



# City of Huntington Beach

File #: 24-106

MEETING DATE: 3/26/2024

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Jennifer Villasenor, Community Development Director  
**BY:** Madalyn Welch, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT:**  
**ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (ZMA) NO. 23-002 (MAPPING CONSISTENCY CLEAN-UP PROJECT - CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS)**

**REQUEST:**  
To amend the current zoning map to bring 18 inconsistently zoned parcels consisting of churches and schools into conformance with their General Plan designations.

**LOCATION:**  
Citywide

**APPLICANT:**  
City of Huntington Beach

**PROPERTY OWNER:**  
Various

**BUSINESS OWNER:**  
Not applicable

**RECOMMENDATION:**  
That the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A) Find the proposed project categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to section 15183; and
- B) Recommend approval of Zoning Map Amendment No. 23-002 with findings (Attachment No. 1)

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):**  
A) Recommend denial of Zoning Map Amendment No. 23-002 with findings,  
B) Continue Zoning Map Amendment No. 23-002 and direct staff accordingly.

**PROJECT PROPOSAL:**

The project includes the following request:

Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) No. 23-002 - To amend the current zoning map to bring 18 inconsistently zoned parcels consisting of churches and schools into conformance with their General Plan designations.

**Study Session:**

A study session introducing this item was held on October 10, 2023 as well as January 23, 2024.

**ISSUES AND ANALYSIS:**

**General Plan Conformance:**

The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-term policy document that provides the framework for guiding civic decisions and development of the City over a 25-year planning horizon. Government Code Section 65300 of the California State law requires every city to prepare and adopt a General Plan. Essentially, it is the City's official statement of policies and programs needed to achieve community physical, economic, and environmental goals.

The General Plan acts to clarify and articulate the City's intentions with respect to the rights and expectations of the public, property owners, and prospective investors and business interests. The General Plan is made up of elements, one of them being the Land Use Element, which identifies what uses may be permitted on a property. The Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance are tools used to implement the Land Use Element to define land use development standards and identify the location and extent of land uses throughout the City. Since the General Plan provides long-term goals for the City, the Land Use Element supports the envisioned character of change to the current development pattern and land uses, the development of future uses and how land use goals will be achieved citywide.

As such, a General Plan Update was completed in 2017. With General Plan updates, changes in Land Use designations may be included in order to support the long-term vision for the City. California Government Code Section 65860 (c) requires zoning implementations to be internally consistent with their general plan designations. However, staff has identified 18 parcels throughout the City which are developed as churches or schools, which have zoning classifications that are inconsistent with their General Plan designations. As such, this Zoning Map Amendment is to clean up the discrepancies of said parcels and bring their zoning classifications into compliance with their corresponding General Plan designations. This project will not change any General Plan designations but rather ensure that zoning ordinance designations are consistent with existing General Plan designations. The amended designations will correspond to the pattern of existing uses, as the sites are already developed and maintained in good condition.

**Zoning Compliance:**

**Zoning Map Amendment**

The Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) would amend the zoning classifications for 18 parcels developed as churches or schools that are currently inconsistent with the General Plan designations in order to be in conformance with the General Plan. Properties with inconsistent zoning classifications to General Plan designations create limitations on development of the site. Government Code Section 65860(c) states:

*“In the event that a zoning ordinance becomes inconsistent with a general plan by reason of amendment to the plan, or to any element of the plan, the zoning ordinance shall be amended within a reasonable time so that it is consistent with the general plan as amended”*

The adoption of the ZMA is primarily in effort to clean up the zoning map which will bring these parcels into conformity with their General Plan designations and into compliance with California State law.

The parcels developed as churches or schools currently have varying zoning designations of residential, industrial, and open space. However, the zoning designations would be amended to the zoning designation intended for churches or schools which is Public Semipublic (PS). The parcels included in this ZMA are already developed and the density will not be affected. Staff has evaluated the affected parcels and determined that the proposed zones will be compatible with the existing uses on site and with the zoning in the surrounding area.

Properties with a Public-Semipublic designation have an underlying designation shown in parentheses on the Land Use Map. The underlying designation indicates the preferred land use in the event the sites permanently transition to another use in the future. A General Plan Amendment would be necessary to changes these sites to the underlying designation or any other land use.

**Urban Design Guidelines Conformance:**

There is no development associated with the proposed ZMA. As such, this section is not applicable.

**Environmental Status:**

The proposed project will not have any significant effect on the environment and is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15183 because the project is consistent with the development density established by the existing General Plan for which an EIR was certified for during the 2017 General Plan Update.

**Coastal Status:**

Not applicable.

**Design Review Board:**

Not applicable.

**Other Departments Concerns and Requirements:**

Not applicable.

**Public Notification:**

Legal notice was published in the Huntington Beach Wave on Thursday, March 14, 2024 and notices

were sent to occupants and property owners of record within a 500-foot radius of the subject parcels and to individuals/organizations requesting notification.

**Application Processing Dates:**

**DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:**      **MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):**  
February 29, 2024                                      Not applicable (Legislative)

**SUMMARY:**

The ZMA is consistent with the General Plan and its goals and policies. The ZMA is necessary to comply with California Government Code Section 65860 (c) requiring zoning to be internally consistent with General Plan designations. The proposed amendments will address nonconformities and bring such parcels into compliance with the General Plan.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1.      Suggested Findings of Approval for ZMA No. 23-002
2.      Draft Ordinance for ZMA No. 23-002
3.      Existing and Proposed Zoning Maps - Churches and Schools
4.      List of Parcels with Legal Descriptions
5.      Notice sent to property owners
6.      Copy of Notice envelope
7.      PowerPoint Presentation