



# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** October 4, 2004

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** PROPOSED CENTRAL DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN, AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT AND THE MOBILITY ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN, AND REVISION OF TITLE 17 OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE (ZONING)

## RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information and discussion.

## BACKGROUND

Attached for City Council review is the *Environmental Impact Report (EIR)*. The EIR consists of three volumes: 1) Final Environmental Impact Report, 2) Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR, and 3) Technical Appendix. The draft EIR was circulated for public review from June 4, 2004 to August 23, 2004. The comments and responses to comments are presented in Section 8.0. Revisions and clarifications to the EIR were made in response to comments on the draft EIR and the final documents were issued on October 1, 2004. Copies of the EIR are available to the public via CD-ROM by contacting the Planning and Development Department.

The EIR analyzes the impacts of the 2004 Land Use and Mobility Elements, Zoning Code Revisions, and Central District Specific Plan (Plans) in the horizon year 2015. The EIR looks at alternatives and combinations of alternatives to determine if altering the Plans as proposed could reduce the impacts associated with the Plans.

*Alternative 1: No Project* – This alternative assumes that the 1994 General Plan remains as the adopted policy document and none of the other plans are adopted.

*Alternative 2: Reduction Growth* – These alternatives assume a new reduction in Citywide growth of 25% and 50% in the year 2015.

2A: 75% Growth of Recommended Project (25% Reduced Development)

2B: 50% Growth of Recommended Project (50% Reduced Development)

*Alternative 3: Extension of Gold Line* – This alternative assumes extension of the Gold Line to Claremont.

3A: Recommended Project with Gold Line Extension to Claremont

*3B: 75% Growth of Recommended Project with Gold Line Extension to Claremont*

*3C: 50% Growth of Recommended Project with Gold Line Extension to Claremont*

*Alternative 4: Completion of I-710* – This alternative assumes that the I-710 freeway is completed between Alhambra and Pasadena.

*4A: Recommended Project with I-710 Completion*

*4B: 75% Growth of Recommended Project with I-710 Completion*

*4C: 50% Growth of Recommended Project with I-710 Completion*

*Alternative 5: Commercial-Oriented Development* – This alternative assumes that the focus of new development in the Central District is commercial, rather than a mix of commercial and residential.

*Alternative 6: Alternative FAR Allocation* – This alternative assumes that the maximum FAR on the blocks adjacent to the Del Mar Gold Line station will be 2.50 and the FAR in the historic core of Old Pasadena will be 2.50.

*Alternative 7: Extensive Physical Improvements to Improve Traffic Flow* – This alternative assumes that certain intersections would be widened to increase traffic capacity.

*Alternative 8: Residential-Oriented Development* – This alternative assumes that the focus of new development in the Central District is residential, rather than a mix of commercial and residential.

The EIR finds that adoption of the Plans will result in impacts in the areas of transportation/traffic, air quality, noise, and parks/recreation. Other impacts of the Plans can be mitigated to a level of insignificance. The intensity of impact is less in some alternatives than others, however the project and all the alternatives will result in environmental impacts. In fact, the greatest impacts are found in not adopting the Plans. The traffic impacts of each alternative are relatively similar and reflect the influence of regional traffic at key intersections and street segments.

Thirty-two agencies and individuals commented on the Draft EIR resulting in a total of eighty-five comment letters. Many of the comments were on similar themes and the responses are grouped into topical responses. Each comment letter and the responses are printed in Volume II of the EIR.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires public agencies to prepare EIRs for projects that have potential impacts on the physical environment. According to CEQA, the term *environment* means the physical conditions that exist within the area to be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic significance.

CEQA analysis is intended to provide a process by which public agencies can identify feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives to reduce impacts on the environment. If an EIR documents unavoidable impacts resulting from the project, the decision making body may approve the project if they adopt a statement of overriding considerations. The statement of overriding considerations documents the public

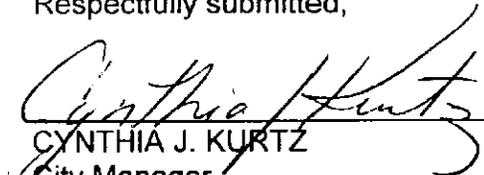
benefits of proceeding with the project and the decision making body, after considering the impacts and benefits of the project may approve the project. Staff will recommend certification of the EIR even though approval of the project or any of the alternatives will require a Statement of Overriding Consideration.

Also attached for City Council review are papers discussing the interchangeability and intensity standards for the specific plan areas and Revisions to the Zoning Code Transit Oriented Development and Parking Caps.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The transmittal of the EIR documents for informational purposes will not result in a fiscal impact.

Respectfully submitted,

  
CYNTHIA J. KURTZ  
City Manager

Prepared by:

  
John Poindexter  
Planning Manager

Approved by:

  
Richard Bruckner  
Director  
Planning & Development Department

**Attachments** Environmental Impact Report Volumes I, II, and III  
Interchangeability and Intensity Standards for the Specific Plan Areas  
Revisions to the Zoning Code Transit Oriented Development and  
Parking Caps

## INTERCHANGEABILITY AND INTENSITY STANDARDS FOR THE SPECIFIC PLAN AREAS

October 4, 2004

On September 27, 2004, the City Council requested information about the draft 2004 Land Use Element update provision for interchangeability between the intensity standards for residential and nonresidential development and also about the updating of the intensity standards to reflect development since 1994.

The draft Land Use Element update includes various provisions for implementing the Element's intensity standards in the preparation of specific plans. For a specific plan area, the intensity standards are limits on the number of residential units and nonresidential floor area that may be added within the area. To allow greater flexibility while maintaining an overall limit on development, the draft Land Use Element update includes the following provision, added with the Council's conceptual approval in August 2002: "Specific plans may determine whether dwelling unit totals and building floor area for nonresidential development may be converted and interchanged to allow more flexibility among uses." The provision *allows* a specific plan to interchange the allowable residential and nonresidential development potential but does not require that any particular specific plan make use of the option. Neither does it establish a citywide standard for the conversion, for example, 1,000 square feet of nonresidential development for one residential unit.

For the Central District, the 1994 Land Use Element set intensity standards of 5,095 additional residential units and 6,217,000 square feet of additional nonresidential floor area. The 1994 Element also established totals for individual strategy areas, as well as the area that remained, in the Central District. According to the 1994 Element, the intensity standards do not include parking areas. The draft 2004 update revises the intensity standards by reducing the amount of potential new development, based on development added since 1994. Those updated intensity standards are shown on Table 2B, page 36, of the draft Element (Attachment A). For the Central District, the standards are 3,395 net new residential units and 4,817,000 square feet of net new nonresidential development. There are standards for the Central District as a whole but not for individual strategy areas and the remaining areas outside of these strategy areas.

The current pace and pattern of development indicate several factors that point to retaining the individual intensity standards for residential and nonresidential development for the Central District without allowing interchangeability in the 2004 update. First, the rate of residential development in the four years since 2000, because of development in the City's Central District, has been significantly higher than the rate between 1994 and 2000. Nevertheless, the

citywide rate remains below the annual rate projected in the 1994 Land Use Element.

Table A  
Rate of Residential Development

1994 Land Use Element – Projected Annual Rate Citywide to 2010	438 units
Actual Annual Citywide Rate, 1994 to 2000	189 units
Actual Annual Citywide Rate, 2000 to 2004	397 units
Actual Annual Central District Rate, 2000 to 2004	339 units

During the past four years, more than 80 percent of new Pasadena housing has been built within the Central District. The rate of development outside the Central District (58 units/year), however, is substantially lower than in the past. For the 1970s and 1980s, the citywide annual average was 297 units per year. The rate for the 1990s was 110 units/year. Comparatively little of the new housing in the city was constructed in the Central District during those decades.

The abrupt change in annual rate and the current concentration of new housing development in the Central District suggest that additional time is necessary to understand future market conditions. For example, currently, there is a strong demand for housing and a soft market for new commercial development. There has always been a concern that, if this strong housing market continued for a significant period, it could utilize all of the available commercial development sites. The response in the draft Central District Specific Plan to this concern is to reserve certain areas for solely commercial development, (e.g. restrictions in Lake Avenue & Arroyo Corridor/Fair Oaks sub-districts and requirements for ground floor commercial). Recently, there have been concerns expressed as to whether these restrictions would be sufficient, should the housing market become explosive, with thousands of units coming on the market within a short period. Although this is an unlikely event, retention of the current individual intensity limits are seen as a further hedge against over utilization of available commercial development sites for residential development. If no such pattern develops, it would still be possible to provide interchangeability at the next five-year update. The five-year period until the next update of the Land Use Element will provide sufficient time to understand the changing market demand for housing in Pasadena's Central District.

Second, we are currently experiencing an increase in the number of mixed-use projects, as is encouraged by Policy 1.4 of the Land Use Element. The concentration of housing in mixed-use districts creates new opportunities for mobility. Proximity to employment locations, to shopping, and to recreation allows residents to change their habits, especially dependence on automobiles. Similarly, shopping patterns of new residents will shift, as will their use of City services and facilities. Changes in behavior usually require time, however, so

recent development does not yet provide sufficient evidence to determine how people will use the opportunities that downtown housing offers. In the future, the City can evaluate the actual effects of adding significantly more housing in mixed-use projects and districts downtown, including the effects on mobility, City revenue, and service costs.

The draft 2004 Land Use Element update is intended to govern development for the next five years. Within that term, and also for a reasonably longer term, the intensity standards for the Central District would accommodate development that is comparable to historical growth in Pasadena.

For the term of the 2004 update (*i.e.*, for the next five years), the current "caps," without interchangeability, allow the amount of development that is reasonably projected. At the current rate of development, *i.e.*, 339 units per year, the limit on residential development will not be reached prior to the next five-year update. Therefore, the flexibility that comes with making the two intensity standards interchangeable will not likely be necessary within that timeframe. Interchangeability remains, however, a practical and valuable tool, both now in certain other specific plan areas and for the future in the Central District.

Based on the information that will become available from actual development by the time of the next Land Use Element update, the City can determine whether the intensity standards established in the 1994 Element support or hinder the desired Central District mix of activities. In the meantime, new development will be consistent with the limits established in the 1994 Land Use Element.

## Attachment A

### Building Intensity Standards for Targeted Growth Areas (Draft Land Use Element Table 2B) and Potential Development

**Table 2B**

#### BUILDING INTENSITY STANDARDS FOR TARGETED GROWTH AREAS

SPECIFIC PLANS	ALLOWABLE NET NEW DEVELOPMENT BEYOND 1994		ALLOWABLE NET NEW DEVELOPMENT BEYOND 2004	
	UNITS	SQ. FOOTAGE	UNITS (See Note)	SQ. FOOTAGE (See Note)
A. CENTRAL DISTRICT	5,095	6,217,000	3,395	4,817,000
B. SOUTH FAIR OAKS	300	1,550,000	300	1,290,000
C. WEST GATEWAY	75	800,000	75 Interchangeable with Nonresidential (Increase to 1,016 units or reduction to 0, by Specific Plan)	800,000 Interchangeable with Residential (Reduction to 0 or increase to 863,750 by Specific Plan)
D. EAST PASADENA	400	2,100,000	500	2,020,000
E. EAST COLORADO	750	650,000	750 Interchangeable to Nonresidential (Decrease to 0 units by Specific Plan)	315,000 Interchangeable from Residential (Increase to 1,065,000 by Specific Plan)
F. NORTH LAKE	500	175,000	487	145,000
G. FAIR OAKS / ORANGE GROVE	150	500,000	485	553,000

Note: Specific Plans may permit higher totals for either residential units or nonresidential floor area, with a corresponding reduction of the other category, if they provide that potential residential and nonresidential development are interchangeable.

Residential intensity standards for targeted growth areas do not include affordable housing units, unless the specific plan determines otherwise, so actual residential development may exceed the numbers shown.

**Attachment A**

**POTENTIAL BUILDING INTENSITY  
OUTSIDE OF TARGETED GROWTH AREAS  
AND TOTAL CITYWIDE BUILDING INTENSITY**

	POTENTIAL NEW DEVELOPMENT BEYOND 1994		POTENTIAL NEW DEVELOPMENT BEYOND 2004	
	UNITS	SQ. FOOTAGE	UNITS	SQ. FOOTAGE
<b>A. POTENTIAL BUILDING INTENSITY OUTSIDE OF TARGETED GROWTH AREAS</b>	3,431	4,848,215	3,278	4,002,995
<b>B. TOTAL CITYWIDE BUILDING INTENSITY</b>	10,704	16,840,215	9,270*	13,942,995*

\* Note: Specific Plans may permit higher totals for either residential units or nonresidential floor area, with a corresponding reduction of the other category, if they provide that potential residential and nonresidential development are interchangeable.

Residential intensity standards for targeted growth areas do not include affordable housing units, unless the specific plan determines otherwise, so actual residential development may exceed the numbers shown.

## REVISIONS TO THE ZONING CODE – TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND PARKING CAPS

The following information was requested by the City Council at its September 27, 2004 meeting. It includes; the experience in other cities, the potential number of parking spaces to be provided under the parking provisions of the proposed zoning code, and alternatives to the proposed parking provision of the zoning code.

### *1) Parking Caps in Other Cities*

San Diego has capped its parking in its downtown. Office uses are allowed to have a maximum of 1 space for every 1,000 sq. ft. Residential parking floats between 1.25 and 2 spaces per unit. The San Diego experience is that parking is too low for offices uses. Office construction has shifted to other parts of the City and County as a result of the highly restrictive parking caps in the Centre City. Currently the City of San Diego is considering increasing its parking for office uses in order to attract office development back downtown.

The City of Portland did not cap their parking based on use. Instead they created a cap for the entire downtown. This parking cap was set at 40,000 spaces in their entire downtown in 1975. They held that cap until the late 1980s when they increased it to 44,000. They increased it again slightly in the late 1990's. New development is not permitted to have parking once the maximum number of spaces is met.

Other cities have chosen to substantially reduce parking rather than having a cap. Seattle has reduced office parking to one space per 1,000 sq. ft. In conversation with these cities, developments are not parking their projects above the minimum.

A question that arose in the parking cap discussion was what is the parking requirement of other local cities in their downtowns. Attachment 1 is a comparison of other cities' parking requirement including Burbank and Glendale.

### *2) Central District Parking*

The Central District has approximately 45,000 parking spaces. This includes street parking as well as parking in private parking lots and structures and public parking structures.

The EIR assumes 1,250,000 sq. ft. of new non-residential development and 2,750 new residential units in the Central District by 2015. The following table (Table 1) shows how much parking would result from this new development with and without the proposed parking caps. According to this table there will be about a 1,000 space reduction with the caps. This is a reduction of about 12 percent of the new parking. It is important to note that the current proposal permits individual projects to develop public parking above the cap subject to a CUP. Public and shared parking would be exempt from the cap.

**Table 1 - Estimate of Additional Parking Spaces with or without Caps by 2015 within the Central District**

	Maximum # of Units/Sq. ft. allowed under the General Plan	Proposed Parking requirement	# of spaces w/o caps or 25% reduction	# of spaces w/caps and 25% reduction
Residential	2,750 units	1.5 space per unit [a]	4,125 spaces	4,125 spaces
Non-Residential [b]	1,250,000 sq. ft.			
Office	562,500 sq. ft.	3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. (administrative) and 4 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. (Medical) [c]	1,969 spaces	1,477 spaces
Retail	437,500 sq. ft.	3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.	1,313 spaces	985 spaces
Institutional	250,000 sq. ft.	Varies depending on use [d]	750 spaces	563 spaces
Subtotal for non-residential			4,032 spaces	3,025 spaces
<b>Total w/residential</b>			<b>8,157 spaces</b>	<b>7,150 spaces</b>

- [a] The parking requirement for residential uses inside the Central District is less for those areas outside the Central District. For units less than 550 sq. ft. the requirement is one space (outside the CD it is 1.5 spaces); for units 550 sq. ft. or larger the requirement is 1.5 spaces (outside the CD it is 2 spaces per unit).
- [b] The non-residential is broken down into 35 percent retail, 45 percent office and 20 percent institutional. This breakdown is the same used in the EIR for traffic modeling.
- [c] The assumption is that about 50 percent of the new office use will be medical office.
- [d] 3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. has been assumed for institutional uses.
- [e] The current code has a maximum on parking. The parking cannot be larger then 50 percent of the minimum.

*3) Alternatives*

The intent of the caps is to encourage uses that can take advantage of transit or are less auto-oriented. It is also intended to encourage centralized parking in which shoppers consolidate trips by parking once and the occupants shop at several locations or use the City's Art Buses throughout the downtown. For residential uses, staff has provided the Council with information that shows that parking is being constructed at a rate that is comparable to the cap (see Attachment 2). Staff has developed several options for discussion.

- a. **Decrease Parking Cap.** Under this option the parking cap would not be the same as the reduction (as currently proposed). Required parking could be reduced by up to 25 percent, but the cap could be at a higher number such as the minimum requirement before the reduction. For example, without a parking reduction an office project would be required to have parking at 3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. With the reduction, the parking requirement would be reduced to 2.25 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. The project developer

could decide to take the full reduction, no reduction, or a reduction of less than 25 percent. This provides the developer with the greatest flexibility. However, this proposal does not have the same effect of reducing traffic.

- b. Differentiate between Low Turnover Parking and Customer Parking. Another option would be to reduce parking for office uses by 25 percent and cap the parking at this reduction. However, uses which are dependent on a high volume of customers (such as retail) would reduce their parking by 10 percent since a much larger fraction of those uses are devoted to customer parking. Employee parking for retail and market uses is typically 20 percent of the parking. The parking for food sales (market) is 4 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. and with the 10 percent reduction would then be 3.6 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. This option focuses the reduction on low turnover parking and doesn't affect customer parking.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**COMPARABLE DOWNTOWN PARKING RATIOS**

City		PARKING RATIOS[a]			
		OFFICE [b]	RETAIL	COMMERCIAL	RESIDENTIAL
BURBANK	[c]	3.5	3.5	3.5	
GLENDALE	[d]	2.7	4	2 to 5	1.25 to 2 plus 0.25 guest
LOS ANGELES	[e]	2	2	2	1.25
SAN DIEGO	[f]	1	2.5	2.1	1.25 to 2
SEATTLE	[g]	1	2.8	2	0.33 To 0.5
PASADENA	Proposed w/o reduction Proposed w/reduction	3 2.25	3 2.7	3 2.25	

**Notes**

- [a] Parking ratios are per 1,000 square footage of development, except for residential in dwelling units.
- [b] Excludes medical office.
- [c] <http://www.burbankca.org/planning/pdf/bmc/bmc-ch31.pdf>
- [d] [http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/gmc/Zoning\\_Code/Chapter30-32.pdf](http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/gmc/Zoning_Code/Chapter30-32.pdf)
- [e] City of Los Angeles, Planning and Zoning Code, Sections 12.21 A 4 and 12.21 A 4 (x), July 2000
- [f] [http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=alp:lamc\\_ca](http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=alp:lamc_ca)
- [g] <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~tables/2354015a.htm>

**ATTACHMENT 2 - Survey of Parking for Residential Projects in the Central District**

<b>Project</b>	<b># of units</b>	<b>Commercial</b>	<b># of parking spaces</b>	<b>Parking Ratio for Residential</b>
Arpeggio – 325 E. Cordova	135	1,000 sq. ft.	218	1.5 spaces per unit
Acapella – 160 E. Corson	143	1,000 sq. ft.	224	1.5 spaces per unit
Operating Engineers – 290 No. Hudson	140	None	230	1.5 spaces per unit plus guest parking
Bob Champion Project – 175 Sol Lake; 160 So. Hudson	72	2,000 sq. ft.	112	1.5 spaces per unit
Trio Project – 621 E. Colorado	304	14,600 sq. ft.	876	1.5 spaces per unit
Archstone – 25 So. Oak Knoll	120	8,000 sq. ft.	221	1.5 spaces per unit
Alexan – 801 E. Walnut	214	None	372	1.7 spaces per unit
Paseo Colorado – 278 E. Colorado	387	Lots!	581	1.5 spaces per unit
840 E. Green	103	27,000 sq. ft.	214	1.55 spaces per unit
Dayton Street Townhomes – 46-56 W. Dayton	17	3,920	43	1.5 spaces per unit