

## REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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DATE ISSUED: May 10, 2023

MEETING DATE: May 24, 2023 AGENDA  
ITEM: 6

PROJECT NUMBER: 2022-004173

PROJECT NAME: Green Zone Technical Update

PLAN NUMBER(S): RPPL2022010227, RPPL2022013866

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 1-5

PROJECT LOCATION: Countywide

PROJECT PLANNER: Christian Turner, Regional Planner  
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### **RECOMMENDATION**

LA County Planning staff (staff) recommends that the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) adopt the attached resolution (Exhibit A) recommending **APPROVAL** to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) of the Green Zone Technical Update, Project Number 2022-004173, Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2022010227 and Zone Change No. RPPL2022013866.

Staff recommends the following motion:

**I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES; AND**

**I ALSO MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPT THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE GREEN ZONE TECHNICAL UPDATE, PROJECT NUMBER PRJ2022-004173, ADVANCE PLANNING CASE NO. RPPL2022010227, AND ZONE CHANGE NO. RPPL2022013866.**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

#### **A. Project Scope**

The Project is a technical update to the Green Zones Ordinance, which became effective July 14, 2022, and aims to promote environmental justice in communities that are

disproportionately affected by toxic pollutant and contaminants generated from various land uses over time. The Project includes the following minor and non-substantive changes for clarity and ease of use:

Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2022010227 is a proposed ordinance amending Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to simplify language, correct errors and omissions, and remove redundant regulations and internal inconsistencies in the Green Zones Ordinance. It also establishes the Green Zone (-GZ) Combining Zone, which replaces the existing Green Zone Districts designation and serves as a tool to implement existing Green Zones regulations.

Zone Change No. RPPL2022013866 is an amendment to the Zoning Map to add the -GZ Combining Zone on industrially-zoned parcels that are subject to existing Green Zones regulations in the unincorporated communities of West Carson and West Whittier – Los Nietos.

## **B. Project Background**

The Project is a technical update to the Green Zones Ordinance, which was initiated by the Board in December 2015 to address environmental justice in unincorporated Los Angeles County. Effective July 14, 2022, the Green Zones Ordinance established the following unincorporated communities as Green Zone Districts: Avocado Heights, East Los Angeles, East Rancho Dominguez, Florence-Firestone, South San Jose Hills, Walnut Park, West Athens – Westmont, West Carson, West Rancho Dominguez – Victoria, West Whittier – Los Nietos and Willowbrook.

The Green Zones Ordinance utilizes land use tools and regulations to improve community health and quality of life for residents living near major sources of pollution. It added countywide standards as well as localized permitting and development requirements, such as landscaping and air filtration, for existing and new industrial, recycling and vehicle-related uses near sensitive uses like homes, schools, and parks. It also established the schedule for compliance for these industrial and vehicle-related uses.

The Project does not change, add, or delete any existing regulations in the Green Zones Ordinance as all proposed changes are minor and technical in nature.

## **C. Major Elements and Key Components**

The Project Hearing Draft Ordinance (Exhibit B) includes the following major elements and key components:

### **New Green Zone (-GZ) Combining Zone**

Currently, the Green Zones Ordinance identifies select communities as Green Zone Districts. However, regulations only apply to certain industrial properties within 500 feet from sensitive uses, and not the entire community. The Project makes the following modifications to the Green Zone Chapter (22.84) to help clarify this:

- Establish the -GZ Combining Zone to designate industrial parcels subject to the Green Zones Ordinance; and
- Remove references to the Green Zone Districts;

The Project rezones 227 industrial parcels in the unincorporated communities of West Carson and West Whittier – Los Nietos with the -GZ Combining Zone (Exhibit C). The base zone of these parcels remains unchanged. The mapping of -GZ Combining Zone in other Green Zone District communities will be completed through the forthcoming Metro Area Plan and the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan.

### **Correct Errors and Update Code Language**

The Project also corrects discrepancies and typographical errors, and reformats and reorganizes sections for clarity and consistency.

- ***Maintain internal consistency.*** The Project reorganizes sections, standardizes terms, and adds cross-references between various sections and chapters of Title 22, such as:
  - Reordering sections within the Green Zone Chapter (22.84) to include Prohibited Uses as a stand-alone section after the Applicability section;
  - Using the term “CNG fueling station” throughout the Green Zone Chapter (22.84) to maintain consistency with Table 22.20.030-B (Principal Use Regulations for Commercial Zones) and Table 22.22.030-B (Principal Use Regulations for Industrial Zones); and
  - Adding a cross-reference in Section 22.84.050 (Schedule for Compliance for Existing, Legally-Established Uses) to Section 22.172.050.B.3, which includes specific provisions regulating the amortization period for the nonconforming uses due to the prohibition in the -GZ Combining Zone.
- ***Clarify and simplify the code language.*** The Project clarifies the following:
  - Compliance encompasses all outlined requirements, such as permits, construction improvements, site maintenance, and operational standards;
  - Nonconforming uses due to the prohibition in the -GZ Combining Zone are subject to maintenance and operational standards during the amortization period; and
  - A sensitive use shall not include a legal, nonconforming residence in an industrial zone.

- **Correct errors or omissions.** The Project corrects internal discrepancies within the County Code, such as:
  - Adding a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) requirement for new drive-through establishments, which is omitted in error. The addition of the CUP requirement aligns with the Interim Urgency Ordinance No. 2022-0065U, which temporarily requires a CUP for new drive-through establishments within the Green Zones Districts.

#### **D. General Plan Consistency**

The Project is consistent with the following applicable goals and policies of the General Plan:

- Goal LU 7: Compatible land uses that complement neighborhood character and the natural environment.
  - Policy LU 7.1: Reduce and mitigate the impacts of incompatible land uses, where feasible, using buffers, appropriate technology, building enclosure, and other design techniques.
  - Policy LU 7.2: Protect industrial parks and districts from incompatible uses.
  - Policy LU 7.8: Promote environmental justice in the areas bearing disproportionate impacts from stationary pollution sources.
- Goal LU 9: Land use patterns and community infrastructure that promote health and wellness.
  - Policy LU 9.4: Encourage patterns of development that protect the health of sensitive receptors.
- Goal ED 2: Land use practices and regulations that foster economic development and growth.
  - Policy ED 2.8: Incentivize as much as feasible, environmentally sustainable practices and high standards of development in the communities that bear disproportionate pollution and health impacts.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The Project qualifies for a Categorical (Class 5) Exemption, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15305, which exempts minor alterations in land use limitations in areas with an average slope

of less than 20 percent, which do not result in any changes in land use or density. The project also qualifies for an exemption pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines 15061(b)(3), which exempts projects where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.

## **OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **A. County Department Comments and Recommendations**

County departments including Public Works, Fire, Public Health, and Parks and Recreation were consulted during the preparation of the project. Staff has not received any comments at the time of report preparation.

### **B. Project Outreach and Engagement**

All property owners of a Green Zone industrial parcel in the communities of West Carson and West Whittier – Los Nietos were mailed a Notice of Public Hearing (Exhibit D). The Notice of Public Hearing included contact information and a link to the Project website.

Information on the public hearing was also distributed to a list consisting of 271 email addresses for industrial property owners, residents, and other interested parties. Furthermore, staff engaged with East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, an environmental justice group that partnered with the County on the early ground-truthing efforts and informed the development of the Green Zones Program.

The forthcoming Metro Area Plan (MAP) includes seven unincorporated communities, all of which are currently within Green Zones Districts and will be subject to the proposed -GZ Combining Zone. For the MAP, 1,342 zone change courtesy notices, which reference the -GZ Combining Zone, were mailed out to industrial property owners. As of the writing of this report, the MAP team facilitated communications on the Green Zones Ordinance and/or the Project via 79 virtual appointments, 11 phone calls, and 22 emails.

### **C. Public Comments**

As of the publication of this report, staff did not receive any public comments.

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Report

Reviewed By:



Tina Fung, Supervising Regional Planner

Report

Approved By:



Connie Chung, AICP, Deputy Director

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<b>LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS</b>	
EXHIBIT A	Draft Resolution of the Regional Planning Commission
EXHIBIT B	Hearing Draft Ordinance
EXHIBIT C	Zone Change Maps
EXHIBIT D	Notice of Public Hearing