

## **Discussion**

The subject property is a rectangular shaped collection of parcels located between Devonshire Street to the south and Hiawatha Street to the north, Amestoy Avenue to the west, and a commercial shopping center improved with a church campus to the east. Though the property is currently designated for Low Residential land use with a corresponding zone of A2-1 (agricultural), the property has been used as a school campus for a number of years.

The Department of City Planning has been undertaking a comprehensive update to the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan, and in its 2013 approval of the Community Plan, the City Planning Commission considered and approved the subject General Plan Amendment and Zone Change. Transmittal of the City Planning Commission's approved Community Plan is anticipated to take place during the late summer months of 2015 while the Community Plan's Environmental Impact Report is finalized. However, in order for the Granada Hills Charter School to remain in operation at the subject site, more immediate action is needed, hence the transmittal of this item ahead of the larger community plan update.

While a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the update to the Community Plan, and preparation of a Final EIR is underway, an independent Initial Study and Negative Declaration were prepared for the subject action (ENV-2015-1626-ND). No significant environmental impacts have been identified or are anticipated, largely because the subject site has been used as a school campus for a number of years.

## **Findings**

The requested action is consistent with the City's General Plan, and will ensure the ongoing operation of a use of land that is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.

The subject property has been developed with a school campus that has previously been occupied by Pinecrest Northridge Elementary School for a number of years, and has operated under the control of a Conditional Use—an entitlement normally required for school facilities that are not located within either a PF or C2 zone. The property was recently acquired by Granada Hills Charter High School in 2014, with the intent of occupying the existing facility in the 2015-2016 school year. Granada Hills Charter High School carries one of the City's most diverse enrollments of high school students, with over 4,000 students in annual attendance.

The currently adopted Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan envisions a balance between land uses and public services such as public school facilities, and action on the part of the City to change the General Plan land use designation and zone to allow an existing school facility to remain in use by-right helps to effectuate this balance. Furthermore, the Framework Element of the City's General Plan encourages the development and use of public schools that provide a quality education for all of the City's children, including those with special needs, and adequate school facilities to serve every neighborhood in the City so that students have an opportunity to attend school in their neighborhoods. The establishment of an appropriate General Plan land use designation (Community Commercial), and zone ([Q]C2-1VL) that will allow for the ongoing use of the site as a school campus is consistent with this goal.

The recommended General Plan amendment and zone change was evaluated in an initial study and found to have no significant potential environmental impacts, and a Negative Declaration was issued by the Department of City Planning (ENV-2015-1626-ND). No substantial changes to the physical environment will occur as a result of the recommended action, the physical development and natural conditions of the subject property and surrounding vicinity will remain largely the same, in as much as the subject site has been used as a school campus for a number of years, and the subject action is consistent with the existing conditions

Pursuant to Section 21082.1(c)(3) of the California Public Resource Code, the Department of City Planning prepared Negative Declaration ENV-2015-1626-ND, which concludes that impacts

resulting from this General Plan Amendment and Zone Change will be less than significant, and/or that there will be no impacts. The environmental document was published and it observed a 20-day public comment period. No comments or letters were received during the environmental comment period. The attached environmental document reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the CPC Case file in Room 667, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles CA 90012.