

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

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May 23, 2023

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:

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PEARBLOSSOM
COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT ORDINANCE
PROJECT NO. 2019-003978-(5)
ADVANCE PLANNING CASE NO. RPPL2019002601
PROJECT LOCATION: PEARBLOSSOM
(FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The recommended action is to approve the Pearblossom Community Standards District Ordinance (Ordinance). The proposed Ordinance adds new development standards to address the specific needs of the Pearblossom community. Proposed development standards include vegetation protections, landscape requirements, and regulations on accessory storage, rural artifacts, signs and fences, new subdivisions, rural road design, trails, building materials, and uses in the proposed Blossom Community Corridor Area. A project summary is included as Attachment 1, and the proposed Ordinance is included as Attachment 2.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING,

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to state and local CEQA guidelines;
2. Indicate its intent to approve the proposed Ordinance (Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2019002601), as recommended by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC); and
3. Instruct County Counsel to prepare the final documents for the Ordinance and submit them to the Board of Supervisors (Board) for its consideration

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On June 16, 2015, the Board adopted the Antelope Valley Area Plan (AVAP), which includes goals and policies applicable to the unincorporated areas in the Antelope Valley. The AVAP specifies that a comprehensive review shall be required of all existing Community Standards Districts (CSDs) and may include a program to prepare and adopt new CSDs. The adoption of the proposed Ordinance will advance the implementation program for the AVAP and meet its goals and policies, as well as those contained in the General Plan.

Key Components

Pearblossom is a small town with a Modern Rustic aesthetic. The community values its natural environment, and supports its artistic, creative, and resourceful spirit. The proposed Ordinance will preserve, protect, and enhance the unique and rural character of Pearblossom with development standards that allow the display of rural artifacts within yard setbacks, taller fences, residential ranch entrance signs, signs on commercial parcels with narrow frontages, and accessory outdoor storage, including onsite materials storage areas and cargo shipping containers.

The proposed Ordinance also requires new residential subdivisions to have multiuse trail easements, more open space in developments with five units or more than currently required, greater distances between buildings than currently required, and a minimum lot size of two gross acres. Requirements for new commercial subdivisions include public amenities, minimum landscape requirements, landscape buffers when adjoining Residential or Agriculturally zoned properties, connectivity to existing street networks, pervious paving, smaller maximum floor areas, lower building heights, and a minimum lot size of one acre. Wireless communications facilities must blend with the rural environment. Additionally, streetlight and signage lighting designs must be compliant with the Rural Outdoor Lighting District. On parcels within 300 feet of Pearblossom Highway (CA-138), drive-throughs are prohibited. Alcoholic beverage sales for off-site consumption are prohibited on parcels within 1,000 feet of public schools and places of worship. Billboards, internally illuminated signs, and electronic signs are prohibited.

The desert environment will be protected by allowing existing vegetation to count toward commercial and industrial landscape requirements and by setting vegetation removal and ground disturbance thresholds, with exceptions. No more than 70 percent of ground disturbance of areas with vegetation is allowed on any property that is two gross acres or larger.

The proposed Ordinance also establishes the Blossom Community Corridor Area, which extends along the rural town center area and includes all parcels within 500 feet from each side of the Pearblossom Highway (CA-138) right-of-way. Standards for the Blossom Community Corridor include a tree planting requirement in commercial and industrial developments and a prohibition on the following uses: metal plating, recreational vehicle sales and rentals, truck storage, and truck sales and rentals, including incidental repair.

On October 19, 2022, the RPC held a public hearing and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed Ordinance. A summary of the RPC proceedings is included as Attachment 4. The RPC's resolution is included as Attachment 5.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed Ordinance promotes the County's Strategic Plan Goal II: Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities; Objective II.2.3: Prioritize Environmental Health Oversight and Monitoring, which aims to strengthen the County's capacity to effectively prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergent environmental and natural hazards and reduce impacts to disproportionately affected communities. The community of Pearblossom contains mapped environmental and natural hazards, including Special Flood Hazard Areas; High Fire Hazard Severity Zones; and Liquefaction and Seismic Hazards. The proposed Ordinance contains development standards intended to preserve the existing low-density rural character of the area. Standards ensure that new development will be consistent with the community character and will mitigate hazards in the community. In addition, the vegetation preservation development standards discourage ground disturbance, which may prevent contaminated soil and dust from circulating in the air and spreading Valley Fever.

The proposed Ordinance promotes Strategic Plan Goal III: Realize Tomorrow's Government Today; Objective III.3.1: Improve water quality, reduce water consumption, and increase water supplies, which aims to promote water conservation, recycle and reuse local water resources, and reduce storm water pollution through development standards that reduce the amount of water for landscaping. The proposed Ordinance allows existing desert vegetation to count toward the landscape requirement for commercial and industrial developments. Furthermore, the existing tree planting requirement for commercial and industrial developments in the Blossom Community Corridor area has been reduced from 24-inch box trees, as specified by the existing Zoning Code, to five-gallon trees.

In addition, the proposed Ordinance supports Objective III.3.4: Reduce waste generation and recycle and reuse waste resources, which aims to increase landfill diversion and recycling programs and infrastructure, and inspire the community to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste materials. With additional salvage and supplies storage options, communities can divert materials from landfills through creative reuse of materials in art projects and home repair.

Lastly, engagement with the community was ongoing throughout the development of the proposed Ordinance. The continuous dialogue with the community shaped the proposed Ordinance. Engagement included 12 working groups and two community meetings, a public survey, email exchanges, phone conversations, and ad hoc meetings with community members. At the RPC public hearing, residents spoke of their positive experience participating in the ordinance development process.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Adoption of the proposed Ordinance will not result in any significant new costs to the Department of Regional Planning or other County departments and agencies.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the public hearing conducted by RPC on October 19, 2022, a public hearing before the Board is required pursuant to Section 22.232.040.B.1 of the County Code and Section 65856 of the California Government Code. Required notice was given pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth in Section 22.222.180 of the County Code.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

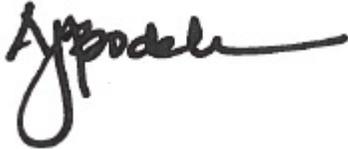
The proposed Ordinance is categorically exempt from CEQA per Sections 15301, 15302, 15303, 15304, 15307, 15308, 15311, 15320, and 15321 (Class 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 20, and 21 Categorical Exemptions) and the County Environmental Guidelines. The Notice of Exemption is included as Attachment 3.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the proposed Ordinance will not significantly impact County services.

For further information, please contact Caroline Chen, Regional Planner, Community Studies North Section at (213) 974-6476 or cchen@planning.lacounty.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



AMY J. BODEK, AICP
Director of Regional Planning

AJB:CC:MSH:CC:ar

Attachments:

1. Project Summary
2. Proposed Ordinance
3. CEQA Notice of Exemption
4. RPC Hearing Proceedings
5. RPC Resolution

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Assessor
Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Fire Department
Parks and Recreation
Public Health
Public Works