



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Amy J. Bodek, AICP
Director

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Chief Deputy Director

October 23, 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
WEST CARSON TRANSIT ORIENTED DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN
PROJECT NO. 2017-003499
PLAN NO. RPPL2015000153
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. RPPL2017005947
CARSON ZONED DISTRICT
(SECOND SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The West Carson Transit Oriented District Specific Plan (Specific Plan) proposes changes in zoning to encourage transit oriented development and promote active transportation within an approximately half-mile radius of the Metro Silver Line Carson Station. The Specific Plan would potentially accommodate an additional 2,271 residential units and about 1.7 million square feet of non-residential land use.

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 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 Specific Plan, Project No. 2017-003499 with the changes as noted by the Regional Planning Commission (Commission), and related actions and determine that the recommended zone changes and zone amendments serve the public health, safety and general welfare and is in conformity with good zoning practice and is compatible with and supportive of the goals and polices 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 to add Section 22.46.3200, 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 2015, the Board adopted the General Plan. One of the main policy areas of the General Plan is to encourage transit oriented development by establishing Transit Oriented Districts (TODs) that promote infill development and active transportation strategies. The General Plan designates eleven TODs that are 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 Specific Plan is the second plan developed to implement this program and was initiated in January 2015.

The Specific Plan area comprises approximately 319 acres adjacent to the Metro Silver Line Carson Station, which is a bus rapid transit stop along a designated bus lane adjacent to the I-110 freeway. This area was selected because of the station location relative to the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center campus which attracts thousands of commuters to the area each day and the significant public investments planned for the campus. The Campus Master Plan is still being finalized but to ensure compatibility, concepts presented in the Campus Master Plan were incorporated into the polices and regulations proposed in the Specific Plan.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

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

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The recommended action had no fiscal impact to the County as it was completed under a grant from the State of California's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program and as part of the Department's implementation of the General Plan. The adoption of the updated 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 July 11, 2018, the Commission held a duly-noticed public hearing to consider the proposed Specific Plan. During the hearing, the Commission heard testimony from three speakers expressing opposition to the project. Two testifiers spoke in opposition to the proposed residential density and one testifier spoke in opposition to a suggested station improvement that the Specific Plan recommends Metro consider at such time Metro decides to upgrade or make changes to the Carson Station. Additionally, one new comment letter in opposition was submitted into the record at the public hearing.

After hearing testimony, the Commission requested that staff add policies related to affordable housing preservation and additional measures to ensure compatibility between new mixed use developments and existing residences as detailed below. The Commission closed the public hearing and voted unanimously to recommend that the Board certify and adopt the Final EIR, hold a public hearing to consider the proposed Specific Plan as amended, adopt the recommended zone changes and zone amendments and determine that the Specific Plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Additional Edits/Information

West Carson TOD Specific Plan, Page 35 and 93:

At its hearing on July 11, 2018, the Commission instructed staff to add the following policies to Goal 6 on page 35:

- Policy 6.8: Increase the supply of different housing types affordable to the community;
Policy 6.9: Streamline and expedite affordable housing projects through the project and environmental review process and coordinate with private and non-profit organizations; and
Policy 6.10: Ensure that there is no net loss of affordable housing units in the community.

Additionally, the Commission instructed staff to add a landscaping component within the 15-foot setback required between new mixed use developments adjacent to existing residences to provide a greater buffer. The following bullet point is added to the development standards for Built Form & Landscaping on page 93:

- Required interior yards (side or rear) shall feature a landscaped buffer designed and continuously maintained to maximize the privacy of adjoining single family homes. At the time of planting, plant materials shall be of a size that maturity and maximum privacy will be achieved within five years.

These updated pages with changes indicated, are included as an attachment to this memo and can also be found on the Specific Plan web site.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

A Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment from February 28, 2018, to April 13, 2018, pursuant to CEQA reporting requirements. The Draft EIR was posted online as well as at the Carson Library. The Notice of Completion/Availability was mailed and emailed to more than 2,801 postal addresses and 498 email addresses and was published in the Long Beach Press Telegram on February 27, 2018. The County received seven comment letters. All comments are addressed in the Response to Comments Section of the Final EIR. An additional comment letter was received and provided to the Commission at the hearing.

The Final EIR contains a summary of the potential environmental effects of the 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 CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, the MMRP, and Response to Comments is included as Attachment 5.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

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

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

Respectfully submitted,



Amy J. Bodek, AICP
Director

AJB:MC:AG:LF:ems

- Attachments:
1. Regional Planning Commission Resolution
 2. Draft Zoning Ord. (Includes entire Specific Plan)
 3. Commission Staff Reports and Correspondence
 4. Final Environmental Impact Report
 5. Additional Edits/Information

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