

Agenda Report

June 15, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Planning & Community Development Department

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING: AMENDMENTS TO TITLES 3 (CIVIC EVENTS AND FACILITIES) AND 17 (ZONING CODE) OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE AND SOUTH FAIR OAKS SPECIFIC PLAN RELATED TO ROSE PARADE GRANDSTANDS, MEDICAL USES, WALLS/FENCES AND MISCELLANEOUS UPDATES

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the Amendments to the Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) and South Fair Oaks (SFO) Specific Plan are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA;
2. Adopt the Findings for Amendments to the PMC and SFO Specific Plan in Attachment A;
3. Approve the Amendments to the PMC and SFO Specific Plan as outlined in this report and in Attachment B; and
4. Adopt an Ordinance for the Amendments to the PMC and SFO Specific Plan as outlined above.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On February 25, 2026, the Planning Commission voted 8-0 to recommend the City Council approve the proposed Amendments to Title 17 of the PMC and SFO Specific Plan as recommended by staff (the proposed Amendments to Title 3 of the PMC do not require the review of the Planning Commission).

BACKGROUND:

The Planning and Community Development Department is bringing forward Amendments to Titles 3 (Civic Events and Facilities) and 17 (Zoning Code) of the PMC and the SFO Specific Plan. This includes changes to the following:

- 1) PMC Section 3.12.070 (Permit – Time Limits). Increase the time period to construct grandstands for the Rose Parade;
- 2) PMC Section 17.35.030 (South Fair Oaks Specific Plan - Allowable Land Uses) – Update the land use table to allow medical offices in the “Mixed-Use Neighborhood” (MU-N) zoning district;
- 3) SFO Specific Plan Section 4.3 (Allowable Land Uses) – Update the land use table to allow medical offices in the MU-N zoning district;
- 4) PMC Section 17.40.180 (Walls and Fences) – Update standards related to walls/fences for certain uses; and
- 5) PMC Sections 17.50.275 (Accessory Dwelling Units), 17.50.320 Temporary Uses), and 17.80.020 (Definitions) – Miscellaneous updates.

ANALYSIS:

1. Rose Parade Grandstands – PMC Section 3.12.070

The beginning of the Rose Parade route includes a prominent area of grandstands at the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and Orange Grove Boulevard, which includes a platform and a multiple-story tower for major media, broadcasters and photographers. Currently, the PMC allows construction and staging for this area to begin on November 7th of any year (with constructing and staging for the remainder of the parade route beginning on November 15th of any year). These are very challenging to construct due to their location and the complexity of the structures. For these reasons, the contractor responsible for constructing and operating the parade grandstands has requested additional time. Staff recommends allowing construction and staging for the beginning of the Rose Parade route to begin on November 1st. No changes are proposed to the existing deadline to dismantle and remove all structures, which is by January 15th for the entire parade route.

2 & 3. Medical Uses – PMC Section 17.35.030 and SFO Specific Plan

The SFO Specific Plan was adopted in 2022 with the vision to be a “creative, innovative and health-oriented mixed-use district that provides multi-family housing, neighborhood-serving amenities, medical services and educational and employment opportunities...” Major anchors of the area include Huntington Hospital, Keck USC, ArtCenter South Campus and the Fillmore A Line Metro Station. The SFO Specific Plan includes seven commercial and mixed-use zoning districts and all of them permit medical offices except the MU-N zoning district. The MU-N zone stretches along Raymond Avenue north of California Boulevard and along Del Mar Boulevard (Attachment C). The MU-N zoning

district includes several multi-story medical office buildings, which are now considered legal non-conforming. Prohibiting medical offices from the MU-N zone was found to be an oversight when the SFO Specific Plan was adopted. Therefore, staff recommends adding medical office uses by-right in the MU-N zone to correct the code and align with the intent of the district.

4. Walls and Fences – PMC Section 17.40.180

The City has specialized development standards for walls/fences for three different types of zoning: low density residential (RS and RM-12 zones), multi-family residential (all other RM zones) and nonresidential. However, residential projects are permitted in many nonresidential zones and some nonresidential uses are permitted in residential zones. Therefore, the standards do not always meet the needs of the use or protect adjacent uses.

In addition, some residents have raised concerns that the maximum height of walls/fences in residential zones (six feet) is not high enough to protect pets from coyotes and other predators. Some cities allow greater walls/fence heights or anti-climbing roller barriers (i.e., “coyote rollers”) be attached at the top of walls/fences. Roller barriers are rotating barriers that prevent animals from gaining a foothold to climb over and are seen as effective, humane, and relatively unobtrusive. At the Planning Commission meeting, there was much discussion on whether to allow greater wall heights (up to seven or eight feet) or roller barriers (as recommended by staff). Some members supported greater wall heights to protect pets and maintain privacy. However, other members believed predators could still jump over greater wall heights and felt vertical landscaping could also be used to maintain privacy. At the end of the discussion, there was consensus to allow barrier systems in single-family zones along interior side, corner side and rear lot lines.

Since the Planning Commission meeting, staff was also asked about taller fences/walls in the RS-1 and RS-2 single-family zoning districts. These zones are characterized by large lots with a minimum width of 100 feet and area of 20,000 square feet. Many of these properties are developed with estates surrounded by taller perimeter fences and gates. Staff recommends allowing taller walls/fences (increasing the maximum height from four feet to six feet) on such properties, provided the house is set back a minimum 40 feet from the front property line and the fence is set behind landscaping a minimum five feet from the front property line.

In summary, staff recommended changes include the following:

- Specify that mixed-use projects with residential units shall follow the wall/fence standards of nonresidential zones.
- Add wall/fence standards for nonresidential projects (e.g., religious facilities, schools, daycare centers) in residential zones.
- Allow anti-climbing roller barriers be attached at the top of walls/fences in single-family zones along interior side, corner side and rear lot lines. This would

increase the overall height of walls/fences by up to one foot (for a total height of seven feet).

- Allow taller walls/fences in the corner side yard (the area between the house and the side street property line) in RS and RM-12 zones from four feet to six feet.
- Allow taller walls/fences in the front yard in RS-1 and RS-2 zones from four feet to six feet provided the house is set back a minimum 40 feet from the front property line and the wall/fence is set behind landscaping and a minimum five feet from the front property line.

5. Miscellaneous Updates

Staff also recommends the following miscellaneous “clean-ups” and technical changes:

- Accessory Dwelling Units – PMC Section 17.50.275: Clarify that new second story windows shall be prohibited along the interior side and rear lot lines for all non-exempt ADUs when the proposed setback is less than five feet. This shall not apply to Junior Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Temporary Uses – PMC Section 17.50.320: Clarify that a Temporary Use Permit shall not be required for “Seasonal Merchandise Sales – Small Scale.”
- Definition of Dwelling Unit – PMC Section 17.80.020: Allow non-habitable rooms such as bathrooms, storage and utility areas to be internally or externally accessible.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed Amendments implement numerous goals, policies and programs of the General Plan Land Use Element including Guiding Principles 3 (Pasadena will be an economically vital city by providing jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities) and 6 (Pasadena will be a cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and education center for the region). In addition, they are consistent with Land Use Element Implementation Plan Program B1 (Review and amend Zoning Code standards and regulations to achieve consistency with the General Plan’s Land Use Diagram and goals and policies) and Housing Element Program #11 (Alternative Housing Opportunities, e.g., Review ADU Ordinance to Reflect State Law). A full summary of the General Plan’s supporting policies and programs can be found in Attachment A.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The proposed Amendments are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), under the “Common Sense” exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. The Amendments focus on time

periods related to the Rose Parade, office uses in commercial zones, walls and fences in urbanized areas, and minor technical cleanups.


CONCLUSION:

The Amendments focus on time periods related to the Rose Parade, office uses in commercial zones, walls and fences in urbanized areas, and minor technical cleanups. Staff recommends the City Council make the required findings and adopt the proposed amendments.

FISCAL IMPACT:

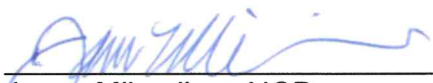
There is no direct fiscal impact to the City by adopting the proposed Amendments.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Approved by:



MATTHEW E. HAWKESWORTH
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Attachments (3):

- A. Findings for Zoning Code Amendments
- B. Summary of Zoning Code Amendments
- C. Map of South Fair Oaks Specific Plan