

# **ATTACHMENT 1**

WESTRIDGE SCHOOL  
MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDPA2007)

## **Analysis and Findings for zone change, Amendment to General Plan Land Use Diagram, and Tree Removal**

# ATTACHMENT 1

## ANALYSIS and FINDINGS

### ANALYSIS - Zone Change and Amendment of General Plan Land Use Designation

#### Land use:

The proposed amendments to the zoning map and General Plan Land Use Diagram will leave the Madeline condominium complex at 1068-1074 South Orange Grove Blvd. surrounded on three sides by the PS zoning district and the Westridge School campus. The parcel at 1068-1074 S. Orange Grove Blvd. will continue with the same zoning designation (RM16-1) as the properties on the west side of Orange Grove Blvd.; therefore, no spot zoning would result from this proposal.

- The Master Plan Amendment ensures that the proposed 19,730-square-foot Science Center building in this parcel will be compatible with the adjacent residential developments, and less intense in scale than a multi-family residential building permitted under the existing RM-16-1 zone. The current zone would allow up to six units of multi-family residential building at this site. The master plan process provides the opportunity for the City to develop conditions of approval to address the specific concerns and issues raised by the surrounding residents. The proposed Science Center will be occupied during regular school hours, and not typically on evenings, weekends and holidays as it would be if it was a six-unit multi-family residential building. The conditions of approval govern development standards, hours of operation, traffic management, parking, setting limits on school activities which could have impacts on the surrounding residential uses, on public health and general welfare of those who reside or work in its vicinity
- School use is conditionally permitted in the current zoning of the property (RM16-1). This means that a school may be established at this site subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit, which process involves public review. The proposed zone change and General Plan amendment are submitted to the City for a Master Development Plan Amendment review process, which provides the benefit of a comprehensive review of the entire master plan site (school campus).
- The added parcel will not need to accommodate parking spaces on site because the school's parking requirements will be met by the combined use of the existing north parking lot (53 spaces), the Madeline Court parking (5 spaces) and the future underground parking on State Street (109 spaces) for a total of 167 spaces. There will be no vehicle access to the new Science Center building from Orange Grove Boulevard, thus, it will result in less traffic to and from this specific parcel than if it were developed with six residential units.
- The added parcel will have no effect on traffic circulation and parking operations. Westridge School has been and will continue to implement a Parking Operations Plan that provides the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up procedures to ensure minimal disruption of traffic in the neighborhood.

#### Compatibility with Surrounding Residential Developments – Development Standards

A multi-family residential development at the subject site would be subject to City of Gardens standards. Staff recommends limiting the building height to 24 feet from the existing grade to the highest ridge, which is below the maximum allowed under the multi-family residential standard. Staff recommends that the new Science Center provide a side setback of 10 feet consistent with RM-16-1 standard, and that no portion of the building shall be located within an encroachment plane sloping upward and inward to the site at a 45-degree angle, commencing six feet above the existing grade at the property line of the abutting Madeline Condominium. The new building shall provide a front setback of forty feet, which is consistent with both the RM-16-1 standard and with the existing adjacent developments. Furthermore, the proposed new Upper School Science Center's building height, bulk and design will be reviewed by the Director of Planning and Development, subject to call for review by the Design Commission and/or the City Council to ensure that it is compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding residential community.

The master plan includes conditions of approval and development standards that are tailored to respond to adjacent residents' issues and concerns (e.g., window placement to ensure privacy, building height, setback and encroachment plane to protect view to the north) expressed at a community meeting.

Although the master plan application has not provided architectural design plans for these proposed new buildings, the master plan will provide conditions of approval that will define the building envelopes of these new buildings in terms of building height, setbacks, provision of encroachment planes, which are compatible with the surrounding residential developments. These proposed new buildings are all less than 25,000 square feet; thus, will be subject to review by the Director of Planning and Development prior to issuance of building permits.

Preliminary drawings show that the new two-story, 19,730-square-foot Science Center (Phase I) will align with the two adjacent multi-family residential buildings on South Orange Grove Boulevard. The Master Plan condition will limit its height to 24 feet from existing grade for view protection of the condominium units adjacent to the south, and that windows on the north elevation will be the type that will let in light but not look out into the residential units adjacent to the north for privacy.

The proposed new Middle School complex (Phase II), located in the interior of the campus and where two small buildings are to be demolished (Gertrude Hall Lecture building and Gertrude Hall Classroom building) will consist of four separate buildings with small footprints at grade, and a second floor with smaller massing. This concept is consistent with the massing and size of the two buildings proposed to be removed.

In Phase III, the proposed new two-story Lower School complex will replace the two-story Ranney House, and will consist of three separate small structures at grade with a second floor of smaller massing. This grouping of buildings will relate well to the other three buildings on State Street frontage of the campus (e.g., Seeley Mudd Science Building, Laurie and Susan Frank Art Studio, and Pitcairn House), which were once residential structures that have been adaptively re-used for school purposes.

#### Housing:

With its current zoning designation of RM16-1 (Multi-family Residential, 14 units per acre), the subject parcel (with 17,388 square feet lot size) could be developed with a maximum of six dwelling units, subject to the development standards for Multi-family Residential. There is an existing single-family residence, which translates to five potential additional units. The request to change the zoning from RM-16-1 to PS reduces the potential for five additional housing units in the City. This potential reduction, however, remains uncertain in the absence of any proposal to develop the site for multi-family residential use.

Since 2003, state law has required local jurisdictions to assess any reduction in potential density on a parcel to determine whether it will affect the jurisdiction's capacity for its share of the regional housing need (i.e., RHNA). If adequate capacity remains, then the jurisdiction may approve the reduction with two written findings: 1) this is a minor reduction in overall capacity consistent with the general plan, including the housing element; and 2) the remaining sites that were included in the City's Housing Element analysis are adequate for the jurisdiction's share of regional housing need. These two findings can be made for this zone change request. Therefore, the potential reduction by five housing units is within the housing forecast and is consistent with the City's 2000-2005 Housing Element of the General Plan, adopted in 2002. It is also within the range of housing forecast for Pasadena contained in the Southern California 2020 - a preliminary Growth Forecast: Regional Overview prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments.

#### Consistency with General Plan:

The proposed expansion, and accompanying zone change and General Plan amendment are consistent with various objectives and policies of the General Plan Land Use Element, as noted below:

Objective 13 – Adequate Services

Policy 13.4 – Education: Promote public and private schools, support quality education for all students.

Objective 23 – Existing Institutions – provides for long-term opportunities for growth of existing cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and educational institutions in balance with their surroundings.

Policy 23.1 – Expansion - Recognize and support the expansion opportunities of existing regionally significant cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and educational institutions.

## **ANALYSIS - Proposed Demolition of Existing Buildings**

### **Demolition:**

The proposed master plan includes demolition of four structures (with a total floor area of approximately 16,327 square feet) and construction of new buildings in their place, with a total of approximately 58,206 square feet gross floor area. The buildings proposed to be demolished are:

1. One-story Gertrude Hall (SMUD) Lecture building (1,155 square feet) and one-story Gertrude Hall Classroom building (1,896 square feet): These two buildings were designed by a noted architect George Vernon Russell and were completed in 1955. This pair of buildings was designed in a modern Tudor Revival style to provide a visual complement to the 1923 Administration Building by Marston, Van Pelt and Maybury. While these two buildings were designed by a noted architect, they are of undistinguished architecture, and do not meet any of the criteria for historic or architectural significance. The Historic Survey forms for these two buildings (Attachment 6) indicate no significant characteristic or historic value to make them eligible for any level of significance.
2. Two-story Ranney House (8,376 sqft): The Ranney classroom building was designed by noted architects Henry Eggers and Walter Wilkman and was completed in 1962. Like the Gertrude Hall (SMUD) building and Gertrude Hall Classroom Building, this structure was designed in a modern Tudor vernacular to complement the Administration building. Although designed by noted architects, the building's design is undistinguished, and does not meet any criteria for historic or architectural significance. The Historic Survey form for this building (Attachment 6) indicates no significant characteristic or historic value to make it eligible for any level of significance.
3. One-story, 4,900-sqft single-family residence at 1066 South Orange Grove Boulevard: This residence was built in 1907 in the Arts and Crafts style. The architect and/or builder was unknown. City permit records indicate that the building has been significantly altered over the years, most significantly from 1953 to 1956, when the porch was rebuilt and a new garage and kitchen/service wing was constructed. Significant changes to the interior have occurred as well. Due to numerous alterations, this residence does not meet any of criteria for historic or architectural significance.

Based on survey information and permit records available, staff has determined that these four structures do not meet the threshold or criteria that would qualify them for any level of significance. Staff recommends approval of the proposed demolition of these structures as part of the master development plan amendment. The Design Commission concurred with staff's finding and recommendation to allow demolition of the four structures cited above.

## **ANALYSIS - Trees**

Among the 227 trees that will remain, a 72-inch camphor tree (a protected Specimen) located in the playground area (Orange Grove Boulevard frontage) shall require protection during the demolition of the two Gertrude Hall buildings (Lecture/SMUD and classroom), and construction of the proposed two-story Middle School building in Phase II in accordance with a recommended condition of approval. Westridge School shall be required to submit a tree protection plan for review and approval of the Director of Planning and Development prior to issuance of a demolition permit or building permit for the new construction at each phase of the master plan.

The MDP application has identified 44 trees to be removed during the three construction phases of the master plan. Six of these are protected trees and 38 are non-protected trees. When removal of trees cannot be prevented, the City has interpreted that the finding for a replacement canopy extends to all trees that are proposed to be removed; and not limited to the protected trees. Therefore, Westridge School shall be required to submit a more detailed landscaping plan for each phase of the master plan, which will include new trees of appropriate size and species that will result in a tree canopy of greater significance than the canopy being lost, within five years after completion of each phase of construction. For Phase I, the landscaping plan shall

include planting of replacement trees that may be located on this parcel or in other parts of the school campus. For Phase II, the landscaping plan shall include tree protection plan for the 72-inch Camphor tree as well as each of the remaining trees in the vicinity of Phase II construction site. A condition of approval requires an arborist's evaluation on the feasibility of relocating tree #191 (14-inch Olive) to another part of the campus.

Phase III identifies one Native tree (28-inch Coast Live Oak, tree #264), located at the south edge property line on State Street, for removal. A report by the project Landscape Architect indicates that this oak tree is leaning towards the south, overhanging the public right-of-way. Because of this lean, it is very likely that its roots have spread significantly to the north underneath the asphalt of the parking lot, and that this root network serves as the tree's anchor that has supported the tree's weight and has prevented it from falling over to the sidewalk. The Landscape Architect also noted that Oaks' roots tend to grow close to the surface under asphalt.

With the proposed underground parking at this location, this tree will be significantly compromised. Any attempt to retain this tree will entail trimming of its roots that will further jeopardize its stability, while conserving much of its root envelope will entail a large cutback in the proposed underground parking structure. This option will necessitate re-designing the structure, and will potentially eliminate an aisle and an indeterminate number of parking spaces. Although the projected total parking spaces in the campus exceeds the code-required number of spaces by 44 (167-123 = 44), it is the school's intent to provide as many spaces as possible for the school events when parking demand is at its peak. Design Commission's proposed condition of approval would require the applicant to submit a tree protection plan that includes an arborist's evaluation of the tree's actual condition at that time, and any way of maintaining a root envelope that could minimize the risk of losing the tree's structural integrity, and the feasibility of retaining the tree. Staff supports the school's proposal to include a condition that requires planting of two native trees in Phase I as a replacement for tree #264, so that these two trees may have grown to a comparable tree canopy at the time of the need to remove tree #264 in Phase III. If retaining the Coast Live Oak tree proves infeasible, then the two native trees will serve as its replacement. This provision is included in the master plan Conditions of Approval (See Exhibit B of the Resolution Amending the Land Use Element and Approving the Master Development Plan).

All landscaping plans shall be subject to review and approval by the Director of Planning and Development prior to issuance of a building permit at each phase of the master plan.

**FINDINGS FOR ZONING MAP AMENDMENT and GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM AMENDMENT:**

- 1. The proposed amendment is in conformance with the goals, policies and objectives of the General Plan.** The proposed zone change and General Plan amendment is consistent with the City adopted General Plan Objective 13.4 which states that the City should provide adequate support for businesses and institutions that serve the needs of the City's diverse residents and families, including schools. It also states the City should "Promote public and private schools, support quality education for all students." In addition, Policy 23.4 states that the City should support Specific Plans, master plans, and other planning activities initiated by cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and educational institutions.
- 2. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City.** The proposed zone change and General Plan Amendment would enable Westridge School to bring into consistency the entire ownership of its site into one zoning district and will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the city.
- 3. The site is physically suitable for the requested land use/development.** The proposed school use (Science Center) is conditionally permitted in the current zoning designation of Multi-family Residential (RM-16-1). The site provides sufficient size and suitable shape to allow its development with the proposed Science Center with appropriate building height and setbacks that will be compatible with the adjacent residential development, and the surrounding neighborhood.

## FINDINGS FOR MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section 17.61.050(l) Master Plans requires the same findings for approval of a Master Development Plan as those for a Conditional Use Permit.

1. **The proposed use is allowed within the applicable zoning district, and complies with all applicable provisions of the Zoning Code.** The proposed master plan amendment is for school use, which is allowed within the PS (Public, Semi-public) zoning designation of the campus. The proposed demolitions and construction of replacement buildings for school use are consistent with the institutional use of the master plan site.
2. **The location of the proposed use complies with the special purposes of the Zoning Code and the purposes of the applicable zoning district.** The school is a land use, which supports the needs of Pasadena's families. It will provide educational opportunities consistent with Policy 13.4 of the General Plan promoting public and private schools, and supporting quality education for all students. The request to incorporate an adjacent residential parcel zoned for multi-family use (RM-16-1) and use it for school purposes (Science Center) is consistent with the current zoning designation of the subject parcel because school use is conditionally permitted in a Multi-family Residential (RM16-1) district as well as in the Public, Semi-public (PS) zoning district.
3. **The proposed use is in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan.** The proposed master plan amendment includes incorporating an adjacent residentially-zoned parcel into the campus, and a request for a zone change from RM16-1 (Multi-family Residential, 14 units per acre) to PS (Public, Semi-Public) and an amendment to the General Plan land use designation from Medium Density Residential (0-16 dwelling units per acre) to Institutional. The purpose of this proposal is to attain consistency of zoning and land use designation for the entire master plan area (school campus). The other proposed components of the master plan will further certain goals, policies and objectives of the General Plan.
4. **The establishment, maintenance or operation of the use would not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety or general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed use.** The components of proposed master plan amendment, including the construction of a new Science Center will be built in accordance with specific development standards in terms of building height, setbacks, and design (e.g., no exterior stairs, window placement, window type, etc.) that are tailored to address the specific needs of adjacent residential properties, and will be maintained and used by the school in accordance with conditions of approval that will be imposed by the Master Development Plan Amendment.
5. **The use as described and conditionally approved, would not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City.** The proposed new buildings in the campus as well as the Science Center in the additional parcel (at 1066 South Orange Grove Boulevard) will be built, maintained and operated in accordance with conditions of approval in terms of building height and encroachment plane, setbacks, hours of operation, noise level, safety measures, to ensure that the school use of these buildings would not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City.
6. **The design, location, operating characteristics, and size of the proposed use would be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity in terms of aesthetic values, character, scale and view protection.** All proposed new construction in the campus, including the new Science Center will be built in accordance with development standards specified in the conditions of approval of the master plan (such as height limit of 24 feet, 10-foot side setback, encroachment plane, window types and placement) which are tailored to address the specific issues and concerns of the adjacent residential developments pertaining to noise, privacy and view protection. The other new buildings are designed to be compatible with the adjacent residential development and with the other school buildings in the campus.

## **FINDINGS FOR TREE REMOVAL:**

Staff determined that the removal of 38 non-protected trees and four of the six protected trees proposed for removal, meets certain findings required by the Tree Protection Ordinance. The Master Development Plan Amendment includes conditions of approval that require Westridge School to submit a landscaping plan for each phase of the master plan, specifying appropriate new trees that will result in a tree canopy coverage of greater significance than the tree canopy being removed. The replacement canopy shall be achieved within five years after completion of each phase.

**The project includes a landscape plan that will result in a tree canopy coverage of greater significance in a reasonable time.** This finding applies to Phase I, which involves removal of six non-protected trees. The landscaping plan for Phase I shall include planting of new trees that will result within five years of completion of Phase I in a tree canopy of greater significance than approximately 3,000 square feet of canopy that will be lost. Replacement trees can be located on the Phase I site or in other parts of the campus. The landscaping plan shall furthermore include tree protection plan for the four remaining trees.

**There would be a suitable hardship to property owner.** This finding applies to tree #189 (16-inch Victorian box), which is located very close to an existing structure and the future replacement building. Retaining this tree will entail a significant reduction in the footprint of the new building, thus, would be a hardship to the school.

The "hardship" finding could also apply to tree #191 (14-inch Olive), because it will be in the footprint of a new building, however, the Design Commission decided to require that the landscaping plan for Phase II shall include an arborist's evaluation of this tree for the feasibility of relocating it to another location in the school campus.

**There is an objective feature of the tree that makes it not suitable for protection.** This finding applies to tree #193 (14-inch Jacaranda) due to its leaning arc in the main trunk. This finding also applies to trees #235 (12-inch Jacaranda) and #236 (12-inch Victorian Box), which are both located very close to an existing building to be demolished, and have been significantly pruned resulting in restricted growth, making them less desirable for protection.

Staff would apply the same finding to tree #264 (28-inch Coast Live Oak), located on the south property line on State Street because of the trunk leaning to the south overhanging the public sidewalk. In addition, staff finds that retaining it would be a hardship to Westridge School, because it would require preserving its root envelope that would have grown northward, entailing a significant reduction in the proposed underground parking at this location. However, the Design Commission decided to require that the landscaping plan for Phase III shall include an arborist's evaluation of tree #264 with respect to the feasibility of retaining it.

A condition of approval of the master plan provides that Westridge School shall plant two native trees in a suitable location in the campus in Phase I of the master plan as a replacement for tree #264 (28-inch Coast Live Oak), so that these two trees may have grown to a comparable tree canopy at the time of the need to remove tree #264 in Phase III. However, the landscaping plan for Phase III If retaining this tree is not feasible, the two native trees planted in Phase I shall serve as its replacement.

Incorporation of Mitigation Bio-1 would ensure that potentially significant impacts from tree removal would be reduced to a less than significant level. This mitigation measure requires Westridge School to adhere to applicable State and Federal laws pertaining to the protection of native birds at each phase of the master plan. The mitigation measure specifies that disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall take place outside of the breeding bird season of March 1 to September 1 to avoid killing or taking of migratory birds (including disturbances which would cause abandonment of active nests containing eggs and/or young). If the project cannot avoid the breeding season, nest surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and active nests shall be avoided and provided with buffer. The applicant shall record the results of the recommended protective measures to document compliance.