

## FINDINGS

### General Plan/Charter Findings

#### 1. General Plan Land Use Designation.

General Plan Land Use Designation. The subject property is located within the Reseda – West Van Nuys Community Plan area which was updated by the City Council on November 17, 1999 and designates the subject property for Community Commercial land uses corresponding to the CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, P and PB Zones. The site is zoned with the [Q]P-1L-CDO Zone. The proposed C2 zone is a corresponding zone for the Community Commercial land use designation. The proposed outdoor recreation facilities, bathroom with storage area, and solar shade structure is consistent with development permitted in the proposed (T)[Q]C2-1L-CDO Zone and is consistent with the regulations of the qualified Q condition. Therefore, the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan as reflected in the adopted Framework Element and Community Plan.

#### 2. General Plan Text

- a. The **Framework Element** of the General Plan (Framework Element) was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services.

The Framework Element Long Range Land Use Diagram for the San Fernando Valley identifies Sherman Way in Reseda as a “Community Center.” Community Centers are a focal point for surrounding residential neighborhoods and contain a diversity of uses such as small offices and overnight accommodations, cultural and entertainment facilities, and schools and libraries, in addition to neighborhood oriented services. The proposed Zone Change to a C2 zone is consistent with a “Community Center” and the proposed school recreation facilities are consistent with the long range vision for the area.

The Framework Element includes the following Goals, Objectives and Policies relevant to the request:

*GOAL 9N: 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.*

*Objective 9.32 Work constructively with LAUSD to promote the siting and construction of adequate school facilities phased with growth.*

*Policy 9.32.2: Explore creative alternatives for providing new school sites in the City, where appropriate.*

The proposed Zone Change from [Q]P-1L-CDO to (T)[Q]C2-1L-CDO will allow for the development of a recreational facility where an underutilized surface parking is currently located. The project is in conjunction with Magnolia Science Academy 1, an LAUSD

Charter School, which has been conducting student lunch, student recreation and drop-off/pick-up activities incidental to the school, in the surface parking lot through Zone Variances since 2006 (ZA-2005-3787-ZV, ZA-2008-0748-ZV, ZA-2014-0995-ZV). The Zone Change is consistent with Framework Policy 9.32.2 as it would allow an underutilized site to be developed into a permanent school facility.

Therefore, the Zone Change is consistent with the Distribution of Land Use goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan Framework Element.

- b. **Reseda – West Van Nuys Community Plan.** The Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use Objectives and Policies:

*GOAL 4: 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.*

*Objective 4-1: Work constructively with LAUSD to promote the siting and construction of adequate school facilities phased with growth.*

*Policy 4-1.1: Explore creative alternatives for providing new school sites in the City, where appropriate.*

The proposed Zone Change from [Q]P-1L-CDO to (T)[Q]C2-1L-CDO will allow for the redevelopment of an underutilized surface parking lot with proposed recreational facilities in conjunction with the Magnolia Science Academy 1, an LAUSD Charter School. The school has been conducting student lunch, student recreation and drop-off/pick-up activities incidental to the school, in the surface parking lot through Zone Variances since 2006 (ZA-2005-3787-ZV, ZA-2008-0748-ZV, ZA-2014-0995-ZV). The Zone Change would allow for the installation of landscaping and a natural turf lawn and the construction of a permanent structure for active recreation and a lunch area. Therefore the Zone Change is consistent with Framework Policy 9.32.2 as it would allow an underutilized site to be developed into a permanent school facility.

- c. The **Mobility Element** of the General Plan (Mobility Plan 2035) is not likely to be affected by the recommended action herein. The site abuts an alley to the north. The alley is dedicated to a width of 20 feet and improved with asphalt roadway. As part of the (T) Tentative Classification conditions incorporated herein, the applicant must reconstruct the 20-foot wide alley and longitudinal concrete gutter as necessary to provide safe access for students and pedestrian traffic. The site does not abut any other public right-of-way.
- d. The **Sewerage Facilities Element** of the General Plan will not be affected by the recommended action. While the sewer system might be able to accommodate the total flows for the proposed project, further detailed gauging and evaluation may be needed as part of the permit process to identify a specific sewer connection point. If the public sewer has insufficient capacity then the developer will be required to build sewer lines to a point in the sewer system with sufficient capacity. A final approval for sewer capacity and connection permit will be made at that time. Ultimately, this sewage flow will be conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant, which has sufficient capacity for the project.

### Zone Change and “T”/“Q” Classification Findings

3. Pursuant to Section 12.32 of the Municipal Code, the zone change and classifications are necessary because:
- a. Public Necessity: On April 29, 2019, Mayor Eric Garcetti released LA’s Green New Deal (Sustainable City pLAn), a roadmap to achieve short-term results while setting the path to strengthen the transformation of the City in the decades to come. As part of the plan, the Mayor set forth a goals to supply 100% renewable energy by 2045 and increase tree canopy in areas of greatest need by at least 50% by 2028 to grow a more equitable urban forest that provides cooling, public health, habitat, energy savings, and other benefits. The Zone Change would allow an asphalt surface parking lot site to be redeveloped into an outdoor recreation facility with a solar shade structure and many new trees. By providing solar panels and increasing the tree canopy coverage on site, the project is aligned with the city’s sustainability goals and is consistent with public necessity.
  - b. Convenience: The project site is located in the Reseda Central Business District, an area that is highly urbanized with commercial uses, residential uses, and transportation infrastructure. The proposed project would improve the outdoor recreational facilities of an existing school. Granting the Zone Change to the C2 Zone would allow residents local access to an LAUSD Charter School that offers high quality, on-site, outdoor recreational facilities for its students. Improving the school’s facilities provides a public convenience allowing residents the option to send their children to an amenity rich school nearby.
  - c. General Welfare: Granting the Zone Change to the C2 Zone would allow the redevelopment of an underutilized surface parking lot with improved outdoor recreational areas in conjunction with an existing school. Pursuant to three previously granted Zone Variances, the school already programs a portion of the P-zoned surface parking lot as a recreation area and lunch area for students. The Zone Change to the C2 Zone would allow the school to continue the existing use while also upgrading the outdoor school facilities with a solar shade structure, a natural turf grass field, landscaping, and trees. Students at the school would benefit from the improved facilities, additional greenery, and shade.
  - d. Good Zoning Practice: The proposed C2 Zone is identified as a corresponding zone of the Community Commercial land use designation. The development would be consistent with the land use designation. The proposed Zone Change from [Q]P-1L-CDO to (T)[Q]C2-1L-CDO will allow for the development of an underutilized surface parking lot with recreational facilities for an LAUSD Charter School, which has been conducting student lunch, student recreation and drop-off/pick-up actives in the surface parking lot through Zone Variances since 2006 (ZA-2005-3787-ZV, ZA-2008-0748-ZV, ZA-2014-0995-ZV). As such, the C2-Zone would allow site’s facilities to be upgraded while continuing a long standing authorized use of the site without the need for future Zone Variances.
  - e. “T” and “Q” Classification Findings: Per Section 12.32-G, 1 and 2 of the Municipal Code, the current action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with new “T” and “Q” conditions of approval. Such limitations are necessary to ensure the identified dedications, improvements, and actions are undertaken to meet the public’s needs, convenience, and general welfare served by the required actions. The conditions that limit the scale, design and scope of future development on the site are also necessary to protect the best interests of and to assure a development more compatible with surrounding properties and the overall pattern of the existing development in the community, to secure an appropriate development in harmony with the General Plan as discussed in Findings Section 1. The existing Permeant Qualified Q condition is not

proposed for change as it has been in effect since 2005 and is related to the CDO. The Q prohibits certain uses, and regulates building height, signage, and parking.

#### **Design Overlay Plan Approval Findings pursuant to LAMC Section 13.08**

#### **4. The project substantially complies with the adopted Community Design Overlay Guidelines and Standards.**

The proposed project would replace a portion of an existing surface parking lot with improved outdoor school facilities including an open recreation area with a landscaped grass field, a modular restroom and storage facility, and an outdoor covered student activity area with a solar shade structure 25 feet in height. A portion of the parking lot will be re-striped and maintained as a surface parking lot with the addition of landscaping and trees. The project also includes installation of an eight-foot tall concrete masonry unit block wall along the southern property line and a six-foot tall security fence along the east and west property lines.

The proposed Project is located in a Community Commercial General Plan Land Use Designation within in the Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan and is further located within the Central Business District of Reseda Community Design Overlay District (CDO). The project, as proposed and conditioned herein, demonstrates compliance with the guidelines and standards (Section 5) of the adopted CDO as described below.

In compliance with Section 5.A of the CDO, proposed fences and freestanding walls are conditioned to comply with Guideline 6, Standard 6a, and Standard 6b of the CDO. Consistent with the CDO, a combination wrought iron and masonry wall is proposed. Masonry wall materials are conditioned to comply with the CDO's standard materials (brick, stone, split face concrete, or other decorative materials). A condition to prohibit the use of chain link fencing is also included.

In compliance with Section 5.B of the CDO, proposed landscaping includes softscape and hardscape, introduces a variety of species of trees and shrubs on a site where there were previously none, and includes a required minimum 15 foot wide landscaped buffer along the southern property line abutting single family zoned properties.

In compliance with Section 5.C of the CDO, building colors are conditioned to coordinate with the existing school building's blue gray color scheme. Highly reflective colors are prohibited in the conditions. The conditions require shielded lighting to be provided on-site. Consistent with the security devices guidelines and standards, a condition has been added prohibiting barbed wire, razor wire, and concertina wire.

Section 5.D of the CDO regarding signage does not apply to the proposed project as no signage is proposed for the site.

Therefore, the project complies with all subsections (A through D) of the Section 5, *Design Guidelines and Standards* of the CDO.

#### **5. The structures, site plan and landscaping are harmonious in scale and design with existing development and any cultural, scenic or environmental resources adjacent to the site and in the vicinity.**

The property to the north of the alley is developed with the Magnolia Science Academy 1 classroom and administrative buildings. The eastern and western adjoining properties are developed with surface parking. The southern adjoining properties are zoned R1 and are

developed with four single-family dwellings. The site is not adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, any recognized and/or known cultural, scenic, or environmental resources.

The project's proposed structures, site plan and landscape plan are harmonious in scale and design with existing development and will provide a visual improvement to the surrounding community. The site's asphalt surface parking lot will be replaced with an open recreation area with a landscaped grass field, a modular restroom and storage facility, and an outdoor covered student activity area with a solar shade structure. A portion of the parking lot will be re-striped and maintained as a surface parking lot with the addition of landscaping and trees. A 15-foot wide landscaped buffer with shrubs and trees will be located on the southern property line adjacent to the single family homes, providing screening, beautification, and privacy for the neighboring properties. The solar shade structure is proposed 25 feet in height and is compliant with the height requirements for structures in commercial zones that abut R1 single family zones (LAMC Section 12.21.1-A.10). Currently there is no landscaping in the parking lot and thus the proposed landscaped recreational areas and landscaped parking lot will add greenery to an otherwise asphalt parking lot. Thus, the structures, site plan and landscaping are harmonious in scale and design with existing development.

### **Environmental Findings**

6. **Environmental Findings.** Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(b), after consideration of the whole of the administrative record, including the Mitigated Negative Declaration, No. ENV-2019-1065-MND, as circulated on August 22, 2019, ("Mitigated Negative Declaration"), and all comments received, with the imposition of mitigation measures, there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment. The Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City. The mitigation measures have been made enforceable conditions on the project and a Mitigation Monitoring Program prepared for the Mitigated Negative Declaration
7. **Flood Insurance.** The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone C, areas of minimal flooding.