



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 19-561

MEETING DATE: 5/28/2019

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ursula Luna-Reynosa, Community Development Director
BY: Hayden Beckman, Senior Planner

SUBJECT:
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 2019-001, ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT NO. 2018-002, ZONING MAP AMENDMENT NO. 2018-001 (COUNTY GOTHARD PROPERTY & RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY ZONING)

REQUEST:

To review the background and technical analysis of two proposed amendments: 1) to amend the General Plan Land Use Map designation on a portion of the former County landfill site; and 2) to amend the Zoning Map and establish a set of zoning standards for the Research and Technology (RT) zoning district.

LOCATION:

APN 111-071-37 (West side of Gothard Street at Prodan Drive) and multiple existing Industrial zoning districts

APPLICANT:

City of Huntington Beach

**PROPERTY
OWNER:**

County of Orange and Multiple Various Property Owners

**BUSINESS
OWNER:**

Multiple Various Business Owners

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

To introduce a two part project: 1) to amend the General Plan Land Use Map designation on a portion of the former County landfill site (Attachment No. 1), and 2) to amend the Zoning Map and establish a set of zoning standards for the Research and Technology (RT) zoning district (Attachments No. 2).

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

The proposed project includes the following requests:

General Plan Amendment (GPA) 19-001: To amend the land use designation of a 2.26 acre vacant parcel (APN 111-071-37):

- from current Open Space - Park (OS-P)
- to Research and Technology (RT)

Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) 18-001: To amend the Zoning Map designation in two existing industrial areas (Attachment 2):

- from Industrial General (IG) or Industrial Limited (IL)
- to Research and Technology (RT)

Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 18-002: To amend the Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance (HBZSO) to establish land use zoning and development standards for the new Research and Technology (RT) zoning district.

The purpose of this Study Session is to re-introduce the proposed project, since the last formal communication with the Planning Commission regarding the project occurred on October 3, 2018 at the Planning Commission Workshop. Since that time, the Planning Commission welcomed Commissioner Perkins, and the project was revised to include a General Plan Amendment request, as described above. The background discussion, map exhibit attachments, and draft EIR Addendum attached herein are included for reference to guide consideration of the proposed amendments.

BACKGROUND

Research and Technology

The 2017 comprehensive update of the General Plan included a Land Use Element that introduced a new Research and Technology land use designation. The RT land use designation allows a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 1.0 and intends to permit a wide variety of nonresidential mixed-use development in existing industrial areas along the Gothard Street corridor (from south of Edinger Avenue to Ellis Avenue) and within the northwest industrial areas (bordered by Bolsa Avenue, Springdale Street, Edinger Avenue, and Bolsa Chica Street). The Technical Background Report prepared for the General Plan Update identified the RT designated areas as opportunity areas with high potential for growth when considering Huntington Beach's location, employment, and land uses including technology manufacturing and technology services industries. The next step is to amend the Zoning Map to correspond to the approved General Plan Land Use Map for RT designations, and amend the zoning code to establish development standards.

The current HBZSO land use controls and development standards do not reflect the current business market environment and lack the flexibility to support local business retention, new business growth, and technological innovation. The new RT development standards will fill the gap between commercial uses and pure industrial uses and expand how both existing and new uses can 'flex' their business models within their building space. Ideally, the new RT development standards will easily allow new start-up businesses to develop and grow from initial conceptualization stages all the way through to full-fledged successful operations while remaining in Huntington Beach. Future 'RT Flex' uses will primarily retain the industrial/manufacturing/warehouse base that remains vital to the overall health and balance of the community's economic needs, but will allow some level of flexibility to accommodate commercial uses. Establishing 'RT Flex' uses will permit a variety of non-industrial

uses, such as limited amounts of retail sales, showroom and product display areas, product testing space, small scale local production and/or corporate headquarter offices that directly support the growth and retention of the City's base industrial businesses. A legislative draft of the proposed RT zoning district will be introduced at the next Planning Commission Study Session.

General Plan Amendment

The majority of the former County landfill site, a 9.42-acre parcel fronting Gothard Street, was amended to RT as part of the 2017 comprehensive General Plan update. However, an interior 2.6-acre portion of the site was inadvertently left out of the update. The subject General Plan Amendment will correct this omission. The subject parcel is also owned by the County, and is immediately west of the 9.42-acre vacant parcel (APN 111-071-35) currently designated RT. Both properties function together as one vacant site, and this action will bring the entire site under the RT designation for future use. The new RT development standards to be established will subsequently apply to the entire 11.68-acre site.

Technical Background Analysis

The project's consultant team compiled a draft Technical Background Analysis (Attachment 4) that analyzed the existing conditions of the RT designated areas in order to provide a baseline for research into best practices. The analysis includes discussion of the existing regulatory setting, and a comparison of examples of RT or related land use zoning standards from other California cities for relevant zoning examples. Further, a summary of the findings and observations of the project's community outreach and stakeholder interview process, a key strategy for building a collaborative interest and consensus to help guide the development of the proposed zoning standards.

CEQA:

The City Council adopted Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) No. 14-001 for the General Plan Update in 2017, which included implementation of a new Research and Technology General Plan land use designation. The General Plan EIR Program projected growth and 2040 buildout numbers for non-residential development, including 463 acres of the RT land use designation. Thus, the General Plan EIR provides the environmental setting and analysis to serve as the first-tier California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document for the proposed project.

Following staff and consultant analysis of the Program EIR and the proposed project, the City's Environmental Assessment Committee determined that an Addendum to EIR 14-001 is the appropriate level of environmental review. The project's consultants have prepared a draft Addendum to serve as the environmental review for the proposed project as required by CEQA (Attachment No. 3). It is not necessary for the Planning Commission to take action on the Addendum, but it is provided here for reference.

PLANNING ISSUES:

Before the Planning Commission makes its recommendation to the City Council on a change of zoning district or a change in the text of a zoning provision or standard, the Planning Commission must make certain findings. Below are the findings that the Planning Commission must consider pursuant to Section 247.10 of the HBZSO:

1. The change proposed is consistent with the objectives, policies, general land uses and programs specified in the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;
2. In the case of a general land use provision, the change proposed is compatible with the uses authorized in, and the standards prescribed for, the zoning district for which it is proposed;
3. A community need is demonstrated for the change proposed; and
4. Its adoption will be in conformity with public convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.

PUBLIC HEARING DATE:

The proposed Legislative Draft changes to establish the new RT zoning code will be presented to the Planning Commission in Study Session on June 11, 2019.

The Planning Commission public hearing is tentatively scheduled for June 25, 2019.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Use Map
2. Existing and Proposed Zoning Land Use Map
3. Draft Addendum to Environmental Impact Report No. 14-001
4. Draft Technical Background Analysis