



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



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Director

February 27, 2018

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 FLORENCE-FIRESTONE COMMUNITY PLAN,
ZONE CHANGE, AND COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT UPDATE
PROJECT NO. 2010-01687- (2)
ADVANCE PLANNING (PLAN AMENDMENT) NO. RPPL2017007677
ZONE CHANGE NO. RZC-201500003
ADVANCE PLANNING (CSD UPDATE) NO. RPPL2017006041
COMPTON-FLORENCE, GAGE-HOLMES, ROOSEVELT PARK,
FIRESTONE PARK, STARK PALMS,
AND CENTRAL GARDENS ZONED DISTRICTS
(SECOND SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

SUBJECT

This action is to adopt the Florence-Firestone Community Plan (Plan), accompanying zone changes, and updates to the Florence-Firestone Community Standards District (CSD), collectively known as the Project. The Project requires a plan amendment, zone change, and an ordinance update.

The proposed Plan is an amendment to the General Plan as community plans are extensions of the General Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework to guide future development, maintenance, and preservation in the unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone which does not currently have an adopted community plan.

Zone changes are proposed to bring zoning into conformance with the adopted General Plan land use policy for designated properties along Florence Avenue.

The Florence-Firestone CSD, which was adopted in 2004, is being updated to effectively implement the Plan.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING,

1. Find that the Addendum to the Certified Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update Project 02-305 has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and state and local agency guidelines related thereto and reflects the independent judgment of the Board of Supervisors (Board);
2. Indicate the intent to approve the proposed Plan, accompanying zone changes, and CSD update as recommended by the Regional Planning Commission (Commission); and
3. Instruct County Counsel to prepare the final documents and ordinances for the Project and bring them back to the Board for final action.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Project establishes community level goals, policies, and standards to guide the future growth and development of Florence-Firestone. It identifies recommended implementations strategies to carry out the goals and policies. The Project was developed with input from the community and stakeholders and responds to the needs, opportunities, and challenges raised through the engagement process.

The Project aims to achieve the following goals:

- Improve the overall health, welfare, and vitality of the community;
- Facilitate mixed-use development and direct growth to transit adjacent areas;
- Alleviate conflicts arising from the proximity between industrial and residential uses;
- Make new development pedestrian-friendly;
- Increase access to housing opportunities;
- Improve community connectivity, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscapes, and access to public open space;
- Encourage maintenance and reuse of structures and properties;
- Facilitate access to information and resources, particularly regarding environmental justice, public health, and nuisance concerns; and
- Ensure that the community's vision is clearly reflected in the Plan and subsequent actions.

Below is a summary of the three components of the Project:

The Plan

The Plan has been developed to reflect the community's shared vision of the future and identifies specific goals, policies, and actions to achieve that vision. It furthers the objectives of the General Plan by providing a community-level planning document for the development of property, mobility, public realm, open space, and community design in Florence-Firestone. The Plan is tailored to the unique geographic, demographic, and social diversity of the Florence-Firestone community. The anticipated plan timeframe is 20 years (see Attachment 1).

The Plan is organized into five chapters:

- Chapter 1: Introduction - Provides community background information and describes the plan and its purpose.
- Chapter 2: Community History - Provides an overview of the historical development of the community from early history to the present day.
- Chapter 3: Existing Conditions - Provides a statistical overview of the community and a breakdown of existing land uses including residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- Chapter 4: Goals and Policies - Expresses the community's vision for the future. This chapter focuses on enhancing land use, mobility, community facilities, infrastructure, amenities, and public space to support a healthy quality of life. The chapter consists of the following twelve elements:
 1. Residential Areas
 2. Commercial Areas
 3. Industrial Areas
 4. Environmental Justice
 5. Connectivity
 6. Transit Oriented Districts
 7. Community Identity
 8. Economic Development
 9. Parks and Recreation
 10. Safety and Health
 11. Public Facilities
 12. Building Partnerships
- Chapter 5: Implementation - Consists of a list describing the strategies and actions associated with the goals and policies in Chapter 4, as well as the potential coordinating agencies for implementation.

Zone Changes

Zone changes are proposed to implement the goals and policies of the Plan, and to ensure that zoning is consistent with the Land Use Policy Map of the General Plan. The Land Use Policy Map designates Florence Avenue for mixed use. A total of 150 parcels will be changed from mostly C-2 Zone (Neighborhood Business) and C-3 Zone (General Commercial) to MXD Zone (Mixed Use Development) for consistency with the Plan's Mixed Use (MU) land use designation (see Attachment 2).

Community Standards District Update

The CSD Update is an amendment to the existing CSD and is necessary to implement the Plan. New standards will improve the appearance of the community and ensure proper maintenance of structures. The CSD Update contains updated uses and development standards to implement the Plan's goals and policies, and is further described below (see Attachment 3).

Residential Zones

Under all residential zones, development standards for fences, walls, and landscaping that form a barrier were modified to allow for heights greater than 3.5 feet (42 inches) in the front yard without a permit.

Commercial Zones

Commercial development standards were revised to support the goals and policies of the Plan, as summarized below.

- **Architectural Features and Pedestrian-Friendly Design Requirements:** To support a built environment that is aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian-friendly, standards for new commercial development were maintained or updated. Commercial corridor subareas were also developed to promote pedestrian-friendly design.
- **Design for Safety:** To address potential safety concerns, some standards that applied to Florence Avenue were expanded to all commercial zones and new standards have been added. Standards pertaining to security grilles, roll-down gates, and barbed wire fencing were expanded to apply throughout Florence-Firestone. New standards requiring exterior lighting have been added.
- **Parking:** Parking standards were updated for commercial uses to allow for greater flexibility and encourage reuse of existing structures.

Industrial Zones and Manufacturing Uses

To implement the Plan goal to expand industrial use revitalization, and the County General Plan's goal of encouraging clean technology businesses, CSD restrictions on medical laboratories and research and testing laboratories were removed. In addition,

breweries will be permitted in the M-1 Zone (Light Manufacturing), consistent with other areas of the County.

Applicability

Although the standards contained in the CSD Update apply only to new construction, most standards would, however, apply to existing structures starting one year after the effective date of the CSD Update. These include:

- Graffiti, maintenance, material colors, fence/wall height measurements and standards (i.e., communitywide development standards);
- Commercial exterior lighting standards;
- Commercial security gate standards replacing roll down security blinds with grilles to deter graffiti; and
- Commercial maintenance informational signage.

General Plan Consistency

All community plans are extensions of the General Plan and are based on the framework established by the General Plan. As such, the proposed Plan is part of the General Plan and is consistent with the General Plan's guiding principles, goals, and policies. It is a localized, community-based plan that contains goals, policies, and implementation actions specific to the issues and needs of the Florence-Firestone community. The zone changes ensure consistency with the Plan's Land Use Policy Map. The CSD Update implements the goals and policies of the Plan through the various changes to standards in residential, commercial, and industrial zones, as well as the establishment of the additional commercial subareas in Florence-Firestone.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The County's 2016-21 Strategic Plan provides direction to ensure that the County's efforts are aligned with the Board's priorities. The Project promotes Goal II, Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities. The Plan incorporates policies to support growth and build capacity for locally owned businesses and recommends the creation of a community liaison position to better connect individuals and businesses to resources. The Project also encourages diverse and vibrant commercial areas by allowing mixed use and flexible parking requirements, incentivizing community-serving uses, and promoting the inclusion of outdoor gathering areas in commercial projects. The Project further supports active, healthy, and engaged lifestyles through policies that promote pedestrian-friendly development, community identity and public art, improved access to public space, and active transportation enhancements.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The adoption of the Project will not result in the need for additional Department of Regional Planning (Department) staffing. Implementation of the Project will not result in

significant new costs to the Department or other County departments. The Project is intended to be implemented throughout the lifespan of the Plan. Recommended implementation actions will commence with the allocation of resources, the securing of funding or other resources as needed. Therefore, a request for financing is not being made at this time.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Throughout the development of the Project, staff consulted internal and external stakeholders, including meetings with local stakeholders, government agencies, other departments and internal working groups. The departmental working group held weekly meetings between February and May 2017 to review the Project and included members from Zoning Enforcement, Zoning Permits, and the Southwest Field Office.

Project development also involved coordination and communication with County departments and government agencies, including the Arts Commission, Public Health and the Toxic Threat Strike Team, Public Library, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Probation, Metro, Sheriff, Community Development Commission, California Highway Patrol, and ResCare Workforce Services. A complete draft of the Project was forwarded to these departments and agencies for review and comment.

Community Engagement

Staff held outreach events, attended community meetings, and engaged with various stakeholders throughout Project development to obtain feedback, ensure that the community's concerns were addressed, and to develop a project that reflects the community's shared vision for future development. Relationships with local stakeholders and agencies were developed and maintained to support long-term stewardship of the Project's implementation. Over 30 outreach events were held between 2009 and 2011. These included workshops with the Department of Parks and Recreation for the concurrent development of the Florence-Firestone Community Parks and Recreation Plan (2010). Another 30 engagement events, including workshops, community events, and stakeholder meetings, were held from 2013 through 2017.

An open house was held on June 17, 2017, at which over 50 members of the public were present. The open house provided both English and Spanish language presentations, information, and brochures. In addition, an interactive online Story Map was created to walk the public through the Project elements, summarize the Project's primary objectives and goals, and present relevant community data and information linked to maps and data visualizations. The Story Map was made available online in English and Spanish and can be accessed at planning.lacounty.gov/ffcp.

Regional Planning Commission Public Hearing

The Commission held a public hearing on November 15, 2017, to consider the Plan, zone changes, and updates to the CSD. Ten members of the public testified. Several members

of the public testified to their confusion regarding the applicability of the proposed zone changes to their properties. Several commenters stated their support for the Plan, including a representative of the Florence-Firestone Community Leaders Group. A representative of the Florence-Firestone/Walnut Park Chamber of Commerce indicated support for the Plan, but also voiced concerns about the cost to business owners of implementing required changes within a one-year timeline as required in the CSD Update. He requested that funding be provided to existing business owners to comply with the new requirements.

After public testimony, the Commission asked staff for clarification on several points, including the zone change area and scope; timeline and funding for Plan implementation; timeline for preparing a Transit Oriented District (TOD) Specific Plan; and impacts of increasing housing in an area underserved by public space. In response, Department staff clarified as follows:

- Zone change to MXD Zone applied only to Florence Avenue; Plan implementation would commence upon securing resources to implement recommended actions over the 20-year lifespan of the Plan;
- TOD Specific Plan timeline is dependent on securing grants. Three TOD Specific Plans for other communities are currently in development;
- Plan recommends increasing public space in the community through joint-use agreements and other strategies for shared resources.

The Commission requested revisions to the Plan regarding no net loss of affordable housing policy, mixed-income housing in TOD's, tenant protection for residents in accessory dwelling units (ADU's), and targeted hiring. In response to the Commission's comments, Department staff made the following revisions to the Plan:

- Residential area policies were added to the Commercial Areas and TOD Areas sections of the Plan by reference;
- An implementation action for Policy R-1.7 (No Net Loss of Affordable Units) was added to the list of recommended actions;
- Implementation Action #44 was revised to specifically include mixed-income housing types in TOD Specific Plans;
- Tenant protection for residents in ADU's undergoing legalization was added to Policy R-1.1 (Accessory Dwelling Units); and
- The scope of local hiring policies ED-3.2 (Local Hiring) was expanded to include targeted hiring of workers.

The Commission recognized the community history section of the Plan and appreciated the inclusion of the environmental justice element and the recommended action for hiring a community liaison/organizer. The Commission finally stated the need for funding to be allocated to implement the Plan. After making these final comments, the Commission recommended the Project for approval to the Board.

Legal Requirements

A public hearing by the Board is required pursuant to Section 22.16.200 of the County Code and Section 65856 of the California Government Code. Required notice must be given pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth in Section 22.16.200 of the County Code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Sections 6061, 65090, and 65856 of the California Government Code relating to notice of a public hearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Addendum to the Certified Final EIR for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update, adopted on October 6, 2015, was prepared for the Project in compliance with CEQA (see Attachment 6). The Project is a component of the General Plan and is included within the scope of the General Plan Implementation Program No. LU-1 (Planning Areas Framework Program). The Project is consistent with, and implements, the General Plan, bringing various aspects of the Florence-Firestone community into compliance with the General Plan and Zoning Code.

The General Plan serves as the foundation for all community-based plans and the Plan proposes goals and policies consistent with the General Plan. The Project does not propose amendments to the General Plan's Land Use Policy Map. The zone change from C-2 and C-3 Zones to MXD Zone along Florence Avenue is proposed to make zoning consistent with the General Plan Land Use Policy Map.

The Project does not authorize specific development or construction projects. Future development projects are required to receive the necessary and appropriate review and approval and prepare appropriate environmental documents at the time of future project applications.

A Modified Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study) was prepared for this Project to demonstrate that the potential Project impacts either do not create a new change to the previous impact or mitigation identified; or that the Project would result in no impact or less than significant impact.

No new information pertaining to the subject community or the environmental impacts of the proposed Project components has been discovered during the preparation of the environmental document. Therefore, the preparation of the Addendum to the Certified Final EIR adopted on October 6, 2015, is in compliance with the requirements of CEQA for the Project. The Addendum was not required to be circulated for public review per Section 15164 of CEQA. However, the Addendum was made available online for informational purposes on November 2, 2017, and the Final Certified General Plan EIR is available online for review at planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan/eir.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the Project will not significantly impact County services.

For further information, please contact Adrine Arakelian, Community Studies East Section at (213) 974-6425 (aarakelian@planning.lacounty.gov) or Richard Marshalian, Community Studies North Section at (213) 974-6476 (rmarshalian@planning.lacounty.gov).

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

1. Draft Florence-Firestone Community Plan – November 2017
2. Draft Zone Change Map
3. Draft Florence-Firestone Community Standards District Update – October 2017
4. Regional Planning Commission Resolution
5. Regional Planning Commission Hearing Packages
6. Draft Addendum to the Certified Final EIR for the General Plan Update

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Arts Commission
Assessor
Chief Executive Office
Community Development Commission
County Counsel
Library
Parks and Recreation
Public Health
Public Works