002556
JULY 28, 2016 – AGENDA ITEM No. 5**

BACKGROUND

The Altadena Community Standards District (CSD) was established by the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors in 1998 as a supplemental district to address specific land use and zoning concerns within the community of Altadena. The CSD addressed a number of issues, including development standards for residential and commercial areas, to ensure compatibility development with the surrounding residential neighborhood, and support the built and economic character of its commercial areas. This CSD was subsequently amended in 2010 to establish development standards for hillside management areas within the Altadena community.

In 2012, a visioning process was initiated by the County Fifth Supervisorial District in conjunction with the County Community Development Commission and County Department of Regional Planning (Department), to gather input on the future of Altadena. The Altadena Vision Plan identified a number of characteristics for the community of Altadena, including a diverse, eclectic, unique character; mountain views, access to nature and environmental stewardship; town/district centers with thriving businesses; safe and peaceful neighborhoods; and opportunities for walking and biking. This Vision Plan was intended to set the direction for any future updates to the CSD.

Since then, a sub-committee was appointed by the Altadena Town Council to develop recommendations for the CSD Update. The CSD Committee is comprised of representatives from various aspects of the community, and include residents and

business owners as well as Altadena Heritage and the Altadena Chamber of Commerce. The CSD Committee developed a number of recommendations addressing residential and commercial issues based on current needs of the community of Altadena and to implement the Altadena Vision Plan. The County received these recommendations after they were presented by the CSD Committee to the Altadena Town Council in December 2014 (commercial) and March 2015 (residential) before transmitted to the Department as the basis for the Altadena CSD Update project.

The Altadena CSD Update was formally initiated by your Commission on February 3, 2016, and the public hearing date and location were scheduled on May 25, 2016.

CSD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The original CSD Committee recommendations are extensive and detailed, and can be found in full as Attachment 7. Below is a summary of the original recommendations from the CSD Committee, including those that are part of the CSD Update for your consideration. A more detailed description of the CSD Update can be found in the Project section below.

SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL CSD RECOMMENDATIONS		
INCLUDED IN CSD UPDATE	DEFERRED FOR FUTURE REVIEW	NOT INCLUDED OR NOT APPLICABLE
Residential		
Bed & Breakfasts in R-1, R-2 zones ¹	Filming (may be addressed as separate countywide effort)	Leaf Blower Restrictions (not regulated by zoning)
Home-Based Occupations ^{1,3} : - Uses (Picture Framing, Digital Photo Lab, Seamstress/Tailor) - Development Standards	Second Units ⁴ (currently being addressed through concurrent countywide update)	Home-Based Occupations: - Uses (Classes ⁴ , Beauty ⁵ , Upholstery ⁵ , Wood Shop ⁵ , Letterpress ⁵ , Dog/Cat Grooming ⁵ , Animal Training ⁵)
Setbacks: - Front Yard - Hillside Areas ² - Flag Lots ² - Pools w/in Side/Rear Yards ³	Animal keeping/Beekeeping ³ (may be addressed through separate countywide effort or future update)	Side Yard Encroachments ⁴
Rear Yard Landscaping Buffer ³		Setbacks: Odd-Shaped Lots ⁴
Fences, Walls and Hedges ¹ (development standards)		
R-3: Live/Work ⁵		

SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL CSD RECOMMENDATIONS		
INCLUDED IN CSD UPDATE	DEFERRED FOR FUTURE REVIEW	NOT INCLUDED OR NOT APPLICABLE
Commercial		
Outdoor Dining ¹	Restaurant Liquor Permitting (may be addressed through separate countywide effort or future update)	Oversize Vehicles (Overnight Parking) ⁵
Drive-Through Businesses ¹	Update List of Permitted Uses (more information needed; may be addressed through future update)	Signage ⁵ : - Type (Sandwich Boards, Banner/Holiday Signs)
Self-Storage	Temporary Fencing (may be addressed through other countywide efforts, e.g. Building Code)	
Auto Service ¹		
Mixed Use: - Permitting ³ - Increase Building - Height/Stories		
Live/Work: - Permitting ³		
C-2: - Permitting for 5+ Commercial Tenants		
C-2 & C-3: - Multi-family by right ⁵ - Mixed Use ^{1,3}		
Consistent Development Standards for all Commercial Areas		
Commercial Adjacent to Residential ^{1,3}		
Building Color, Wall Finish, Architectural Elements ^{1,5}		
Parking ^{1,4}		

SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL CSD RECOMMENDATIONS		
INCLUDED IN CSD UPDATE	DEFERRED FOR FUTURE REVIEW	NOT INCLUDED OR NOT APPLICABLE
Signage ^{1,2,3} : - Type (Wall, Monument) - Size		
Other		
CSD Modification Update		

¹ Original recommendation modified through further collaboration with County Departments and CSD Committee

² Recommendation addressed by deletion from the CSD, which then defers to countywide standards

³ Original recommendation (or portion of) required no action in CSD as existing provisions apply

⁴ Not included; discussion on basis for non-inclusion further discussed in staff report

⁵ Recommendation (or portion of) subsequently withdrawn by CSD Committee

PROJECT

The proposed Altadena CSD Update is a zoning ordinance amendment to the existing Altadena CSD. The objective is to update residential and commercial uses and development standards of the CSD to implement the County General Plan, the Altadena Community Plan (Plan), and the Altadena Vision Plan. The CSD Update includes proposals by the community that reflect the community’s current needs, as represented by the Altadena Town Council-appointed CSD Committee, as well as other amendments for consistency with recently-adopted ordinances.

Below is a summary of the major aspects of the CSD Update as well as other minor amendments as part of this effort. The CSD Update includes revised uses and development standards as well as procedures. Attached as Attachment 8 is a summary of corrections sheet explaining changes made to the Draft Altadena CSD Amendment Ordinance in Attachment 1.

RESIDENTIAL

The intent of the residential amendments are to permit certain flexibility for residents within Altadena’s diverse and unique neighborhoods while recognizing and ensuring compatibility with residential community character and safety. These amendments achieve this balance through appropriate permitting and development standards. Below are highlights from these amendments:

Bed and Breakfast Establishments (B&Bs)

Currently B&Bs are not explicitly permitted in Altadena.

Proposed under the CSD, B&Bs with three or more guest rooms are:

- Allowed in R-1 (Single-Family Residential) and R-2 (Two-Family Residential) zones
- Subject to a CUP and certain development standards, which include:
 - Minimum lot size (10,000 square feet or greater)
 - On-site guest parking requirements
 - Location of guest rooms within the main residence, and
 - Regulation of any on-site events as part of the CUP
- Required to comply with all other development standards of the zone, such as height and setbacks
- Through a CUP, subject to findings regarding neighborhood compatibility, and project-level analysis of site specific environmental impacts under CEQA

Home-Based Occupations

Currently certain home-based occupations are permitted countywide in all residential zones, subject to specific development standards (County Code Section 22.20.020).

These requirements address:

- Permitted occupations
- Hours of operation, deliveries
- Pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- Residential neighborhood compatibility

Proposed, the countywide provisions would continue to apply except where modified in the CSD. These proposed home-based occupations provisions will:

- Apply to R-1 zone only
- Add permitted occupations not permitted countywide:
 - Digital photography lab
 - Picture framing
 - Seamstress/tailor
- Add use-specific development standards:
 - Number of machines
 - Type of activity (e.g. finished wood assembly for picture framing)
 - Activity within an enclosed space (but not a garage)
- Modify existing development standards:
 - Maximum two businesses per property
 - Maximum two employees per property

Please see Attachment 9 for additional information on home-based occupations.

Fences, Walls and Hedges in Front Yards in R-1 Zones

Currently, the height and location of fences, walls and landscaping that serve the same purpose as a fence or hedge, are regulated by countywide provisions listed in the R-1 zone (Section 22.48.160). Specifically, fences, walls or hedges within a required front yard:

- May be up to a maximum 3.5 feet
- Are not regulated for materials

While many properties do not comply with current requirements, the existing fences and hedges are an aspect of the community character, and address privacy and noise concerns. However, the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists must be considered with any revised standards.

Proposed under the CSD, fences, walls and hedges within a required front yard:

- When located at least 10 feet back, may be up to a maximum six feet
- Are permitted with specified materials in all yards
- Will be required to comply within five years from ordinance adoption

For fences, walls and hedges that do not comply:

- Additional development standards for any modification request include:
 - May not exceed 3.5 feet within the driveway zone, as defined in the proposed CSD and depicted below
 - Maintaining adequate line of sight for vehicular traffic, including factors such as topography, and curvature and posted speed of the road
 - May not exceed 3.5 feet where located close to a property line or sidewalk
- A CSD Modification must be requested (please see below for further discussion)

Setbacks

Given the variety of lot sizes within Altadena and concerns with mansionization, currently in Altadena, required yards are calculated as follows:

- For front yards, the average of the same side of the block
- For larger flag lots, same yard requirements as standard lots

Proposed under the CSD:

- For front yards, the smallest on the same side of the block (minimum 20 feet)
- For all flag lots, same yard requirements as countywide (10 feet around)

Within designated setback districts, existing setback requirements would continue to apply.

COMMERCIAL

The intent of the commercial amendments are to promote business including pedestrian-oriented retail and restaurants, encourage diversity of architecture, and maintain appropriate buffers between commercial and residential properties. These amendments achieve this balance through appropriate permitting and development standards, including unifying existing standards throughout Altadena. Below are highlights from these amendments:

Drive-Throughs

Currently drive-throughs are permitted within Altadena, except along a portion of Lake Avenue. Drive-throughs are reviewed by the Department as well as County Department of Public Works (Public Works) for traffic safety design.

Proposed under the CSD, drive-throughs would be permitted throughout Altadena as follows:

- When adjacent to residential zones:
 - Subject to a CUP and development standards, including specified hours of operation, drive-through area setback, noise and landscaping buffering, and a clean-up plan
- When adjacent to non-residential zones:
 - Permitted with development standards, including a clean-up plan

Outdoor Dining

Proposed under the CSD, outdoor dining would be encouraged through permitting as an accessory use, and would include a parking reduction for the outdoor dining portion of any food establishment.

Auto Service

Proposed under the CSD, auto service activities as a primary or incidental use would be further regulated through development standards, including number of service bays and ensuring customer parking areas are not used for vehicle storage.

Other Use Amendments

These include:

- Dog training as a permitted use, same as countywide, C-3 (General Commercial) zone
- Automotive repair uses as a CUP use in C-3 zones, automotive service uses as a CUP use in C-2 zones, and all auto repair uses must abide by development standards of Section 22.28.190.

Consistent Commercial Development Standards

Currently, the Altadena CSD identifies two sub-areas, the West Altadena Area and Lake Avenue Area, with differing development standards.

Proposed under the CSD, development standards generally from the Lake Avenue Area will apply to all commercial zones, including:

- Signage (types and development standards)
- Building envelope, setbacks, color
- Architectural elements (number and options, including windows, balconies, offset planes, roof designs, benches)
- Lighting requirements where adjacent to residentially-zoned properties

In addition, for consistency with the adopted Altadena Community Plan:

- Maximum building height for the Lake Avenue Mixed Use 'Center' is proposed from 35 feet to 48 feet
- Floor area ratio is proposed;

Area and Zone	Initial FAR	Proposed FAR
Lake Avenue Area, C-3 Zone	2.7	1.8
Lake Avenue Mixed-Use 'Center' Area	2.7	2.7
West Altadena Area, C-M	1.0	1.0
West Altadena Area, C-3	1.8	1.8
All Commercial Zones Outside West Altadena and Lake Avenue	13	1.8
All M Zones	13	1.0

Additional Pedestrian-Friendly Development Standards

Currently the CSD includes a number of development standards to encourage pedestrian-friendly development. However, some of these standards are unclear or result in development that does not meet the objectives of pedestrian-friendly design.

Proposed under the CSD, in addition to the consistency development standards above, development standards are added or clarified to address pedestrian-friendly design, including:

- Percentage of ground-floor façade as windows, interior views or interior displays
- Location of street-facing doors and windows at sidewalk level
- Requirement that any unfinished concrete masonry unit (CMU) block walls are not visible to pedestrians
- Required setbacks to accommodate pedestrian activity or landscaping

Parking

Currently, parking is required based on countywide requirements.

Proposed under the CSD, revised parking requirements are included to balance the encouraging retail and restaurant businesses with maintaining sufficient parking as to not overly impact adjacent residential areas. These revised parking requirements are included in the table below:

Proposed Parking Requirements

<u>Lot Size (net square feet)¹</u>	<u>New Construction and Additions</u>	<u>Existing Buildings²</u>			
		<u>New Use</u>	<u>Intensification or Expansion of Use, where no increase in building gross floor area occurs</u>	<u>Intensification or Expansion of Use, where increase in building gross floor area occurs</u>	<u>With Outdoor Dining or Sidewalk Dining</u>
<u><2,500</u>	<u>None³</u>	<u>None³</u>			
<u>2,500-5,000</u>	<u>30% reduction of that required under Part 11 of Chapter 22.52</u>	<u>30% reduction of that required at time building was constructed</u>	<u>None³</u>	<u>30% reduction of that required for increased gross floor area, including landscaping, bicycle parking and loading spaces</u>	<u>30% reduction of that required for outdoor dining or sidewalk dining area under Part 11 of Chapter 22.52⁴</u>
<u>>5,000</u>	<u>That required under Part 11 of Chapter 22.52</u>	<u>That required at time building was constructed</u>	<u>None³</u>	<u>That required for increased gross floor area, including landscaping, bicycle parking and loading spaces</u>	<u>30% reduction of that required for outdoor dining or sidewalk dining area under Part 11 of Chapter 22.52⁴</u>
¹ Legal nonconforming lots ² Constructed prior to September 22, 1970 ³ Except as required for persons with disabilities ⁴ One space per three persons based on occupancy load of outdoor dining or sidewalk dining area					

Additionally, for any commercial use, location of parking within a ¼-mile off-site or shared parking may be used to meet required parking.

OTHER AMENDMENTS

CSD Modification Process

Currently, the CSD outlines several procedures for requests to modify CSD requirements. All of these procedures require notification to a 1,000-foot radius as well as the Altadena Town Council.

- In R-1, a CUP is required
- In the other residential zones, a CSD Modification is required that:
 - Requires Director denial when three or more protests are received
 - May be requested for public hearing if denied. Additional fees for the Hearing Officer hearing are required
 - May be appealed to the Commission where their decision remains final
- In commercial zones, a different procedure for CSD Modification is identified, with no automatic denial

Under the proposed CSD, the CSD Modification process will be unified to include:

- A procedure that follows the Minor CUP, where a streamlined Hearing Officer hearing is held
- The fee is the same as the current CSD Modification fee
- An updated notice radius will be 300 feet as well as the Altadena Town Council
- Specific development standards for certain modifications, such as minimum lines of sight for fences and walls to maintain safety

Consistency with Countywide Ordinances

For consistency with other recently adopted ordinances, the following were also updated in the CSD:

- Hillside Management provisions: References to the countywide ordinance and development standards were updated. The lower threshold for a CUP in Altadena continues to apply
- Historic Preservation provisions: References to the new countywide ordinance were updated, including any future properties designated under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Notice and consultation to the Altadena Heritage continues to apply

Other Amendments

Other amendments to the Minor CUP provisions of the County Code are included. These were previously considered as part of the Renewable Energy Ordinance (REO), which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on July 14, 2015 and awaiting final adoption. These amendments are carried forward as part of this CSD Update until such time that the REO is adopted and in effect.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CSD COMMITTEE

In addition, there are several recommendations from the CSD Committee where concerns from staff remain. These are further described in the Staff Analysis section below.

PLAN CONSISTENCY

GENERAL PLAN

The CSD Update is consistent with and/or implements a number of policies and objectives of the County General Plan (General Plan). The General Plan emphasizes the concept of sustainability through its five guiding principles:

- Employ Smart Growth
- Ensure community services and infrastructure are sufficient to accommodate growth
- Provide the foundation for a strong and diverse economy
- Promote excellence in environmental resource management
- Provide healthy, livable and equitable communities

More specifically, the following are some of the applicable General Plan policies:

Policy	Item
LU 4.1	Encourage infill development in urban and suburban areas on vacant, underutilized, and/or brownfield sites
LU 4.2	Encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized structures and the revitalization of older, economically distressed neighborhoods
LU 4.4	Encourage mixed use development along major commercial corridors in urban and suburban areas.
LU 5.3	Support a mix of land uses that promote bicycling and walking, and reduce [Vehicle Miles Traveled].
LU 5.10	Encourage employment opportunities and housing to be developed in proximity to one another.
LU 9.2	Encourage patterns of development that promote physical activity.
LU 10.6	Encourage Pedestrian Activity through the following, Designing the main entrance of buildings to front the street; Incorporating landscaping features; Limiting masonry walls and parking lots along commercial corridors and other public spaces; Incorporating street furniture, signage, and public events and activities; and Using wayfinding strategies to highlight community points of interest.
N 1.3	Minimize impacts to noise-sensitive land uses by ensuring adequate site design, acoustical construction, and use of barriers, berms, or additional engineering controls through Best Available Technologies (BAT).
ED 1.7	Identify opportunities to lower the costs of doing business in Los Angeles County
ED 4.4	Incentivize infill development in urban and suburban areas that revitalizes underutilized commercial and industrial areas.

The CSD Update accomplishes these policy objectives through its uses and development standards, as further summarized below:

- Encourage infill and mixed use development

The CSD Update proposes to update the maximum building height for the Lake Avenue Mixed Use ‘Center’ Area as well as floor area ratio, thereby encouraging compatible development such as joint live and work, and mixed use consistent with existing countywide provisions.

- Encourage patterns of development that promote physical and pedestrian activity

The CSD Update retains and further clarifies its development standards to encourage pedestrian-friendly design. These standards include visual interaction elements on building facades, street/sidewalk level entrances, pedestrian flow and structure setbacks, and architectural design features that collectively provide visual interest, allow unimpeded pedestrian movement, and amenities such as benches and landscaping. Permitting off-

site parking within ¼ mile also encourages physical activity similar in distance as transit-oriented development.

- Minimize impacts to noise-sensitive land uses through best practices

The CSD Update allows commercial properties adjacent to residential zones to establish a drive-through with a CUP and development standards, such as a drive-through area setback, buffering, clean-up plan, and specified hours of operation. These development standards ensure that the microphone and cashier areas of the drive-through are located a minimum distance from residences along with landscaping and buffering to reduce any potential aesthetic impacts. A CUP is a discretionary permit and while require site-specific environmental review, and all drive-throughs are reviewed by Public Works to ensure the siting of the driveway does not impede traffic flow and safety.

- Incentivize reinvestment in local businesses and older commercial areas

The CSD Update includes amendments for both residential and commercial areas that support economic development. In residential areas, appropriate home-based occupations as well as bed and breakfasts can encourage improvements to existing residences and provide limited business activity that supports residents and brings visitors to Altadena. In commercial areas, parking reductions greatly encourage the reuse of existing underutilized structures for retail and restaurant uses, including modified parking standards for outdoor dining that revitalize street activity and encourage safe neighborhoods.

Therefore, the CSD Update is consistent with the General Plan.

ALTADENA COMMUNITY PLAN

The Altadena Community Plan (Community Plan) was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1985 as a component of the General Plan, and describes Altadena as a mature community of residences, commercial districts, institutional and public uses. Major objectives of the Community Plan include:

- Preserve the residential character of the community
- Intensify, renovate, and revitalize the commercial and industrial areas.

The CSD Update preserves the residential character of the community while encouraging limited flexibility to avoid stagnation and lack of property improvements and upkeep. No up-zoning or down-zoning is proposed in this project. In addition, every change in the CSD that affects residential areas has been balanced to ensure that the residential character of a neighborhood will not be affected. This can be seen through such amendments as:

- Bed and Breakfasts: A minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet is required, and a homeowner or manager must reside on site.

- Home-based Occupations: Additional occupations through the CSD Update must be conducted indoors, and the existing standards that apply to all home-based occupations also apply to the new permitted occupations. The additional conditions and restrictions on these proposals limit impacts to residential communities and simultaneously allows residents more freedom to work and support themselves.
- Updated Fences and Walls: Revised standards support property improvement through fences and walls that add to the community character and provide privacy, while ensuring that safety is maintained.

In addition to the goal of revitalizing the commercial and industrial areas of Altadena, in addition to supporting other commercial areas within Altadena a key Community Plan goal was to create a “village-like” community center within the Lake Avenue commercial core. This area was to be considered the focal point of Altadena, and was initially conceived as the principal activity area of Altadena where mixed-use development was to be encouraged. The CSD Update ensures this through:

- Building Height: The CSD Update increases the height within the Lake Avenue Mixed-Use ‘Center’ from 35 feet (two stories) to 48 feet (three stories), which is consistent with the standards within the Community Plan.
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Described in the Community Plans as the Maximum Building Intensity¹, the CSD Update maintains the FAR of 2.7:1 for the Lake Avenue Mixed-Use ‘Center’, consistent with the Community Plan. Height limits and intensity are therefore consistent with the Community Plan.

The CSD Update also helps revitalize commercial areas while preserving the residential character of the community by unifying signage requirements, improving pedestrian design requirements, instituting commercial buffers, and other changes. For example, drive-throughs are permitted when adjacent to residential zones with a CUP, or when not adjacent to residential zones by right with a site and clean-up plan. This would allow uses such as restaurants, coffee shops, banks or pharmacies to offer a drive-through with limited impacts to surrounding residents.

Therefore, the CSD Update is also consistent with the Community Plan.

COUNTY REVIEW AND OUTREACH

COUNTY REVIEW

In reviewing the CSD Committee recommendations and developing the ordinance, staff worked extensively with Current Planning and Zoning Enforcement staff from the Department as well as other County Departments, including Public Works, Department of Public Health, Department of the Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures (Agricultural Commissioner), and County Counsel. Through this collaboration and consultation process, the draft ordinance reflects staff’s best recommendation for meeting the desires of the community while limiting any unintended consequences.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach for the CSD Update was broad and wide-ranging, including community meetings, social media posting and non-profit partnerships. The CSD Committee, who were the Department's key partner in developing the ordinance and understanding the needs of the community, offered recommendations to the draft CSD, assisted in outreach for specific events, and communicated the current status of the project to their constituents throughout the process. In addition to e-mails and calls, staff met with the CSD Committee 11 times between March 2015 and May 2016 to discuss and refine the CSD recommendations. Representatives from the Board office as well as Zoning Enforcement, Public Works and Agricultural Commissioner staff also attended numerous meetings to facilitate the policy- and technical-related discussions.

Open House

A Community Open House was hosted by the Department on June 4, 2016 at the Altadena Elementary School. Outreach for the community meeting was conducted through a series of postings on local websites, at local business establishments, and through partnerships with community groups such as Altadena Heritage, Altadena Now, and the local Chamber of Commerce, non-profits, religious organizations, and business organizations.

Approximately 90 people attended the Open House, where they could learn about the draft provisions through an automated presentation and visiting 6 different booths, organized by topic and enforcement. Summary sheets on the different recommendations were provided as well as the additional recommendations proposed by members of the CSD Committee. Planners were available to answer questions and accept comments. Comment cards from 29 different people were collected at the Open House. Written comments on the proposed Altadena CSD were also taken at the meeting as well as through an online survey. These comments are provided as Attachment 3.

COURTESY NOTICE AND AVAILABILITY

The legal notice of public hearing was advertised in The San Gabriel Valley Tribute on June 27, 2016. In addition, on June 28, 2016 a courtesy postcard notice was mailed to all property owners informing them of the proposed project, Initial Study, and Regional Planning Commission hearing. The Draft CSD ordinance and Negative Declaration were also made available on the website at that time.

Notices and copies of the draft CSD were also posted at the Altadena libraries, Altadena Community Center, and the Altadena Senior Center as well as at the Department's field office in Arcadia.

CORRESPONDENCE

OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

As of the date of the release of the RPC Public Draft Ordinance on June 28, 2016, the Department received a total of 46 comments, including 35 written and emailed comments on the Altadena CSD update and draft CSD, and 11 comments via our online survey. Twenty-nine (29) public comments were submitted at the Open House event, and six comments were submitted via email in the time leading up to June 28.

These comments addressed a number of topics, including, pedestrian friendly design, front yard setbacks, fences and hedges, and home-based occupations. Please see Attachment 3 to review the Open House comments in full.

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS

Since the release of the RPC Public Draft Ordinance on June 28, two written letters have been received and five online comments posted. Those comments are included in Attachment 4.

Public comments received raised the following concerns or issues, including:

- Existing CSD Hillside Management development standards (which are not being substantively revised);
- Fences and walls and hedges both inside and outside of required yards;
- Vacation home rentals;
- Current construction of a supermarket on Lake Avenue;
- Uses in ground floor in commercial zones;
- Providing entrances and windows on commercial developments facing the street; and
- The CSD Modification process (which has since been revised to include the Minor CUP)

Reasonable consideration was given by staff to all comments received. Generally, the letters received fell into the following categories:

- Clarification: Several comment letters contained recommendations which will be taken under advisement for further ordinance revisions, such as adding a definition for bed and breakfast establishments.
- Already Included: Comments received which are part of what Staff has already incorporated into the CSD Amendment, such as having pedestrian-oriented building design on street facing buildings in commercial zones.
- Objections: Comments received contained objections to development standards in the CSD, which staff reviewed and are not recommending further changes to the CSD, such as eliminating any standards related to front yard fences, walls or hedges on private property.

- Not Applicable: Comments received which fall outside of the purview of the CSD.
- Requests for Information: Requests for information were also received, such as the meaning of the term 'Negative Declaration'.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The CSD Update is an amendment that updates residential and commercial uses and development standards within the zoning ordinance. The CSD Update does not contain any provisions for building or development that has the potential to degrade the quality of the environment beyond less than significant.

The Proposed Update would not change or conflict with any General Plan policy with regards to environmental effects. This includes the Community Climate Action Plan 2020 (CCAP), which is a component of the General Plan. The CCAP are applicable to new construction as well as existing uses within the Project Area. This includes home-based occupations and drive-through establishments included in the CSD Update.

Regarding drive-throughs, the Project proposes permitting drive-through facilities in commercial zones in two tiers. When the commercial parcel is adjacent to a residentially-zoned lot, drive-through facilities are permitted with a CUP, and include findings and development standards such as the requirement of a clean-up plan, adequate buffers from residential uses, and site-specific environmental review. On commercial parcels not adjacent to residentially-zoned lots, the drive-through facility is permitted with a site plan review, which includes submittal of a clean-up plan. Commercial lots not adjacent to residentially zoned lots are limited in number, as the majority of commercially-zoned areas abut R-1, R-2, or R-3 zones. Less than 200 parcels within the Project Area are both commercially zoned and not adjacent to residentially-zoned lots. The Project will implement General Plan policy that encourages context-sensitive infill development, and includes standards related to buffering and a setback of the drive-through area. As the Community Plan identifies retail needs being met from outside the community, drive-throughs could help achieve goals of reducing vehicular trips, and thereby help reduce total vehicular-based greenhouse gas emissions.

The Draft Altadena CSD Amendment also provides consistency between the height limit currently imposed by the CSD within the area the Altadena Community Plan designates as Mixed Use Center. Maximum heights in the Mixed Use Center were allowed to be up to 48 feet according to the adopted Community Plan. The current CSD limits those commercial zone heights to 35 feet.

The Mixed Use Center is an urbanized center in an existing generally urbanized area. Furthermore, the Mixed Use Center is adjacent and mostly surrounded by institutional and multi-family residential uses, some of which have heights around or above 48 feet, similar to the Project's proposal. The Project's revision to update the maximum height of commercial structures in the Mixed Use Center implements and ensures consistency with the adopted Community Plan.

While the draft ordinance analyzed for purposes of CEQA differs slightly than the RPC Public Draft Ordinance, the changes are minor as to not affect the environmental

analysis or conclusions made from such analysis. The CEQA Draft Ordinance is attached as part of the Negative Declaration (Attachment 5).

The Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration was properly noticed and published in The San Gabriel Valley Tribune on June 27, 2016 and posted on the Department website.

INITIAL STUDY DETERMINATION

The Initial Study was completed and concluded that the CSD Update would have a less than significant effect on the environment, and therefore a Negative Declaration has been prepared.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The RPC Public Draft Ordinance (Attachment 1) presented for your consideration, represents the culmination of more than three years of work with the CSD Committee, a subcommittee appointed by the Altadena Town Council to develop the CSD recommendations and represent the community, in addition to consultation with subject matter experts from the Department and other County Departments.

The RPC Public Draft Ordinance has been written to balance the input from a diverse constituency while striving to maintain the health, safety and welfare of the entire community. The comprehensive update of the CSD deals with many areas, including difficult and sensitive issues such as the front yard fences, walls and hedges and commercial pedestrian-oriented design. This updated ordinance incorporates local development standards which reflect the community's interest and the best interest of the county.

The revised fences and hedges standards reflect a need to address conditions specific to Altadena. For many years, the development pattern within Altadena has resulted in numerous over-height fences and hedges that may not ensure the safety of vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. These revised standards have been developed through considerable consultation with Public Works, and reflects the minimum standards necessary for safety. Modifications to these minimum standards must further demonstrate that line of sight needs specific to that property are met.

The revised yard development standards will appropriately address the unique character of certain parts of Altadena which have widely varying existing front yards, and will make it easier for applicants and DRP to determine the most appropriate setbacks for the current development pattern on the block and surrounding neighborhood. The revised CSD Modification process further helps homeowners by reducing the costs and burden from a CUP to a Minor CUP process, thereby balancing the opportunity for impacted neighbors to share any concerns while allowing each CSD Modification request to be evaluated on its merits.

The commercial development standards have been updated to provide consistency for all commercial areas within Altadena. Additional standards have also been incorporated to ensure that pedestrian-friendly design is achieved through architectural features, setbacks and queuing, and visibility from the street.

Commercial uses have been updated to meet the needs of the community, with further development standards, appropriate permitting and County review to ensure that these uses, namely drive-throughs and incidental auto-service related uses, meet the needs of the local residents.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

While every effort has been made to reach consensus on outstanding issues, not all recommendations were included in the CSD Update. As summarized under the Original CSD Recommendations section above, there were certain recommendations that did not apply to the zoning code or where a countywide approach is more appropriate. In some instances, the environmental constraints or professional consensus of staff on feasibility and Zoning Code consistency code and processes resulted in not including some proposals.

Of those recommendations where staff concerns remain:

1. Certain recommendations have draft CSD language for your Commission's consideration. Should the Commission wish to include the recommendation in the CSD Update, draft CSD language has already been prepared. Those recommendations are represented as the Additional Recommendations document (Attachment 2). These include:

Classes as a Home-Based Occupation in the R-1 Zone

The CSD Committee recommends allowing classes by right as a home-based occupation. Classes may be up to 10 participants for a total of four classes. Additional development standards would include hours of operation and that two-thirds of the 1,000-foot notification radius must be in support of the project.

Staff Analysis: Staff recommends a CUP be required for classes as a home-based occupation. For a project to be approved, the CUP should be able to impose conditions that mitigate the impacts related to ongoing parking, noise and traffic. Effective enforcement would be difficult to ensure that the number of classes or participants are not exceeded each and every time, and therefore could result in a negative impact on the residential character of a neighborhood, including increased traffic on residential streets, and intensity of commercial-like activity if many residences have this use. There is also potential to detract from demand of commercial space within Altadena where these uses would be more appropriately located.

➤ Therefore, staff does not recommend approval of this recommendation.

2. Certain recommendations do not have draft CSD language drafted. Further discussion of staff's concerns are described below, and should the Commission

wish for further information or to include the recommendation, staff would need to prepare the draft language for future Commission consideration. Additional environmental analysis may also be required. These include:

One-Time Additions Encroaching into Side Yards in the R-1 and R-2 Zones

Members of the CSD Committee recommend that for any permitted dwelling in the R-1 or R-2 zone, a one-time only single-story addition of 500 square feet or less must be allowed to encroach into a required side yard setback. The addition must be designed in such a way as to continue the plane of the existing building. In no case could the addition be taller than 15 feet at the eaves measured at the property line, and no side yard less than 5 feet be allowed.

The CSD Committee members have requested this change because complying with the CSD for a small additional poses hardship on the homeowners and in some cases threatened the integrity of historically-significant structures. This one-time exception to the current CSD requirements is proposed to allow a small addition following the line of the existing structure, so long as a minimum 5 foot setback is maintained.

Staff Analysis: This proposal would be difficult to administer and would only benefit the current owner of the property. Subsequent owners would be subjected to more stringent only because they were not the first to apply. There are potential legal concerns with granting an exception the first time, and requiring a different process for another when they could fundamentally be the same request. The one-time exception does not take into account the nature of potential impacts, including impacts to historically significant structures as cited above. The alternative for one-time exceptions is through a CSD Modification, which is a reduced process than the CUP required today in R-1 zones. Further, the CSD Modification process still allows for neighbor input. Allowing by-right exceptions potentially undermines the larger CSD setback as an anti-mansionization tool.

➤ Therefore, staff does not recommend approval of this recommendation.

Setbacks for Odd-Shaped Lots

Members of the CSD Committee recommend that for odd-shaped lots with less than 50 feet of street frontage, define the front yard to be that portion of the lot that fronts onto the public street.

Staff Analysis: This proposal is potentially inconsistent with countywide provisions for how to determine yard areas for odd-shaped lots. The County Code identifies the Director as determining where yards are located on odd-shaped lots, and it is still somewhat unclear to staff why it is necessary to create a different definition for Altadena. There is also concern that widely applying a definition for front yard as the portion abutting the street could be considered arbitrary as it does not account for the neighborhood pattern or how development could best fit on that particular lot. In such cases where it is necessary, a CSD Modification process (rather than a full CUP) is another way to consider site-specific needs based on lot shape.

➤ Therefore, staff does not recommend approval of this recommendation.

Second Units

Members of the CSD Committee recommend that second units be allowed by right where homes are served by septic systems. For residences in high fire severity zones or within a Significant Ecological Area (SEA), a CSD Modification is the more appropriate procedure rather than a CUP for a second unit. Height limits for second units are also recommended to be the same as the main residence.

Staff Analysis: The current countywide second unit ordinance is in compliance with State law to allow second units in the R-1 zone. The state law also gives local jurisdictions discretion to account for infrastructure or environmental constraints.

Second units are permitted throughout the County as a by-right use in R-1, unless located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or not served by public water and public sewer. In such cases, a CUP is required for a second unit. Any CUP for a second unit is reviewed by Public Health as well as Public Works and Fire Department; individual private water wells or wastewater treatment systems, such as septic, are also reviewed and permitted by Public Health.

Second units are currently not permitted in hillside areas or in an SEA. An SEA is an officially designated area identified for their potential biological value. These areas warrant special management because they contain biotic resources that are considered to be rare or unique; are critical to the maintenance of wildlife; represent relatively undisturbed areas of County habitat types; or serve as linkages.

Potential concerns with this change relate to timing, as the Board of Supervisors has already directed the Department to update the countywide Second Unit Ordinance as part of its priority policy on homelessness, and community outreach is anticipated to begin early 2017. If issues remain specific to Altadena after the countywide update, an effort to address those issues would be appropriate then.

- Therefore, staff does not recommend approval of this recommendation.

No Required Parking on Commercial Lots Less Than 5,000 Square Feet

Members of the CSD Committee recommend a waiver of all parking requirements for retail or restaurant uses with a change of use of an existing structure or additions to an existing structure on commercial lots less than 5,000 square feet. This however, should not apply to separate lots less than 5,000 square feet lots that have been combined into one larger than 5,000 square foot lot, or buildings that span multiple lots less than 5,000 square feet each.

Staff Analysis: The concern is that there will be spillover parking in adjacent residential areas if there is not enough parking for commercial businesses. There are more than 130 parcels that have been identified in Altadena that may be under 5,000 square feet. Due to historic development patterns, these parcels are clustered in specific areas of Altadena, such as along Lake Avenue. These areas are adjacent to single-family zoned areas that may be impacted by additional parking demand.

The CSD Update already includes proposed parking reductions in a tiered approach so that any development on lots smaller than 2,500 square feet are not required any new parking requirements. Lots between 2,500 and 5,000 square feet are required to provide parking based on requirements applicable at time of original construction or only at a reduced amount for additions. Lots larger than 5,000 square feet are to conform to current parking requirements. This tiered approach provides the necessary balance between encouraging additional restaurant and retail uses, and limiting potential impacts to local residents. Lots under 2,500 square feet are more generally spread out throughout Altadena, and it was determined that the limited number of the lots, combined with their small size and generally scattered locations, would have a less than significant impact on the environment.

- Therefore, staff does not recommend approval of this recommendation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is made prior to the public hearing and is subject to change based upon testimony and/or documentary evidence presented at the public hearing:

The RPC Draft Altadena CSD Amendment (Attachment 1) is a comprehensive zoning ordinance that amends the CSD to maintain and enhance residential character while providing new development standards for an evolving and diverse community of Altadena. The ordinance also provides for commercial areas with improved pedestrian-friendly aesthetically-pleasing building design and parking requirements, which are intended to encourage new businesses to locate and serve the residents and visitors, while retaining the diversity of architecture and community character of Altadena.

The CSD Update reflects countless hours of service by the CSD Committee, who have worked on behalf of their community to develop recommendation so to improve the quality of life for all of Altadena. This CSD Update also reflects the County's best recommendation for an ordinance that best balances the community's goals with effective and enforceable zoning regulation of future development in Altadena.

Therefore, staff recommends that your Commission close the public hearing, and recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Negative Declaration and adoption of the Draft Altadena CSD Ordinance.

I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, AND RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, APPROVAL OF THE NEGATIVE DECLARATION, AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT ALTADENA COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT ORDINANCE.

Attachment 1: RPC Draft Altadena CSD Amendment Ordinance

Attachment 2: Additional Recommendations from the CSD Committee

Attachment 3: Open House Draft 2 Comments

Attachment 4: RPC Draft 3 Comments

Attachment 5: Negative Declaration

Attachment 6: Draft Resolution – TO BE PROVIDED IN SUPPLEMENTAL MAILING

Attachment 7: Original Recommendations from CSD Committee

**Attachment 8: Revised CSD Draft and Errata – TO BE PROVIDED IN
SUPPLEMENTAL MAILING**

Attachment 9: Home Based Occupations Development Standards Table