

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
February 14, 2019 Hearing

Case Type/Numbers:

General Plan Amendment 18-0004
and Zone Change 18-0005

Applicant:

City of La Cañada Flintridge

Property Owner:

Joseph Shayfar

Project Location:

AINs 5810-008-022, -050, -053
and -055

La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011

Project Planner:

Emily Stadnicki, AICP
Principal Planner



1. Request:

General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004) is a request to amend the General Plan Land Use designation of the subject site from “Commercial/Office (max of 0.5 FAR)” to “High Density Residential (up to 30 du/ac); and Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0005) to amend the Zoning Map from “CPD Community Planned Development” to “R-3 (up to 30 units/acre)”, on an approximately 33,762 square foot parcel; and a Zoning Text Amendment to remove “Apartments and condominiums (maximum 15 units/acre)” from the list of permitted land uses in the CPD (Community Planned Development) Zone, Table 1, Section 11.14.020.

2. Location:

The subject property is located south of Foothill Boulevard, on the west side of Briggs Avenue, with an address of 2388 Foothill Boulevard.

3. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution recommending the City Council approve General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004), amending the General Plan Land Use designation and associated Land Use Map and adopt an ordinance adopting Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0004), amending the Zoning Map and the text of Zoning Code, Chapter 11.14 (CPD Zone), Section 11.14.020, Table 1.

4. General Plan/ Zoning/ Existing Land Use:

Commercial/Office (max of 0.5 FAR) / CPD Community Planned Development / vacant

5. California Environmental Quality Act Review:

Staff has determined that the project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15061(b)(3) of Title 14 of the Code of California Regulations, which provides “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, the activity is not subject to CEQA.” The existing property is vacant and the parcel is currently zoned CPD Community Planned Development, which permits multifamily uses of a density comparable with the proposed GPA and Zone Change.

6. Previous Actions:

The Planning Commission approved a Lot Line Adjustment on October 13, 2015.

7. Pending and Potential Actions:

Final action on General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004) and Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0005) by the City Council.

8. Staff Analysis:

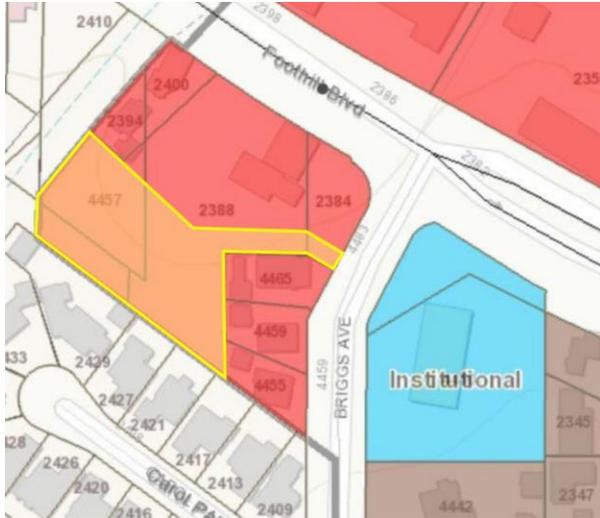
A. Project Description

This parcel is the result of a 2015 Lot Line Adjustment that reduced the excess area behind the existing gasoline station and simplified multiple fractured property lines in an effort to facilitate development on an underutilized site. Commercial uses are no longer viable on the property and the site is more suited to residential development. The General Plan Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment are needed to transition this lot into residential uses consistent with the adjacent parcels and the area across Briggs Avenue.

The conveyance deed required to update the Assessor’s Parcel Map with the approved legal description is in process. This must be finalized before any future development can occur on the property.

B. Analysis of General Plan Amendment:

Amending the Land Use Map to modify the designation from Commercial/ Office (max of 0.5 FAR) to High Density Residential (up to 30 du/ac) is logical and supportable given the



changing nature of retail and the reduced demand for commercial properties. The requested designation is compatible with the immediately adjacent land uses, both within the City boundaries and outside the jurisdiction. Although the three adjacent parcels fronting Briggs Avenue have a General Plan designation of Commercial/Office (max of 0.5 FAR) the existing uses are residential. (This discrepancy will be resolved when the Zoning Code/General Plan Map are updated.) With the exception of the church on the southeast corner, the properties directly across Briggs Avenue on the south side of Foothill Boulevard have a

High Density Residential designation.

The amendment has also been reviewed and found consistent with the following provisions of the City of La Cañada Flintridge General Plan:

LUE Policy 1.1.3: Allow for multi-family and mixed-use development in designated areas to meet community housing needs and meet the goals of the City's Housing Element.

LUE Objective 1.5: Ensure that new and rehabilitated development is compatible with the residential character of the City, the project's surrounding land uses, the circulation network, availability of public facilities, and existing development constraints.

LUE Policy 1.5.7: Encourage and/or create incentives to improve existing undesirable edge conditions and buffer areas between residential neighborhoods and other sensitive receptors and adjacent commercial uses and highways.

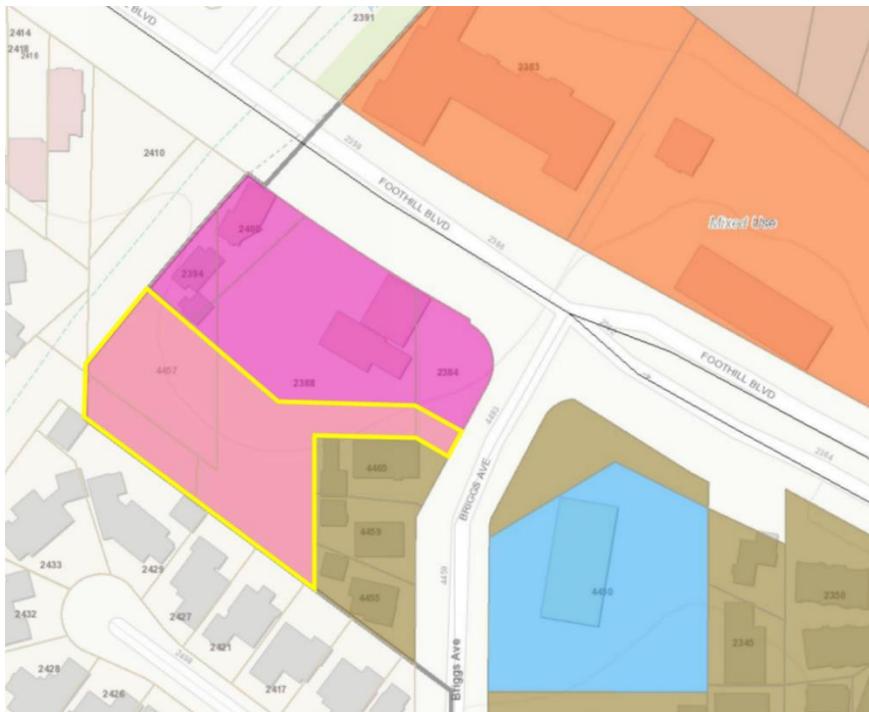
LUE Policy 3.1.2: Ensure new development is designed to make public transit a viable choice for residents by locating multi-family residential and mixed-use development on or near streets that are served efficiently by public transit and alternative transportation modes.

Amending the General Plan Land Use designation will allow for the development of the site as multi-family housing that can serve as a buffer between the commercial on Foothill Boulevard and the single-family houses to the south, as well as providing housing opportunities for senior citizens and others who desire an alternative to a single-family property.

C. Analysis of Zone Change:

The Planning Commission decision on the Zone Change is a recommendation to the City Council. It includes amending the Zoning Map from “CPD Community Planned Development” to “R-3 (up to 30 units/acre)” and a Zoning Text Amendment to remove “Apartments and condominiums (maximum 15 units/acre)” from the list of permitted land uses in the CPD Zone, Table 1, Section 11.14.020. In making its recommendation relative to a proposed Zone Change, Section 11.42.080 of the Zoning Code requires the Planning Commission to make the following findings:

1. *That modified conditions warrant a revision in the zoning plan as it pertains to the area or district under consideration.*



The request is warranted at the current time given the changing nature of retail and the reduced need for commercial properties. The subject parcel is located immediately adjacent to land already zoned R-3 and the proposed Zone Change is therefore consistent with existing development patterns and the development standards in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, the CPD currently allows for multifamily development, with a density of up to 15 dwelling units per acre.

The removal of apartments and condominiums from the CPD zone is consistent with the stated purpose of the CPD Zone, which is primarily focused on commercial development. Rezoning the property from CPD to R-3 will ensure that multifamily units can continue to be developed on the site at a comparable density. Staff supports the finding.

2. *That a need for the proposed zone classification exists within such area or districts.*

The subject property has an existing Zone designation of CPD. The need to modify the Zoning exists since a higher density residential project is not a permitted use within the CPD zone. The amendment of the Zoning from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3 is necessary for the property to be utilized in a manner consistent with existing

properties in the vicinity. The removal of apartments and condominiums from the CPD zone serves to refine the intent of the CPD. Staff supports the finding.

3. *That the particular property under consideration is a proper location for said zone classification within such area or district.*

The subject property is located on the south side of Foothill Boulevard, just inside the City's boundaries. The immediately adjacent parcels to the east are currently zoned R-3 and the properties immediately to the south (outside the city limits) are developed with single-family houses. Given the existing development patterns and a consistent zoning of residential uses on immediately adjacent parcels, the subject property is properly located for the requested Zone Change from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3. The Text Amendment to remove multifamily uses from the Zoning Code is consistent with the intent of the associated General Plan Land Use designation of Commercial/Office (max of .5 FAR). Staff supports the finding.

4. *That placement of the proposed zone at such location will be in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare and in conformity with good zoning practice.*

The subject property is currently vacant. The current Zone designation of CPD Community Planned Development has resulted in an under-utilized site but one that permits multifamily development. The requested Zone Change from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3 is in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare as it will allow for use of the property consistent with adjacent properties both in the City of La Cañada Flintridge and in neighboring jurisdictions. Further, it increases the variety of housing options for residents who may want to downsize. It will also continue to allow for multifamily development on the project site even if the Zoning Text Amendment to remove such uses from the CPD is approved. Staff supports the finding.

D. Recommendation:

Based on the above discussion and findings, staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend modifying the Land Use and Zoning to allow for the future use of the property as additional housing and refine the intent of the CPD by taking the following action(s):

1. Adopt A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (PLAN 2018-0004) AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM "COMMERCIAL/OFFICE (MAX OF 0.5 FAR)" TO "HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (UP TO 30 DU/AC)" AND ZONE CHANGE (PLAN 2018-0005) AMENDING THE ZONING MAP FROM "CPD COMMUNITY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT" TO "R-3 (UP TO 30 UNITS/ACRE)" FOR THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS AINs 5810-008-022, -050, -053 and -055 AND A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO REMOVE "APARTMENTS AND CONDOMINIUMS (MAXIMUM 15 UNITS/ACRE)" FROM THE LIST OF PERMITTED LAND USES IN THE COMMUNITY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

CPD ZONE AND FINDING THE PROJECT EXEMPT FROM THE PROVISIONS
OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution

ATTACHMENT 1

RESOLUTION NO. 19-__

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (PLAN 2018-0004) AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM “COMMERCIAL/OFFICE (MAX OF 0.5 FAR)” TO “HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (UP TO 30 DU/AC)” AND ZONE CHANGE (PLAN 2018-0005) AMENDING THE ZONING MAP FROM “CPD COMMUNITY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT” TO “R-3 (UP TO 30 UNITS/ACRE)” FOR THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS AINs 5810-008-022, -050, -053 and -055 AND A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO REMOVE “APARTMENTS AND CONDOMINIUMS (MAXIMUM 15 UNITS/ACRE)” FROM THE LIST OF PERMITTED LAND USES IN THE COMMUNITY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT CPD ZONE AND FINDING THE PROJECT EXEMPT FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

WHEREAS, the City of La Cañada Flintridge has requested a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change to amend the Land Use Map and the Zoning Map on a 33,762-square foot parcel and a Zoning Text Amendment, said request attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the requested General Plan Amendment and Zone Change (Map Amendment) apply to four parcels, located south of Foothill Boulevard and west of Briggs Avenue, referred to on the County Assessor’s roles as AINs 5810-008-022, -050, -053, and -055; and

WHEREAS, the requested Zone Change-Text Amendment applies to properties in the City that are currently zoned CPD Community Planned Development; and

WHEREAS, the requested General Plan Amendment would amend the designation on the Land Use Map from “Commercial/Office (max of 0.5 FAR)” to “High Density Residential (up to 30 du/ac), and the Zone Change would amend the designation on the Zoning Map from “CPD Community Planned Development” to “R-3 (up to 30 units/acre)” and a Zoning Text Amendment would remove “Apartments and condominiums (maximum 15 units/acre)” from the list of permitted land uses in the CPD; and

WHEREAS, after publication and posting of the request in the prescribed manner, the Planning Commission, on February 14, 2019, held a public hearing on the project and concluded said hearing on that date; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) of Title 14 of the Code of California Regulations which provides that “it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.”

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the facts contained in the staff report dated February 14, 2019, regarding the application for General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004) and Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0005), and heard and considered the testimony of the public; and

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the evidence presented by the application materials, staff report, and public testimony the Planning Commission hereby finds and determines as follows:

Section 1. The Planning Commission finds and determines that the above recitals are true and correct.

Section 2. With respect to General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004):

A. The request has been found to be consistent with the following provisions: LUE Policy 1.1.3: Allow for multi-family and mixed-use development in designated areas to meet community housing needs and meet the goals of the City’s Housing Element. LUE Objective 1.5: Ensure that new and rehabilitated development is compatible with the residential character of the City, the project’s surrounding land uses, the circulation network, availability of public facilities, and existing development constraints. LUE Policy 1.5.7: Encourage and/or create incentives to improve existing undesirable edge conditions and buffer areas between residential neighborhoods and other sensitive receptors and adjacent commercial uses and highways. LUE Policy 3.1.2: Ensure new development is designed to make public transit a viable choice for residents by locating multi-family residential and mixed-use development on or near streets that are served efficiently by public transit and alternative transportation modes.

B. Amending the Land Use Map to modify the designation from Commercial/Office (max of 0.5 FAR) to High Density Residential (up to 30 du/ac) is logical and supportable given the given the changing nature of retail and the reduced demand for commercial properties. The requested designation is compatible with the immediately adjacent land, both within the City boundaries and outside the jurisdiction.

Section 3. With respect to Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0005):

A. Modified conditions warrant a revision in the zoning plan as it pertains to the area or district under consideration. The request is warranted at the current time given the changing nature of retail and the reduced need for commercial properties. The subject parcel is located immediately adjacent to land already zoned R-3 and the proposed Zone Change is therefore consistent with existing development patterns and the development standards in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, the CPD currently allows for multifamily

development, with a density of up to 15 dwelling units per acre. The removal of apartments and condominiums from the CPD zone is consistent with the stated purpose of the CPD Zone, which is primarily focused on commercial development. Rezoning the property from CPD to R-3 will ensure that multifamily units can continue to be developed on the site at a comparable density.

B. A need for the proposed zone classification exists within such area or districts. The subject property has an existing Zone designation of CPD. The need to modify the Zoning exists since a higher density residential project is not a permitted use within the CPD zone. The amendment of the Zoning from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3 is necessary for the property to be utilized in a manner consistent with existing properties in the vicinity. The removal of apartments and condominiums from the CPD zone serves to refine the intent of the CPD.

C. The particular property under consideration is a proper location for said zone classification within such area or district. The subject property is located on the south side of Foothill Boulevard, just inside the City's boundaries. The immediately adjacent parcels to the east are currently zoned R-3 and the properties immediately to the south (outside the city limits) are developed with single-family houses. Given the existing development patterns and a consistent zoning of residential zoning on immediately adjacent parcels, the subject property is properly located for the requested Zone Change from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3. The Text Amendment to remove multifamily uses from the Zoning Code is consistent with the intent of the associated General Plan Land Use designation of Commercial/Office (max of .5 FAR).

D. Placement of the proposed zone at such location will be in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare and in conformity with good zoning practice. The current Zone designation of CPD Community Planned Development has resulted in an under-utilized site but one that permits multifamily development. The requested Zone Change from CPD Community Planned Development to R-3 is in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare as it will allow for use of the property consistent with adjacent properties both in the City of La Cañada Flintridge and for neighboring jurisdictions. Further, it increases the variety of housing options for residents who may want to downsize. It will also continue to allow for multifamily development on the project site even if the Zoning Text Amendment to remove such uses from the CPD is approved.

Section 4. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT.

A. The Planning Commission has determined that the project is Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15061(b)(3) of Title 14 of the Code of California Regulations which provides that "it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA." The existing property is vacant and the parcel is currently zoned CPD Community Planned Development, which permits multifamily uses of a density comparable with the proposed GPA and Zone Change.

B. The custodian of records for all other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Planning Commission's decision is based, is the Director of Community Development of the City of La Cañada Flintridge. Those documents are available for public review in the Planning Department of the City of La Cañada Flintridge located at One Civic Center Drive, La Cañada Flintridge, California, 91011, telephone (818) 790-8881.

Section 5. Based on the above findings, the Planning Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge hereby recommends that the City Council approve General Plan Amendment (PLAN 2018-0004), amending the General Plan Land Use designation and associated Land Use Map and adopt an ordinance adopting Zone Change (PLAN 2018-0004), amending the Zoning Map for AINs 5810-008-022, -050, -053, and -055 and a Zoning Text Amendment to remove "Apartments and condominiums (maximum 15 units/acre)" from the list of permitted land uses in the CPD (Community Planned Development) Zone, Table 1, Section 11.14.020.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 14th day of February, 2019.

Chair, Planning Commission

Attest:

Secretary to the Planning Commission

State of California)
County of Los Angeles) ss.
City of La Cañada Flintridge)

I, Susan Koleda, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. PC 18-30 was duly adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge at a Regular Meeting held on the 14th day of February, 2019, by the following vote:

AYES: GUNTER, HAZEN, JAIN, McCONNELL, OH
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE

Dated: February 14, 2019

Susan Koleda, AICP
Secretary to the Planning Commission