



**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
LONG RANGE PLANNING DIVISION  
MEMORANDUM**

Date: October 1, 2010

To: Chair Cecilia Brown and Members of the Planning Commission

From: Bret McNulty, Planner

CC: Glenn Russell, Ph.D., Director, Planning & Development Department  
Vicki Parker, Deputy Director  
David Lackie, Supervising Planner  
Christopher Wrather, Chair, Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee

Subject: **Los Alamos Community Plan Update  
October 13, 2010 Planning Commission Hearing**

**1. Introduction**

The Planning Commission continued their August 11, 2010 hearing on the Los Alamos Community Plan update to provide staff additional time to address parking related questions raised during the hearing by Commissioner Blough and provide Laurie Tamura of Urban Planning Concepts Inc. further opportunity to provide comments to staff. This memo summarizes staff answers to the parking related questions and Ms. Tamura's comments.

**2. Parking Questions**

*Will on-street parking supply be adequate to accommodate mixed use development in the CM-LA zone?*

The Bell Street Corridor Parking Study prepared for the LACP EIR identified 479 existing on-street parking spaces available within the CM-LA zone. Striping of angled parking along cross streets one block north and south of Bell Street would add an additional 211 spaces. Existing on-street parking along the north side of Waite Street was not included in the EIR parking study, but conservatively would add an additional 40 spaces to the existing parking inventory, bringing the total supply with future angled parking to  $(479+211+40) = 730$  spaces (Attachment A).

The LACP EIR estimated total off-street parking demand between 655 and 906 spaces.<sup>1</sup> The high end of this range assumes the entire CM-LA zone would buildout with high parking demand uses (e.g., office/professional – 1 space per 300 sf). Staff re-evaluated the parking study and determined that (1) space per 500 sf is a more realistic parking demand standard since the majority of new development in the CM-LA zone will likely be in the categories of Retail Business and General Commercial. Staff acknowledges that uses with higher and lower parking demand such as restaurants and offices (one (1) space per 300 sf) and furniture or hardware stores (one (1) space per 1,000 sf) will also be developed however to a lesser extent.

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<sup>1</sup> Final Los Alamos Community Plan EIR, page 4.9-17.

Analysis of the CM-LA on-street parking demand is based on the Inland Residential and Non-Residential parking requirements in Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) Section 35.36.070 summarized in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: CM-LA Parking and Buildout</b>	
<b>LUDC Parking Requirements</b>	
<b>Non-Residential Uses</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Retail businesses and General Commercial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One (1) space for each 500 sf of gross floor area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Retail Trade – Furniture, hardware, appliance stores</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One (1) space for each 1,000 sf of gross floor area.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Restaurant/Cafes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One (1) space for each 300 sf of patron service area and 1 space for every 2 employees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Professional Offices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One (1) space for each 300 sf of gross floor area.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Residential Use</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum one (1) parking space per residential unit (two or fewer bedrooms).</li> </ul>	

The proposed CM-LA zone district allows residential projects with two (2) or fewer units to meet their parking requirements off-site. The EIR projected that 277 of 288 potential residential units would be two (2) or fewer units (277 on-street spaces), assuming that the off-street parking incentive would result in a heightened demand for these units.

The additional 188,550 square feet of commercial uses would require 378 on-street parking spaces for a total on-street parking demand of  $(277 + 378) = 655$  spaces. Therefore, the future supply of on-street parking in the CM-LA zone district (730 spaces) is adequate to accommodate parking demand. The EIR also assumed that all new commercial uses in the CM-LA would meet their parking requirements through on-street parking.<sup>2</sup>

***Will the pace of future growth create on-street parking supply/funding problems?***

To determine when buildout would occur, three development scenarios were examined using low (1%), moderate (2%), and robust (3%) annual growth rates. Even at a high growth rate of 3%, there is sufficient existing on-street parking to support projected CM-LA development through 2033 without the need to re-stripe for angled parking. (Attachment B). Although, it is not likely that growth rates would be sustained at this level throughout the period.

<sup>2</sup> CM-LA commercial parking standard provides that on-site parking is not required.

The timing of on-street capacity under the three growth scenarios is summarized in Table 2 below.

<b>Table 2: CM-LA On-Street Parking Demand</b>			
<b>Existing On-Street Parking 479 spaces</b>	<b>Annual Rate/Year Reached</b>		
	<b>1% Growth</b>	<b>2% Growth</b>	<b>3% Growth</b>
<b>50% capacity (240 spaces)</b>	2040	2025	2020
<b>100% capacity</b>	2095	2052	2033

***Should an in-lieu fee be charged to pay for the new on-street parking?***

DevStd CIRC-LA-1.6.1 identifies 50% of building capacity as the trigger for funding and installing angled parking. The Planning Commission questioned if this trigger was too far down the road to capture funding from initial development if an in-lieu parking fee is pursued.

Staff anticipates the community and business owners will want to plan for angled parking sooner than the 50% capacity trigger because angled parking also serves as an amenity which complements the small town character of Los Alamos. Anticipating this desire, staff recommends DevStd CIRC-LA-1.6.1 be deleted and replaced with a new Action CIRC-LA-1.6.1 (see below).

One of the highest priority implementation measures in the Plan is preparation of the pedestrian circulation plan (Action CIRC-LA-1.5.1). The proposed on-street parking plan could be prepared at the same time as the pedestrian plan to ensure coordination of the two planning efforts and include an angled parking phasing/priority schedule. The plan could also study the feasibility and practicality of an in-lieu parking fee since striping for angled parking cannot be funded using road impact fees. Therefore, other funding must be used such as a potential in-lieu fee. In Old Town Orcutt, the restriping plan was completed in conjunction with the scheduled asphalt resurfacing project which kept costs very low.

Staff is not recommending that an in lieu fee be established at this time concurrent with Plan adoption. Rather, staff is recommending that funding options, including a potential in-lieu fee, be investigated as part of the newly proposed Action CIRC-LA-1.6.1. The Action could include a timing trigger for plan preparation (e.g., within two years of LACP adoption) to inform the community and affected property owners that an in lieu fee may be established in the future.

**Recommendation #1:**

Delete Dev Std CIRC-LA-1.6.1 and replace with new Action CIRC-LA-1.6.1

~~Dev Std CIRC-LA-1.6.1: The County shall pursue funding and installation of angled parking along the cross streets one block north and south of Bell Street when development~~

~~with the CM-LA zone district reaches 50% building capacity in order to meet future parking needs.~~

New **Action CIRC-LA-1.6.1:** The County Planning and Development and Public Works Departments shall prepare an On-Street Parking Plan for the CM-LA zone district. The parking plan shall establish ultimate road rights-of-way and angled parking configurations for each street identified on Figure \_\_\_\_\_ and identify drainage and utility placements. The parking plan shall include a phasing program for installation of angled parking. The plan should also evaluate the feasibility of an in-lieu fee parking program to off-set costs for installing angle parking in the CM-LA zone district. The On-Street Parking Plan shall reinforce the community's informal, rural character and be prepared concurrent to the Pedestrian Circulation Plan. See Action CIRC-LA-1.5.1.

#### Recommendation #2:

Delete Action CIRC-LA-1.6.2. The revised parking supply/demand information indicates existing on-street and future angled parking will be adequate to meet projected parking demand. Therefore, the purchase of land and improvements for a satellite parking lot will not be required.

~~**Action CIRC-LA-1.6.2:** The County shall pursue development of additional parking capacity, such as parking lots when development reaches 90% of on-street parking capacity within the CM-LA zone district.~~

### **3. Urban Planning Concepts Comment Letter**

Laurie Tamura, Principal with Urban Planning Concepts Inc., submitted a comment letter to Planning Commission Chair Cecilia Brown on August 25, 2010 (Attachment E). Staff reviewed Ms. Tamura's comments and met with her on September 22, 2010 to discuss suggested revisions to the draft Plan and proposed LUDC amendments.

Attachment C includes staff recommended revisions to the draft Los Alamos Community Plan and proposed LUDC amendments. Staff requests the Planning Commission consider the suggested revisions and provide direction to staff on any changes or modifications. The revisions respond to on-street parking questions raised by the Planning Commission as well as comments addressed in Ms. Tamura's letter. Below is a topical summary of the issues raised in Ms. Tamura's letter.

#### **A. Draft Plan Policy Amendments Revisions**

*Comments from Ms. Tamura assert that air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) standards impose overly strict requirements on ministerial projects and that many items are redundant with development standards enforced through other planning processes.*

Staff reviewed County standard conditions, Air Pollution Control District standards, and the greenhouse gas standards adopted by the Board of Supervisors for the Santa Ynez Community Plan. Staff is recommending revisions to eliminate redundant standards and clarify requirements

applicable in Los Alamos. The proposed revisions are items 18 through 21 in Attachment C (page 6).

***Requests that biological resource policies and development standards requiring creek buffers not apply to Calaveras Creek in the urban boundary, and tree protection development standards not apply to properties along Bell Street.***

Options for establishing off-site mitigation on properties owned by the Los Alamos Community Services District for oak tree removals in the CM-LA district are being explored. These policies already include provisions that allow buffers to be changed on a case-by-case basis so as not to deprive property owners the reasonable development of their parcels. Edits to three development standards are recommended to clarify the applicability of buffer and tree removal requirements to development in the Plan Area and provide for potential off-site plantings should onsite preservation and replanting prove infeasible. The revisions are items 23 through 26 in Attachment C (page 9).

***Comments from Ms. Tamura assert that flood control and clean water policies applied to the small lots and properties in the designated floodway preclude development. Specifically, an unwritten policy requiring each project to construct a drain pipe to San Antonio Creek will stop development from occurring.***

Staff previously addressed this concern during the Plan update by revising the flood control and water quality requirements applicable in the CM-LA and removing Policy FLD-LA-1.3 from the Plan. Staff met with Flood Control and Clean Water Program staff to review Ms. Tamura's recent letter and reaffirmed that the policies in the Plan update were sufficient to relax development standards in the CM-LA zone, however it was agreed that adding additional clarifying language to two policies would improve communicating their intent.

Staff recommends revisions to the flood policies to further clarify how changes to the development standards in the CM-LA relax permitting requirements and the previous requirement to drain to San Antonio Creek was eliminated. The revisions are items 27 through 30 in Attachment C (page 12).

***Requests that noise policy be reworded to be a positive statement and that outdoor living areas be allowed exposed to higher noise levels.***

Staff recommends a revision to allow for noise levels to exceed the outdoor living areas standard as long as findings that interior living spaces remain at regulatory levels and that property owners are notified of potential noise exposure. The revision is item 31 in Attachment C (page 12).

***Editorial comments from Ms Tamura***

Staff identified 12 additional minor policy text revisions that will serve to clarify and improve implementation of the Plan. The revisions to policies are listed as items 2, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 20 in the table in Attachment C. Staff recommends deleting the Affordable Housing (AH) Overlay from properties that developed as a residential single family subdivision without utilizing the density bonus available under the AH overlay. This item is listed as item M-1 in Attachment C (page 1).

## **B. LUDC Amendments**

Comments on the Land Use and Development Code amendments include:

*The comment letter suggests expanding allowable uses list and downshifting permit requirements from MCUP to Permitted for certain uses.*

The allowable uses were selected by the LAPAC during the Plan update process. Ms. Tamura suggested additional potential uses which could be added to the CM-LA zone. Staff recommended LUDC changes are included in the use table on pages 3 and 4 in Attachment D.

### **Attachments**

- A. Los Alamos Bell Street Corridor On-Street Parking Study, Santa Barbara County. 2010.
- B. Los Alamos Parking Supply/Demand Projections- CM-LA Zone.
- C. Draft LACP Revisions.
- D. Draft LUDC Amendments -Table 2-15 Revisions.
- E. Urban Planning Concepts Comment Letter, August 25, 2010.