

Chapter One:

Introduction

1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background information on the Specific Plan area and the Specific Plan itself as a planning document. This chapter is organized as follows:

- 1.1 What is the Downtown Village Specific Plan?
- 1.2 Specific Plan Goals
- 1.3 Background
- 1.4 Purpose of the Specific Plan
- 1.5 How the Specific Plan Works
- 1.6 Applicability and Conformity with the Specific Plan
- 1.7 Amendments to the Specific Plan
- 1.8 Review of the Specific Plan
- 1.9 General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Consistency

1.1 What is the Downtown Village Specific Plan?

The Downtown Village Specific Plan is a planning and design document intended to describe the kind of environment desired by the citizens of La Cañada Flintridge. The Downtown Village Specific Plan is important to the City and its residents because it will strengthen the Downtown area as the heart of the community with attractive streets, enjoyable public spaces, and lively, mixed use commercial areas.

1.2 Specific Plan Goals

By combining the goals of the General Plan and the Foothill Boulevard Master Plan with a community-based approach to preparing the Specific Plan, the following goals are established:

- Recognize the unique identity of the area.
- Create an attractive pedestrian environment that accommodates open spaces.
- Develop a village atmosphere.
- Create a plan that enhances economic viability.
- Create a workable street system with a smooth flow of traffic and circulation.
- Create appropriate design standards.
- Create a new home for Sport Chalet that fits in to the community's vision.
- Identify strategies for how private and public sectors can work together to implement the Specific Plan.

1.3 Background

The Foothill Boulevard Master Plan was prepared in 1991. The Plan covers the entire length of the Boulevard, including the Specific Plan area. The Foothill Boulevard Master Plan was never adopted by the City Council and did not undergo environmental evaluation. However, the City Council did accept the document as a guidance/resource document. This Specific Plan incorporates and supports many of the goals, policies and design principles of the Foothill Boulevard Master Plan. The City's Design Options Manual and Community Planned Development (CPD) Ordinance also contain many elements of the Foothill Boulevard Master Plan, and are referenced and incorporated in this Plan.

The most recent planning effort in the Specific Plan area was the City's approval and subsequent revocation of development on the 12-acre La Canada Properties site. This development proposal included the Sport Chalet sporting goods store and headquarters office, a Vons market and a mixture of office and other retail uses. An important component of the current Specific Plan process was to facilitate consensus between La Canada Properties, Inc. and the community to create a more appropriate project that is compatible and consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan, Foothill Boulevard Master Plan and the community. Part of this consensus included general community desire to keep the large retail uses, Sport Chalet and Vons market, physically separated on the western and eastern edges of the Village Center area. Through a cooperative community effort, the Downtown Village Specific Plan addresses appropriate development on these sites in the context of the entire planning area.

1.4 Purpose of the Specific Plan

The Specific Plan is enacted pursuant to Section 65450 *et seq.* of the California Government Code and other applicable laws. It is

intended to provide for systematic implementation of the General Plan, as related to properties located in the area to which the La Cañada Flintridge Downtown Village Specific Plan applies. The Specific Plan is a planning document whose relationship to the City of La Cañada Flintridge Zoning Code is described subsequently.

1.5 How the Specific Plan Works

This Specific Plan is designed to establish the vision and development framework for the Downtown Village area. Implementation will be regulated through detailed development standards, design guidelines and land use regulations in this Specific Plan or as referenced. These important Specific Plan features are consistent with the goals and policies set forth in La Cañada Flintridge's General Plan and the Foothill Boulevard Master Plan.

The drawings contained in this document convey the intent of the Plan's design standards and guidelines. They represent one way of applying the standards and guidelines and are not intended to regulate site design and layout. To illustrate this point, Appendix 1 contains three conceptual site plans for the La Cañada Properties site that differ in overall design, but generally comply with the Design Standards and Guidelines in this Plan.

1.6 Applicability and Conformity with the Specific Plan

The provisions of this Specific Plan shall apply to all properties included in the Specific Plan area. No construction, modification, addition, placement or installation of any building structure shall occur, nor shall any new use commence on any lot, on or after the effective date of this Specific Plan, except in conformity with the provisions of this Specific Plan.

The provisions of this Specific Plan shall not apply to development projects for which a complete application has been received by the appropriate city office, all discretionary approvals obtained and a building permit issued as of the effective date of this Specific Plan; provided, applicants for such projects may elect to comply with any of the provisions hereof in lieu of the former provisions.

Where land use regulations and/or development standards of the City of La Cañada Flintridge Zoning Code are inconsistent with this Specific Plan, the standards and regulations of the Specific Plan shall control. Any issue not specifically covered in the Specific Plan shall be subject to the La Cañada Flintridge Municipal and Zoning Codes.

1.7 Amendments to the Specific Plan

This Specific Plan may be amended in the time and manner prescribed by applicable State law.

1.8 Review of the Specific Plan

The progress in the implementation of the Specific Plan shall be reported periodically to the Planning Commission and City Council for review. Additionally, to assist the La Cañada Unified School District with its long term school planning efforts, the City shall periodically review the extent of residential development within the Specific Plan area to report housing and population growth to the School District.

1.9 General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Consistency

To ensure consistency between the Downtown Village Specific Plan and the City of La Cañada Flintridge General Plan, the Land

Use Element of the General Plan is concurrently being amended to reflect the Specific Plan.

To ensure consistency between the Downtown Village Specific Plan and the City of La Cañada Flintridge Zoning Code, a zone change is being concurrently adopted amending the zoning map to designate the Downtown Village Specific Plan.

Although generally consistent with the General Plan, the Downtown Village Specific Plan refines the objectives and policies of the General Plan as it relates to the Specific Plan area. The Downtown Village Specific Plan supercedes the provisions of the Zoning Code, except where such provisions are specifically referenced in the Specific Plan.

