

# Agenda Report

**TO:** City Council

**DATE:** September 8, 2003

**FROM:** City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Zone Change for Properties  
on South Oakland Avenue between Alpine and Glenarm Streets  
to Establish the South Oakland Landmark District Overlay Zone (LD-5)

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

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

1. Find that the application for a zone change is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act, (Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment).
2. Find that the proposed zone change is consistent with the General Plan and the purposes of the zoning ordinance.
3. Acknowledge the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission on June 16, 2003, that the proposed South Oakland Landmark District (Attachment 1) meets the criteria for designation as a landmark district, (§17.52.40 P.M.C).
4. Acknowledge that the petition with signatures in support of the landmark overlay district petition exceeds the 51 percent requirement in P.M.C. §17.52.050.
5. Based on these findings, approve the application for a zone change to add the LD (Landmark District) overlay district to the existing RS-6 (Single-family Residential) and the classification of "contributing properties" shown in the Property Inventory (Attachment 2).
6. Adopt a resolution (Attachment 3) to approve the supplemental chapter for the South Oakland Landmark District in the City's *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts* (Attachment 4).

7. Hold first reading of an ordinance amending the official zoning map of the City of Pasadena established by Section 17.08.040 of the Pasadena Municipal Code by adding the South Oakland Landmark District Overlay (LD-5).

#### **RECOMMENDATION FROM HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:**

At a public hearing on June 16, 2003, the Historic Preservation Commission determined that the proposed district meets the criteria in §17.52.040 P.M.C. for establishment of a landmark district and unanimously recommended approval. At a public meeting on July 7, 2003, the Commission also recommended approval of the draft chapter for the South Oakland district for the City's *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*.

#### **RECOMMENDATION FROM PLANNING COMMISSION**

Following a public hearing on August 13, 2003, the Planning Commission found that the proposed zone change to create a landmark district is consistent with the General Plan and the purposes of the zoning ordinance and voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve the establishment of the South Oakland Landmark District and the supplemental chapter of the *Design Guidelines*.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This application for a zone change is to establish a Landmark District for 20 properties in the Madison Heights neighborhood. The district has a representative collection of 1910's and 1920's architectural styles, with 95% of the properties documented as contributing to the area's architectural and historic integrity. Seventy percent of the property owners have signed a petition in support of the district and a supplemental chapter for South Oakland in the *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Property owners in the district initiated the proposal to create the City's fifth landmark district. The landmark district designation protects the historic and architectural character of a neighborhood through design review. The code requires design review for certain exterior alterations visible from the street. Demolitions, relocations and new construction are also reviewed in the districts.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

Boundaries: The district is one block long on both sides of S. Oakland Avenue between Alpine Street and Glenarm Street.

Construction Dates: The houses were built from 1910 to 1963. The Historic Preservation Commission found that 1910 to 1951 is the "period of significance," i.e., the time period when the area "achieved the character on which significance is based."

Architectural Styles/Building Types: The district consists of 20 single-family houses and their accessory buildings. The most prevalent architectural styles are Colonial Revival and Craftsman, and several Period Revival styles are also represented. Key characteristics of the district are generous setbacks, one- or two-story heights, front porches, and detached rear garages. Stucco walls or wood shingle cladding are predominant.

Eligibility for Landmark District: With 95% of the properties documented as contributing<sup>1</sup>, the district has a high level of architectural and historic integrity. This high percentage of contributing properties surpasses the 60% threshold in the preservation ordinance, and the great variety of residential architecture in a compact area meets the designation requirement for a grouping of properties “of citywide importance” and having an “architectural context.”

When the Historic Preservation Commission determined that 19 of the 20 houses are “contributing” to the historic district, it determined:

1. The house at 1009 is contributing because it is intact, represents well an architectural style from the 1940’s and 1950’s, and has a compatible scale with the older neighboring houses. (See photo on bottom of page 123 of attachment 4.)
2. Even though a stone facing has been added to portions of the planter and porch piers, the house at 1019 is contributing because it was built in 1922, fits the predominant era of construction of the neighborhood, has an unusual Prairie Bungalow style, and is still sufficiently intact that its original architecture is clearly recognizable. (See photo on top right of page 123 of attachment 4.)

Due to a request at the public hearing by the owner of the houses at 1009 and 1019, the Planning Commission also reviewed whether these two houses are contributing to the significance of the district. The Planning Commission agreed with the Historic Preservation Commission about the historic integrity of the district and inclusion of the two houses as contributing.

Guidelines: The *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*, adopted by the City Council on September 16, 2002, apply to reviews of all projects in landmark districts. These guidelines, developed with the participation of local residents, are an elaboration of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* and include examples and illustrations targeting local conditions. These guidelines also have a freestanding chapter for each landmark district. Staff and the proponents of the district prepared the draft chapter based on input from property owners who attended a district workshop on July 16, 2003. (See Attachment 2.)

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<sup>1</sup> Contributing resource---a building, site, structure, or object adding to the historic significance of a property. [*National Register Bulletin, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service, 1990; 2002).]

**GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY:**

The area is low-density residential. The proposed designation is consistent with the General Plan and will advance the objectives of the Land Use Element, e.g., Objective 6, which “promotes preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods.”

The area is zoned RS-6 (single-family). The LD-5 zone is proposed as an overlay over the current zoning. The application is consistent with the purposes of the zoning ordinance, which includes several goals to preserve residential neighborhoods.

**NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS:**

Property owners held an initial neighborhood meeting soon after the Historic Commission stayed the application to demolish the houses at 1009 and 1019 S. Oakland on April 21, 2003. The property owners decided to apply for a landmark district at this meeting. All residents and property owners within the area and within 300 feet of the proposed district received notices of the July 16 public hearing and workshop with the Historic Preservation Commission and the August 13 public hearing with the Planning Commission. Nine property owners attended the first hearing/workshop, and seven attended the Planning Commission hearing.

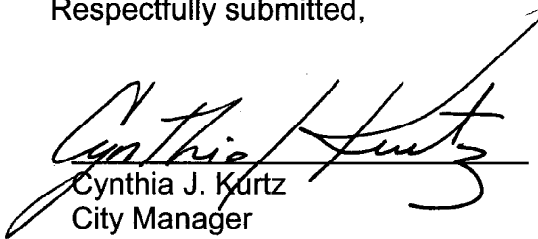
**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

This zone change application is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act, (Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The City’s General Fee Schedule exempts fees for design review in landmark districts. Fees will continue to be collected for all other entitlements, plan checks, permits, and taxes. Based on the number of applications for Banbury Oaks (a similarly sized district), staff expects an average of one application per year (or less) over the next several years. The long-term cost of this service to the City should be minimal.


Respectfully submitted,




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Approved by:



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Attachments:

1. Map of Proposed South Oakland Landmark District
2. Inventory of South Oakland Landmark District Properties
3. Resolution of Adoption of the South Oakland Chapter Amendment
4. Draft Chapter Amendment to the *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*

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