

Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SUNLAND TUJUNGA



SUNLAND-TUJUNGA ALLIANCE, INC.



June 15, 2011

Councilman Paul Krekorian
Council District 2
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilman Krekorian,

Almost immediately after meeting with you in early April we began to explore the best way to approach the much needed amendments for the Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan.

The attached memorandum outlines the reasons we need to improve the plan with examples, suggestions, and proposals. We circulated a draft version for the Neighborhood Council and Land Use Committee to review, for about a month, and after much discussion, it was approved by a 13 – 0 vote (3 abstentions) by the full STNC Board on June 8, 2011. It was then approved by unanimous vote at the Sunland Tujunga Chamber of Commerce board meeting held on June 14, 2011.

We see the attached memo as establishing the "framework" for the discussion of future updates to the Specific Plan. We understand that any amendments that may be made to the Specific Plan will be made only after full involvement and input from the community at large. To be more specific, we desire that the update process that is outlined in this memorandum be transparent and beneficial to the community and not to any special interest group or individual whether they are located in City Hall, in our community or outside of our community. Amending our Specific Plan is not meant to open the Specific Plan to changes that would undermine the underlying purposes and goals of the Specific Plan which are proposed to be left "as is" in the updated Specific Plan.

We hope this will be the beginning of a productive conversation, and look forward to working with you on this important task.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our concerns.

Respectfully yours,

Abby Diamond
Founder/Co-Director
Sunland-Tujunga Alliance

Joe Barrett
Founder/Co-Director
Sunland-Tujunga Alliance

Dean Sherer
Vice Chair-Planning, Land Use Committee
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

Sonia Tatulian
President
Sunland Tujunga Chamber of Commerce

Dan McManus
President
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

Tomi-Lyn Bowling
Vice President – Community Improvement
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council



SUNLAND-TUJUNGA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

P.O. Box 571, Tujunga, CA 91043
(818) 352-4433

June 14, 2011

Councilman Paul Krekorian
Council District 2
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilman Krekorian,

At the June 14, 2011 board meeting of the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce the board voted unanimous to join with the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council and the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Inc. to submit to you the letter as prepared by the STNC's Land Use Committee regarding proposed and needed amendments to the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan and Design Guidelines.

The Sunland Tujunga Chamber of Commerce is ready to work with you and your staff as we continue to improve our businesses in the Sunland-Tujunga community.

Thank you for working with us in this community-wide effort. We look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

Sonia Tatulian
President

Cc: Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Inc.
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SUNLAND TUJUNGA

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June 8, 2011

Councilman Paul Krekorian
Council District 2
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilman Krekorian,

The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) has voted to join with the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Inc. and the Sunland Tujunga Chamber of Commerce to forward you the letter as prepared by the STNC's Land Use Committee (LUC) regarding proposed amendments to the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan.

The STNC's Land Use Committee met on May 16, 2011 where the LUC delivered a Power Point presentation highlighting the need for the updates to the Plan and were presented with a draft of the letter for review. The draft letter was circulated for over three weeks to the committee and the community including posting online at our STNC website's Land Use Document Library. Suggested changes to the letter were made and the final version presented at the LUC meeting on June 6, 2011 where a vote by the committee resulted in 9 in favor, 2 opposed and 0 abstentions. A vote of 6 is required by the Land Use Committee either for or against any agenda item vote per the STNC Bylaws. The final draft was then presented to the STNC full board and voted 13 in favor, 0 opposed and 3 abstentions to forward this on with the intent to begin a serious dialogue with you and your staff geared towards determining and executing an appropriate course of action.

The STNC looks forward to working with you as we continue to outreach and discuss the needed amendments to the Plan. Please keep us informed of next steps. We look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan McManus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dan McManus
President

Cc: Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Inc.
Sunland Tujunga Chamber of Commerce

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA ALLIANCE, INC.

June 8, 2011

Honorable Councilman Krekorian:

As you know, the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance has invested many volunteer hours to improve the community, mainly the commercial corridor. Our primary tool is the Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan. We have worked diligently with the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council, the community, and other elected officials, to implement and uphold the Plan by filing appeals.

Recently, we filed an appeal regarding the Recycling Center at the Chevron Station at Haines Canyon and Foothill. We also approached the property owner and the project applicant to encourage a better site design and encourage them to improve the site by adding permanent landscaping. We were successful in achieving this goal, and our appeal was approved in part with several conditions. However, filing appeals is not the way to Do Real Planning.

In order for City Planning to make better decisions for us and for the business owners, we must have a Specific Plan with more details and better descriptions of what we would like for our neighborhood.

The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council Full Board and Land Use Committee, individual stakeholders, and other planning professionals have had the opportunity to review the attached memo. We feel the final document is a thorough discussion of the problems we have faced.

With support from the Council office, we truly see that it is possible to improve the Plan and bring us into the 21st Century! After all, the current plan is over 15 years old. It has lost its usefulness and we strongly believe it needs to be updated.

The attached memo includes many suggestions and proposals; but the discussion needs to continue with the community at large as there is a wide range of opinions and many individuals who have serious concerns.

As always, it is by working together that we will achieve our common goal of improving the quality of life in Sunland-Tujunga.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our concerns.

Respectfully yours,


Joe Barrett

Abby Diamond

Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, Inc., P.O. Box 123, Tujunga, CA 91043
www.sunlandtjungaalliance.com

June 8, 2011

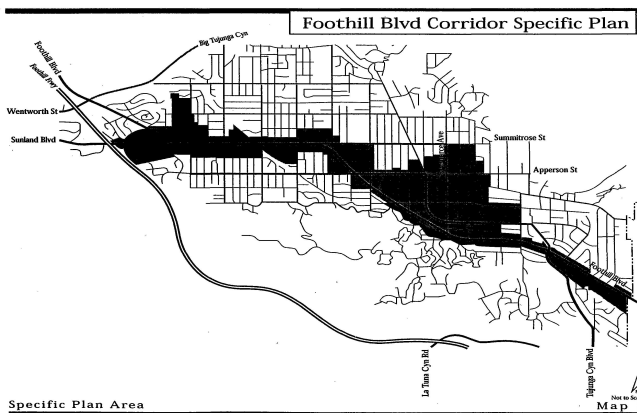
Mr. Paul Krekorian
Councilmember, Second District
City Hall, 200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: Proposed Amendments to the Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan (FBCSP) – Ordinance No. 170,694 (effective October 27, 1995) and Specific Plan Procedures Amended by Ordinance No. 173,455 as Recommended by the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, the Land Use Committee of the Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council, and other concerned stakeholders

Introduction

The Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan (FBCSP) or “Plan” is the best tool the Sunland-Tujunga community has to improve the quality of life in our community and should not be compromised to serve the interests of one particular business or interest group. It's also vitally important to not grant exceptions to the Plan that can then lead to unintentional consequences. Exceptions as well as inaccurate interpretations also undermine the strength and intent of the Plan. Furthermore, the Plan is in need of an update because the Plan itself is over ten years old and currently does not adequately address a variety of land use issues the community has faced since its adoption in 1995. Therefore, a limited number of targeted revisions are proposed to

the Specific Plan. These include, but are not necessarily limited to the following: (a) the updating of regulations pertaining to automobile uses; (b) updating and clarifying the list of permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited uses in the FBCSP; and (c) implementing new regulations for uses not previously considered in the original Specific Plan. A discussion of these objectives, background information, and the addition of amendments that would help fully implement the Plan and its



intentions are provided below.

Background

Section 2, Purposes, of the FBCSP (“Plan”) seeks to establish a vibrant *neighborhood serving* commercial area along and adjacent to Foothill Boulevard which also allows for multiple-family housing opportunities. The original intent of the Plan was to ensure that land uses and development in the Plan area is compatible with and complement the long-term retail and services needs of the community. Specifically, the currently adopted Plan calls for the following:

- A. To ensure that future development in the area occurs in a manner that is environmentally sensitive, considering existing topography, surrounding low-density residential, capacity of the street and circulation system, air quality, and scenic views of the local mountains.
- B. To enhance future commercial development of the Foothill Boulevard Corridor by establishing and coordinating and comprehensive standards for parking, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, outdoor storage, building height, building design, building mass, landscape, and signs.
- C. To ensure compatible multiple-family housing in the area by establishing coordinated and comprehensive standards for parking, vehicle circulation, building height, building design, building mass, open space, landscape, and street improvements.
- D. To create a vibrant neighborhood commercial environment along Foothill Boulevard and Commerce Avenue by encouraging compatible uses, building design, landscaping, sustainable building technology, screening of unsightly views, attractive wall treatments, and proper site designs.
- E. To promote safe and convenient vehicular circulation.
- F. To prevent traffic circulation problems in the area by ensuring street right-of-way improvements and parking for multiple-family housing where existing public and private infrastructure is inadequate.
- G. To preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, cultural resources, such as architecturally significant or community related landmarks.
- H. To provide design provisions and guidelines for the review and approval of landscape and exterior of buildings and structures.
- I. To create a more unified appearance in buildings and signs.
- J. To implement procedures for Plan Approval within the Specific Plan which will encourage good professional site planning and design practices, quality exterior design, and better appearance to improve the community.
- K. To enhance the community by promoting good planning and design.
- L. To promote the general welfare of the community.
- M. Require sustainable landscaping, architecture and construction.
- N. To avoid over-concentrations of automotive oriented uses and malls.

All of the above purposes of the Plan are laudable and, though adopted in 1995, still reflect the desires of the community to promote “real planning” and achieve a better outcome for Foothill Boulevard than that which currently exists. It should also be acknowledged that the Plan has

produced real successes for the community, but that these successes have been limited. Too often the purposes of the Plan have been subverted through inaccurate or erroneous interpretation of its regulatory development and design provisions and more often through complete disregard of said provisions.

The Plan needs to provide greater guidance in establishing good planning. This includes assisting project applicants in designing and building complementary and financially successful businesses in the Plan area. In addition, the Plan should provide greater guidance to those administering the plan on what elements make for good planning that benefits both the applicant and the community. The purpose of the implementation of the Plan would be not to just issue a project approval but to also consider the long-term benefit to the community that the project might provide, including an increase in job opportunities and tax revenues for the City.

Appeals of Project Permit Compliance Review Decisions

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of failures of the current Plan to implement community goals for Foothill Boulevard is the number of appeals of Project Permit Compliance Review Decisions recently filed by the community. These appeals have included such projects as these:

1. 8040 W. Foothill Boulevard and 10355 N. Woodward Avenue – Project Permit Compliance Review application to establish a 94,500 square foot home improvement warehouse in the C2 Zone. The project was originally approved by City staff without proper application and after misinterpreting the definition of “Project” in the Plan. An Appeal was filed by the Sunland -Tujunga Alliance / No 2 Home Depot Campaign. The application was defined as a Project and the applicant withdrew the application.
2. 10249 Plainview Avenue – Project Permit Compliance Review application to permit a change of use and establish a 19,600 square foot automotive use on the subject property. City staff recommended approval of the application based on a misinterpretation of the definition of an “automotive repair mall” in the Plan. The decision of staff was appealed by the Sunland Tujunga Alliance and the appeal was upheld by the Area Planning Commission.

3. 7937 Foothill Boulevard – Project Permit Compliance Review application to permit a change of use to permit the sale of propane and propane appliances. The staff incorrectly interpreted the purposes and intent of the Plan and approved the use. An appeal was filed by the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance. The appeal was denied, in

part, by the Area Planning Commission, allowing the use but limiting the size of the proposed propane tank to 25 square feet.

4. 6737 W. Foothill Boulevard – Project Permit Compliance Review application to establish a proposed Recycling Facility directly adjacent to Foothill Boulevard. The application was approved by City staff after failing to categorize the use as “service area use” and allowing a temporary metal building (prohibited under the Plan) to be located immediately adjacent to the public sidewalk. An appeal was filed by the Sunland Tujunga Alliance. The appeal was granted, in part, allowing the Recycling Facility but requiring the installation of permanent landscaping for screening purposes and limiting the hours of operation of the facility.

In addition to the foregoing, a Change of Use was granted for a proposed mini-soccer field at 10178 Tujunga Canyon Boulevard (in Target Area 3) without undergoing the established Project Permit Compliance Review process. The resulting use was approved without sufficient parking, drainage or restrooms for the proposed use. In addition, Mini-soccer fields and other uses are not adequately addressed or regulated in the current Plan.

We recognize that, in order to build a vibrant and commercial area along Foothill Boulevard and to “de-industrialize” the area, the use of the land is not the only important component of creating a vibrant commercial area, but also other aspects of proposed projects such as building aesthetic, site design, landscaping, and circulation can be used to make an attractive site. But the community’s experience has more recently been one in which an undesirable land use has been proposed and approved by the City with little or no regard to the intent or purposes of the Plan. Additionally, where the Plan is silent, the City has allowed uses that are not consistent with the purposes of the Plan.

These appeals require community members to spend an inordinate amount of time to prepare and file them. These, and past appeals like them, could have been avoided if the Specific Plan regulations and definitions were interpreted correctly and vigorously enforced. Where lacking in specificity, the Plan has failed the community. Where the intent and purposes of the Plan have been ignored in the day-to-day administration of it, the community has suffered.

Community Participation

Throughout its life, the Plan has attempted to uphold community standards for good development, but has often failed in its purposes through its interpretation and administration. Because of this, the Land Use Committee of the Neighborhood Council conducted a series of “specific plan planning classes” to discuss proposed amendments to the Plan. The purpose of these classes was to identify specific areas of the Plan that need to be amended such that the purposes of the Plan can be more fully implemented.

The recommendations to amend the Plan that resulted from the specific plan planning class discussions fall into five major categories:

(A) Amend the mix of land uses allowed in the Plan area (and define them more clearly) to make them more current and desirous;

(B) Expand and modify the existing Major Activity Areas designation in the Plan;

(C) Clarify and/or remove inconsistencies between the intent and purpose of the plan and the regulations that are meant to implement those purposes;

(D) Improve administration and enforcement of the Plan by City Staff; and

(E) Strengthen the Design Guidelines in the Plan to attract more desirable uses to the community. These are explained below.

Summary of Proposed Amendments

A) Amend Land Uses and Land Use Definitions in the Specific Plan

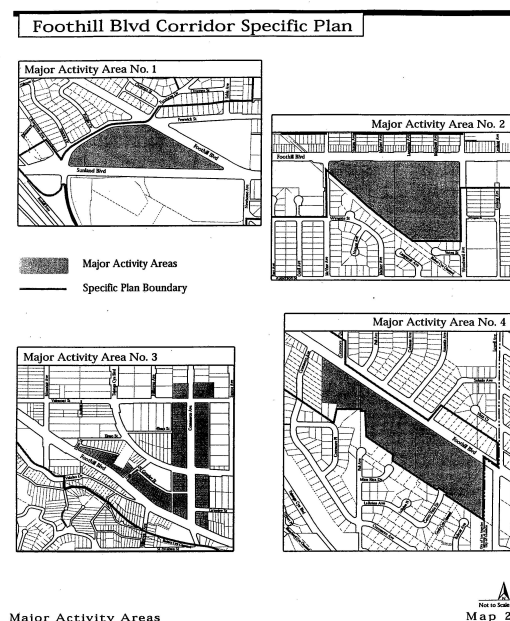
The Plan is proposed to be amended to address the mix of uses described in the Plan area (and how they are defined) that are permitted, conditionally permitted, or prohibited. The reason for this kind of amendment is to provide regulations that address new types of land uses that have been created since the 1995 adoption of the Plan as well as limit the number and expansion of undesirable land uses. These amendments would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Propane Sales: The plan would be amended to allow the sale of propane in the Plan area only as an accessory use to an existing legally established business such as a gasoline service station or hardware store.
- Recycling Facilities: The plan would be amended to prohibit locating new recycling facilities in the plan area.
- Hookah Bars & Lounges: The plan would be amended to prohibit new hookah bars and lounges from being established in the Plan area.
- Big Box Retail: The plan would be amended to control the size of big box retail uses such as restricting retail floor area for general merchandise to a specific square footage.
- Automotive Repair Malls: The plan would be amended to no longer continue to allow new automotive repair malls in the Plan area.

These are only several examples of the types of uses that are un-regulated by the current Plan but which would be addressed in the proposed amendments. Additional amendments will be recommended as a result of input from the community. These include how to address mobile signs, second-hand merchandise stores, smoke shops, adult day care facilities, medical supply shops and other such uses. The over-arching purposes of these amendments are to restrict land uses that are known to cause compatibility issues along the Foothill Boulevard corridor and encourage those types of uses that fulfill the purposes of the Plan.

B) Expand & Modify Major Activity and Target Areas

The Plan currently includes four subproject areas called Major Activity and Target Areas. Each area contains an existing vibrant commercial activity. As a result, these areas



are treated differently in the Plan than other areas within the larger Plan area. For example, no project in these areas can be issued a building permit unless it is first determined by the Department of Building and Safety to be in compliance with the Plan. In addition, projects located in a Major Activity Area (or a Target Area) are first required to obtain a Plan Approval from the Planning Director. The Plan vests the Planning Director with the discretionary authority to issue approval of a Project within Major Activity Areas, or Target Areas, as well as for modifications of approved plans or materials before the issuance of a building permit or certificate of occupancy.

The Plan is proposed to be amended to expand these Major Activity Areas to cover larger areas such as both sides of Foothill Boulevard. Also, in some instances, these activity areas can either be collapsed or merged into one larger area. Additionally, all maps in the Plan including the maps in the current Plan showing both Major Activity Areas and Target Areas would be redrawn to provide greater detail such as actual street names and clarification of the actual physical boundaries of the respective activity areas.

Finally, the Specific Plan would be amended to limit the authority of the Planning Director to interpret the Plan's provisions. There have been too many occasions in the recent past in which the Planning Director or assigned staff has misinterpreted provisions of the Plan, resulting in bad projects that are bad for the community.

C) Clarify Plan Objectives & Remove Inconsistencies

Section 2, Purposes, of the FBCSP ("Plan"), as described above, sets forth the goals and objectives of the Plan. However, these goals or objectives have been easily circumvented through misinterpretation of the Plan's provisions, lack of enforcement, or through over reliance on underlying zoning provisions such that these objectives can't or will never be fully realized. For example, the Plan needs to be amended to cause the following:

- The content of the Plan needs to be re-organized such that its provisions are more easily found and made applicable to proposed projects;
- The Definitions section of the Plan needs to be updated. For example, "pedestrian friendly" should be described in the Definitions section of the Plan;
- Sign regulations in the Plan need to be modified. For example, while adequately addressing the requirements for new signs, the Plan does not include a sunset provision for the removal of over-sized and/or dilapidated signs; and
- Auto uses, including those proposing spray booths, require greater regulation in the Plan to make them more compatible with their surroundings. Under some circumstances existing auto uses in the Plan area should be phased out altogether.

In addition to the foregoing, administration of the Plan since its adoption in 1995 has revealed a large number of inconsistencies between the Plan's development and design regulations and zoning regulations of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). An example of this type of inconsistency is the regulation of automotive repair uses, although there are other examples of inconsistencies beyond auto repair uses. In the case of automotive repair uses, applicants that want to expand such uses in the Plan area are afforded the opportunity to make such expansions because they are allowed to by the LAMC and such expansions are unaddressed in the Plan. The Plan is proposed to be amended to address this kind of inconsistency and make the expansion of such facilities totally regulated by the Plan.

D) Improve Plan Administration & Enforcement

Section 10 – Specific Plan Implementation - sets forth the review and approval process for projects in the Plan area. This process is designed to be applied to projects located in a Major Activity Area or Target Area. Signs are specifically exempted from this process. In granting a project approval, the Planning Director is required to encourage “unified developments that contain functional linkages, distinctive architectural components, and landscape design elements.” In addition, project approvals are supposed to “evaluate the placement of mass, form, spatial elements and overall quality of the design of projects based on provisions and defined objectives in the Specific Plan.” Section 10 goes on to describe project approval procedures, approval thresholds, duration of project approvals, and appeal procedures.

In making a determination to approve a project, the Planning Director or assigned staff is required to make the following findings:

1. That the project complies with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan;
2. That the project is consistent with the general plan;
3. That proposed buildings and structures complement or are compatible with the surrounding buildings in terms of design, massing, and architectural integrity; and
4. That the landscape design is compatible with the buildings onsite and complements landscape off-site.

The application of the afore-listed findings to various projects has often resulted in decisions approving projects that fulfill only a few or none of the findings. This is because there are insufficient regulatory provisions in the Plan to explain exactly what types of projects are desired and what are not desired. Too often projects are reviewed for consistency with the LAMC and general plan and not with the Plan, especially when trying to determine the intent and objectives of the Plan as it applies to each individual project. This results in the habitual application of the “lowest common denominator” of regulations to a project. Consequently, the Plan is proposed to be amended to include one or more new findings that describe the elements of a “community friendly” project that can demonstrate its benefits to both the applicant and the community. The purpose of these amended findings will be to more fully implement the purposes of the Plan.

There are no enforcement provisions in the current Plan. As a consequence, and with reliance for compliance with Plan provisions largely left up to the community to enforce, many uses located within the Plan corridor operate (or are sometimes initiated and built) without proper permits or oversight by the City including the need to obtain a building permit, a conditional use permit, or a Permit Project Review Determination. Although not a problem limited to just the Sunland-Tujunga area, the lack of enforcement of Plan provisions (as well as basic LAMC provisions) has resulted in a visual degradation of the area. Consequently, the Plan is proposed to be amended to require twice annual Code enforcement “sweeps” of the Plan area and an annual internal review of City administrative procedures pertaining to administration of the Plan (which will include representatives from the Neighborhood Council and/or Land Use Committee).

The Plan should also include an administrative approval process for applicants seeking to establish a business in the Plan area such as requiring every applicant to obtain a Zoning Use Certificate (ZUC). This certificate would specify the types of uses allowed as part of the business and would certify that the business is appropriate for the zone in which it is located. The application can be submitted with the plans for building modifications. Typically, if business operators complete all requirements, the Zoning Use Certificate is issued at the time the building permits are signed off by the inspector.

Zoning Use Certificates would not be transferable. Any change in tenant or occupant of the premises, or change in proprietor or owner of a business would constitute a change for which a new ZUC would be required. In addition, a new certificate would be required should any change in location or change in proprietor occur for the business.

E) Improve the Design Guidelines and Standards Manual



The Design Guidelines and Standards Manual included in the Plan have been successful in encouraging good urban design, but largely for newly built projects only. These guidelines and standards regulate site planning, physical design elements, signs, landscaping freestanding walls and fences, utilities and service areas and wireless telecommunication antennas and facilities.

Application of the Design Guidelines and Standards Manual has been inconsistent for existing land uses seeking to expand or remodel or for new uses proposed on previously developed sites. Because the existing guidelines and standards are often believed to be applicable to entirely new construction only, there has been “wide open” interpretation of these guidelines when applied to existing uses and sites. For example, little or no landscaping is often required for a change of use on a property when, if the project were entirely new, substantial landscaping would be required. The same could be said for a building’s signage which is nonconforming but which doesn’t change with the new use (e.g. the business owner just re-uses the old non-conforming sign or sign structure).



The existing Design Guidelines and Standards Manual of the Plan is proposed to be amended to address the need to apply a coherent and effective and mandatory (not selective or optional) set of improvement guidelines for existing properties and uses undergoing expansion or the introduction of a new use. These Design Guidelines and Standards could potentially be administered by a newly formed design review board (DRB). The Design Guidelines and Standards also need to address inadequate landscaping standards. Moreover, the Guidelines and Standards Manual should be a user-friendly document that visually denotes correct plant species (by name) and acceptable building colors, including the use of a color palette. The guidelines could also be re-organized in a “this, not that” visual format or include a design standards matrix to help project applicants visualize acceptable design improvements for their businesses. This same type of guide would be provided for multifamily uses located in the Plan area.

Specific Plan Statutory Requirements

Article 8 of the California Government Code, Section 65451 (a) sets forth the content requirements for specific plans. Those requirements include the following:

1. The distribution, location, and extent of uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
2. The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses describe in the plan.
3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measure necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

A specific plan is also required to include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan. A specific plan may address additional topics which are necessary or desirable for implementation of the general plan. No specific plan may be adopted or amended that is not consistent with the general plan.

The current Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan does not conform to Section 65451(a) as follows:

- A) The Plan does not include an “Infrastructure Chapter” that addresses the requirements of Section 65451(a)(2). No information is provided as to the adequacy of public transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal and other essential infrastructure needs. The community has suffered from a lack of infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance. These needs are required to be addressed because there are areas in the Plan where new development is proposed but infrastructure to support such development is absent or inadequate.
- B) The Plan does not include an “Implementation Chapter” that includes a program for implementing the Plan or for financing the Plan. This is a critical element of a specific plan in that many of its objectives and purposes cannot be realized without a program of commitments by the governing agency (including funding for infrastructure upgrades) clearly explained in the Plan.

As a consequence of the foregoing, we are recommending that the Plan be amended to include an “Infrastructure Section” and “Implementation Section” in order for the Plan to be brought into conformance with the Government Code. We are also recommending that the Plan include a “Business Development Section” that will set forth the goals, policies, and strategies to attract new and desirable businesses to the area.

Request for Proposals – Consultant Assistance

The Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan was adopted over 16 years ago. While implementation of the Plan has improved certain aspects of the Plan area during that time, there are number of deficiencies and inadequacies in the Plan that have resulted in bad projects that have been harmful to the community. To ensure that the purposes of the Plan are upheld, the City should consider issuing a Request for Proposals for an update to the Plan. This is typically done by other local governmental agencies where there is insufficient time or expertise to draft or amend a planning policy document such as a specific plan.

There are many highly-qualified consulting firms in the Los Angeles area that have the necessary experience and expertise to assist the community in its proposed amendments to the Plan. Although the proposed amendments *are targeted amendments and not a complete re-draft* of the Plan, it is paramount these amendments meet the requirements of State law and that they be presented to the decision makers in a precise and professional manner.

The proposed amendments to the Plan will also require preparation of an environmental document as required by CEQA. If the City planning staff is unable or unwilling to prepare this document, it should also be included in the City's' RFP for consultant services.

Finally, the updating of the Plan should include a Public Outreach component to ensure that all stakeholders in the community have an opportunity to participate in the update process. The prime consultant, responsible for preparation of the Plan updates and environmental document, can also be responsible for the Public Outreach component or select a subconsultant to perform this task. The Public Outreach component can include a series of workshops or one larger community event that is well publicized, hosted by the City, and sponsored by both the Neighborhood Council and Sunland-Tujunga Alliance.

We estimate the consultant costs for preparation of the amendments to the Plan, including a public outreach component would be approximately \$60,000 to \$70,000. The cost to prepare the CEQA document (Mitigated Negative Declaration) would be approximately \$25,000.

CONCLUSION

The community seeks to address the current inadequacies of the Foothill Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan to make it a better document that more fully meets the needs of the community. This effort will not be a wholesale revision to the Plan. Nor is this effort intended to "open up" the plan for revisions by outside parties. We are recommending, instead, targeted revisions to the Plan that will correct past misinterpretations of the Plan and its provisions and that will more fully implement the purposes of the Plan. We are seeking the support of the Office of Council District 2 in this important effort. Please let us know if you have any questions or would like to meet with us to discuss the content of the memorandum.