



City of San Gabriel Greening the Code



Code Analysis and Assessment Report



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Executive Summary

Through a grant from the Southern California Association of Governments, the City of San Gabriel is working with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners and Mia Lehrer + Associates, Landscape Architects to produce a systematic evaluation of the best practices for zoning provisions that will help San Gabriel become a “greener” and more resource-efficient place. With that information, the City Council will be able to adopt portions of a new zoning code and revised development codes that achieve a new standard of “green” in a way that makes sense for San Gabriel and its residents, property owners, and business owners.

As the first step of this effort, San Gabriel’s consultant team is evaluating the City’s current approach to regulating development and determining if there are alternative approaches that would better implement sustainability principles, attract high quality development meeting community needs, and respond to City planning policies and State and federal mandates.

The City’s consultant team began working on the project in June 2012. Its work has included field reconnaissance; interviews with City staff and community stakeholders; an assessment of existing regulatory tools, plans, and design guidelines used by the City, “peer” communities in Southern California, and best practices from local and national jurisdictions; and developing preliminary recommendations for incorporating sustainability principles into the zoning framework.

This report summarizes the principal findings and conclusions of the consultant team’s work and recommends a number of ways that the current ordinance could be improved to meet the City’s sustainability objectives. The next phase of the project will include drafting recommended zoning code and development standard amendments for review by City staff, decision makers, and the community.

ISSUES ADDRESSED

The City of San Gabriel’s existing regulatory framework may be interfering with the City’s ability to achieve its vision of sustainability, implement the planning policies of the City’s General Plan, and get the type and quality of development that it wants. Based on stakeholder and City staff interviews the following key areas of sustainability provide a framework for the Code Analysis and Assessment Report:

1. Landscaping and Water Conservation
2. Open Space
3. Parking, Mobility, and Connectivity
4. Water Quality

5. Resource Conservation
6. Urban Agriculture

To carry forward the concepts embodied in this report, everyone's views and opinions must be heard and considered. Input from San Gabriel's residents and business owners will be a vital aspect of the process. Specifically, the City will want to hear about what residents want and expect development regulations to do to achieve sustainability while maintaining the character and charm of San Gabriel's neighborhoods and improve the quality of life in other areas that have not benefited from recent development trends. Preservation and protection of what makes San Gabriel special is of utmost importance, but new regulations should not be barriers to growth and development. The focus is on the removal of unintended regulatory barriers and providing incentives to further promote sustainability goals. The regulations must be predictable, understandable, and enforceable. They must be written to make their intent and purpose clear to everyone—property owners, developers, and residents in general. The ideas this report presents are set forth to achieve these objectives.

Because the purpose of this report was to identify ways to improve San Gabriel's zoning regulations, the recommendations focus on suggested changes with only passing reference to all the positive attributes of the ordinance. The reader should keep this intent in mind to avoid misconstruing the consultant team's conclusions and recommendations and thinking that the ordinance is inherently flawed—which it is not.

NEXT STEPS

Decision-maker and community comments on the recommendations in this report will help the Planning Division provide direction to the consultant team to guide its work on drafting code amendments to implement sustainability during the next phase of the project.

1 Introduction

San Gabriel has a track record of being one of the region’s early adopters of the principles of sustainability and in promoting these principles through municipal operations and in planning documents. This Code Analysis and Assessment Report is a continuation of those efforts. The single most effective municipal tool for built out cities to use to shape the way growth responds to a changing environment is its body of zoning and development codes. This report was drafted to serve as a background paper and a guide to discussion between the community and decision-makers of how best to achieve sustainability goals through zoning regulations. It examines ways in which City of San Gabriel’s zoning code can be updated to better accommodate energy conservation and sustainable development practices. It focuses on the removal of unintended regulatory barriers and possible code amendments offering incentives and multiple paths to compliance that will further promote the City’s sustainability goals.

1.1 Framing the Issue

“Sustainability” is currently one of the most popular themes in zoning. Many citizens have concluded that their city’s zoning rules promote unsustainable patterns of development, and they want that changed. However, it is often difficult to clarify what is meant by sustainability or what aspects of sustainable development should be promoted. Fortunately, substantial interest in this area of regulation has resulted in a rapidly increasing list of completed zoning projects that can help frame the options.

In addition to its vague definition, sustainability turns out to be a difficult zoning topic for a second reason—many sustainability impacts are hard to measure and related regulations are, therefore, hard to administer. While noise or vibration emitted by a land use can be measured by staff in the field, the different carbon dioxide emission impacts of a specific development often cannot.

Finally, sustainability remains one of several competing goals of most American cities. Despite heavy interest in the field, most cities are not interested in making sustainability the only criterion for development and redevelopment approval. In practice, cities need to balance sustainability goals with objectives related to reinvestment, job creation, tax revenue generation, quality architecture and design, and public safety; the limits of the transportation and infrastructure systems; mobility goals; limited capital investment funds; neighborhood demands for stability; and developer demands for a predictable investment climate.

1.2 Addressing Sustainability in Zoning Codes

Defining which elements of sustainability to address through zoning and the best way to incorporate provisions in the development review process are threshold challenges. Popular zoning approaches to climate change include: adopting or broadening mixed-use development (to reduce potential commuting) and adopting transportation demand requirements (generally requiring that larger developments reduce traffic generation below expected values). Techniques for encouraging renewable energy include allowing accessory solar panels and geothermal energy collection equipment (and sometimes wind power generators) in some side and rear setback areas. Solar panels are often explicitly allowed on rooftops (with the exception of historic districts) and are sometimes allowed to exceed building height limits by a small amount (usually 18 inches). Solar, geothermal, and wind power generators can also be allowed as primary uses of land in some commercial and industrial (and sometimes mixed-use) zone districts. Techniques for encouraging water conservation include allowing rain barrels, rain gardens, bioswales, and water harvesting facilities in some side and rear setbacks and explicitly permitting green roofs in some zoning districts.

In addition to these subjects, several jurisdictions have broadened their definition of sustainability to address issues such as food production and security, and community health and safety. Community health is sometimes promoted in zoning ordinances through requirements for street and walkway connectivity within and between neighborhoods and by encouraging or requiring bicycle parking areas. Food security can be addressed by allowing both community gardens and farmers markets in a broader range of zoning districts.

According to the California Attorney General, as of September 2009, 36 California cities and counties had enacted green building requirements. Most of these ordinances rely on one or more of the independent rating systems being used to evaluate the “greenness” of buildings. The most common system is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), a proprietary program developed by the United States Green Building Council. LEED has developed rating systems with guidelines for several different types of projects including new nonresidential building, core and shell construction of commercial buildings, interior commercial construction, schools, health care facilities, and residential construction.

In determining which strategies to pursue, it is important to keep the following principles in mind.

- Significant improvements in building performance are usually better addressed through the building code than the zoning code. Zoning should focus on issues related to design, use, and review procedures – such as building orientation, parking, landscaping, and development incentives – that are harder to address through the type of prescriptive requirements that are stipulated in the building code.
- Begin by removing zoning barriers that prevent sustainable development from happening. If that will not produce significant improvements, consider development incentives to encourage sustainable designs and features. If neither of those approaches is likely to produce significant results, consider regulating the inclusion of sustainable features. Regulatory mandates should generally not be the first approach considered.

- Where incentives or regulatory requirements are considered, evaluate the costs and benefits of the requirement. Avoid incentives that sound good on paper but do not generate enough additional revenues (or cost savings) to motivate builders to use the incentive. Avoid regulations that require expensive building or site changes but produce only marginal sustainability benefits.

1.3 Sustainability in San Gabriel

A number of the provisions described above could be incorporated into San Gabriel's regulatory framework to achieve sustainability goals. However, when evaluating these potential tools for use in San Gabriel, it is important to keep in mind what is meaningful to the City and its citizens. Successful cities must first and foremost be rooted in time and place, and reflect the needs of the people who live and work in them.

During stakeholder interviews, people were asked what sustainability means to San Gabriel. Many described conserving electricity, adding green space with gardens and pocket parks, increasing drought tolerant landscaping; and becoming more pedestrian and bike friendly through improved parking and building design requirements. A common sentiment was that San Gabriel should incorporate sustainability and 'greening' requirements into the zoning code to the extent that they improve the overall quality of life, are realistic, make economic sense, and are tailored to reflect the unique characteristics of San Gabriel. Many people suggested an emphasis on efficient, cost-effective, and common sense solutions, as opposed to complex requirements that would add significant costs. In many cases, it became apparent that development standards are confusing and can function as costly hurdles to overcome rather than encouraging sustainable site and building elements. Educating residents, businesses, and the development community about cost-savings in sustainable development, and clarifying development standards so that it is more readily achieved, received enthusiastic support.

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *The City should promote conservation with energy and water. Should provide clear standards so people understand what we mean by "conservation."*
- *Sustainable development should be encouraged with incentives.*
- *Flexibility is important. Need to allow people to craft solutions.*
- *Especially in this economy we want to pay attention to costs. Have to maintain balance between implementing what we want and what's reasonable.*
- *Anything that reduces buildable area is bad.*

2 Landscaping and Water Conservation



Typical residential landscaping.

Landscape water conservation practices integrate plant selection, adaptation, irrigation, management and cultural practices. In addition to its aesthetic benefits, landscaping improves water and air quality. Areas planted with trees and shrubs help to filter the air and convert carbon dioxide to oxygen, naturally remove pollutants from the air and reduce and treat water runoff. Trees, and the shading that they provide, reduce heat, slow water evaporation and lower ambient temperatures. By using trees to reduce temperatures the amount of fossil fuels used for cooling are reduced. As cities become more and more urbanized water conservation becomes more important than ever.

Water conservation practices will reduce landscape water use, not just during drought but throughout the year and will be practical and sustainable while also saving money. Saving water is not only about preserving a natural resource. It's about reducing the exorbitant amount of electricity needed to pump water into our basin from hundreds of miles away. Opportunities to introduce sustainable landscape practices will conserve water, energy and natural resources while creating a pleasant pedestrian public realm for the City of San Gabriel. In keeping with its long-term vision to achieve energy efficiency, the City of San Gabriel has the opportunity to become a model for sustainable landscape and water conservation.

2.1 Existing Setting

Located approximately 11 miles from downtown Los Angeles, the City of San Gabriel was incorporated in 1913. One of the oldest communities in Southern California, San Gabriel is home to one of the California Missions established by Fr. Junipero Serra in 1771. Often referred to as the “birthplace” of the Los Angeles Metropolitan area, San Gabriel’s motto is “A city with a Mission.” Like most of the Los Angeles area, San Gabriel enjoys a Mediterranean like climate with sporadic rain occurring in the winter months.

The 2010 United States Census reports that San Gabriel had a population of 39,718 which translates to 9,518.5 people per square mile. Like much of Los Angeles the demographics of San Gabriel continues to evolve and change and even varies within the different neighborhoods of the

City. The most pronounced demographic shift has been the increase in the Asian population which is now at over 60 percent of the population up from 48.9 percent as of the 2000 Census report. The significant increases in the Asian population and the related cultural impacts need to be considered when creating development codes for landscape and water conservation practices.

Currently the residential front yard landscaping in San Gabriel is predominantly turf. Areas that have a substantial street tree canopy seemed to have a higher degree of pride of ownership and more of the properties in those neighborhoods have enhanced plantings. There are also some residential areas where the front yards contain a great deal of concrete including infill projects which have paved the front yards to allow for garage access. Cultural preferences also contribute to the tremendous amount of paved, impermeable surfaces. Commercial and retail areas on main streets are lacking in street trees and landscaping in general. No value has been given to stormwater and the benefits of recapture and infiltration.

San Gabriel is divided into distinct districts or neighborhoods. There are commercial districts within San Gabriel, such as the Mission District that have mature street trees with large canopies that create a friendly pedestrian environment. Residential neighborhoods in northern San Gabriel often have streets with mature street trees. Many of the key corridors in the City, such as Valley Boulevard, are lacking in street trees creating a harsh autocentric environment. Existing landscaping is inconsistent both in plant material species and site coverage percentages.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

General Plan

The General Plan recognizes that while some parts of the City have beautiful mature street trees, other portions of the City need more trees and attention to landscaping. The General Plan states the City will work to plant more trees, encourage the proper maintenance of landscaping, and protect significant trees and landscapes.

The General Plan specifically identifies promoting environmentally sustainable planting practices as a goal and identifies a number of targets to help meet this goal. Targets include creating a drought tolerant demonstration garden, encouraging property owners to maintain existing vegetation and replace unhealthy landscaping, and enhancing the City's own landscaping to complement significant buildings and public areas.

The General Plan also highlights the importance of trees and the potential for flood control channels to become important green resources. Policies include requiring developers to plant one tree for every 1,000 square feet of net lot area on new commercial and residential projects. At least one tree shall be planted in the front yard of every new house or addition. Developers are also encouraged to incorporate existing mature and specimen trees and other significant vegetation into the design of a development project for that site. New developments adjoining flood control channels should integrate the channels into project design in part through landscaping.

Valley Boulevard Neighborhood Sustainability Plan

The Valley Boulevard Neighborhood Sustainability Plan provides landscape standards for all open space areas located within the boundaries of any project which applies to either new or re-

development projects. General landscape requirements provide a broad outline of conditions necessary to insure compliance. These requirements refer to a variety of implementation measures ranging from plan submittal to plant material and irrigation. A master plant palette including trees, shrubs and vines is provided as a guide and reference is made to the Water Use Classification of Landscape species for selection of drought tolerant plant material.

Landscape standards are then broken down into Commercial/Retail and Residential requirements in more detail. These requirements outline the percentages of coverage for hardscape and softscape by project type and further list trees suitable for front yards in residential areas. Commercial requirements state that 50-80 percent of the open space may be hardscape areas with the remaining 20-50 percent being landscaped with plant material. Residential requirements allow for 30-50 percent of the front yard to be hardscape including driveways, with the remaining 70-50 percent being landscaped with plant material. The list of trees deemed suitable for front yard planting is a variety of evergreen and deciduous trees with some variation in ultimate tree height.

The section on sustainable energy and green building provides an explanation of green building and its benefits. Landscape techniques for sustainable development provide guidance on water and energy conservation, habitat and use of materials with recycled content. Techniques address topsoil, existing trees, water conservation, energy conservation, water quality waste, recycled materials and habitat.

The sustainable streetscapes chapter establishes a framework for the development of streetscapes and improvements within the public realm within the Plan Area. A series of objectives is provided along with methods to be taken to achieve the objectives. The policies outlined include gateways, streetscape improvements, sidewalk widths, street trees, parkways and medians. Specific standards are then provided to support the implementation of the sustainable streetscapes and open space.

Mission District Specific Plan

The Mission District Specific Plan creates a series of objectives to serve as a guide for the conservation, adaptive use and enhancement of buildings and streetscapes for further development of the Mission District. Recommendations are made for pedestrian improvements along Mission Drive and its vicinity, the Civic Center area, the Mission area, Civic Auditorium area and along Santa Anita Street.

The street tree palette provides for a hierarchy of trees by street and by block. To encourage the pedestrian nature of the Mission District the street tree placement and tree species is important and provides a focal point and identity. Streetscape furniture and other pedestrian amenities such as lighting, trash receptacles, planters and paving materials are identified to assist in creating a uniform pedestrian friendly environment.

Standards for non-residential areas require planter strips with a minimum of seven feet clear, landscape buffer strips along property lines of minimum seven feet in width, headlight screening 36 inches in height at the perimeter of parking lots, a requirement of one parking lot tree for every four parking stalls and enhanced paving in parking lots, drive aisles and pedestrian crosswalks. Landscape improvements along the Alhambra Wash are to line the Wash and enhance its inter-

section with the subject property. Properties abutting a residential neighborhood shall include a landscaped screen six feet in height.

Ten percent of the total net lot area of all new construction projects that add at least 25 percent of the existing square footage of the building are required to be landscaped and a landscape plan must be submitted to the Community Development Department. Plant materials within the Mission District should be chosen with year-round interest in mind. Bloom color and season, fall color, texture, detail, and pedestrian scale should be considered. The use of native and "California friendly" are encouraged. Perennials are an excellent source for variety and color and should be incorporated into the landscape, when appropriate. Plants that need consistent watering, but do not provide color or interest are discouraged, such as: Ivy, Mondo grass, or Boxwoods. The final plant palette shall be subject to approval by the City Landscape Architect.

Landscaping requirements for mixed-use projects are subject to a discretionary review by the Design Review Commission. As an alternative to providing on-site landscaping, an in-lieu fee may be paid by an applicant up to one percent of the construction costs which will be placed in a Mission District fund for public improvements in the specific plan area.

Street Tree Master Plan

The Street Tree Master Plan provides a framework for street tree planting to complement the architecture of the City, provide environmental benefits, and create an enhanced pedestrian experience and economic benefits. The goal of the Street Tree Master Plan is to beautify the streets of San Gabriel and provide guidelines for the selection of street trees for the various neighborhoods within the City.

Existing street trees needing to be replaced will be the responsibility of the City's Public Works Department. Applicants wanting to develop or make improvements to a property (other than homeowners wanting to plant a street tree) will be responsible for planting street trees under the City's guidelines. A 750-dollar per tree Tree Performance Guarantee will be deposited with the City to ensure the longevity of the tree(s). Any balance will be returned to the applicant after five years.

The Street Tree Master Plan provides plant spacing and tree well dimensions. The minimum tree well size is three feet by three feet and where possible, larger tree wells should be provided. A tree palette is provided and tree species are assigned by neighborhood and by major streets to compliment the characteristics of the neighborhood and street and to provide a sense of place and identity.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance regulates residential front yard and driveway standards, requiring landscaping and specifying impervious surface driveways. For new multifamily projects in R-2 and R-3 zones, all plants and shrubs shall be living evergreen vines, shrubs, or ground cover, mowable grass, or a combination thereof. All landscaped areas shall be irrigated by a means of permanent automatic sprinkling system. For commercial zones, six percent of the gross lot area shall

be landscaped, with a permanent automatic irrigation system. For special uses such as automobile service stations, landscape standards are satisfied with five foot wide raised planters along the property line or three foot raised planters along the building, with raised landscape areas protected by a six inch high concrete curb and permanent automation irrigation systems. No landscaping is permitted to grow over public rights-of-way.

Off-street parking areas in the R-2 and R-3 zones are required to landscape a minimum of four percent of the uncovered parking areas (including driveway and vehicle maneuvering areas) with minimum three-foot wide planters using trees, shrubs, and ground cover. Further, any parking area which is visible from an adjoining lot zoned R-1 or R-1A shall be provided with a 10 foot wide landscaped buffer.

Parking areas in the C-1, C-3, and P-1 Zone Districts are required to provide a five-foot wide landscaped strip adjacent to the street frontage and any wall or fence separating the parking area from residential zoned or used properties. Additionally, planting areas shall be installed in the interior of all parking lots providing more than 10 spaces. A minimum of two percent of the parking area shall be devoted to landscape planting. The planting areas shall be evenly distributed throughout the parking area. A minimum of one tree, of minimum size 15 gallons, shall be provided in each planter area containing more than 20 square feet. Shrubs and ground cover shall be used in all planter areas.

For all parking lots, plants and shrubs shall be living evergreen vines, shrubs, or ground cover, or a combination thereof. All trees shall be living, a minimum of 50 percent of which shall be of an evergreen type. The following minimum sizes shall apply: trees, 15 gallon; shrubs, five gallon; and ground cover and vines from pots or rooted cuttings from flats spaced 12 inches to 18 inches on center. Planting areas shall be separated from vehicular areas and street rights-of-way by a concrete curb at least six inches high. All landscaped areas shall be irrigated by means of a permanent automatic sprinkling system. All planting areas shall have an average width of three feet or more. Complete landscaping plans shall be submitted at the time of the application for a building permit. All planting areas shall be drawn to scale, and plants shall be clearly located and labeled. The size, type, and botanical and common names shall be shown.

As discussed in further detail later in this chapter, the Design Guidelines have recommendations for sustainable landscaping and water conservation which compliment the regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

Water-Efficient Landscape Requirements

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act, (AB 325) was signed into law on September 29, 1990. The 1990 Statute directed the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to develop and adopt a Model Ordinance for water efficient landscaping. If by January 1, 1993 a local agency did not adopt a water efficient landscape ordinance, the Model Ordinance adopted by DWR took effect. In 1993, the City adopted its Water Efficient Landscape Requirements in Chapter 150 of the Municipal Code.

San Gabriel's Water Efficient Landscape Requirements provides requirements for plan package submittals and outlines what elements need to be submitted in the plan package. The plan pack-

age is the same for all project types with the exception of homeowner installed landscaping in single-family and multi-family residential projects, historical sites, cemeteries, ecological restoration projects, recreation area plant replacement and any project with a landscaped area less than 3,000 square feet. The plan package is to be prepared and submitted for review at the project onset and is to be prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect.

Plans are reviewed for compliance with the water-efficient landscape criteria and are ranked on a point system based on landscape and irrigation techniques. A minimum of 100 points in each of the landscape and irrigation categories needs to be achieved for the plans to be approved. The point system is often subjective and difficult to enforce stating such things as the “use of creative, thoughtful and diverse hydrozones to enhance the overall landscape design.”

Tree Regulations

Chapter 95: Trees and Shrubs; Weeds of the Municipal Code establishes tree protection and preservation provisions for single family residential zones; multiple family, commercial, and industrial zones; and the public right of way immediately adjacent to real property. Permits are required for significantly trimming or removing certain mature trees or historic/landmark trees. Property owners are responsible for the cultivation, care, and maintenance of all trees and shrubs planted or set out in the right of way immediately adjacent to real property.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The City of San Gabriel Design Guidelines are an accompaniment to the Municipal Code which outlines building setbacks, heights and other building sizes in order to maintain the quality of neighborhoods and to prevent overbuilding on individual lots. The Design Guidelines are intended to preserve the character of neighborhoods and address user needs and to create an enhanced environment. The guidelines place importance on sustainability and outlines sustainability principals to be followed and are broken down into single family residential, multi-family residential and commercial/mixed-use/industrial categories.

The Design Guidelines have a suggested plant palette and a list of plants that are discouraged for each project type. A list of findings required for project approval are listed including providing a degree of amenity characterized by generous landscaping of open spaces and parking lots, preservation of historic and specimen trees, streetscaping, plant palette, provision of transition zones between parcels and pedestrian connections. The guidelines seek to have sustainable technologies, water efficient landscaping and irrigation and passive solar design opportunities included.

2.2 Issues and Strategies

The City currently has in place the San Gabriel Municipal Code, the Mission District Specific Plan, the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan and the Street Tree Master Plan which address landscape requirements for all property types. The landscape requirements in each of these plans vary greatly. The specifics of the Street Tree Master Plan are not reflected in the Mission District Specific Plan which identifies additional tree species not called out in the Street Tree Master Plan. The Valley Boulevard Neighborhood Sustainability Plan cuts through six neighborhoods within the City of San Gabriel each with their own character. Additionally, current conditions indicate that enforcement of these plans and

regulations has been inconsistent resulting in a non-cohesive public realm. As the City continues to grow and evolve, enforced landscape requirements will help to create a more pedestrian, cohesive environment while helping to conserve water and treat runoff.

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *A few trees can make a tremendous difference.*
- *There should not be a requirement for turf. The City shouldn't prohibit it either.*
- *Feng shui should be considered and planting and landscaping requirements.*
- *City is trying to promote removal of turf and replacement with gardens in yards to conserve water. The guidelines to accomplish this may be too generic.*

PLANT PALETTE

Many City policies and regulations address percentages of lots that are to be landscaped but do not address the preferred plant palette. Where a plant palette exists, a more diverse selection of plants should be prepared and should include trees native to Southern California. Cultural considerations need to be taken into account and plant material that meets cultural preferences should be incorporated into the plant palette. Stakeholders have provided input that local cultural preferences lean towards fresh fruits and vegetables, and the use of slow growing plants that have red blooming flowers. There are many plants that would meet these needs and they should be incorporated into the recommended plant palette.

A benefit to residing in a Mediterranean climate is that there is a tremendous amount of drought tolerant plant material to draw from that will thrive in this climate. There is often the misperception that drought tolerant means cactus types of plant material which some people find unpleasing aesthetically. In fact there is a large and diverse plant palette that can be drawn from including plants native to Southern California that should be incorporated into the recommended plant palette.

Invasive plants listed in the California Invasive Plant Council (southwest region) plant inventory should be prohibited. Other jurisdictions such as the Cities of Santa Monica, Torrance and Long Beach provide an online list of plant material with photographs that are drought tolerant, work in their climate, are readily available and appeal to a wide variety of aesthetic preferences. While the specific types of plant material may differ in San Gabriel, the City could take a similar approach of posting an inventory of appropriate plant material.

LANDSCAPE MATERIALS

Xeriscaping and the use of drought tolerant, native plants for landscaping can reduce outdoor potable water-use significantly. Generally, landscaping ordinances specify that landscaping materials consist of a combination of groundcovers, shrubs, vines, and trees. In efforts to conserve water resources, many communities limit the amount of turf that can be planted and require drought tolerant plant materials. Paved or graveled surfaces are often allowed, provided they do not cover more than a certain percent of the area required to be landscaped. Some communities, such as San Carlos, CA specifically state that garden areas and other areas dedicated to edible plants are considered landscaped areas and count toward required landscaping.

Pasadena requires that plant materials emphasize drought-tolerant and/or native species and that trees shall be planted in areas of public view. The clustering of trees is encouraged. Ground cover is required to be of live plant material however limited quantities of bark, colored rock, gravel, and similar materials may be used in combination with a living ground cover.

Santa Monica limits lawn and high water use plants to a maximum of 20 percent of the landscaped area. Mulch to prevent weeds and slow down evaporation is permitted at two inches in depth.

PARKING AREAS

Stakeholder interviews stated that parking lots are not user friendly and need to provide more shading and a more comfortable environment. Parking lot shading currently calls for a continuous row of canopy trees at the perimeter and one tree per four parking spaces throughout the lot without mention if they are evergreen or deciduous. Other jurisdictions require one large tree per four parking spaces, or one medium tree per three parking spaces or one small tree per two parking spaces allowing for more flexibility and variety in plant material. Due to the Southern California climate where we often get some of our warmest days in September and October, at least 20-25 percent of the trees should be evergreen. Other plant material within the parking lots should be planted at a size sufficient to have the plant reach its mature size within three years.

Other jurisdictions provide for a minimum area of the total exterior paved area that accommodates vehicular traffic be devoted to landscape islands, peninsulas or medians distributed throughout the paved area.

WATER CONSERVATION

The State model ordinance has been updated with the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881). Pursuant to AB 1881, local agencies, not later than January 1, 2010, are required to adopt the updated Model Ordinance or, a local landscape ordinance that is at least as effective in conserving water as the updated model ordinance. If the local agency has not adopted the updated Model Ordinance, or a local ordinance, the updated Model Ordinance will be applicable within the jurisdiction of the local agency, including charter cities and charter counties. The City has not updated its Water Efficient Landscape Requirements since the passage of AB 1881.

In updating these provisions, the City can clarify requirements and integrate best practices, many of which are required to achieve compliance with AB 1881. Irrigation techniques can be clarified to eliminate subjectivity and facilitate enforcement. Items currently required such as adjusting the irrigation seasonally and doing an annual irrigation schedule are maintenance items and the City is not in a position to police and enforce these. Stakeholders expressed uncertainty as to the landscape and irrigation plan submittal packages submittal requirements. The landscape and irrigation submittal can be clarified and should become a part of the initial submittal package for all project types in order to achieve a more cohesive project design. Pasadena requires a preliminary landscape plan to be submitted as part of an application for a land use entitlement.

In updating their ordinances, many communities have simply adopted the State's model ordinance despite complaints of it being difficult to implement and not responsive to local conditions. Santa Clara County, however, developed its own ordinance to respond to local conditions and provided straightforward options for simplified compliance with water efficiency requirements. First, a project is exempt from the prescriptive portions of the ordinance when the total landscaped area does not exceed 5,000 square feet, the majority of plants are either native or considered low water use, and total turf area does not exceed 25 percent of the landscaped area to a maximum of 1,250 square feet. If a project does not qualify for the exemption, three options for compliance, each with different requirements to ensure water efficiency, are provided.

1. **Water budget option:** Each landscaped element or plant is assigned a water consumption amount. The total amount cannot exceed a specified budget. The budget provides for a water allowance comparable to about 50 percent of a cool-season turf installation in the same landscaped area. This option has the most requirements beyond plant mix to ensure water efficiency.
2. **Plant restrictions option:** Within the non-turf area (which must be at least 75 percent of the landscaped area) at least 80 percent of the plants are native or low water use.
3. **Native plant emphasis option:** At least 60 percent of all plants and trees must be native. No turf grasses. This option has the least requirements beyond plant mix to ensure water efficiency.

The City of Santa Monica has the option to impose a conservation incentive fee on consumers who have not undertaken conservation measures.

Supporting Programs and Policies

A landscape/tree fund has been established in other jurisdictions to deal with situations where site conditions or builder preferences do not allow for compliance with the landscape standards. Funds collected can be used for landscape improvements to the public realm. Fees are typically based on project size and on landscape standards set for that project type and size.

Many communities have adopted policies for Green Streets. A Green Street is a street that through a variety of design and operational treatments gives priority to pedestrian or bicycle circulation and open space over vehicular traffic. Improvements might include landscaping, traffic calming, sidewalk widening and other pedestrian amenities. Improvements include stormwater treatment through vegetated facilities, and providing water quality benefits and streetscapes that enhance neighborhood livability.

2.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- LAWC-1 Provide for better coordination between existing and future codes, plans and ordinances.** By providing a more cohesive framework and by coordinating planning documents and ordinances, it will be much easier for applicants to understand the requirements and be able to comply.
- LAWC-2 Provide illustrative diagrams of standards and requirements.** By providing illustrative diagrams of design standards, requirements and sustainable technologies it will be easier to understand requirements and leave less to the imagination. Sustainable technologies and water conservation methods are not always understood so a document diagramming what these technologies are and how to accomplish them will help to make this a less mysterious requirement and a requirement that will become simpler to implement.
- LAWC-3 Provide a plant palette that works for all planning documents and addresses cultural preferences.** A consolidated drought tolerant plant palette, diverse enough to address cultural needs as well as City preferences should be created. Having multiple plant palettes for various planning documents is confusing and leads to non-compliance. The plant palette should also identify plants particularly suited for pollutant filtration and that are appropriate to meet water quality concerns discussed in Section 5, Water Quality.
- LAWC-4 Require tree planting and landscaping plans for new construction and additions.** Consistent with the General Plan, require all new buildings and additions over 800 square feet to plant at least one tree for every 1,000 square feet of net lot area, retain existing landscaping that is significant, and undergo a review of landscape plans. Landscaping plan requirements should be revised to streamline the review process.
- LAWC-5 Incentivize integration of landscaping and flood control channels with adjacent new developments.** The City could provide extra landscaping credit or allow additional lot coverage away from the channel in exchange for installing and maintaining landscaping that improves the flood channel.
- LAWC-6 Allow permeable hardscaping alternatives to landscaping.** Allowances can be made for attractive permeable hardscaping elements such as ornamental gravel, native rock, permeable pavers and mulch.
- LAWC-7 Clarify that green roofs and gardens to count toward required landscaping.** Green roofs and garden areas can fulfill landscaping requirements while simultaneously managing stormwater runoff, reducing energy consumption through insulation, and facilitating access to healthy foods.
- LAWC-8 Limit the use of turf in required landscaped areas.** Landscaping provisions can limit the total amount of turf, the maximum slope of areas planted with turf, and the minimum dimension of turf areas.

- LAWC-9 Require water efficient irrigation.** To conserve water, the City can require systems to be drip or other low water irrigation systems with a moisture sensor. Also, plants with similar water needs could be grouped within hydro-zones and irrigation for each hydro-zone could be controlled by a separate valve.
- LAWC-10 Provide more shading and a better environment in parking lots.** By requiring a certain percentage of evergreen trees shade can be provided all year round. Allowing for flexibility in sizes and quantities of trees planted provides for interest and diversity in plant material and can assist in cases where budgets may be constrained.
- LAWC-11 Develop a comprehensive landscaping ordinance.** The City should develop a comprehensive landscaping ordinance that addresses the previously listed recommendations and achieves compliance with AB 1881. The State Model Water Efficiency Landscaping Ordinance incorporates many of the recommendations listed above. By developing a comprehensive landscaping ordinance that is at least as effective in conserving water as the State model ordinance, San Gabriel can take a number of steps to streamline compliance with State law while furthering the City's sustainability goals. The City can offer a menu of options for compliance with water efficiency requirements without complex documentation. For example, a water budget calculation would not be required if a high percentage of drought tolerant plant materials are used. The subjective and dated point system may be eliminated and replaced with a detailed checklist that a reviewer can go through without any subjective responses. Finally, graphic representation of irrigation techniques for AB 1881 rules can assist in compliance.
- LAWC-12 Create a policy for incentivizing the inclusion of best management practices.** The City should provide a program to promote sustainable solutions for runoff pollution and promote the use of water collection, storage or percolation systems.

Supplemental strategies beyond the scope of zoning for consideration

- LAWC-13 Create a policy on Green Streets.** Create a green streets program and pilot projects. Develop standards and incentives for community-based action and for Green Streets projects that can be implemented by the private sector. Educate citizens, businesses and development community about Green Streets and how they can serve as urban greenways.
- LAWC-14 Create a landscape/tree fund.** By creating a landscape/tree fund projects that cannot comply with the landscape standards on site can deposit funds to be used for improvements in the public realm. Improvements might consist of streetscapes, green streets, channel edge trails or other public enhancements.
- LAWC-15 Provide demonstration gardens on City property.** By providing demonstration gardens on City property that showcase the drought tolerance plant palette, green streets standards and water conservation methods, the City can showcase how these improvements can be aesthetically pleasing while meeting the City's sustainability goals.

3 Open Space



Vincent Lugo Park.

Parks and open space are a vital part of a livable, sustainable San Gabriel. Open areas and green spaces provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation, social interaction, and community gathering. The availability of open space and public areas can create a distinctive sense of place, encourage walking, and improve environmental quality. Open space benefits the environment by combating air pollution, absorbing greenhouse gases (through open space vegetation), attenuating noise, controlling wind, providing erosion control, and moderating the urban heat island effect.

Natural and landscaped open spaces also protect surface and ground water resources by filtering trash, debris, and chemical pollutants before they enter a water system.

Development standards have historically played an important role in ensuring that communities had adequate open space. Early English and Spanish land planning laws required the set aside of community open space in the form of commons, plazas, and town squares for the use and enjoyment of citizens. Many communities now require new projects to provide open space, parks space/playgrounds and bike trails/pedestrian connections to meet the needs of new residents and implement community plans. In addition to new regulations to promote open space, parks, and trails, comparable jurisdictions are removing barriers to alternative forms of open space such as community gardens and green “vegetated” roofs and options for infill open space such as plazas and courtyards. They are also creating incentives for provision of additional open space in new developments.

3.1 Existing Setting

The term “open space” broadly means outdoor areas for living and recreation that provide important community space, habitat for plants and animals, recreational opportunities, places of natural beauty, and critical environmental functions and areas (e.g. wetlands and floodplain). Open space may include parks, plazas, gardens, natural habitat, and landscaped areas that provide both active and passive usage.

While San Gabriel has notable and distinct park areas such as Laguna de San Gabriel Playground and Smith Park, the City is lacking in the overall amount of parks and open space. In fact, park space in San Gabriel is only a fraction of the recommended size published by National Park and Recreation Standards. Most of the land within the City has been developed, making land acquisition for new parks difficult. The Alhambra Wash, a potentially important park and recreation resource, has been improved with a concrete bottom and sides and in some areas, covered completely. In a more natural state, the Wash could serve to address the City's sustainability goals by providing stormwater detention and an open space amenity for the community.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The City's planning documents, including the General Plan, Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Specific Plan, and the Mission District Specific Plan, all recognize the importance of public areas and green spaces to the community and that open space is at a premium. As San Gabriel grows, the need for these spaces will only be greater. Many of the City's policies point toward the need for creative solutions to increasing public areas and green spaces such as utilizing school playgrounds, creating "pocket parks", installing landscaped medians, exploring the recreational potential of flood control channels, and working with developers of larger scale developments to identify opportunities or other strategies for inclusion of community serving facilities with their projects.

City planning documents also identify the existing lot pattern as a constraint and influence on development. The scale of development is limited by the multiplicity of individual parcels and ownerships and comparatively shallow parcel depths. This prevents opportunities for master planning where large-scale projects integrate the provision of open space, parks, trails, and other amenities to meet the needs of new residents and implement community plans. Policies, particularly in the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Specific Plan, provide direction for the aggregation of parcels and consolidation as a single development site that will support a development project of substantial scale.

Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan

The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan establishes requirements for common open space in commercial, mixed-use and multi-family developments as well as private open space for individual residential units.

General commercial/retail and mixed-use buildings are required to provide a minimum of 10 percent of the net lot area as landscaped common open space consisting of plazas, courtyards, and/or other public open space. Setback areas may not be used to satisfy this requirement. There is no minimum dimension requirement except a 1:1 and 2:1 height to width ratio if the space is open on one or more sides. Open space plazas must include 50 to 80 percent of hardscape areas with the balance of the open space landscaped with turf, shrubs, or groundcover, and trees. In addition, mixed-use developments are required to provide 10 percent of every residential unit floor area must as private open space in the form of balconies or terraces.

Requirements for on-site open space in multi-family residential buildings are based on a ratio of square footage per unit that varies based on number of bedrooms. As with the open space requirement for general commercial/retail and mixed-use buildings, there are no minimum dimen-

sion requirements except a 1:1 and 2:1 height to width ratio if the space is open on one or more sides. Courtyards are required to include 30 to 50 percent of hardscape areas with the balance of the open space landscaped with turf, shrubs, or groundcover, and trees. In addition to the common open space requirement, a total of 10 percent of more of every residential unit floor area must be provided as private open space in the form of balconies or terraces.

Mission District Specific Plan

The Mission District Specific Plan establishes open space requirements for residential development in the Grapevine Residential and Arroyo Residential districts. In the R-2 Grapevine Residential District, 400 square feet of open space per bedroom is required. In the R-3 Arroyo Residential District, 300 square feet of open space per bedroom is required. Additionally, covering of the Alhambra Wash is prohibited and for properties on the west side of Arroyo Drive, either scenic easements along the Wash or the front yard setback can be counted as open space. The flood control easement itself does not count as open space.

ZONING ORDINANCE

The Zoning Ordinance establishes open space requirements for multi-family development in the R-2 and R-3 districts and for mixed-use development. In the R-2 district, 500 square feet of recreational and leisure area shall be provided for each bedroom. In the R-3 district, 400 square feet per bedroom is required. Private areas are limited to a maximum of 33 percent of the total recreation and leisure area provided and minimum dimensions are established for ground floor private areas (six feet), balconies (five feet), and common areas (20 feet).

Mixed-use developments are required to provide 100 square feet of private open space for each multi-family unit and in mixed-use developments in excess of three acres, a pedestrian plaza or similar open area as an aesthetic and usable passive recreation amenity, the size of which is determined through the Conditional Use Permit process.

3.2 Issues and Strategies

The Zoning Ordinance, Valley Boulevard Neighborhood Specific Plan, and the Mission District Specific Plan establish requirements for the provision of common and private open space with new development. Stakeholders and staff commented that high land costs compel developers to maximize building square footage in order to meet profitability goals. The provision of on-site open space is sometimes seen as a constraint to development as it limits the amount of building square footage that can be attained. In some cases, open areas are provided as an afterthought, fit in 'leftover' areas on-site. While the requirements for open space are

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *Parks are important. San Gabriel needs more parks, including pocket parks with benches.*
- *Could be okay to provide public open space off-site in-lieu of on-site requirements. However, would like to review on a case-by-case basis.*
- *There should be some standards for usability of open space. Currently, open space may be located in places that aren't useful or accessible.*

met on a site-by-site basis, but as a whole, the overall effect may not be what is desired.

Like San Gabriel, many jurisdictions require both private and common open space in mixed-use and multi-family developments and identify minimum dimensions and improvements for those spaces. Some communities require different ratios of private and common open space. Monterey Park requires a minimum of 40 percent private open space whereas San Gabriel limits private space to 33 percent. South Pasadena requires 200 square feet of private open space per unit. Common open space requirements are based on the total number of units in the development with 200 square feet required for developments with three to four units, 500 square feet required for five to 10 units, 1,000 square feet for 11 to 30 units, and 2,000 square feet for 31 or more units. Generally, private open space dimensions are larger as well; typically 10 feet for ground floor and between six and eight feet for balconies whereas San Gabriel requires six and five feet respectively.

Many jurisdictions are looking at ways to encourage infill development and reinvestment in older areas of the community while balancing the need for usable outdoor areas. Some jurisdictions, such as Portland, OR, and Emeryville, CA, are removing barriers to alternative forms of open space such as community gardens and green roofs. Other jurisdictions look at ways of supporting a community-wide park and open space system by allowing open space requirements to be met off-site or through the payment of in-lieu fees. These programs give developers flexibility in meeting open area requirements while supporting the implementation of community open space goals. In Alhambra, the Planning Commission may grant up to a 50 percent reduction in common open space requirements on the basis that a residential planned development is located immediately contiguous and directly accessible to a public park. San Gabriel could augment a similar reduction with the payment of a fee to mitigate the increased use of the public area. The developer is provided flexibility of not having to provide open space on site and the community parks program is supported.

Other jurisdictions allow additional flexibility in where open space may be located or what may be counted toward the open space requirement. For example, Monrovia allows private and common recreation areas to be located within the side and rear setbacks.

3.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- OS-1** **Allow community gardens and green roofs to count towards open space requirements.** Green roofs can fulfill common open space requirements, as long as they are usable and accessible to all units, while simultaneously managing storm-water runoff and reducing energy consumption through insulation.

- OS-2** **Modify open space requirements to provide more usable spaces.** The maximum allowable percentage and minimum dimensions of private open space should be increased. Side setback areas should be allowed to count toward open space. The City may also consider reducing the required rear yard to allow more flexibility in site design.

- OS-3 Allow for open space requirements to be met through off-site dedication.** The Zoning Ordinance can establish a framework to allow open space to be provided off-site, in the form of pocket parks, trails, public plazas, or other configuration consistent with City goals and policies.
- OS-4 Allow for on-site open space requirements to be met through the payment of in-lieu fees.** The Zoning Ordinance can include a framework to allow the City to establish an open space mitigation fund and a fee to be paid in lieu of providing common open areas on-site. The in-lieu fees could be used for programs to provide, enhance, and expand park and open space areas for residents. Participation in such a program would be optional for applicants who chose to pay a fee in-lieu of providing required on-site open space. The City's existing open space impact fee would still apply.
- OS-5 Give open space credit for alternative forms and configuration of open spaces.** Open space credit could be awarded for strategies that enhance existing open space resources such as providing connections to or expanding existing open areas, plazas, or other public destinations or providing additional public amenities. Credit could also be awarded for furthering other City sustainability and 'greening' goals such tree preservation.
- OS-6 Recognize the Alhambra Wash as a citywide open space amenity.** Consistent with the General Plan, specifically prohibit covering of the Alhambra and Rubio washes in the Zoning Ordinance and allow scenic and public access easements along the Wash to be counted as open space citywide, not just in the Mission District Specific Plan Area.

4 Parking, Mobility, and Connectivity



Strip commercial parking.

Land use and transportation policies have a direct and profound effect on energy use and the resulting production of greenhouse gases. The United States is the largest emitter worldwide of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Transportation accounts for a full third of CO₂ emission in the United States. Despite technological advances, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is expected to increase, leading to an increase in the consumption of fossil fuels, the production of CO₂ emissions, and the continued decline in public health.

There are many aspects of community design and transportation that directly or indirectly affect people's choice of transportation mode. People who live in areas with predominantly low-density residential and commercial development with vast separations between land use types are almost assuredly dependent on the car for work, school, and shopping trips. Most communities rely on rigid traffic and transportation engineering standards, which dictate that arterial streets be engineered to move cars quickly and efficiently. Pedestrians and bicyclists are not adequately accommodated. Where there are more cars, there is a higher need for places to park. Large surface parking lots further exacerbate the auto-dominated design of commercial and residential areas. Buildings set far apart by vast parking lots and overly wide access roads discourage walking between destinations.

Zoning standards that guide how vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists each access commercial and residential developments play a significant part in determining how well compact, walkable neighborhoods succeed in meeting their planning objectives. Walkability results from a complex mix of factors that can be addressed through zoning and site development standards, including permitting pedestrian-oriented land uses and activities, providing convenient and safe access between destinations, and creating a comfortable and engaging walking environment.

The quantity, location, and appearance of parking areas also have a substantial impact on the character and functionality of streets, commercial corridors, and residential neighborhoods. Stores, restaurants, offices, and employers use convenient, visible, and plentiful parking to attract customers and serve employees. On the negative side, too much parking, particularly too much surface parking, has a negative impact on community aesthetics, walkability, stormwater runoff, and sustainability in general.

4.1 Existing Setting

San Gabriel is a mature, “built-out” city. The pattern of land use has, for all intents and purposes, been set. The City predominantly consists of single-family residential neighborhoods with commercial and industrial uses concentrated along key transportation corridors including Valley Boulevard, Las Tunas Drive, San Gabriel Boulevard, and the railroad. While the neighborhoods are walkable, overall land use patterns separate the places people live from where they work, shop, and recreate. The automobile is the primary means of access which causes congestion on City streets and consumes gasoline, generates air pollution and noise, and results in delays that diminish the quality life of San Gabriel residents. In spite of the large amount of land in San Gabriel devoted to parking, there seems to still not be enough or not enough for certain uses at certain times such as restaurant parking during dinner hours.

Stakeholders consistently referred to San Gabriel as a dining destination. Many stakeholders recognized that the need to provide parking was often an obstacle to expanding existing restaurants or establishing new ones. However, stakeholders generally did not support reducing parking requirements for restaurants since the use does generate a lot of demand for parking. When this demand is not met, parking spills over into neighboring residential areas. Some stakeholders also recognized that while small restaurants were thriving, small ‘mom and pop’ retail stores were struggling, leaving many vacant storefronts.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

General Plan

The General Plan Ingredients for Success contains several goals, targets, and actions that address access and circulation. The Mobility Element calls for a safe, efficient, and environmentally sensitive transportation system for the movement of people and goods; reducing congestion, promoting alternative forms of transportation, enhancing pedestrian access and circulation, and making corridors more livable places by making them pedestrian-friendly, calming traffic, and promoting quality urban design. New zoning standards can support these policies by focusing on how to create compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and transit-oriented developments, including detailed provisions for access and circulation.

The General Plan identifies adequate and convenient parking areas as a key component of the overall transportation system and the Mobility Element calls for evaluation of parking standards and exploration of shared parking strategies and mechanisms for parking facility consolidation.

The Environmental Resources Element recognizes the role of supporting walkable environments and alternative transportation in improving air quality, calling for the prohibition of parking lots along the street front, requiring bicycle parking racks for commercial developments over 2,000 square feet and residential developments over four units, and requiring priority parking spaces for carpools in all office developments.

Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan

Of the City’s planning and regulatory documents, the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan provides the most comprehensive framework for addressing sustainability in mobility

and connectivity. The Plan covers one of the City’s most bustling commercial areas. Poorly planned development has resulted in interrupted traffic flow and parking patterns, a lack of connectivity between projects, a sparse and uninviting streetscape, and unmitigated impacts on adjoining neighborhoods. The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan addresses these issues by concentrating development in nodes that are located in proximity to primary transit stops and corridors and at key intersections, allowing for a diverse mix of land uses, and establishing development standards to achieve pedestrian- and transit-oriented design. Mixed-use development is encouraged. Development standards to support walkability address site design and layout, building form and orientation, and parking and vehicular access. Buildings are generally required to be oriented toward the street with parking located behind or to the side of buildings. New parking facilities are required to be designed to accommodate access to/from adjacent properties to allow them to become joint use facilities even if initially serving only one development, although stakeholders stated this requirement has been difficult to implement.

The Plan establishes parking ratios unique to the Plan Area which are lower than parking ratios required in the Zoning Ordinance. The Plan also allows valet parking for commercial uses and tandem parking for residential uses.

TABLE 1: PARKING REQUIREMENTS – VALLEY BOULEVARD NEIGHBORHOODS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN	
General Commercial and Office	1 space/375 square feet
Restaurants	
Fast food/take out	1 space/300 square feet
Traditional/sit down	1 space/100 square feet
Residential	0-1 bedroom: 1 space/unit 2+ bedroom: 2 spaces/unit 1 guest space per 5 units

Mission District Specific Plan

The Mission District Specific Plan also allows mixed-use and incorporates development standards to create a vibrant mixed-use area where people can dine, shop, work, and live in a walkable, village atmosphere. Mixed-use development is a Conditional Use in all commercial districts. Parking lots serving new development along Mission Drive shall be located behind the buildings but there are no other development standards that specifically address pedestrian orientation such as building orientation, fenestration, or pedestrian connections.

Unique parking space requirement ratios are established for each district within the Specific Plan area. The Mission District Specific Plan establishes a residential parking requirement ratio per *unit* rather than per *bedroom* as is the case in the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. Parking standards allow for common area parking, whereby tenants of a commercial building or center share use of a parking area even though lot lines may bisect the parking area and joint use or shared parking facilities, either on, or offsite when the hours of operation of the uses do not conflict. The Specific Plan also allows tandem parking for mixed-use and live/work developments and certain multifamily residential developments, and

valet parking consistent with a valet parking plan approved by the Police Department and the Community Development Director.

ZONING ORDINANCE

San Gabriel's zoning ordinance primarily follows a Euclidean, or "use-based" zoning scheme. Euclidean zoning schemes divide jurisdictions into districts or zones, wherein certain types and intensities of uses are allowed. This approach tends to separate dissimilar uses, even if they may be complementary. The current ordinance identifies separate zones for residential, commercial and industrial uses. A noteworthy exception to this approach is that mixed-use development—a mixture of commercial, office, and residential uses in a single structure or on a single site—is allowed in the C-1 and C-3 zone districts with Conditional Use Permit approval.

The Zoning Ordinance also establishes basic bulk and dimensional standards, primarily focusing on maximum height and minimum setbacks. The Ordinance lacks requirements specifically aimed at pedestrian orientation and promoting walkability such as those that address building orientation, facade design, transparency and required openings, or pedestrian connections.

Parking

The Zoning Ordinance contains conflicting parking requirements for multi-family residential uses. Section 153.117 requires (1) one covered space plus one uncovered space for each one bedroom unit; (2) two covered spaces and one uncovered space for each two bedroom unit; and (3) two covered spaces plus 1.5 uncovered spaces for each unit containing three or more bedrooms. Section 153.220 requires two spaces per unit plus one guest space for every three units. When guest parking is provided for multi-family development, one van-accessible stall is required. As shown in the table on the next page, the requirements pursuant to Section 153.117 are relatively high, while the parking requirements pursuant to 153.220 are in keeping with those required in neighboring jurisdictions.

TABLE 2: MULTI-FAMILY PARKING REQUIREMENT COMPARISON		
City	Number of Parking Spaces Required	
	Resident Parking	Guest Parking
San Gabriel	Section 153.220: 2 spaces/unit	1 space/3 units
	Section 153.117: 2 spaces for each one bedroom unit; 3 spaces for each two bedroom unit; 3.5 spaces for each unit containing three or more bedrooms	None
Pasadena	1 space/unit < 650 sq. ft.; 2 spaces/unit 650 sq. ft. or larger	1 space/10 units
South Pasadena	1 space/1-bedroom unit; 2 spaces/2+ bedroom units	1 space/2 units
Rosemead	2 spaces/unit	1 space/2 units
Alhambra	2 spaces/unit, with additional spaces for floor area exceeding threshold	1 space/3 units
Monterey Park	2 spaces/1-bedroom or up to 800-sq. ft. unit; 2.5 spaces/2-bedroom or up to 1,000-sq. ft. unit; 3.5 spaces/3-bedroom or up to 1,500-sq. ft. unit; 4 spaces/4-bedroom or up to 2,000-sq. ft. unit; 1 additional space/each additional bedroom.	1 space/4 bedrooms

Although current parking requirements for nonresidential development are also quite high, stakeholders felt that for nonresidential development, parking requirements generally matched actual parking demand and should be kept even though it may be a hindrance to development or expansion of certain uses in certain locations.

The current ordinance does not offer much flexibility in meeting parking requirements. Tandem parking is not allowed. The ordinance establishes provisions for valet parking but does not explicitly state that valet parking counts toward satisfying parking requirements. There are no allowances for parking reductions where special conditions exist—such as the nature of the proposed operation, proximity to transit service, or characteristics of persons residing, working, or visiting—that would reduce parking demand. The City does have a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) ordinance that requires developments of certain sizes to take measures to reduce the number of trips generated by the project. However, there is no allowance for parking reductions for undertaking the TDM program or additional TDM measures that further reduce parking demand.

The current ordinance does allow for the formation of special parking districts whereby such districts have unique parking requirements and development standards. However, there is no similar framework for the payment of an in-lieu fee should an in-lieu fee program be established.

The ordinance also includes measures to encourage shared parking and allows off-site parking. Off-site parking facilities must be within 500 feet of the building or use being served.

Finally, there are no requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, nor can bicycle parking substitute for vehicle parking spaces.

4.2 Issues and Strategies

Many communities provide support for a broad range of strategies to integrate land use and mobility as well as the sustainable use of land through their zoning code. Zoning can address key elements of development that create walkable, connected communities with a mix of uses, buildings that address the street, parking located behind or to the side of buildings, pedestrian connections, and “right-sized” parking.

SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN

Buildings often have entrances and exits that only face their parking lots. Because such entrances can be difficult and dangerous for pedestrians to find and access from the sidewalk, they discourage people from accessing such services by walking. To make sure that building entrances are easily and safely accessible to pedestrians, communities can require that buildings have their main entrance facing the street.

Successful pedestrian areas also minimize the blank, unfriendly expanses created by windowless structures, parking lots, or garages. Areas such as unadorned surface parking lots (empty or full), long blank walls, vacant lots, reflective glass facades, featureless open spaces, and garage doors lined up along the street lack visual interest and can feel oppressive or unsafe to pedestrians, thereby discouraging pedestrian activity. By locating motor vehicle parking behind or underneath buildings so they are not seen from the sidewalk, requiring windows at street level in buildings, and limiting blank walls, communities can make areas more inviting and draw in more pedestrians.

The City of Pasadena requires the primary entrance of each ground-floor use to be located within the primary building frontage. Pasadena also has transparency standards for pedestrian-oriented streets: clear, untinted glass windows should occupy a minimum of 50 percent of the width of the building facade, with a minimum height of eight feet, to allow maximum visual interaction between sidewalk areas and the interior of buildings. These large transparent facades entice shoppers and curiosity among pedestrians by day and window shopping at night. Pasadena’s code also provides parking lot design standards for its business district. Surface parking is not permitted between a public street and the structures it serves; instead, it must be designed in the rear of the structure or side, but this triggers design review.

With mixed-use and commercial developments in its Planned Development Zone, Monterey Park requires direct pedestrian entranceways from the adjoining sidewalk and prohibits at-grade

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *The City’s use regulations are pretty flexible, which is good.*
- *Buildings should face street, not turn their back on the street.*
- *There should be flexible parking requirements. Uses with different hours should be able to share parking, for example restaurants and adjacent schools. The City should allow for more efficient parking, for example valet and tandem parking.*
- *Reduce parking requirements where it makes sense. If you reduce the parking requirement for restaurants, the parking problem will get worse.*
- *Should have bicycle-parking requirements.*

parking adjacent to the pedestrian realm. Similar to requirements in Pasadena, windows and doors of clear glass are to be provided for fifty percent of the linear frontage along key streets.

Rosemead incorporates similar strategies in its Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use Development Overlay and Regional Commercial zones. Commercial uses that have street frontage shall be accessible to the public through the street front entrance during all hours the business is open. Additionally, at-grade parking may not be located between any building and the street frontage.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

With well-planned connectivity and circulation, individuals can choose to walk and bike for more trips. Many cities establish on- and between-site circulation standards in order to provide safe and efficient movement for pedestrians within developments. Eugene, Oregon's zoning code provides on-site pedestrian circulation standards, block length standards (not to exceed 600 feet in most cases), and street connectivity standards. Design standards are set forth for all on-site pedestrian pathways, including requirements for ADA compliance, directness, grade separation from roadways, and pedestrian-scaled lighting. South San Francisco, San Carlos, and Portland, OR require commercial developments provide pedestrian connections between streets and building entrances, between all main entrances on the site, and to other areas, such as parking areas, common outdoor areas, and any pedestrian amenities. The codes provide design standards, including hard surfacing, minimum width, lighting, and landscaping.

With mixed-use and commercial developments in its Planned Development Zone, Monterey Park requires pedestrian connections between various uses, parking, street sidewalks, and public spaces. In Rosemead, pedestrian walkways or sidewalks shall connect all primary building entrances to one another as well as all on-site common areas, parking areas, storage areas, open space, and recreational facilities in the Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use Development Overlay Zone and the Regional Commercial Zone.

OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Jurisdictions have historically established minimum parking requirements to ensure that peak parking demand is met onsite. The outcome in many places has been an excess of parking supply much of the time. A number of cities are now turning to different strategies for more efficient ways of accommodating parking demand. Alternatives to traditional minimum parking requirements include reduced minimum requirements, maximum parking limits, shared parking, and allowances for parking reductions and alternative compliance. Limiting parking capacity through these strategies can encourage more healthy transportation choices; promote efficient use of land; improve the pedestrian environment and aesthetic quality of an area; improve the economic viability of a development project by reducing the overall cost of the project; and protect air and water quality by reducing auto traffic and the coverage of impervious surfaces.

In Kansas City, MO, the Planning Director is authorized to approve alternative compliance parking plans for shared parking, off-site parking, the provision of special facilities for cyclists, valet parking, transportation demand management programs, transit accessibility and permeable pavement. Portland, OR allows a number of exceptions to its minimum parking requirements, including shared-use parking agreements, reductions for areas well served by transit, and bicycle parking, transit-supportive plaza, and motorcycle parking substitutions.

A number of local jurisdictions have adopted similar provisions. Monterey Park allows for a number of strategies to allow alternative compliance with parking space and design requirements. Provisions allow for a reduction in the number of parking spaces required for uses with complementary demand or operating times based on shared and joint use of parking areas. In multi-use parking areas, required parking spaces shall not be reserved for a specific business or person, unless such spaces are in excess of the minimum number of required spaces. Off-site parking is allowed within 300 feet in the Commercial Zone and 500 feet within the Manufacturing Zone. In the Residential Zone, off-site parking is allowed subject to Conditional Use Permit approval. Tandem and valet parking is allowed the Commercial Zone subject to Conditional Use Permit approval. Tandem parking is also allowed within gated communities.

Pasadena has a fairly extensive public parking system in many parts of the City. In areas where a Parking Development Fund is established, the City allows zoning credit parking spaces to be sold or leased in public parking facilities. Applicants may pay into a Parking Development Fund, rather than providing parking on-site. Pasadena also allows for shared parking for uses with different peak demand periods and for off-site parking. Tandem parking is allowed for up to 30 percent of residential parking where both spaces are associated with a single unit. Valet parking is allowed for up to 50 or 75 percent of nonresidential parking, depending on configuration, with discretionary review. Pasadena limits the total amount of parking that may be provided. The number of required spaces may only be exceeded by 50 percent unless a Variance is approved, except in transit-served areas where the number of required spaces may not be exceeded.

South Pasadena also allows for shared parking and for off-site parking (within 1,500 feet). Tandem parking is allowed for residential parking where both spaces are associated with a single unit. Valet parking is allowed in nonresidential districts. In addition to identifying minimum parking requirements, South Pasadena requires Design Review approval to exceed the number of required parking spaces.

BICYCLE PARKING

The provision of bicycle parking encourages and supports bicycling as viable mode of transportation. In addition to simply requiring bicycle parking, many jurisdictions establish standards for the type, design, and location to ensure usability. For example, Boulder, CO requires short and long-term bicycle parking spaces based on square footage of commercial properties or number of dwelling units for residential developments. Standards require that facilities are able to secure both bicycle frames and wheels; cause no damage to bicycles; allow easy locking without interference from or to adjacent bicycles; have sufficient anchoring; are appropriately designed for the environment; are sited in convenient, highly visible, active, well-lighted locations; and do not interfere with pedestrian movements. Short-term bicycle parking—parking for guests and visitors—must be publicly accessible, be located within 50 feet of main building entrances, and be outdoors. Long-term parking facilities to serve employees, commuters, and others who generally stay at a site for four hours or longer require cover, lighting, and secured entry, must be within 300 feet of buildings they serve, and must be clearly marked if provided within an auto parking garage.

Pasadena also requires bicycle parking for any new structure or addition in excess of 15,000 square feet of floor area. The number and type (Class 1, i.e. short-term or Class 2, i.e. long-term)

of parking spaces varies depending on the size and type of use. Standards address anchoring and security and location to ensure visibility and accessibility.

In South Pasadena, bicycle parking shall be provided at a rate of 10 percent of the required vehicle spaces for multi-family uses and a minimum of two spaces up to a rate of five percent of the required vehicle spaces for retail commercial uses. Each bicycle parking space shall include a stationary parking device to adequately support the bicycle. Spaces shall be conveniently located, generally near the entrance of the main structure and shall be separated from motor vehicle parking spaces or aisles by a fence, wall, or curb, or by at least five feet of open area, marked to prohibit motor vehicle parking.

In the Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use Development Overlay Zone and the Regional Commercial Zone, Rosemead requires bicycle parking spaces equal to ten and three percent, respectively, of required off-street parking, with a minimum of eight bicycle parking spaces per residential/commercial mixed-use development. Bicycle parking facilities are required to be securely anchored and separated by a physical barrier to protect the bicycle from damage by motor vehicles if located within a vehicle parking area.

4.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- PMC-1** **Allow mixed-use development subject to the highest permit level required for any individual use that is part of the project.** The current code allows mixed-use development but requires a Conditional Use Permit, regardless of whether a Conditional Use Permit is required for any individual portion of the project. Mixed-use development could instead be subject to the highest permit level required by for any individual use (e.g. if any single component requires a Conditional Use Permit, the whole project would be subject to Conditional Use Permit approval). As a result, a mixed-use development that doesn't have any uses requiring a Conditional Use Permit will therefore not require a Conditional Use Permit.
- PMC-2** **Establish development standards that create walkable environments.** Development standards should address key elements of pedestrian-oriented design such as building orientation, fenestration, and the location of parking. Buildings should be oriented to face public streets and provide ample windows and openings to engage the pedestrian. Building frontages should be generally parallel to streets, and the primary building entrance should be located on a public street. Parking should be located behind or to the side of buildings. Standards for shading can also create more walkable environments.
- PMC-3** **Require pedestrian connections.** On-site access and circulation standards should be set which require a system of pedestrian walkways that connect all buildings on a site to each other, to on-site parking areas, and open space or pedestrian amenities. Regular connections should also be provided to the public sidewalk as well as to adjoining commercial and residential areas. Walkway standards should include requirements for minimum width, paving, grade separations, bollards, landscaping,

lighting, or other means to clearly delineate pedestrian areas for both day and night use

- PMC-4 Clarify residential parking requirements.** Establish one set of parking requirements for residential uses. Maintain the parking requirements established in Section 153.220, Number of Parking Spaces Required, for single family and multi-family uses. Delete conflicting requirements located in other sections of the Zoning Ordinance.
- PMC-5 Expand the use of parking reductions.** San Gabriel could allow for reductions in parking where special conditions exist—such as the nature of the proposed operation, proximity to transit service, or characteristics of persons residing, working, or visiting—or elements are provided that would reduce parking demand. Elements that qualify for parking reductions could include transportation demand management measures beyond those already required, proximity to transit, provision of bicycle and/or motorcycle parking, and shared parking.
- PMC-6 Allow for the payment of fees in-lieu of providing parking.** The Zoning Ordinance can establish a framework for the payment of a fee in-lieu of providing parking on-site should an in-lieu fee program be established. In-lieu fees could then be used for public parking areas or other programs to reduce parking impacts.
- PMC-7 Allow alternative parking configurations that provide for efficient use of space.** Allow tandem parking for parking spaces associated with a single residential unit and clarify that valet parking counts toward required number of parking spaces.
- PMC-8 Exempt small retail establishments from parking requirements.** Provide an across-the-board exemption from the off-street parking requirement for retail businesses under a certain size. The majority of the parking demand in commercial areas is due to restaurants, not small retail establishments. Alleviating small retail establishments from providing parking can help fill vacant storefronts.
- PMC-9 Require bicycle parking.** Consistent with General Plan policies, the City could require bicycle parking racks for commercial developments over 2,000 square feet and residential developments over four units and provide standards for the number, type (short-term/long-term), and location and design of bicycle parking. These requirements should compliment the requirements in the Green Code. The City could also allow a reduction in the number of required parking spaces where the applicant provides bicycle parking.
- PMC-10 Provide parking credits for nonconforming businesses.** To support the continued occupancy of existing buildings, the City currently employs a practice called "ascribed parking". Ascribed parking is where a new business moves into a building where the existing use had a legal nonconforming parking deficiency and is credited the number of required automobile parking spaces unmet by the previous use, even if there is currently little or no on-site parking. This practice should be codified.

5 Water Quality



Stormwater management techniques.

Many California communities face the challenge of balancing water quality protection with accommodating new growth and development. Conventional development practices cover large areas with impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways, and buildings. Once such development occurs, rainwater cannot infiltrate into the ground. Instead it runs off the land at much higher levels than would naturally occur. The collective force of this runoff carries large quantities of sediment and other pollutants into the drainage and sewer system. Many communi-

ties now require new projects to incorporate green infrastructure, such as new regulations to promote stormwater retention, filtration, or reuse. Techniques for improving water quality and reducing run-off and stormwater pollution include allowing rain barrels, rain gardens, bioswales, and water harvesting facilities in some side and rear setbacks and explicitly permitting green roofs in some zoning districts. Generally, cities need standards to encourage or require better retention, detention of water on site from streets, sidewalks, and all hardscape so that water can infiltrate into the soil rather than run off the site. They are also creating incentives for provision of additional creative approaches to stormwater management, such as Low-Impact Development (LID), an approach that emphasizes the conservation and use of on-site features to protect water quality. The most frequently used LID practices include bioretention cells, rain barrels, green roofs, pervious concrete, and bioswales.

5.1 Existing Setting

Stormwater that does not soak into the ground is collected into San Gabriel's storm drain system. This runoff is then conveyed to waterways through a vast network of inlets, pipes, channels, basins, bridges, and support facilities that are maintained by the City, the County, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Stormwater runoff contains many types of pollutants from the urban and industrial landscape, yet does not receive treatment in most cases, and is the single largest source of surface water pollution. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Program controls water pollution by regulating point of pollutants. The California Water Board issues NPDES

permits to dischargers of municipal stormwater runoff. San Gabriel is covered by a Los Angeles Countywide NPDES Permit, including a Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), to plan for urban runoff and pollutants. All new development projects in the City are required to comply with the NPDES Permit, and in some cases, with the SUSMP. The City adopted its Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Ordinance, Chapter 53 of the Municipal Code, to comply with the Clean Water Act, to protect and improve water quality of receiving water, and to reduce pollutant volume in stormwater and urban runoff from land uses and activities identified in the municipal NPDES permit. At a minimum, projects are required to be sand-bagged (minimum two bags high) to prevent run-off into the public right of way. Additional BMPs may be needed depending on the size and extent of development. Over the next several years, the City will be working on preparing a stormwater master plan to inventory, analyze, and improve stormwater quality, drainage, and flood control in the City.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

General Plan

General Plan Goal 8.4 is to encourage the conservation and protection of water quality within San Gabriel. Individual targets include reducing the amount of storm water runoff by updating the City's Best Management Practices, directing runoff from rooftops and other areas, and encourage property owners to use paving surfaces that reduce the amount of urban storm water runoff. Strategies identified to meet water quality goals include amending the Municipal Code to allow for modifications—or minor variances—to lot coverage figures if a project incorporates alternative paving systems that reduce urban storm water runoff.

The General Plan also includes direction to decrease the amount of impervious surfaces to aid in on-site retention of stormwater. Paved areas in new developments should be minimized and interspersed with landscaping and where feasible, turf block, decomposed granite, or similar permeable surfaces should be used rather than conventional pavement.

Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan

The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan recognizes the impact of paving for surface parking on water quality. All projects are encouraged to use “porous” paving materials to the extent possible. The Plan also recognizes that techniques for sustainable development protect water quality, and specifies that landscapes should be designed to allow stormwater to soak into the soil, recharge groundwater systems and filter out pollutants. Accordingly, the Sustainable Energy and Green Building Standards regulate and support the implementation of green building site requirements and landscape techniques for sustainable development. All on-grade surface parking lots shall be “porous paving” for a minimum 30 percent of the paved surface (such as permeable concrete, grasscrete, or other permeable pavers, appropriately detailed decomposed granite surfaces), and landscape filter strips should be designed to catch the drainage from impervious surfaces and landscaped with vegetation that will filter sediment and pollution from the stormwater. Rainwater should be collected on site by incorporating infiltration basins into the landscape. Regarding residential water quality, landscapes should use permeable paving for walkways, plazas, patios, and driveways, which allows some water to percolate through the paving.

The Plan also establishes landscape requirements. The primary ground cover is required to be lawn. Thirty to 50 percent of the front yard may be hardscape, consisting of brick, stone, interlocking concrete pavers, textured concrete and/or impressed patterned concrete.

The Plan limits roof materials to metal seam roofing, corrugated metal roofing, terra cotta or concrete tile, and tar and gravel (on flat roofs only). Green roofs are not listed.

Mission District Specific Plan

The Mission District Specific Plan's stormwater management requirements defer to the federal NPDES program to reduce pollutants in stormwater. It acknowledges "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) have been developed by the state, are implemented through the county permit process, and are carried out by local government. City inspectors enforce NPDES requirements, which cover the following types of projects: Commercial development with over 100,000 square feet of impermeable area, free-standing restaurants, parking lots with 5,000 square feet or more than 25 parking spaces, creation or addition of over 5,000 square foot of impervious surfaces on any already developed site, or 10 or more residential units. Currently, the City Engineer is responsible for determining on a case-by-case basis specific BMPs to be required on each of the above types of projects in the Mission District.

Noteworthy, in its discussion of Mission District urban design, the Plan identifies paving as an opportunity to enhance the pedestrian experience, including the use of decorative paving in the color of Prairie Red along Mission Drive, Santa Anita Avenue, and Junipero Serra Drive. The Plan does not provide direction on whether this paving should be pervious or permeable, but it does suggest other decorative paving could also be used on private walkways and public sidewalks to emphasize pedestrian pathways and provide further enhancements.

ZONING ORDINANCE

Current regulations do not encourage pervious surfaces or other measures to improve water quality. Parking, driveway, and other areas are required to be paved, but no mention is made of pervious, porous, or permeable paving to satisfy these requirements. In fact, Section 153.037 requires driveways to be of an impervious surface.

The Zoning Ordinance includes development standards for the improvements of parking areas. In addition to requiring parking areas to be paved, a certain portion is required to be landscaped. The parking lot landscape standards similarly specify a landscaped strip of ornamental trees, shrubs, and ground cover, separated from vehicular areas and street rights-of-way by a concrete curb at least six inches high, irrigated with a permanent automatic sprinkling system. Off street parking areas are required to have adequate grading and drainage, as approved by the Community Development Director. The Zoning Ordinance does not provide direction for directing drainage into the required landscape areas which would assist in on-site stormwater retention.

The current ordinance does not recognize many features related to water quality and on-site retention of stormwater. Allowed projections into setbacks do not include rainwater collection or grey water systems. Green roofs, which can improve stormwater quality and reduce runoff volumes, are not yet contemplated. In fact, green roofs would not be allowed in the R-1 district

which requires roofs to be constructed with woodshake, shingle, asphalt composition, tile (i.e. slate, concrete, clay), or other similar roofing material.

Commercial and Industrial Zones (C-1, C-3, and M-1) performance standards specify that the construction of any new building and all activities shall comply with stormwater runoff regulations and NPDES requirements. No mention of similar requirement for development and activities in other zones is made, even though compliance with stormwater runoff regulations and NPDES requirements is applicable citywide.

The regulations in the Zoning Ordinance are complimented by design guidelines. The Sustainability Section at the end of each set of Design Guidelines address water quality and identify strategies to reduce development stormwater runoff impacts on the quantity and quality of our water resources such as the use of permeable paving for drives, parking lot, and outdoor patio surfaces.

5.2 Issues and Strategies

Reducing the amount of pervious surface is a key strategy to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality. More efficient use of parking and reducing the amount of land dedicated to surface parking, as discussed in Section 4, can help reduce the overall amount of impervious surfaces. Other strategies include requiring, allowing, or incentivizing LID strategies such as rain harvesting, green roofs, functional grading, and permeable paving.

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *On-site drainage solutions should be encouraged. This would decrease runoff into city streets and sewers.*
- *The City should look at more 'environmentally friendly' ways of allowing hard-scape and zero-scape.*
- *The City should offer alternatives for driveway paving. Do not require concrete.*

Many communities, including Los Angeles County, have prepared LID Manuals to show site planners and engineers a wide array of simple cost-effective techniques that focus on site-level hydrologic control, describe those techniques and provide examples and descriptions of how they work, and contain for particular types of projects. Other communities, such as Duarte, incorporate stormwater runoff control measures directly into ordinance requirements.

Rain Harvesting

Rainwater harvesting refers to the practices of using rain barrels, cisterns and storage tanks to collect and store rainwater for various uses, including irrigating plants. Rain barrels are most often used for individual residences, while cisterns have both residential and commercial applications. Initial runoff volume (first flush) is retained by rain barrels and cisterns, ranging from approximately 50 gallons to several thousand for a large cistern. Many communities are amending their zoning and development codes to expressly allow rain barrels to encroach into required zoning setbacks. Portland, OR, allows water collection cisterns under six feet in height in side and rear setbacks.

Bioretention (Bioswales and Rain Gardens)

Bioretention areas are typically small, landscaped basins that filter stormwater runoff as the water seeps through mulch, soil and gravel layers and releases the filtered water into the ground. The areas can be sized to detain and infiltrate stormwater that would otherwise flow into the storm drainage system and into natural bodies of water. Bioretention is suitable for commercial and residential areas to filter run-off from roofs, driveways, roads and parking lots.

Communities have been looking at different ways to provide for bioretention. Washington D.C. is considering including requirements that some portion of the planting areas function as stormwater capture areas, rather than being walled off by concrete curbs. Seattle, WA allows rain gardens as part of stormwater management systems and landscaping.

Green Roofs

Green roofs are another option to reduce runoff and filter pollutants. A green roof is a permanent roof-top planting system that allows live plants to cover a significant portion of a building's roof. Some communities are not only allowing green roofs as acceptable roofing materials, but incentivizing or requiring their use. Henderson, NV, allows green roofs as an alternative to other permitted roof forms and grants points in its sustainability point review system for installation of cool or vegetated roofs. Portland, OR gives a floor bonus for a green roof. Emeryville, CA is considering a similar strategy. Chicago, IL requires every Planned Unit Development to have a green roof. Green roofs can also be encouraged by allowing them to count toward required landscaped areas.

Paving

Permeable paving refers to paving materials—typically concrete or stone—that promote absorption of rain and snowmelt. Depending on soil conditions permeable pavement can be very effective in reducing the quantity of surface runoff, particularly for small to moderate-sized storms. Many communities are looking at ways to encourage or require permeable pavement. Philadelphia requires that new development minimize impervious surface. It also requires all new development manage at least one inch of stormwater on-site.

The design of paved areas can also affect the amount of stormwater runoff. Duarte establishes design provisions to help retain stormwater. Site grading is required to maximize the amount of stormwater runoff directed to permeable areas by orienting roof runoff and utilize rain gutters for collecting/directing runoff to collection devices (i.e., cisterns and rain barrels), planter areas, greens strips, vegetated swales, permeable surfaces, drywells, French drains, or other structural Best Management Practices rather than directly onto driveways or non-permeable surfaces, with the objective of allowing runoff to penetrate into the ground on-site instead of flowing off site. Curbs, berms, and the like are to be removed or designed to avoid isolation of permeable or landscaped areas, as feasible.

Additionally, surface parking spaces for new residential and commercial development may be met with alternative forms of paving, such as porous concrete/asphalt, Hollywood driveways, block pavers, open cell concrete, plastic grid systems, or reinforced turf to facilitate groundwater percolation.

5.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- WQ-1 Remove barriers to providing on-site runoff retention and filtration features.** Identify green roofs as an acceptable roofing treatment and allow them to count toward required landscaping. Specifically allow water retention features such as rain barrels, small bioswales, and cisterns to project into setback areas.
- WQ-2 Where feasible, require drainage to be directed toward landscaped areas.** Lot and parking lot development standards could require site drainage to be directed toward landscaped areas. Breaks in required curbing should be provided to allow drainage to flow through.
- WQ-3 Explicitly allow the use of permeable materials for parking lots and driveways.** The Zoning Ordinance should specifically state that permeable materials may be used for parking areas and driveways. The Zoning Ordinance could include an approach similar to the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan which requires 30 percent of the total parking area be paved with permeable materials. Alternatively, the Zoning Ordinance could provide incentives to use permeable paving such as granting landscaping credit for paving a certain percentage of the total parking area with permeable materials.
- WQ-4 Provide a list of “City-approved” permeable material for driveways and parking lots.** The list could include a discussion of the appropriate use of different materials such as permeable interlocking concrete pavers, and Porous asphalt and concrete.
- WQ-5 Clarify threshold for conformance with current parking lot design standards.** The Zoning Ordinance should identify thresholds for when existing parking lots need to be retrofitted to meet current parking lot design standards, including requirements for landscaping and shading.

Supplemental strategies beyond the scope of zoning for consideration

- WQ-6 Develop a Stormwater Management Plan and Best Management Practices (BMPs) for typical projects.** The City should develop a manual that contains specific recommendations and criteria to be considered to manage stormwater and offer best practices and strategies that are most suited to local conditions.

6 Resource Conservation



Shade provided by awnings.

For many people, interest in sustainability is due in large part to the recognition that the demands of a growing human population are exceeding the capacities of Earth's natural resources. The design and construction of the built environment impacts our use of non-renewable natural resources. Communities can be designed to reduce dependency on the automobile and increase trees and green space. Buildings can be constructed with materials, architectural design features, and interior fixtures and finishings to reduce energy and water consumption, toxic and chemical pollution, and waste.

Energy efficiency and renewable energy is another important component of sustainability. Our dependency on fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural gas, has grown. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that more than 85 percent of the energy consumed in the United States comes from fossil fuels. This includes nearly two-thirds of our electricity, and virtually all of our transportation fuels. Over 63 percent of all oil that the nation uses is imported, a trend that has fueled growing national security concerns. Energy generation from fossil fuels is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, which have been linked to global warming and health impacts from air pollution.

The most effective approach in improving energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy is simply to reduce energy use through implementing energy efficiency strategies for buildings, lighting, and mechanical equipment. Once a building and its equipment are made efficient, the next strategy is to provide the remaining energy that the building requires from renewable sources such as solar and wind. Improving resource conservation practices and promoting greater use of renewable energy resources can help reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases and foster a more energy-independent and sustainable city.

6.1 Existing Setting

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

General Plan targets and actions call for the encouragement of energy conservation and creation of urban landscapes that will reduce heat and solar gain. The Mission District Specific Plan is silent on energy conservation and renewables. Development standards require utility equipment, rooftop equipment, trash enclosures, and other equipment or structures that could create unsightly background as seen from a historic site or cultural resource to be concealed in development adjacent to cultural or historical resources. While not specifically listed, it is reasonable this standard would apply to renewable energy features such as solar panels.

The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan contains extensive policies and standards for sustainable energy and green building. There are numerous standards and policies that address each element of development, including building site design, landscape techniques, building envelope, indoor air quality, materials, water use, energy efficiency, heating, venting, and air conditioning, and construction management.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance is silent on renewable energy sources like solar hot water heaters, PV panels, and wind energy mechanisms. Each residential district has a maximum height, and height is measured to the “highest point of the structure or appurtenances thereto.” Commercial and industrial districts also have development standards with building height maximums, with height similarly measured, and allow exceptions to the height limit for “architectural features that do not provide any usable floor area” such as skylights and flagpoles. Structures are not permitted within any yard areas, and no projections are allowed into public rights of way, except for “architectural adornments” such as cornices, eaves, and window sills which can protrude five inches for each foot of required yard and chimneys are allowed to extend four feet. Exceptions for solar panels, whether in height, setback, or public right of way do not appear available in any of the districts. The Zoning Ordinance is also silent on cool roofs, reflective building materials, awnings, and other techniques to provide shading and reduce heat retention. Roofs are to be constructed with woodshake, shingle, asphalt composition, tile (i.e. slate, concrete, clay), or other similar roofing material as approved by the Community Development Director and the Fire Marshal.

The Zoning Ordinance specifies minimum floor area for dwelling units. In the R-1 zone there is also a minimum site area of 7,260 square feet, minimum lot width of 50 feet, and minimum dwelling width of 20 feet. In the multifamily residential R-3 zones the minimum size of one bedroom units is 880 square feet, two bedroom units is 1,100 square feet, and three bedroom units is 1,320 square feet.

Solar Energy Collectors Ordinance

In its Building Regulations chapter in Title XV of San Gabriel’s Municipal Code, the City has adopted the Solar Energy Collectors Ordinance, to regulate the construction, installation, and appearance of solar energy systems. This ordinance defines “solar energy collectors,” as equip-

ment designed for the purpose of “collecting, storing, or transferring solar energy.” The ordinance specifies that they cannot be visible from any street or thoroughfare. The ordinance also sets forth standards for roof-mounted solar energy collector panels, in that they are required to be parallel to the roof, no more than 2.5 inches from the roof, panel frames cannot extend more than four inches from the panel, and all related equipment must be installed below the roof line and not visible from any street. If a property owner desires to seek relief from these standards, they may apply for an exception through the Minor Modifications process in the Zoning Ordinance.

6.2 Issues and Strategies

Many local governments have found that modifications to zoning ordinances can facilitate renewable energy, increase energy efficiency, and help preserve and protect natural resources. The most effective approach in improving energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy is simply to reduce energy use through implementing energy efficiency strategies for buildings, lighting, and mechanical equipment. These practices are regulated in the building code and other related ordinances on energy conservation and green buildings. Once a building and its equipment are made efficient, the next strategy is to provide the remaining energy that the building requires from renewable sources such as solar and wind. Additionally, allowing smaller housing sizes promotes more efficient use of land and promotes development types that typically use less energy and resources.

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *The code should make solar and energy-efficient types of building materials easier.*
- *There is a cultural preference for dark red roofing instead of light roofing materials. This is contrary to cool roof goals.*

SOLAR ENERGY

San Gabriel has enviable solar potential, with direct sunlight and warm temperatures prevalent most of the year. The energy from the sun can be harnessed through solar technology, with both solar hot water heaters and solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, which convert sunlight into electricity.

Development standards that promote solar energy systems provide a clear path to approving solar hot water heaters and PV panels, and remove regulatory barriers as well. By incorporating reasonable design standards in urban neighborhoods and historic districts, aesthetic objections can be overcome. Saratoga, CA has developed a sustainability glossary of terms, which has definitions for PV panels, energy efficiency, and renewable energy facilities. Denver permits solar and PV energy systems as an accessory structure subject to building form standards for accessory structures. Fort Collins, CO does not allow prohibitions or limits to be set on solar collectors. Salt Lake City allows “green building improvements” such as the addition of solar panels, on nonconforming uses and structures. It also adopted a hierarchy of preferred locations for solar panels on historic sites, but may be allowed on front yard roofs as last resort. Henderson, NV has created a sustainability point review system and grants points for proper solar orientation and additional points if twenty percent of energy is generated on-site from renewable sources. Los

Angeles now allows structures that “solely support solar energy systems,” for example solar panels built over parking lots or open spaces, by including installation of panels above height limits in the zoning code and reconfiguring parking space requirements so parking stall specifications can be reduced to accommodate the solar panels.

COOL ROOFS AND REFLECTIVE MATERIALS

There are many benefits to keeping a building’s surface cooler, including air-conditioning energy and demand savings, energy bill savings, increased human comfort both indoors and outdoors, and other positive impacts on urban environmental quality. On sunny warm days, a typical roof surface can reach temperatures that are nearly 100° F above the ambient temperature. Roofs or siding that have a high solar reflectivity level work to lower surface temperatures by reducing the amount of sunlight and heat absorbed by buildings. Many communities, including San Gabriel, have modified their codes to require or incentivize cool roofing materials. Pleasanton, CA adopted residential cool roofing requirements that require altered exterior surface area of existing roofs be replaced with a certified cool roof product. Henderson, NV grants points in its sustainability point review system for cool roofs. Chicago created a white roof requirement for all new and replaced roofs on city buildings. Miami requires a minimum solar reflectance for all roofing materials specific to the slope of the roof.

In the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan, all projects are required to specify and install an Energy Star labeled roof except that projects may install non-Energy Star labeled roofing in such portions of the project where a green vegetated roof system and/or a photovoltaic array covers and protects roofing material. The Plan notes that Energy Star labeled roofs are available in virtually every roofing type—built-up, single ply, tile and/or metal—and in many alternative colors and finishes. This standard could be expanded to apply citywide.

AWNINGS

External shading is a particularly effective strategy for reducing heat gain before it impacts the heating and cooling loads of the occupied portion of the building. External shading also addresses the problem of glare caused by direct solar access. Awnings and overhangs not only help shade a building, they can also provide relief from direct sunlight for pedestrians. Alhambra allows awnings to project up to four feet into the required setback area.

HEAT ISLAND

More than almost any other American urban center, the greater Los Angeles area suffers seriously from the heat island effect caused when all of the dark, non-reflective surfaces of streets and parking lots absorb the heat from the sun and radiate it back into the surrounding environment. The result is a rise of 10° F or more in the ambient temperature and an increased reliance on air-conditioning that in turn consumes greater quantities of energy. Dark paving such as asphalt is a major contributor to the heat island effect. All projects should therefore encourage the use of various shading techniques.

In order to reduce ambient surface temperatures in parking areas, South San Francisco requires at least 50 percent of the areas not landscaped to be shaded, of light colored materials with a So-

lar Reflectance Index (SRI) of at least 29, or a combination of shading and light colored materials. Shade may be provided by canopies, shade structures, trees, or other equivalent mechanism.

UNIT SIZE

Reducing parcel and unit size can allow for more units and more efficient use of the land and resources. While the overall size of housing has increased, the demand for smaller housing units is also rising. Many jurisdictions do not establish a minimum unit size in their zoning regulations. Unit size is determined by owner preference, market demand, and building code requirements. Some communities with minimum unit size requirements are reducing or limiting the requirements altogether. Berkeley, CA has approved 400 square foot homes. Santa Maria, CA has established an “efficiency” unit size, and reduced its requirement from 220 to 150 square feet. Even Beverly Hills is recognizing a need to accommodate smaller housing units, recommending the unit size of one bedroom be reduced from 1,000 square feet to 600-800 square feet depending on the district.

6.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- RC-1 Permit ground mounted and freestanding solar energy systems.** Allowing ground mounted and freestanding solar energy systems in certain districts subject to location, height, surface area, and other limitations can facilitate appropriate installations of larger solar energy systems such as solar panels built over parking lots. In determining appropriate districts and standards, potential hazards and compatibility issues should be evaluated.
- RC-2 Allow more flexible height allowances for solar panels.** The Solar Energy Collectors Ordinance specifies solar panels must be parallel to the roof, not greater than 2.5 inches from the roof, and not visible from the street. However, depending on the site and building orientation, a steeper pitch for the panels might be desirable to harness more energy.
- RC-3 Require cool roofs.** The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan requirement for all roofs to be Energy Star labeled is already addressed in the 2008 Energy Standards. The City could exceed these requirements and require all roofs to exceed 2008 Energy Standards.
- RC-4 Amend parking lot design standards to reduce the heat gain.** Require at least 50 percent of paved parking areas to be shaded, of light colored materials, or a combination of shading and light colored materials in order to reduce ambient surface temperatures in parking areas. Shade could be provided by canopies, shade structures, trees, or other equivalent mechanism.
- RC-5 Allow limited encroachments into setback areas and public rights-of-way in pedestrian areas where buildings are constructed at the property line.** The Zoning Ordinance should specify how far an awning can project and under what circumstances.

RC-6 **Eliminate minimum residential unit size requirements.** The City should allow residential unit size to be determined by owner preference, market demand, and building code requirements.

7 Urban Agriculture



Community garden.

Concerns of climate change, rising food costs, and increasing health and nutritional concerns about our food supply have triggered a new movement in urban agriculture. “Urban agriculture” is an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of activities from backyard gardens to small farms involving the raising, cultivation, processing, marketing, and distribution of food in urban areas. In many cities, urban agriculture consists of backyard gardens, community gardens, bee keeping, and poultry raising. Other communities allow urban farms; enterprises that grow produce on a larger, more intensive scale for sale. While the approach may differ, urban agriculture is an important and innovative tool communities are using to address food security, environmental issues, and the need for green space in an urban setting. Benefits of urban agriculture include such things as:

approach may differ, urban agriculture is an important and innovative tool communities are using to address food security, environmental issues, and the need for green space in an urban setting. Benefits of urban agriculture include such things as:

- **Urban Ecosystem:** Gardens restore oxygen to the air and help reduce air pollution, reduce soil erosion and runoff, filter rainwater and stormwater, and reduce the “heat island” effect which in turn helps to lower energy use.
- **Community Health and Pride:** Urban agriculture not only increases community access to healthier food, such as fruits and vegetables, it also encourages working outside as a form of outdoor recreation and serves as a source of social interaction and community pride. For example with community gardens, residents have the opportunity to socialize and exercise and add green space by putting underutilized land to productive use.
- **Cultural Opportunities:** Community gardens offer unique opportunities to establish relationships within and across physical and social barriers. In places like San Gabriel, where there are large communities of first and second generation immigrants, community gardens provide a space for inter-generational exposure to cultural traditions, and overall positive social outlets in a larger neighborhood context.
- **Economic Development:** If residents are allowed to grow and sell their own produce, entrepreneurship opportunities rise, and farmers markets or produce stands could be a draw and bring customers to commercial corridors. Residents would be more likely to shop in their community, and support their neighbors and local businesses.

- **Climate Change:** Urban agriculture promotes environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions caused by transporting food over long distances. In addition to gas pollution, there is the added effect of the waste associated with the processing and packaging of food products. Thus consuming food produced in one's own community reduces the carbon footprint of food production and transportation.

Related to community health and community gardening are farmer's markets and farm stands. Generally, farmer's markets are organized retail places, both indoors and out. They sell farm or garden produce (usually along with other retail items) made available to the public in designated, and oftentimes, public places and right of ways. Farm stands are considered to be of a smaller scale, especially in suburban/semi-rural areas, where the farmer/gardener can sell their produce directly on their property. Allowing and encouraging these types of uses can promote healthier lifestyles, and better nutrition, and has the added benefit of fostering community amenities that enhance the quality of life for urban dwellers.

As the urban agriculture movement has gained momentum, many communities are finding their zoning and development codes do not accommodate local food production in urban areas. Traditionally, zoning and development codes dealt with growing fresh produce as farming uses allowable in agricultural zones. Rarely has it been integrated or addressed in urban areas. This lack of attention results in codes having some inadvertent barriers to growing local food.

7.1 Existing Setting

San Gabriel has articulated its quest to become a more sustainable city; it has only just begun to develop the framework for local food production. Residents and stakeholders have expressed their desire for community gardens, farmers markets, and urban gardening, which all concern the local production and sale of food, yet the opportunities to create this more sustainable lifestyle are not easy to accomplish given the City's current land use regulations and policies. Urban agriculture in San Gabriel is primarily an informal practice done by landowners in their private yards. There is no policy direction related directly to urban agriculture and local food production. In fact some of the current regulations appear to deter or obstruct the implementation of key strategies for increasing local food accessibility.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The San Gabriel General Plan, Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan, and Mission District Specific Plan include policies and direction related to creating livable communities, achieving sustainability, improving public health, and increasing access to parks and open spaces; all of which relate to urban agriculture. However, the City has not articulated an urban agriculture policy and these policy documents provide little direct support for the land use and operations for food production, community gardening, and farmer's markets.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

San Gabriel's development regulations do not explicitly encourage sustainable food production. There are no incentives to help landowners grow food on their own property. The Zoning Ordinance does specify that flower and vegetable gardening, including for the purposes of propaga-

tion and culture, is permitted by right in Residential districts, however it is not allowed to be sold or advertised. There are no clear exceptions to allow structures that facilitate backyard food production, such as rain barrels and gray water systems, to be located in side and rear setbacks. It is also unclear whether vegetable gardening is allowed in front yards or if garden areas count toward open space or landscaped area requirements. Composting or community gardens are not addressed. Additionally, flower and vegetable gardening is not listed as a permitted or conditionally permitted use in the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan or the Mission District Specific Plan causing uncertainty whether flower and vegetable gardening is an allowed use within these districts.

Animal raising and keeping for purposes of food production is also limited. Municipal Code Chapter 92, Animals, is rather restrictive on the keeping of animals in the City, prohibiting beekeeping and the keeping of just about any kind of animal except dogs and cats.

Farmer's markets are not regulated consistently in the Zoning Ordinance, Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan, and the Mission District Specific Plan. Open-air markets held on a recurring basis, including farmer's markets, are allowed in Commercial and Industrial Districts with Conditional Use Permit approval while single-event markets are allowed with a Temporary Use Permit. The Mission District Specific Plan allows single-event open-air markets with a Temporary Use Permit but does not mention recurring open air markets. It is unclear whether farmer's markets held on a recurring basis would be allowed as they are not listed as permitted or conditionally permitted uses within the district. Open-air markets are not listed as a permitted use in the Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan causing uncertainty whether farmer's markets would be allowed in this area.

7.2 Issues and Strategies

Urban agriculture can contribute to healthy communities by engaging residents in a productive activity that provides healthy food, a closer connection to the natural environment, the potential for entrepreneurship, and a stronger understanding of the food system. Many cities have started taking urban food barriers out of their zoning code, in order to

encourage or protect it and establishing appropriate design, location, and performance requirements to ensure compatibility. San Francisco defines neighborhood agriculture in their zoning code, specifying that it occupy less than one acre for food or crops to be harvested, and can be inside or outside the home or on a roof garden. San Francisco also allows the sale of that produce, specifying that sale may occur on-site or on vacant property, but not occur within a dwelling unit and regulates compost area location, fencing, mechanized farm equipment, and sale hours.

Portland, OR provides bonus incentives, such as density or height, for roof gardens, which can include edible landscaping. Salt Lake City and Sacramento have amended their zoning code to remove barriers to vegetable gardening in residential front yards. Los Angeles County's Healthy

Sample Stakeholder Comments:

- *Many people here love fruits and vegetables. Gardens should be encouraged.*
- *Don't hear a lot about green space related to sustainability, for example community gardens.*

Design Ordinance proposes changes to streamline the process to establish farmers' markets and community gardens. The City of Escondido adopted a zoning amendment to make vacant land available for community gardens. Similar strategies can increase the priority and ease of food production, and ensure that urban agricultural practices are compatible with neighboring uses in San Gabriel.

ANIMAL KEEPING

Addressing nuisance issues related to urban agriculture—especially regarding the keeping of livestock (chickens, ducks, goats, small pigs, etc.)—is often a major concern for communities. However, by carefully placing limits on the number and species of animals allowed and by limiting the intensity of animal use to appropriate zones, many cities have successfully protected adjacent neighbors from potential odor, noise, or hygiene concerns.

Pasadena, South Pasadena, and La Cañada-Flintridge all allow residents to keep fowl under strict guidelines. For example, in Pasadena the maximum number of chickens on a property is 10, and they cannot be kept within 50 feet of a property line. Roosters over four months old are not allowed. In La Cañada-Flintridge, most residences are limited to three chickens, though people with larger lots can have more, and roosters over two months are prohibited. San Marino is currently considering permitting chickens, with regulations covering attention to coop size and location, the number of chickens to allow, discouraging commercial gain and possibly requiring a permit. Portland allows up to three chickens, ducks, doves, pygmy goats, or rabbits without a permit, but residents can get a special use permit for a small-scale livestock facility with the permission of property owners within 150 feet of the site.

Bees are critical for healthy produce and are an important component of the urban agriculture movement. First Lady Michelle Obama helped propel a beekeeping movement last year when she started an organic garden at the White House, complete with two hives. Many communities allow the keeping of bees. Alhambra and Monterey Park allow up to three hives which must be located at least 100 feet from any residence. South Pasadena also allows up to three hives and requires the hives to be located at least 200 feet from an outdoor pool. Other communities, including San Gabriel, prohibit bee keeping. In response to the increasing interest in bee keeping, many communities have looked at ways to allow the keeping of bees while addressing health and safety concerns that arise.

Denver, CO recently revised its zoning code to allow beekeeping on residential lots. Beekeeping is also legal in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco, among other cities. Madison, WI is considering allowing residents to keep up to six hives, with certain restrictions, such as forbidding hives bigger than 10 cubic feet, and setbacks of 15 feet from a property line, 40 feet from a sidewalk or principal building on an abutting lot. If the hive is within 25 feet of the property line, there must be a "flyway" barrier at least six feet high and 20 feet long, requiring the bees to fly up instead of directly into a neighbor's yard. There also must be a constant supply of water.

Beekeepers Association of Southern California has begun to educate the public about bees, beekeeping, and the beneficial products made by the bees. Santa Monica recently began allowing beekeeping in single-family residential areas. The new ordinance allows up to two hives on residential property. Hives must be kept five feet from a property line, be provided a water source,

and have a six-foot screen, fence, or some kind of vegetation to make sure the bees fly up before they fly out. Otherwise, the hive can be kept eight feet up without a screen.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens provide opportunities for residents to grow their own food in a neighborhood setting while promoting healthy eating, physical activity, and community interaction. They also offer opportunities to grow healthy food for those in need, as well as access to gardening space for those without space of their own. Many communities allow community gardens in certain zones, subject to specific standards, for example regulating location, size, ownership, purpose, and duration. Cleveland addresses urban gardens by providing definitions, creating a zone district, provisions for accessory structure (for gardening) and sales. Burlington, VT addresses the definitions of gardening, appurtenant structures, produce sales and allows community gardens in residential zones, public parks, and open space. The cities of San Carlos and South San Francisco have added Community Garden as an allowed use in residential and mixed-use districts. Closer to home, Alhambra established the Winston Smoyer Memorial Community Garden, which has almost 100 individual garden sites that are tended by individual gardeners, on previously underutilized City property. Duarte allows community gardens to count toward landscaping and open space requirements. South Pasadena allows community gardens with Conditional Use Permit approval subject to conditions relative to setbacks, structures, fencing, lighting, trash, operational standards, parking, water, and periodic review. Bathroom facilities and the sale of produce are not allowed.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Farmers' markets increase prevalence of and access to fresh, affordable produce and boost the local economy. Local farmers markets provide fresh produce to community residents, support small farmers, serve as community gathering places, and can revitalize community centers and downtown areas. Defining farmers' markets as an allowable use and designating appropriate locations is an important step cities can take to encourage the creation of farmers' markets in their communities. Alhambra has a weekly farmers market and provides incentives to frequent the market. Shoppers are given five-dollar bonus coupons if they spend at least five dollars in CalFresh (food stamps). Many cities, including Alhambra, Monterey Park, and Arcadia, allow farmers' markets as a special event or temporary use. Other jurisdictions, such as Los Angeles County and Fresno, allow farmer's markets as ongoing uses subject to development standards that address hours of operation, noise, trash, and parking to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses. Recent amendments to Los Angeles County's ordinance eliminate an existing requirement for sponsorship by a charitable organization.

7.3 Opportunities and Recommendations

- UA-1 Treat gardens as landscaped areas.** Treating gardens as landscaped areas allows homeowners, residents, and developers flexibility in meeting open space and landscape requirements while supporting sustainability goals. It also provides clarification of where gardens can be located, whether in front, side, and rear yards, setbacks, landscape strips, parkways, or public-rights-of way (such as alleys or the Alhambra Wash). The City could also modify landscaping provisions to encourage edible plants or food-bearing trees to be included as part of landscape plans. Community gardens and roof top gardens could also qualify as required open space and extra open space credit could be awarded for providing gardening support elements such as irrigation and tool sheds.
- UA-2 Adjust setback requirements for gardening related structures and equipment.** Make clear that accessory structures such as rain barrels, composting bins, tool sheds, and greenhouses that can aid in gardening are allowed within side and rear setbacks. Review by the Building and Engineering Divisions would be required.
- UA-3 Allow for the keeping of bees and chickens.** San Gabriel can allow a broader range of animals but with more detailed compatibility standards to address health and safety concerns and ensure that neighboring properties are protected from potential conflicts.
- UA-4 Define Community Gardens and allow as a permitted use.** The Zoning Ordinance can define community gardens and allow them as a permitted or conditionally permitted use in all or most districts. Standards could be incorporated to address the use of composting associated with community gardens, including provisions to ensure odor control. Additionally, regulations could allow food grown on-site to be sold on site, with standards to ensure compatibility, particularly with respect to residential areas.
- UA-5 Allow farmer's markets citywide, subject to Conditional Use Permit or Temporary Use Permit approval.** The Zoning Ordinance, Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Specific Plan, and Mission District Specific Plan should be revised to clarify allowances for recurring open-air markets. Recurring open-air markets should be allowed in all nonresidential districts, subject to Conditional Use Permit approval and specific standards that regulate location, size, ownership, purpose, and duration. Alternatively, San Gabriel should identify Farmer's Markets as a separate use, defined by a certain percentage of the products sold that are farm produce or products made from farm produce, and a certain percentage of vendors are farmers that directly sell to consumers of the produce or products the farmers grow themselves. Standards for location and operation could be included in the zoning ordinance, thus allowing Farmer's Markets to be allowed by-right, without the need for discretionary review.

8 Next Steps

This paper will be the basis for a public workshop with the Planning Commission and Design Review Commission. Comments from the workshop and further work with City staff will guide preparation of draft zoning code and development standard amendments for review by City staff, decision makers, and the community.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Interview Summary

City of San Gabriel

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1 Introduction

The City of San Gabriel has received a grant from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) through their Compass Blueprint Demonstration Projects to produce a systematic evaluation of the best practices for zoning provisions that will help San Gabriel become a “greener” and more resource-efficient place. The project will build upon the foundation of the Sustainability Action Plan, General Plan, Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan, Mission District Specific Plan, and other relevant planning endeavors. Zoning and development standards are important as they establish the detailed rules for what can be built, and the processes required. Zoning and development standards are where “the rubber meets the road” – the place where all the goals and visions of the community are translated into specific numbers and standards.

PURPOSE OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In order to better understand the community’s vision of sustainability and the current obstacles to sustainable development, interviews were conducted with a variety of community leaders, “code users,” and stakeholders, people that regularly use the zoning ordinance or might have a specific interest in zoning. Those interviewed included City Council and Planning Commission members, the City Architect and City-Landscape Architect, real estate developers, business owners, property owners, and residents.

The City’s consultants conducted eight in-person interviews, each approximately 45 minutes long. The interviews were conducted by staff from the consulting team: Martha Miller and Vivian Kahn of Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners. One staff member was interviewed. However, to encourage candid responses, no city staff members were present during the interviews with outside stakeholders. The interviewees were asked a series of questions regarding overarching concerns as well as specific topics. In addition to particular subject areas, people attending were also given the opportunity to discuss issues of significance to them, which could be important for staff to consider in helping San Gabriel realize “greener,” more sustainable development.

2 Interview Questions

The interviewees were provided with a brief introduction of the project and objective of the interviews. Following, they were asked a series of questions, and asked to elaborate about their experience working with the current zoning ordinance or issues of most concern.

What's your background and experience dealing with zoning regulations? What types of development are you involved with?

In light of project objectives and based on your understanding of the current zoning regulations, is there anything particularly beneficial or effective about the current regulations in achieving 'green' an resource-efficient development? Which may be an obstacle?

- **Type of construction.** Are there any regulations that limit the potential for renovation or rehabilitation, for example requirements for certain materials? Do you have any suggestions for changes that would help encourage renovation or rehabilitation of existing development to increase energy efficiency, conserve water, or support other 'green' goals?
- **Site design standards.** Do you think building location, landscaping, location and size of parking areas, paving types, or other development requirements are effective in achieving 'green' development? If not, what are their shortcomings and drawbacks?
- **Use regulations.** Are the City's use regulations effective in supporting resource-efficient development while separating incompatible uses? Are there any particular uses the City should consider promoting or allowing in order to promote sustainability, for example allowances for mixed-use development, community gardens, farmers' markets, and animal-keeping?
- **Adaptive reuse provisions.** Do the current regulations support adaptive reuse and renovation of existing structures, for example nonconforming provisions, and historic preservation?

What is the most important thing the City could do in the zoning and development regulations to support and promote sustainable development?

Are there other jurisdictions that have been particularly successful in supporting resource efficiency and 'green' development that we should look at as examples?

What problems do you have using or understanding the existing code? What changes would you recommend to make the code more user-friendly? What other cities would be good examples?

What role does the City staff play in promoting green development? Do they seem to have the necessary tools and training?

How should the City balance the emphasis on making things easier for new projects – being Business Friendly and promoting economic development through project review streamlining – with the goal of sustainability if that means new Code requirements? Which is most important and why?

Are there other issues we have not covered that are important for us to consider in helping San Gabriel realize “greener” and more sustainable development?

3 Stakeholder Comments

A strong consensus among stakeholders emerged about what the major zoning issues are in San Gabriel as they relate to sustainability. The interviewees were in clear agreement that the zoning ordinance needs to be revised to be more understandable, workable, and supportive of both the City's sustainability goals and economic success. The stakeholders differed on their exact recommended changes, however each pointed out ways the current regulations can become obstacles to implementing sustainable principles. Following is a list of major themes heard during the stakeholder interviews. A comprehensive list of the comments received, organized by topic, follows.

1. **Provide incentives for people to make “green” improvements and incorporate sustainable elements.**
2. **Remove obstacles to encourage development that is consistent with sustainable principles but is also cost sensitive.**
3. **Allow flexibility in approaches to achieve sustainability objectives.**
4. **Support well-designed mixed-use and higher density development in appropriate areas.**
5. **Revise landscaping requirements to support sustainable practices while considering aesthetic and cultural preferences and maintenance issues.**
6. **Allow, but do not require, more sustainable and resource efficient building, landscaping, paving, and other site improvement materials.**
7. **Provide flexibility in meeting parking requirements.**

GENERAL

- Would like to see better development generally.
- The time is coming when everyone will have to contribute. Businesses and developers should do their part in helping cities achieve sustainability and climate change goals.
- The City should promote conservation with energy and water. Should provide clear standards so people understand what we mean by “conservation.”
- The Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods Sustainability Plan is flexible. It allows mixed-use development. It also gives a lot of incentives. This should be expanded to other commercial areas. It is probably not applicable to residential areas.

- The Valley Boulevard Plan can't be duplicated on Las Tunas. It's a completely different area.
- Sustainable design guidelines should provide better guidance.
- Sustainable guidelines should be incorporated into the code. This would provide greater enforcement opportunities.
- Anything that reduces buildable area is bad.
- Development has been depressed. Not much has happened lately.
- San Gabriel has a lot of NIMBYism that has discouraged development.
- It is very difficult to understand the code.
- The current Code is fairly user-friendly and self-explanatory. It's hard to understand if it's your first project, but it's pretty good. There are clear standards, for example for setbacks, and parking requirements. The Planning Department also has handouts that are helpful.
- The City should ban plastic bags. Even charging 10 cents a bag will make a big difference.
- San Gabriel is an old city. It was never master-planned.
- Development money comes from overseas. Developers have a different way of thinking.
- Foreign architects have difficulty understanding code requirements; they often do not want to satisfy code requirements.
- Pasadena is a good example of a City with a 'green' code.
- Pasadena's Green Ordinance works pretty well.
- San Gabriel is not Pasadena.
- Glendale was looking at a new greening program, to conserve more resources.

Approach

- Sustainable development should be encouraged with incentives.
- Use both carrots and stick approach.
- Flexibility is important. Need to allow people to craft solutions.
- Consider zoning goals and be creative about how to achieve them.
- Look to fulfill original zoning goals in creative ways.
- It would be good to make the Code more flexible.
- Balancing quality and code requirements is a slippery slope.
- Incentivize projects when they meet certain criteria.
- Delicate balance of providing flexibility and enough parameters.

- Encourage and provide incentives to go beyond standards to get better design.
- Allow quality to trump other code issues.

Cost

- Especially in this economy we want to pay attention to costs. Have to maintain balance between implementing what we want and what's reasonable.
- Cost is an issue. People don't want to spend a lot of money in making improvements.
- A small change in price will make a difference. Make the green option the cheaper option.
- It costs more to do 'sustainable' development.
- People care more about cost than sustainability.
- Developers want to meet minimum design standards because the land cost is so high.

LAND USE AND DENSITY

- San Gabriel doesn't approach the density it could have with really good design.
- Allow and promote mixed-use.
- The City should allow for more density along corridors.
- Incentivize both district and individual building mixed-use.
- The City should be flexible with regard to allowable uses.
- Pasadena does a pretty good job with density. Some of the development in higher density areas is nice.
- Focus mixed-use requirements where it could thrive, but start small.
- Restaurants are the only mom and pop businesses left. Retail has gone to chains or internet shopping. It hard to convert from retail to restaurants, which is why there are a lot of vacant storefronts.
- The City's use regulations are pretty flexible, which is good.
- The Code does not need to be too restrictive in the industrial area around railroad tracks.
- Decision makers and the City are always trying to make projects work. Paying more attention to form and less attention to use may make sense.
- Allow denser development. Business drives everything. San Gabriel is the only community without a Starbucks.
- If the City allows more density, it should get good design with it.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- The Valley Neighborhood Plan has good urban design standards that address mass and scale, consider zoning of adjacent properties, and require cross parcel parking access. It also allows for flexibility, which has been successful.
- Buildings should face street, not turn their back on the street. This is true for commercial and residential projects.
- Retain prohibition on garage in front yard.
- Utilize site and building orientation to minimize solar panel appearance while maximizing sun.
- Be careful not to get too contemporary. From residential design standpoint, San Gabriel is pretty traditional.
- Signage and the lack of sign programs is an issue. This may be an enforcement problem.
- Cultural preference for certain fence and wall design and materials. It's hard to enforce fence requirements.

LANDSCAPING

- City does a pretty good job working with and encouraging developers regarding landscaping.
- The landscape requirements are there and are clear. Sometimes they need to be supplemented.
- There is a cultural preference for minimal landscaping and maintenance. Sometimes this makes it hard to enforce design standards.
- The City landscape architect aims to add more landscape and green space throughout the City consistent with the City's design guidelines. A current focus is on landscaping and trees in parking lots.
- It's difficult working with landscape requirements.
- Cities and schools don't have resources to maintain landscaping. Some of this is matter of cost.
- Landscaping in general is good but there are considerations that businesses have such as maintenance and liability.

Landscaping Materials

- Issue of feng shui should be considered and planting and landscaping requirements.
- Many people here love fruits and vegetables. Gardens should be encouraged.
- Businesses prefer slow growing plants for maintenance issues and cultural preferences favor plants with red flowers. A slow growing plant with red flowers is ideal.
- There should not be a requirement for turf. The City shouldn't prohibit it either.

- Drought tolerant plants don't look good. They do not produce the type of results people want out of landscaping. It's an aesthetic issue.
- There should be more native plantings, cactus gardens, and other drought tolerant plants.
- Bougainvillea is not a commercial friendly plant. It's messy and has thorns. Red trumpets are a good alternative.
- There should be a list of plants that are allowable.

Trees

- Difficult to provide privacy between new and existing development without trees.
- There is a problem with number of street trees the City requires because regulations don't provide flexibility to deal with all situations. For example, existing streetlights or hydrants.
- A few trees can make a tremendous difference.
- City doesn't consider the impact of large trees.
- Trees need to be assessed for value and appropriateness. Shouldn't be required to retain just because it's a tree.
- Street trees need to be carefully watered with bubblers.
- Property owners need to understand how to maintain trees.
- The City should enlist volunteer organizations that help to maintain medians and street trees.

Water Conservation

- Parkways (parking strips) have to be planted and irrigated. The City could do more to encourage use of drip versus spray irrigation
- Community needs education on when to water plants. Setting sprinklers to go on at night is a very easy thing to do. People may just not know about it.
- City is trying to promote removal of turf and replacement with gardens in yards to conserve water. The guidelines to accomplish this may be too generic.
- People are price sensitive. If water rates go up, people will conserve water.
- Some water districts require a water budget for building and landscaping at the beginning of the project.
- There should be more plants, besides grass, that use less water and maintenance.
- Irvine requires water budget up front, so landscape architect needs to be involved from beginning.

Landscaping Review Process

- Landscape architects are brought in too late to the design process. The City landscape architect tries to get involved to the extent allowed by time and budget.
- Part of problem is process. There isn't a requirement to have the entire design team together, including landscape designer, at the beginning.
- By the time the project gets to Design Review it has already been through Planning Commission, so landscape design could be compromised. Requiring substantive changes at that point can lead to increased project costs.
- Landscape architects are not involved in pre-application meetings.
- City staff should be trained to conduct landscape review.
- Landscape review usually takes place at the tail end of project rather than the beginning of it.
- Review after the Planning Commission has already approved a project makes it difficult to have a well thought out and integrated approach to landscaping.
- People should think of landscaping at the onset.
- Don't make people come back to city for permission to change plant type.
- Cities should offer workshops on pruning for gardeners. Most of the landscape is "boxes or balls." That is not proper maintenance and doesn't look good.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- There should be some standards for usability of open space. Currently, open space may be located in places that aren't useful or accessible, for example have seen trees in parking garage or tiny planter boxes on upstairs balconies qualify as open space for development projects.
- Allow and promote small gardens and pocket parks.
- Parks are important. San Gabriel needs more parks, including pocket parks with benches.
- Could be okay to provide public open space off-site in-lieu of on-site requirements. However, would like to review on a case-by-case basis.
- Zoning for parks and greenery would lead to a "sense of place" and encourage development.
- City gardeners removing leaves under bushes and removing mulch, which is harmful to plants and trees in parks.
- Encourage community gardens and pocket parks. Example is South Pasadena pumping station site in residential neighborhood, which could be used as pocket park.
- Don't hear a lot about green space related to sustainability, for example community gardens.

PAVING AND DRAINAGE

- Code requirement of specifying only pavement/concrete for driveway is unattractive, resulting front yards of concrete. Allowing alternate paving materials would look better.
- On-site drainage solutions should be encouraged. This would decrease run-off into city streets and sewers.
- The City should look at more ‘environmentally friendly’ ways of allowing hard-scape and zero-scape.
- Investigate on-site drainage solutions.
- Unclear whether pavers are pervious or impervious.
- The City should offer alternatives for driveway paving. Do not require concrete.
- Limit amount of paving in front yards.
- There should be more flexibility in paving requirements.
- The City should limit the amount of concrete and instead encourage pavers and pervious finishes.
- Currently grading requirements basically result in directing run-off to the street. CalGreen requires retention on-site.

BUILDING MATERIALS

- Recycled or sustainable materials are often more expensive than conventional materials. There may be materials that cost the same and are better for the environment, but no one knows where to find them. Cost is the bottom line.
- Redoing the roof in sustainable material is cost prohibitive.
- Interviewee had to go through difficult permitting process to construct a “green wall” of plants. The goal was to spruce up a plaza in a cost efficient manner. The permit process made it cost prohibitive.
- It is difficult to find ‘sustainable’ building materials such as insulation made out of recycled jeans.
- Replacing wood shake roof with metal is not allowed. How does this apply to solar panels which are metal and glass? The code should make solar and energy-efficient types of building materials easier.
- Cultural issues with color of building materials, for example there is a preference for dark red roofing instead of light roofing materials. This is contrary to cool roof goals.

MOBILITY AND PARKING

- Provide bike lanes. Employees would love to bike to work but it’s too dangerous.
- Institute fees to make improvements that allow employees to bike to work
- San Gabriel should be more pedestrian friendly. This would reduce dependence on cars.

- Transit availability reduces dependence on cars. San Gabriel is only 4.4 square miles, internal transit would increase connectivity.
- San Gabriel doesn't have the transportation and transit infrastructure for more intensity. Valley Boulevard is the start.
- San Gabriel needs to have a system for moving people before we start planning for retail and restaurants along a transit corridor. The Valley Boulevard plan needs to be implemented.
- Minimize required parking.
- If parking is difficult, people will walk.
- Allow and encourage common parking solutions.
- Reduce parking requirements where it makes sense.
- Should have bicycle-parking requirements.
- Allow for shared parking.
- The Valley Boulevard Plan requires parking areas to have shared access with neighboring commercial parcels. This causes a hardship if the neighboring property owner doesn't want to cooperate.
- The parking requirement for restaurants is more than for retail. If you reduce the parking requirement for restaurants, the parking problem will get worse.
- Business users parking in residential neighborhoods is a problem.
- An in-lieu fee program for parking is intriguing. The difficulty will be in providing parking lots close to businesses. People won't walk more than a block or two.
- Maybe restaurants could make 'green credits' and trade for parking reductions. That would be an incentive.
- Nonconforming parking is an issue. Restaurants don't have enough parking to expand.
- Artesia reduced parking requirements. In Arcadia, takeout restaurants are considered retail.
- Relax parking requirements for businesses. San Gabriel is becoming a food mecca, which is good for our economy.
- The City needs a parking in-lieu fee program. The City must allow business to flourish.
- The City should regulate casino bus parking. People park their cars and leave them for the whole day, taking up available parking. The City should provide a lot for the tour buses to pick up people and charge a fee. Sort of a casino bus park and ride that charges a fee
- The City should increase how far away off-site parking can be located.
- Parking is a big issue. On residential side, number of parking spaces per residence is a concern. Parking is also the number one issue on the commercial side

- The City should look at broader parking management restrictions, such as short term versus overnight parking, a parking program, such as in-lieu fees and a master parking plan. A residential parking permit program may be helpful, especially near main thoroughfares.
- There should be flexible parking requirements. Uses with different hours should be able to share parking, for example restaurants and adjacent schools. The City should allow for more efficient parking, for example valet and tandem parking.
- Parking is an issue. Opportunities exist to do shared parking.
- Parking drives design. Modifying parking requirements is a good way to incentivize design improvements.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

- It is important to look at obstacles to restoring and maintaining existing properties. Historic Resource designation or label of potential significance can be an obstacle to property sale or redevelopment.
- Adaptive reuse not qualified in current regulations. It should be the most creative part of the code.
- Allow for more flexibility in how reuse the property or structure.
- Be more flexible with code requirements in regard to adaptive reuse, particularly with setbacks and parking requirements.
- Code should allow for flexible approvals if city wants to encourage retention and renovation of current buildings.
- In San Gabriel there are many small old buildings that do not meet current code requirements. This creates a problem for renovation and rehabilitation. It's easier to demolish and rebuild a new building because anytime you want to make improvements to an existing building, a number of things need to be done to bring it up to code, specifically building and fire codes.
- Adaptive reuse is sustainable development. In order to do adaptive reuse, flexibility is needed, only then you will see more rehab and repositioning.
- Downtown Los Angeles has done a great job reinvigorating the area through the with adaptive reuse ordinance.
- The City has a lot of legal nonconforming development which is problematic.
- City should have regulations that allow adaptive reuse to help preserve buildings.
- The City should provide menus of ways to meet code would encourage adaptive reuse.
- Notion of flexibility in renovation and remodeling may not work because everyone is not on the same page.
- Older homes typically have four-foot setback. Current requirements allow the extension of the setback only for only a portion of length. This discourages building retention.

PROCESS

- The City is too stringent. Simple improvements, like Tenant Improvements in shopping centers take too long.
- Don't give away too much in design review.
- Applications don't provide adequate information about context in design review. Context is required for conditional use permit but not for design review.
- The City offers pre-application process allowing anyone to obtain inter-departmental feedback even before site is purchased, and that is good for design.
- The City needs to improve time for plan check. Turn-around for tenant improvement business plans should be within four weeks.
- Tenant improvements should have priority processing. The City needs to be responsive to these projects since they are more immediate than large, new construction projects.
- Permitting process is issue. It should be easy to do the right thing.
- The permit process has made it cost prohibitive in certain circumstances.
- A lot required for development approval but little follow-up or enforcement afterwards.
- Allow equivalency perspective to permeate zoning, planning, and building.
- City staff must be advocates at the planning counter.
- City staff should be allowed to make creative suggestions and consider what would most benefit the applicant.
- Allow creative alternative methods to meet zoning and planning goals.
- Consider the idea or goal behind a particular zoning requirement, and allow staff to consider other ways to meet that goal besides the exact code requirements.
- Additional staff training would be a benefit.
- The City needs to have more than one plan checker. The Planning Department gets back to you pretty quickly but plan check takes too long.
- City Council members rely on staff to interpret and apply zoning requirements.
- Staff has initial training to achieve objectives. When matters come before Council, staff has been very willing to assist.
- Would like to see staff utilize list of developers and contractors and find out what they are doing and what is possible. Have dialogue with those who are doing the work.
- Streamline the approval process. Alhambra and Temple City are cities where it is easier to work.
- New application checklist pushes applicants to provide more information about their project earlier.
- It's very difficult to work with the City.

- Some of the problems are due to difficulty of working with City but the City should also go out and promote development.

EDUCATION

- Sustainability efforts should focus on where you can be effective. Target restaurants. Could work with a couple of restaurants as demonstrations of how a typical restaurant can make changes to be more ‘green’ and what the results are – both for the business and the environment. For example, change take out containers from Styrofoam to something else. Show them how they can make some changes that meet sustainability goals and help profits.
- Businesses might consider supporting conservation if it could be demonstrated that it will be beneficial.
- Educate applicants. For example bio fuels. Restaurants may not know that you can separate your grease and someone will pick it up to recycle it.
- The public needs to be educated about sustainability, both the costs and benefits.
- The City is often dealing with applicants who have project managers that don’t understand the approval process and are not aware of City requirements.
- Education on air conditioning units is needed. Some restaurants have old, inefficient air conditioners that they turn off when it’s hot. Instead, if people would just maintain them or get energy efficient ones, they could keep their restaurants cool with less energy.
- Many businesses are mom and pop operations that are very short sighted about wasting electricity. If they understand some investment now will pay off, they will make changes.
- A big part of the effort is education. There should be education campaigns along with efforts. People will make changes if they understand why and how it will save them money.

4 List of Interviewees

Juli Costanzo, City Council Member

Tom Klawiter, Planning Commissioner

Dale Brown, City Architect

Greg Clark, City Landscape Architect

Robin Scherr, San Gabriel Economic Development Manager

Winnie Kho, property owner, Asian Business Community

Alex Chang, Architect

Yael Lir, Landscape Architect

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