



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Dennis Slavin  
Acting Director

October 24, 2017

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**HEARING ON THE WILLOWBROOK TRANSIT ORIENTED DISTRICT  
SPECIFIC PLAN  
PROJECT NO. R2015-02007-(2)  
ADVANCE PLANNING NO. R201500004  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 201500136  
WILLOWBROOK-ENTERPRISE ZONED DISTRICT  
(SECOND SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The Willowbrook Transit Oriented District (TOD) Specific Plan proposes changes to land use and zoning to encourage transit oriented development and promote active transportation in the area within an approximately half-mile radius of the Willowbrook Rosa Parks Metro Station. The Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan would potentially accommodate an additional 1,952 dwelling units and 2,666,035 square feet of non-residential land use and includes pedestrian sidewalks and intersection improvements.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING,**

1. Consider, approve and certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and find that it has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the state and local agency guidelines related thereto and reflects the independent judgment of the Board of Supervisors (Board);
2. Determine that where significant adverse environmental effects of the project, as described in the Final EIR, have not been reduced to a level of less than significant, the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan benefits, such as specific social, economic, legal, technological or other considerations outweigh the environmental effects of the project as stated in the attached CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding

Considerations for the project, which findings and statement are incorporated herein by reference;

3. Consider, approve and certify the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project, included in the Final EIR and as modified to County format and implementation procedures, and pursuant to Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code, find that the MMRP as modified by the County is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during project implementation;
4. That the Board consider, approve and adopt the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan, Advance Planning No. R2015-02007-(2), with the changes as noted by the Regional Planning Commission (Commission), and related actions and determine that the recommended zone changes, zone amendments and plan amendments serve the public health, safety and general welfare and in conformity with good zoning practice and is compatible with and is supportive of the goals and policies of the Los Angeles County General Plan (General Plan); and
5. Instruct County Counsel to prepare the final ordinance amending Title 22: Planning and Zoning of the Los Angeles County Code (County Code) to add Section 22.46.3100 - Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan as recommended by the Commission and to submit the final ordinance to the Board for its consideration.

#### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

In 2009, at the request of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Urban Land Institute convened a Technical Assistance Panel to study the area of Willowbrook that includes the Willowbrook Rosa Parks Metro Station and Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Center. The panel made specific recommendations which formed the foundations for the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan. Concurrently, the Department of Regional Planning (Department) was working to update the General Plan, which was adopted by the Board on October 6, 2015.

One of the main policy areas of the General Plan is to encourage transit oriented development by establishing TODs that promote infill development and active transportation strategies. The General Plan designates eleven TODs that are areas located within a half-mile radius of an existing Metro Station or stop. The General Plan update also repealed earlier TOD regulations and established the TOD Program. This program calls for the preparation of a specific plan for each of the TODs. The Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan is the first plan developed to implement this program and was initiated in January 2014. The Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan area comprises approximately 312 acres adjacent to the Willowbrook Rosa Parks Metro Station.

The Willowbrook Rosa Parks Metro Station was selected for the County's first TOD Specific Plan because it is a prominent transfer station on Metro's Blue and Green Lines. Additionally, a number of improvements are planned in the area that will support transit oriented development at the Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Center campus, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, the Kenneth Hahn Plaza Shopping Center, as well as Metro's Station Improvement Project to redevelop and revitalize the Willowbrook Rosa Parks Metro Station.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan supports the first two goals of the County Strategic Plan: I. Make Investments that Transform Lives, and; II. Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities. The proposed Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan will establish standards to encourage new housing, including affordable housing, and jobs in proximity to transit. Additionally, the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan promotes active and healthy lifestyles by encouraging active transportation modes within an integrated, multi-modal transportation system.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The recommended action had no fiscal impact to the County as it was completed under a grant from Metro's Transit Oriented Development Planning Grant Program and as part of the Department's implementation of the General Plan. The adoption of the updated Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan will not result in the need for additional departmental staffing.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

A public hearing is required pursuant to Section 22.16.200 and 22.60.174 (Planning and Zoning) of the County Code and Section 65856 of the California Government Code. Required notice must be given pursuant to the process and requirements set forth in Section 22.60.174 (Planning and Zoning) of the County Code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Sections 6061, 65090, and 65856 of the Government Code related to the notice of public hearing.

On August 9, 2017, the Commission held a duly-noticed public hearing to consider the proposed Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan. During the hearing, the Commission heard testimony from four speakers with no opposition. One speaker, representing the Golden State Environmental & Social Justice Alliance stated that the comments raised in their comment letter provided on May 29, 2017, and included in the Response to Comments portion of the Final EIR, remain and that the Final EIR for the project is inadequate and should be redrafted and recirculated. No new comment letters were received or submitted into the record.

After hearing testimony, the Commission approved a motion that included strengthening Polices 6.6 and 6.7 and elaborating on the character the plan seeks to preserve in residential neighborhoods as detailed below. The Commission closed the public hearing and voted three to one, with one member absent, to recommend that the Board certify and adopt the Final EIR, hold a public hearing to consider the proposed Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan as amended, adopt the recommended zone changes, zone amendments and plan amendments and determine that the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

#### Additional Edits/Information

##### **Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan, Page 7 and Page 11**

At its hearing on August 9, 2017, the Commission instructed staff to strengthen Policy 6.6 to require new development to provide public open space, as appropriate, and Policy 6.7 to require that pocket parks and community gardens be built on available County-owned vacant lots. The Commission also directed staff to amend and elaborate on the description referring to the character that the plan seeks to preserve in residential neighborhoods.

##### **Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan, Chapters 7 and 8**

Staff added details to provide clarity regarding the economic development strategy and the conceptual Capital Improvement Program.

##### **Final EIR, Chapter 8, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Pages 8-7 to 8-17**

Staff removed redundant information from the Action Required Column and updated the permit type under the Mitigation Timing Column to provide clarity in implementing the MMRP, which is included as Chapter 8 in the Final EIR.

These updated pages and chapters, with changes indicated, are included as an attachment to this memo and can also be found on the Department's Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan website at [planning.lacounty.gov/willowbrook](http://planning.lacounty.gov/willowbrook).

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

A Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment from May 12, 2017, to June 26, 2017, pursuant to CEQA reporting requirements. The Draft EIR was posted online as well as at the Willowbrook Library. The Notice of Completion and Availability was mailed to more than 1,300 postal addresses and e-mailed to 180 e-mail addresses and was published in the Long Beach Press Telegram on May 12, 2017. The County received eight comment letters as well as testimony from five testifiers at the Hearing Examiner Public Hearing held on June 1, 2017. All comments are addressed in the Response to Comments Section of the Final EIR.

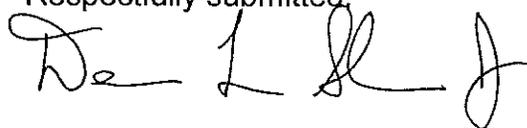
The Final EIR contains a summary of the potential environmental effects of the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan, the recommended mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid those effects, and the level of significance after mitigation. Implementation of the mitigation measures, as detailed in each environmental analysis section presented in the EIR, would reduce most of the potentially significant impacts to a less than significant level. However, even with the implementation of the mitigation measures, the plan would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to the following: air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation and traffic. The Final EIR, which includes the Draft EIR, the MMRP and Response to Comments are included in Attachment 5.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

Approval of the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan will not impact current services or projects. Per the applicability provisions in the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan, applications filed prior to the effective date may be reviewed for consistency with land use and zoning or the land use and zoning in effect prior to adoption of the Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan.

For further information, please contact Anita Gutierrez, AICP, Community Studies West Section, at (213) 974-6422 or [agutierrez@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:agutierrez@planning.lacounty.gov).

Respectfully submitted,



Dennis Slavin  
Acting Director

DS:AG:LF:ems

Attachments:

1. Regional Planning Commission Resolution
2. Draft Zoning Ordinance
3. Willowbrook TOD Specific Plan – August 2017
4. Commission Staff Reports and Correspondence
5. Final Environmental Impact Report
6. Additional Edits/Information

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
October 24, 2017  
Page 6

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Assessor  
Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Public Works

S\_AP\_102417\_BL\_WILLOWBROOK\_TOD\_SPEC\_PLN