

City of Hesperia

STAFF REPORT



DATE: August 10, 2017

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Dave Reno, Principal Planner

BY: Daniel S. Alcayaga, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Specific Plan Amendment SPLA17-00002; Applicant: City of Hesperia; APNs: 3057-131-36 through 57

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. PC-2017-23 recommending that the City Council introduce and place on first reading an ordinance approving Specific Plan Amendment SPLA17-00002.

BACKGROUND

Proposal: A Specific Plan Amendment from the Very Low Density Residential (VLR) to Medium Density Residential (MDR) on approximately 49.5 gross acres.

Location: Generally bounded by Maple Avenue to the east, Tamarisk Avenue to the west, and Yucca Street to the north.

Current General Plan, Zoning and Land Uses: The affected area is within the Very Low Density Residential (VLR) Zone as part of the Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan. The surrounding land is designated as noted on Attachment 1. The affected area includes vacant land, as well as single-family residences on one and two-and-one-half acre parcels. The land to the north includes vacant land and an existing apartment complex. A church exists to the south. To the east, on the opposite side of Maple Avenue, a neighborhood of single-family residences exist on half-acre, one acre, and two-and-one-half acre lots. A mobile home park and single-family subdivisions with lot sizes below 7,200 square feet exist to the west (Attachment 2).

In 2006, the City Council denied a Zone Change for two condominium projects in the area in question (Attachments 3 and 4). One project was 28 units and another was 21 units, both of which were two-story developments. These projects were consistent with the General Plan at the time, which designated the properties Medium High (MH) supporting densities between 5 and 10 dwelling units per acre. The developers applied for a Zone Change from Limited Agricultural with a minimum lot size of 2 ½ acres (A1-2 1/2) to Multi-family Residence (R-3) and was intended to bring the Zoning Map in compliance with the General Plan Land Use Map. The study area was expanded to encompass 61 acres, in order to determine the zoning that best fit this area and to avoid spot zoning. The study area included 22 lots, 13 (59%) of which were developed and 9 (41%) were vacant.

In 2006, the Council believed the zone change was not appropriate at that time and was not in keeping with the land use patterns in the area. The Council's decision was based on the fact that the majority of the lots were developed with single-family residences, and several residents cited concerns with noise, traffic, and crime if the condominium developments were constructed. It was assumed that the area would continue to develop with single-family homes and this reflected the desired land use pattern of the neighborhood.

The Council's 2006 decision rezoned the area in question to Limited Agricultural with a minimum lot size of one acre (A1), and the General Plan was rezoned to Very Low (VL). Table 1 provides a chronology of the various zones and designations the affected area has undergone. During the 2006 discussions, the Planning Commission adopted a recommendation to change the General Plan to Low (L) and the zoning to R1-20000, but this option was turned down by the Council. The Council kept four lots along Yucca designated MH and zoned R3. The four lots are currently zoned Medium Density Residential (MDR) and are not part of this Specific Plan Amendment.

In 2008, the Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan (MSFCSP) was adopted, making the area Very Low Density Residential (VLR), which allowed lot sizes between half acre and one acre. Today, a subdivision of 18,000 square foot lots could be approved. The proposed Specific Plan Amendment would allow multi-family developments to be permitted within the affected area.

Table 1
Chronology of Zoning/General Plan Land Use Designations

	Zone Map	General Plan Map	Density
Prior to 2006 decision	A1 2 ½	MH	5-10 du/ac
After 2006 decision	A1	VL	0.25-1 du/ac
MSFCSP (2008)		VLR	0.5-2 du/ac
Proposed SPLA17-00002		MDR	8-15 du/ac

ISSUES/ANALYSIS

The property owners of lots within the affected area have requested that the City reconsider a zone change. Staff would like to revisit the zoning issue, as the decision to deny the zone changes for condominium projects in 2006 was largely based on inconsistencies in the General Plan and Zoning, and the projects may have not been appropriate at that time. Since then, the City weathered the Great Recession in which the local economy experienced almost no residential development. Recently, the City has approved zone changes in other areas to construct multiple developments to spur development of apartment and duplex projects.

In the last decade, the nine properties in the proposed area have remained vacant with little interest in building additional single-family residences or half acre lot subdivisions. The area to the west has developed with residential subdivisions with densities approximately 5 du/ac. In 2015, a 40 unit apartment project was approved on the southwest corner of Primrose Avenue and Yucca Street. Due to higher densities approved in the surrounding area, approval of this Specific Plan Amendment is consistent with the land use patterns generally located west of Maple Avenue.

Traffic/Street Improvements: The project is located within the VLR Zone, which allows a density of 0.5 – 2 units per gross acre. A total of 45% of the lots are already developed, as 13 of 22 lots are developed with single-family residences. Based upon 20.25 undeveloped gross acres, the maximum allowable number of units possible under the VLR zone is 41. The Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation Manual estimates that 41 new single family residences would generate approximately 386 daily vehicle trips. This is based upon 9.52 vehicle trips per day for each unit.

In comparison, the MDR Zone allows a density of 8 – 15 units per gross acre. Based upon development of multi-family developments to the maximum allowable density on the 20.25 gross acres zoned MDR, a maximum of 304 units are allowed. The ITE Trip Generation Manual estimates that 304 new multi-family residences would generate approximately 2,020 daily vehicle trips. This is based upon 6.64 vehicle trips per day for each unit. The Amendment would result in 1,634 new daily vehicle trips.

At build-out, Maple Avenue will be constructed as an arterial. A traffic analysis will be completed at the time of the land use application process to evaluate the specific impacts of a project associated with the affected area. The project would be conditioned to provide on-/off-site improvements to mitigate any traffic impacts generated by the project. Upon development of the parcels fronting Maple Avenue, such developments will be constructed with full half width street improvements. The existing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) along Maple Avenue is 5,599 and currently has a roadway capacity of 24,480 before being considered deficient. At build out, Maple Avenue will have an ADT capacity of 30,600. The future ADT of Maple Avenue is expected to be 28,600 and has the capacity to accommodate additional traffic as a result of this Specific Plan Amendment.

The GPUEIR acknowledged that at build-out of the General Plan, traffic throughout the City would substantially increase. In the long term, the City will have to construct capital improvements consistent with the Circulation Element, including widening arterials and collectors to ultimate capacity, redesigning intersections to operate more efficiently, and synchronize signals along major roadways. New developments in the City will continue to construct street improvements necessary to make their projects work, as well as pay traffic impact fees. Traffic impact fees will be collected as development occurs, which will help fund the Capital Improvement Program.

Environmental: Approval of this development requires adoption of a negative declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The negative declaration and initial study (Attachment 5) prepared for the development conclude that there are no significant adverse impacts resulting from the project.

Conclusion: The project conforms to the goals and policies of the City's General Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

Development will be subject to payment of all development impact fees adopted by the City.

ALTERNATIVE(S)

1. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan Zone Map
2. Aerial Photo
3. Site Plan (28 condo units)
4. Site Plan (21 condo units)
5. Negative Declaration ND-2017-03 with Initial Study
6. Resolution No. 2017-20, with Exhibit "A"