

Agenda Report

To: City Council

Date: January 28, 2002

From: City Manager

Subject: Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council following a public hearing:

1. Adopt a resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report and the mitigation measures contained therein (Attachment 1)
2. Approve the De Minimis Impact Finding on the State Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Attachment 2); and
3. Adopt a resolution approving the Fair Oaks Orange Grove Specific Plan (Attachment 3), with modifications as recommended in the attached compendium (Attachment 4);
4. Direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination with the Los Angeles County Recorder (Attachment 5)
5. Direct the staff to initiate necessary amendments to the General Plan and map and code amendments to Title 17 – the Zoning Code to reflect the new Specific Plan (SP) designation and regulations.
6. Direct staff to initiate the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan Implementation Program and adopting design guidelines.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

On January 9, the Planning Commission approved the staff recommendations, with modifications as shown in Attachment 6. These recommendations include some recommendations made by other Commissions. Staff concurs with the Planning Commission's changes to the Specific Plan, with the exception of a minor modification to one parcel, and the provision relating to the expansion of Robinson Park.

The following Commissions and Committees reviewed the Specific Plan and E.I.R.: 1) Design Commission; 2) Arts Commission; 3) Cultural Heritage Commission; 4) Northwest Commission; 5) Fair Oaks Project Area Committee (PAC); 6) Community Development Committee; and the 7) Transportation Advisory Committee. Their comments and recommendations are included in Attachment 6. The Planning Commission and staff recommendations include most of the recommendations from the other Commissions and Committees.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan is one of seven specific plans cited in 1994 Land Use Element of the General Plan for areas of the City designated for future growth. After more than 60 diverse meetings with the community, the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan is the culmination of an effort designed to enhance the image of the area and to promote opportunities for new economic development. It proposes a comprehensive set of new land-use regulations, development standards, design guidelines, and streetscape and pedestrian amenities to achieve these goals.

The study area is two-and-a-half miles in length, extending along Fair Oaks Avenue from the county line on the north to Maple Street in the south and along Orange Grove Boulevard, from Lincoln Avenue to Los Robles Avenue. Altogether, it includes 171 acres, 408 parcels, and roughly 1,000 residential units.

BACKGROUND

Draft Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan

Specific Plan Preparation Process

The Specific Plan City participation process was overseen by a coordinating committee which met regularly for over two years. The coordinating committee was comprised of representatives of Council Districts 1, 3 and 5, a representative of the Mayor, and residents and business owners in the specific plan area.

Specialized consultants assisted with various parts of the project, including managing the public participation process; economics and marketing feasibility; community design; historic resources inventory; and environmental impact report and traffic study.

The process involved extensive outreach efforts, including the preparation of a brochure to provide the public with a "snapshot" of the revised Draft Specific Plan.

Community Outreach Process

The Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan preparation process has been underway for over two years. The Specific Plan is the result of an extensive public participation and outreach process that included community meetings and workshops, round table sessions and sub-area meetings, individual interviews, mobile display presentations to neighborhood associations, civic and business groups and the guidance of the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan Coordinating Committee.

The first draft of the Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (E.I.R.) was reviewed by the Planning Commission in the Spring 2001, followed by the review of several City advisory bodies throughout the summer months. Following these meetings, the Plan was refined to respond to comments, issues, and suggestions gathered during the presentations.

The *Revised* Draft Specific Plan was completed in November of 2001. The Revised Plan and the Draft Final Environmental Impact Report (E.I.R.) have been reviewed by City Advisory bodies during the months of November, December of 2001, and January 2002.

Several community meetings were conducted to engage residents of Northwest Pasadena in the Specific Plan process. To further broaden community input, a telephone survey was recently conducted among a representative sample of residents of Northwest Pasadena, equally inclusive of Districts 1, 3 and 5. Respondents were interviewed in English and Spanish, whichever language they preferred.

One of the questions asked what residents want more of in Northwest Pasadena and included a list of specific programs and services. Results showed residents want more jobs (95%), affordable housing for senior citizens (92%), affordable housing for families (91%), parks and open space (81%), offices and businesses (59%) and retail stores (57%).

Summary of Specific Plan Recommendations

Within the framework of the General Plan's vision for this area, three themes guided the preparation of Specific Plan: *Economic Development, Quality of Life, and Neighborhood Beautification*. The Specific Plan proposes some changes to the current mix of uses to stimulate activity in commercial nodes that will serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The desired effect is to spark renewed interest in living, working, and providing for economic development opportunities in the corridor. Based on the three themes, the following six Guiding Principles shaped the development of the Specific Plan:

- Protect, support and preserve the surrounding residential neighborhoods by establishing appropriate land uses, development standards and design guidelines.
- Improve the appearance of the area to enhance the quality-of-life for local residents and opportunities for employment and business development.
- Allow a mix of land uses that provide for viable commercial and residential development and support efforts to revitalize the area.
- Create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment that balances the needs of pedestrians and vehicular traffic, recognizing the status of Fair Oaks Avenue as a "Principal Mobility Corridor."
- Build upon and enhance existing and new community-serving facilities, including parks, libraries, community centers, , etc., to respond to the needs of the community.
- Recognize the importance of preserving historic and cultural resources in the area.

Land Use Recommendations for Each Specific Plan District:

The "Land Use Vision" in the revised Draft Specific Plan calls for a dynamic commercial and residential corridor centered on the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove intersection. The Plan identifies three sub-areas or districts and builds on the existing character, scale, and development trend of each to provide a comprehensive planning strategy for the entire area.

District 1: La Pintoresca Neighborhood Corridor District

The intent for this area is to encourage residential uses and to provide opportunities for neighborhood-serving commercial businesses that complement and support the residential uses. The new commercial nodes could support and benefit from existing active uses nearby (such as the Community Health Center and other health-care related businesses). To advance the intent for this area, the Plan proposes to:

- Maintain the existing multi-family residential zone (RM-16) and change the existing RM-32 to RM-16 zoning district.
- Retain the existing commercial nodes at Montana Street and Washington Boulevard, emphasizing neighborhood-serving commercial uses. Housing is not allowed in these areas.
- Create two neighborhood-serving commercial nodes (one at the intersection of Fair Oaks/Tremont and another at Fair Oaks/Howard.) These nodes will allow residential and mixed-use development at a density up to 16 units per acre.

- Retain the PS zone at Tremont Street and Fair Oaks Avenue, which includes the Health Center and the recently approved senior housing development.
- Live/work uses will be allowed and existing housing will be maintained.

District 2: Robinson Park District

The intent for this area is to continue to encourage uses that contribute jobs and increase the opportunities for development and use of underutilized industrial parcels. To this end, the Plan expands the mix of uses allowing both commercial and light industrial uses in areas currently restricted for industrial uses. The Plan also envisions strengthening the community resources and services (Robinson Park, Jackie Robinson Center, Fire Station #36, etc.) that exist in this district to provide additional amenities to the community, and encourages particular attention to this district for the development and delivery of arts and cultural programming. The Plan will:

- Allow a wide range of commercial uses (except retail) in addition to light industrial uses such as component assembly, R & D office and laboratories, technology-oriented businesses, etc.
- Allow community service uses, such as child day care centers, charitable or not-for-profit institutions that provide job/skills training facilities, and will encourage arts organizations and cultural institutions to deliver art and cultural programming.
- Enhance the role of the Jackie Robinson Center as a magnet for civic life for the community, and provide for the potential expansion of Robinson Park as currently proposed by the Master Plan.

District 3: Renaissance Commercial District:

The Plan envisions this area as a pedestrian-oriented district with commercial, residential and mixed-use developments that continue to make this area a key center of commercial activity and a gateway into northwest Pasadena. The proximity of the district to the Foothill Freeway (I-210), to Old Pasadena, and to major transportation corridors are assets supporting this vision. The plan proposes to:

- Allow a mix of residential, commercial land uses such as retail, food sales, offices, personal services, and other neighborhood-serving uses, mixed-use, and certain small-scale light industrial uses along both Fair Oaks and Orange Grove corridors.

Along the Fair Oaks Avenue south of Mountain Street, it will:

- Allow and encourage mixed-use development (residential with ground floor non-residential use) to maintain the commercial character along this portion of Fair Oaks Avenue.
- Allow housing only as part of mixed-use development. A density of 40 units per acre is allowed on parcels along Fair Oaks from Mountain Street on the

north to Esther and Peoria Streets on the south, with the exception of the Renaissance Plaza site which is developed with commercial retail uses and it does not provide for housing. A density of 32 units per acre is allowed on parcels south of Esther and Peoria to Maple Street.

- Change the Villa-Parke Planned Development (PD2) zone to an appropriate residential or commercial zoning district.

Along the Orange Grove corridor between Lincoln Avenue and Los Robles Avenue, it will:

- Allow residential, and commercial uses such as: retail, food sales, personal service business, office, etc., and mixed-use. The residential component of mixed-use or multi-family development may be up to 32 units per acre, as currently allowed.
- Change the zoning of 675 N. Raymond Avenue from Commercial to Multi-family Residential (RM-12 two units per lots). Change the zoning on the north side of Orange Grove Blvd. between Manzanita and Sunset avenues from RM-32 (Multifamily residential, 32 units per acre) to Commercial
- Establish a Planned Development (PD) district for the Community Arms housing development (151 E. Orange Grove Boulevard) allowing the existing 131 units to remain with no any additional units.

Community Design Component

The Plan includes a streetscape design vision that strengthens positive attributes of the corridor with the goal of creating an inviting and pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential environment.

Design standards and design guidelines for streetscapes address elements such as sidewalks, parkways, streets and public parks to foster a unified and visually pleasant area and act as catalyst for private investment. The Plan outlines a conceptual program of improvements to street furnishings, street lighting, pedestrian crosswalks, and street trees, among other improvements.

The private realm development standards and design guidelines are intended to integrate new private development with the public real improvements, encourage development that supports a desirable street environment, encourage imaginative new design, harmonious with it surrounding as well as rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of identified historic/architectural resources. To enhance the experience of the pedestrian, the design guidelines promote landscaped setbacks and building articulation and amenities.

The majority of development standards and design guidelines are applicable to the entire Specific Plan area. A few of the development standards such as height and setback are tailored to each district to respond to their unique character.

Historic Preservation

The Specific Plan includes an approved updated historic resources survey for the plan area. The Plan supports the preservation of historic properties by recommending an active program to designate qualifying historic resources as landmarks or to nominate them for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The plan further promotes the adaptive re-use of historic resources by allowing their conversion to office uses with a conditional use permit.

Intensity and Density Allocations

The General Plan allocated 150 net new housing units and 500,000 square feet of net new non-residential floor area for the "original" project area that included 235 parcels. With the expansion of the Specific Plan area to the northerly city limits, the added parcels (173) created a potential for an additional 111,000 square feet of net new non-residential space and 400 net new housing units. The total residential allocation for the entire Specific Plan area is 550 net new units (200 units for both Districts 1 and 2; and 350 units for District 3)

The total non-residential allocation for the entire Specific Plan area is 611,000 square feet. The non-residential allocation is assigned as follows:

- District 1: 70,000 square feet
- District 2: 41,000 square feet
- District 3: 500,000 square feet

The General Plan has not provided for the recommended additional units and square footage allocation, because the expansion of the Specific Plan was not anticipated. Thus, an amendment to the General Plan will be required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (E.I.R.)

The environmental clearance for the plan, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), is a program or "tiered" EIR (Attachment 7). It is more general than a project-specific EIR because it only analyzes the aggregate effects of implementing the plan, absent information about future, site-specific projects. The EIR focuses on the effects that may be expected with the adoption and subsequent implementation of the Specific Plan.

The E.I.R. primarily analyzed impacts in the following areas, which were identified by city staff in the Initial Environmental Study as potentially impacted by the proposed Specific Plan:

- Land Use and Planning
- Traffic and Circulation
- Cultural Resources
- Public Services (Schools)

- Air Quality
- Population and Housing
- Recreation

During the 45-day review period, several comments were received on the draft EIR. The preliminary Final EIR attached contains the response to all the comments. The EIR concluded that the plan will not create significant adverse impacts in land use, population and housing, cultural resources, and recreation. Traffic and circulation impacts are expected at eight of 16 intersections, but these impacts can be mitigated through synchronizing traffic signals, improving roadways, and applying Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures for future development projects. It also identifies impacts on air quality with mitigation during construction of future projects. It also notes that implementation of the plan will strain capacity problems with enrollment in elementary schools; however, the collection of school impact fees by PUSD will reduce impacts to an acceptable level.

The proposed development allowed by the Draft Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan and analyzed in the EIR is:

Residential:	550 net new housing units
Non-residential:	611,000 square feet
Commercial	420,000 sq. ft.
Industrial	191,000 sq. ft.

As required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the EIR identifies project alternatives and establishes the “environmentally superior” alternative. In this instance, it finds that the proposed Fair Oaks Orange Grove Specific Plan is superior because it balances economic vitality with the assurance of high quality development in the future, and it respects the neighborhood character of the surrounding area.

General Plan Consistency

The Draft Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan provides a detailed program to implement the intent of the General Plan Land Use Element for the Specific Plan area.

Four issues require more detailed comments. First, in the 1994 Land Use Element, the initial boundaries for the Specific Plan included the area along the corridors from Lincoln Avenue to Los Robles Avenue and from Maple Street to Mountain Street. The Land Use Element states that “precise boundaries will be adopted during the public participation process.” After the General Plan was adopted, the City Council directed in June 1999 that the boundaries be extended along Fair Oaks Avenue northward to the city limit, just above Montana Street. It will be necessary to amend both the map in the Land Use Element and the Land Use Diagram to reflect the revised boundaries.

Second, the Land Use Element intensity and density allocations, which indicate the amount of new development for the area, should be amended in the Element to reflect the larger Plan area, as well as to provide the level of development that is now proposed as a result of developing the Plan. Before development projects relying on this additional development potential can be approved, it will be necessary to amend the Land Use Element intensity standards both for the specific plan area itself *and also for the city as a whole, from which the development intensity will be subtracted.*

Third, the Land Use Element directs that the specific plan will encourage balanced mixed use development in portions of the area that are currently zoned IG (Industrial). In the absence of this specific direction, the industrial zoning districts would be governed by General Plan Land Use Element Policy 10:5, which protects existing industrial districts. It is the specific intent of the Land Use Element, however, that areas along Fair Oaks Avenue that were formerly zoned for industrial activity should provide opportunity for mixed use development, not the very short list of industrially-oriented uses allowed under Policy 10.5. The Plan reflects the specific Land Use Element intent for the area by allowing mixed-use development.

Finally, the Specific Plan provides that the intensity standard for potential new residential development includes housing units that are restricted by income and income qualifications of occupants (i.e., affordable units) as well as purely market-driven units. This provision anticipates a change in the updated Land Use Element, which will be considered early in 2002. At present, Land Use Element Policy 3.1 says: "Allow development of residential units exceeding targeted development area if the units are ownership units affordable to moderate, low and very low income households, rental units affordable to low or very low income households, or senior housing." The Specific Plan provision that would include affordable and senior units within the intensity standard for the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan area will become effective only when the Land Use Element update is adopted with a revised policy to allow specific plans to determine whether affordable units are included in the intensity standards. Language will be included in the Specific Plan to acknowledge the points noted Above and other minor administrative items.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY IMPACTS

The Specific Plan recommended residential and non-residential development provides for potential housing, employment opportunities, and community-serving uses for families in northwest Pasadena. The 550 additional residential units will provide a wide range of housing types. Additional recreational opportunities for children are anticipated from the potential expansion of Robinson Park provided for in the Specific Plan.

HOUSING IMPACT

Implementation of the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan will have a positive impact on the City's supply of housing. In the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove corridors, up to 550 net new housing units can be developed. Housing is being introduced in areas where it was not previously permitted.

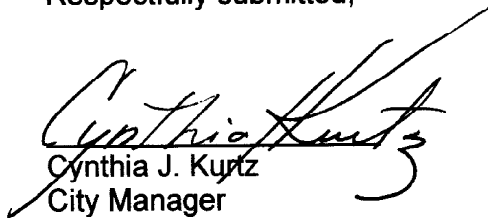
FISCAL IMPACT

The Specific Plan allows a mix of land uses that provides for viable commercial and residential development and supports efforts to revitalize the area and make it more attractive for commercial retail businesses. There is no estimated future building permit revenue for commercial projects due to the Enterprise Zone fee waivers. Potential revenues are anticipated from the housing units projected over time for the Specific Plan area.

Estimated costs for implementation of the Specific Plan are approximately \$8.5 million, which include preliminary concepts for streetscape improvements, pedestrian amenities, transportation improvements, and other related projects and activities. A portion of these improvements would be funded by developers in association with development projects. As concepts are refined in consultation with the community, new cost estimates will be updated.

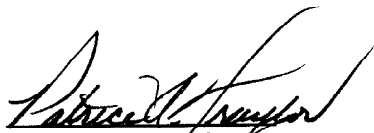
Implementation of the Specific Plan will rely on a variety of funding sources, both public and private. Phased public improvement projects will need to be included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



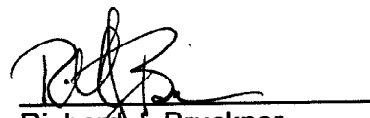
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Attachments:

1. Resolution Certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)
2. De Minimis impact Finding on the State Fish and Wildlife Habitat
3. Resolution Adopting the Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan (Specific Plan)
4. Draft Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan (October 2001) and Compendium - Recommended modifications to the Revised Draft Fair Oaks/Orange Grove Specific Plan
5. Notice of Determination
6. Commission and Committee comments along with staff responses and recommendations
7. Final Environmental Impact Report