

# Agenda Report

June 13, 2022

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Planning & Community Development Department

**SUBJECT:** **PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW OF A THREE-LOT SUBDIVISION AND TWO NEW SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES ON UNDEVELOPED LAND AT 58, 60, 64 LOS ALTOS DRIVE**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

This report is intended to provide information to the City Council; no action is required.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The applicant, Kenneth Wang, has submitted a Predevelopment Plan Review (PPR) application to develop two new single-family dwellings on undeveloped land along Los Altos Drive (AIN: 5708-026-021, 5708-026-022, 5708-026-023). Existing parcel boundaries are proposed to be modified, with two of the parcels to be improved each with a single-family dwelling. Plans for the third parcel are undetermined. The project site is bound by Linda Vista Avenue and the 134 Freeway on the south, with the nearest cross street, San Rafael Avenue and Linda Vista Avenue located to the west. Annandale Golf Course is located further to the west across San Rafael Avenue. Adjoining the project site to the north, east, and west are single-family zoned properties (RS-2-HD; Single-family Residential, Hillside District Overlay) developed with single-family residences. The project site has an aggregate site area of approximately 141,328 square feet (3.2 acres), and is zoned PS (Public and Semi-Public). The site is not designated on the Land Use Diagram of the General Plan. The site was formerly owned by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) but sold to the current owner in 2018.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.60.040.C (Predevelopment Plan Review) the purpose of the PPR is to achieve better projects through early consultation between City staff and applicants. The intent is to coordinate the review of projects among City staff and City departments, familiarize applicants with regulations and procedures that apply to the project, and avoid significant investment in the design of a project without preliminary input from City staff. In addition, the purpose is to identify issues that may arise during review of the project, provide opportunities for discussion about the project and an exchange of information on potential issues between the City staff and

applicants, and, for projects defined in the administrative guidelines to be of communitywide significance, inform the City Council and the public of proposed development projects.

A project is categorized as a project of communitywide significance if it consists of: 1) more than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area with one discretionary action; or 2) 50 or more housing units; or 3) any project determined by the Planning Director to be of major importance to the City. Projects of communitywide significance are presented to the City Council for informational purposes; the proposed project was determined by the Planning Director to be of major importance to the City. The scope of the project necessitates a General Plan Diagram Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment, both of which require approval by the City Council, and would involve grading and new private and public improvements on a site that has historically remained undisturbed.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The applicant's proposal includes the following:

- Creation of three parcels with the following lot sizes:
  - Lot 6 – 31,600 square feet (0.72 acres)
  - Lot 8 – 28,000 square feet (0.64 acres)
  - Remaining parcel – 81,728 square feet (1.87 acres)
- Construction of two single-family dwellings:
  - Lot 6 – 5,700 square feet, 2 stories, basement garage, pool
  - Lot 8 – 5,700 square feet, 2 stories, basement garage, pool
- Construction of infrastructure for the dwellings, including driveways, utilities, etc.

The site is accessible from Los Altos Drive, a private road on the north. The project would use this private drive to access the proposed dwellings. No other vehicular access is proposed. An aerial map of the existing site and the proposed site plan follow.



### Aerial View of Existing Site Boundary



### North View Proposed Lot 6 and 8

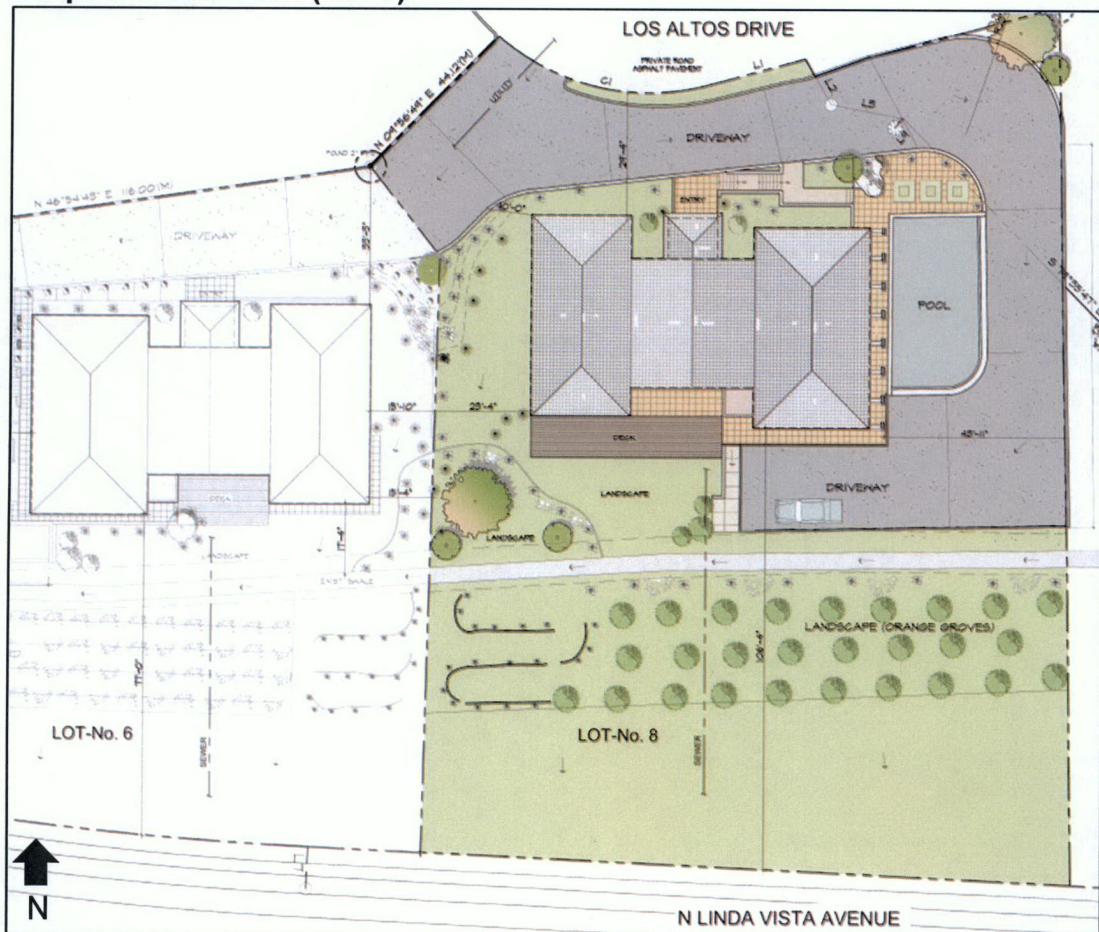




### Proposed Site Plan (Lot 6)



### Proposed Site Plan (Lot 8)



## **PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW ANALYSIS:**

All applicable City departments reviewed the project as part of the PPR process and provided comments that are included in Attachment A. Planning staff met with the applicant to discuss the PPR comments on April 26, 2022. Notable Planning-related comments are discussed below.

### **Amendments**

The existing project site is zoned PS (Public and Semi-Public). The PS district is intended to provide a specific base zoning district for large public or semi-public land uses that may not be appropriate in other base zoning districts. In the PS zone, the single-family residential use is not allowed. To allow single-family housing, a zoning map amendment would be required to change the existing PS zoning district to RS-2-HD (Single-Family Residential, Hillside Overlay). A zoning map amendment has the effect of rezoning property from one zoning district to another.

The project site is not designated on the Land Use Diagram of the General Plan. Development of the affected parcels for single-family uses would require an amendment to the General Plan diagram to establish a designation such that standards for density and intensity of development are defined (eg. Low Density Residential; 0-6 du/acre).

### **Context and Compatibility**

The project site consists of land that is relatively undisturbed and characterized by a hillside. The topography is steep, ascending from Linda Vista Avenue on the south and peaking at the northern side of the site. Vegetation and several mature trees fill the southerly side of the site. Existing single-family dwellings surround the property.

Within the nearby neighborhood (500-foot radius) there are 51 parcels located in the City of Pasadena that are developed with single-family residences. According to County Assessor figures, the floor area of these houses (excluding garages, basements, and accessory structures) range between 1,260 square feet and 10,277 square feet in size. The median (middle) size is 6,263 square feet. Each dwelling proposed is 5,700 square feet in size, which is below the median size in the 500-foot neighborhood.

### **Massing and Scale**

Building heights proposed, are shown at approximately 25 feet from the ground. Due to the existing sloped topography, the applicant is encouraged to explore stepping or terracing the design of each house such that they would more closely follow the natural contours of the site, thereby better integrating the houses into their surrounding topography. Since significant grading may be undertaken in order to develop the project with subterranean garages, it is necessary that the applicant consider designs that minimize potential impacts to the hillside.

### Environmental Review

The proposed project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The environmental review shall consider the amendments, any proposed subdivision and the construction of new dwellings as well as any other improvements planned.

### Discretionary Entitlements

Based on the proposal, the project would require the entitlements listed below. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.60.030 (Concurrent Permit Processing), the review of the different entitlements would occur concurrently by the highest review authority, in this case, the City Council.

- *General Plan Diagram Amendment* – to revise the diagram to establish a land use designation that is consistent with single-family residential uses;
- *Zoning Map Amendment* – to rezone the site from PS to another district that permits single-family residential uses;
- *Tentative Parcel Map* – to establish boundaries of the three parcels; and
- *Hillside Development Permit* – to allow a subdivision on property zoned HD (Hillside District Overlay).
- *Hillside Development Permit* – to allow the construction of a single-family residence. A separate application is required for each new dwelling proposed.

### NEXT STEPS:

To proceed with the project, the applicant would submit the applications to pursue the amendments, the subdivision and the Hillside Development Permit applications for each new residence; to be processed concurrently. Public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council are necessary in order to carry out the proposed project, with the Planning Commissions acting as a recommendation body and the City Council as an approval body. Environmental review of this project will occur consistent with the requirements of the CEQA. Upon submittal of an official application, the steps included in the review process are as follows:

- Conduct environmental review per CEQA;
- Conduct a noticed public hearing before the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the City Council; and
- Conduct a noticed public hearing before the City Council for review and decision.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This report is for information only and will not result in any fiscal impact.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachments (3):

- Attachment A – Predevelopment Plan Review Comments to Applicant
- Attachment B – Predevelopment Plan Review Plans (Lot 6)
- Attachment C – Predevelopment Plan Review Plans (Lot 8)