



City of La Cañada Flintridge

Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update

Planning Commission Meeting

November 14, 2019



Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Objectives for the Update
3. Process Overview (to Date)
4. Summary of Significant Changes
5. Next Steps
6. Questions



Introduction

- What is a Zoning Ordinance?
 - A set of regulations that:
 - Governs the use of land as well as the type and intensity of development within the community
 - Defines and describes review processes and procedures, application requirements, review criteria, and approval authority associated with the regulatory control
 - Derived from a jurisdiction's general police power to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community
 - The most widely used tool to implement the land use and development policies in the jurisdiction's General Plan
 - Often referred to as the *Zoning Code* or *Code*



Introduction

- Why Update the City's Zoning Code?
 - La Cañada Flintridge adopted Los Angeles County's zoning code in 1976, after incorporation
 - City's zoning code has never been comprehensively updated
 - City adopted a comprehensive update of the General Plan in the autumn of 2014
 - Update implements pertinent General Plan goals, objectives, and policies



Objectives

- The comprehensive update is intended to:
 - Codify City policies—both existing policies and General Plan goals, objectives, and policies
 - Respond to issues and concerns that have been identified by the City Council, Planning Commission, Staff, and the public
 - Evaluate and address certain land uses and development trends that are not currently regulated by the Zoning Code
 - Incorporate contemporary planning practices and respond to changes in land uses and trends in development and building design
 - Comply with state and federal planning-related laws



Objectives

- The comprehensive update is intended to:
 - Make it easier for all users to understand and use the Zoning Code
 - Provide internal consistency and eliminate internal conflicts
 - Consolidate, clarify, and streamline permit and approval processes
 - Improve consistency of procedures, interpretation, administration, and findings
 - Make it graphically and visually appealing



Process to Date

- Project Initiation (Autumn 2015):
 - Several sessions held with Staff to identify issues, concerns, and objectives for the update
 - Several public workshops held to solicit early direction, including two workshops with a Code User's Group and one with a Mayor's Committee
- Policy Workshops (November 2016 – April 2017):
 - Planning Commission held four public workshops to discuss and provide direction regarding several key policy issues and review draft language proposed by Staff and provide opportunity for public input
- Drafts:
 - Three drafts were reviewed in detail with Staff
- Public Review:
 - Kick-Off (November 14, 2019): Planning Commission workshop kicks off public review of Public Review Draft Zoning Code
 - Future schedule and public review opportunities (discussed later)
- Adoption of Updated Zoning Code:
 - Since the Zoning Code is a legislative document, the City Council is responsible for adopting any changes to it
 - The existing Zoning Code is proposed to be replaced in its entirety



Summary of Significant Changes

ORGANIZATION & FORMATTING

■ Organization:

- In the existing Zoning Code, each topic is a stand-alone chapter, with no discernable order or organization
- In the updated Code, common topics, regulations, processes, etc., have been organized into one of eight new *Parts*:
 - Part 11.1: General Provisions
 - Part 11.2: Administration
 - Part 11.3: Zones, Allowable Land Uses, & Zone-Specific Standards
 - Part 11.4: Special Regulations
 - Part 11.5: General Regulations
 - Part 11.6: Land Use and Development Permits and Procedures
 - Part 11.7: Subdivisions (Pending)
 - Part 11.8: Definitions
- All existing and new chapters have been put into one of the Parts



Summary of Significant Changes

ORGANIZATION & FORMATTING

- Formatting:
 - Reformatting makes it easier to read—heading levels are indented and further differentiated by changes in font size, color, bold, and italics
 - Tables reduce text and make it easier to identify key information
 - Many new figures have been created to present certain information graphically (note that figures have the same regulatory authority as text)
 - Online version will use hypertext and hover text
 - City's Code Publisher will retain new formatting



Summary of Significant Changes

ADMINISTRATION

- Decision-Making Authorities:
 - Duties and functions of decision-making authorities of City's planning agency have been clarified and consolidated in a new chapter (Chapter 11.2.01)
 - Zoning Hearing Officer (ZHO) has been added:
 - A new decision-making level of authority between the Director and the Planning Commission
 - ZHO replaces "administrative review" in the existing Zoning Code



Summary of Significant Changes

ADMINISTRATION

- Administrative Procedures:
 - Procedures for public meetings and hearings have been consolidated and standardized
 - Procedures for call-ups and appeals have been consolidated, clarified, revised, and standardized as appropriate
 - Authority and process for enforcing requirements of the Zoning Code and any violation of conditions of approval have been consolidated into one chapter and standardized as appropriate
 - A new “Stop Work Order” action has been added and procedures for permit revocation or modification have been clarified



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

- Organization of Zones and Categories:
 - Zones have been organized into six overarching use categories: Residential Zones, Commercial Zones, Mixed Use Zone, Special Purpose Zones, and Specific Plans
 - Special and general regulations have been moved to separate chapters in Parts 11.4 and 11.5, respectively
 - Processes and general permits have been moved to Part 11.6.
 - Special permits, which apply to certain uses, have been relocated to applicable chapters in Part 11.4 (Special Regulations)



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

- Residential (R) Zones:
 - Residential category retains the same residential zones and densities provided in the existing Zoning Code
 - Applicable policies in the *Community Development Department (CDD) Policy Manual* were codified; several were workshopped with the Planning Commission
 - Many existing development standards have been revised and new ones have been added to address issues and concerns, resolve inconsistencies, and provide clarification as to interpretation and administration
 - Certain sections were reorganized for clarity and to be more user-friendly



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

■ Commercial (C) Zones:

- The existing Commercial Planned Development (CPD) Zone has been replaced by 3 new commercial zones, which implement the updated Land Use Element:
 - Commercial General (CG)
 - Commercial Office (CO)
 - Commercial Neighborhood (CN)
- Zone-specific development standards were developed for the new commercial zones, based on policies in the Land Use Element
- Design guidelines, which are applicable to all 3 zones, were developed to implement policies in the General Plan



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

- Mixed Use (MU) Zone:
 - The MU Zone has been modified to correlate certain standards with the 3 commercial zones
 - Commercial General (CG)
 - Commercial Office (CO)
 - Commercial Neighborhood (CN)
 - Design guidelines were developed to implement policies in the General Plan



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

- **Special Purpose Zones:**
 - The existing Special Purpose Zones (Open Space Zone and Public and Semi-Public Zone) in the existing Zoning Code have been consolidated into one chapter, entitled Special Purpose Zones
 - A new Parks and Recreation Zone was added to the new Special Purpose Zones chapter to implement the new Parks and Recreation land use category in the General Plan
 - New development standards were created to implement General Plan policies



Summary of Significant Changes

ZONING

- **Overlay Zones:**
 - Adds a category for overlay zones
 - Retains Emergency Shelter Overlay Zone
- **Specific Plans:**
 - Incorporates existing specific plans by reference
- **Zoning Map**
 - Will be updated to reflect changes to Zoning Code



Summary of Significant Changes

LAND USES

■ Formatting & Organization:

- All land uses have been organized into one land use table (Table 11.3.02-1), except for temporary uses, which are in their own chapter
- Type of approval required for each use is included in the table
- Table includes a column that references standards/special requirements that may apply
- Footnotes provide additional information as needed



Summary of Significant Changes

LAND USES

- General Changes:
 - Certain specific, stand-alone uses have been consolidated into a more encompassing land use
 - Other land uses have been redefined and expanded
 - New land uses have been added
 - Several land uses have been specifically prohibited
 - Outdated land uses have been deleted
 - All land uses have been defined



Summary of Significant Changes

REGULATIONS

- Special Regulations:
 - Some land uses have their own special regulations, whether they are ministerially or conditionally permitted
 - They have been grouped into Part 11.4—Special Regulations
 - 18 existing, 18 new
 - Special regulations for existing special uses have been updated to some extent



Summary of Significant Changes

REGULATIONS

■ Special Regulations—New

- Alcoholic beverage sales
- Animal sales & services
- Bed & breakfast inns
- Community gardens
- Day care facilities
- Donation collection bins
- Drive-in & drive-through facilities—prohibited
- Flags & flagpoles
- Kiosks
- Late night hours
- Outdoor dining
- Outdoor vending/service facilities
- Outdoor display and activities in nonresidential zones
- Recycling facilities
- Residential care facilities
- Senior citizen multifamily residential
- Service stations
- Short-term vacation rentals—prohibited (workshopped with the Planning Commission)



Summary of Significant Changes

REGULATIONS

- General Regulations:
 - They have been grouped into Part 11.5—General Regulations
 - 6 existing, 6 new
 - Most existing regulations have been updated to some extent, some significantly (e.g., parking facilities)



Summary of Significant Changes

REGULATIONS

- General Regulations—New:
 - Grading
 - Mechanical equipment
 - Outdoor lighting standards (workshopped with the Planning Commission)
 - Refuse and recycling storage areas
 - Story pole and site marking requirements
 - Trails



Summary of Significant Changes

PERMITS AND PROCEDURES

■ Issues:

- Existing Code has a multitude of individual permits for special situations, often each with its own time frames, notification processes, appeal provisions, and other procedures, even though they are similar in nature
- “Use” permits are being used for review of development projects
- Findings needed to be revamped
- Planning Commission and Staff have indicated it would be beneficial to have a level of review between Director and Planning Commission



Summary of Significant Changes

PERMITS AND PROCEDURES

■ General Changes:

- General permits are now located in Part 11.6
- New chapter provides general processes and procedures that apply to most permits unless otherwise specified
- New tables lists all permits, including decision-making and appeal authority, with reference to the chapter/section that applies
- Existing review processes have been updated, clarified, streamlined, consolidated where appropriate, and standardized to the extent practical
- New permits have been added to address certain issues



Summary of Significant Changes

PERMITS AND PROCEDURES

■ General Changes:

- Five general types of permitted processes have been created to provide consistency: Processes A, B, C, D, and E
- Each process indicates:
 - Decision-making authority responsible for the action
 - Type of action (ministerial or discretionary)
 - Whether notification is required
 - Whether a public hearing is required; and
 - The appeal process, if applicable



Summary of Significant Changes

PERMITS AND PROCEDURES

- **Overview of Processes:**
 - **Process A:** Ministerial decisions made by the Director
 - **Process B:** Discretionary decisions made by the Director
 - **Process C:** Discretionary decisions made by the Zoning Hearing Officer
 - **Process D:** Discretionary decisions made by the Planning and Design Commissions
 - **Process E:** Legislative decisions made by the City Council (recommendation by the Planning Commission and others as applicable)



Summary of Significant Changes

DEFINITIONS

■ General Changes:

- All land uses in the *Land Use Permit Table* have definitions
- Land uses are differentiated from other terms with the phrase "*land use*" in parentheses behind the term
- While land use definitions do not include standards, they are specific enough to provide direction regarding appropriate operations
- All key terms used in the Zoning Code have definitions
- Figures have been added to many existing and new definitions



Next Steps

OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

- Special or regular Planning Commission meetings?
 - If special meetings:
 - Once or twice per month?
 - 1st and/or 3rd Thursdays?
 - 2nd and/or 4th Tuesdays? (previous Planning Commission schedule)
 - Other?
- Format(s)? (Workshops, open house, etc.)
- Process to review:
 - Review part-by-part?
 - Pull out certain topics/chapters to review as stand-alone topics, such as single-family residential, Hillside development, parking, etc.?
 - Other?



Questions & Comments