

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
RESOLUTION NO. 7930**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA, CALIFORNIA,
ADOPTING A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT TO
IMPLEMENT THE 2021-2029 (6TH CYCLE)
HOUSING ELEMENT AND RELATED ACTIONS**

WHEREAS, Sections 65300 *et. seq.* of the California Government Code requires each city and county to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development of land within its jurisdiction and Sphere of Influence; and

WHEREAS, Sections 65580 *et. seq.* of the California Government Code requires each city and county to periodically prepare and update its Housing Element in its General Plan. The City of South Pasadena received the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers from the Southern California Association of Government in 2019, in conjunction with the requirement that the City update its Housing Element for the 6th Cycle (2021-2029); and

WHEREAS, on May 30, 2023, the City Council adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the 2021-2029 (6th Cycle) Housing Element (“Housing Element”) and then adopted the Housing Element; and

WHEREAS, certain further actions were necessary to obtain a determination from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) that the Housing Element substantially complied with Housing Element Law; and,

WHEREAS, the City completed the necessary actions and on July 29, 2024, HCD found the City’s Housing Element to substantially comply with State Housing Element Law; and,

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2023, the City Council adopted the Program Environmental Impact Report prepared for the General Plan Update and the Downtown Specific Plan and 2021-2029 Housing Element Implementation Programs Project; and

WHEREAS, the City has continued to work diligently to implement Housing Element programs, including adopting a new General Plan, Downtown Specific Plan, and rezoning; and

WHEREAS, Housing Element Program 2.n called for the City to place a ballot initiative before the voters of South Pasadena to consider removing the 45-foot building height limit in certain parts of the City, and on November 5, 2024, South

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Pasadena residents approved said measure with the results being certified by the City Council on December 18, 2025, thus enabling amendments to the General Plan, Downtown Specific Plan, and the South Pasadena Zoning Code consistent with the adopted Housing Element; and

WHEREAS, on February 1 and February 15, 2025, the City conducted walking tours to familiarize residents and public officials with the areas under consideration for revised building height limits and development standards, with staff receiving feedback and suggestions from the community on potential changes to both the South Pasadena Municipal Code and Downtown Specific Plan, as well as the Housing Element, with approximately 40 residents in attendance at each event; and

WHEREAS, on February 18, 2025, the City conducted an open house to showcase the analysis prepared in regard to height limits in conjunction with housing density, with maps showing areas in which the City proposed to increase height and exhibits showing examples of conceptual development scenarios in areas that included Huntington Drive, Ostrich Farm, Fair Oaks Avenue, and Mission Street, with staff receiving feedback from the approximately 40 residents who attended; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2025, a subcommittee of two Commissioners was formed to study in-depth the assumptions and methodology involved in the proposed amendments; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2025, the City conducted a second open house, this time focusing on current development standards that may present challenges to housing development including setbacks, stepbacks, building breaks, parking location, open space, and minimum unit sizes, with staff receiving feedback from the approximately 40 participants who attended; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2025, a joint City Council and Planning Commission study session was held wherein additional public comment and feedback from both the Planning Commission and the City Council were received regarding potential amendments to the General Plan, Housing Element, Downtown Specific Plan, the Zoning Code found in the South Pasadena Municipal Code, and the City's Zoning Map; and

WHEREAS, On April 8, 2025, the Planning Commission subcommittee that was convened to study the assumptions and methodologies upon which potential amendments would be based reported to the full Planning Commission, resulting in further feedback to staff with the subcommittee continuing to work with staff to prepare a recommendation for future consideration by the Planning Commission; and

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WHEREAS, on April 29, 2025, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed Public Hearing, wherein the Planning Commission received a staff presentation and staff report on potential amendments to the General Plan, Housing Element, Downtown Specific Plan, the City's Zoning Code and the City's Zoning Map ("proposed project" or "project"; received public testimony; and held Planning Commission discussion. Thereafter, the Planning Commission continued the Public Hearing to May 7, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 2025, the Planning Commission continued its Public Hearing, wherein the Planning Commission resumed its discussion, received corrected maps and exhibits, including a density/height summary table and received public testimony. Thereafter, the Planning Commission continued the public hearing to May 20, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2025, the Planning Commission continued its Public Hearing, wherein the Planning Commission resumed its discussion, received corrections to the zoning map and density/height summary table, received public testimony and gave direction to staff and the City's consultant for additional information and scenarios related to the density and height amendments. Thereafter, the Planning Commission continued the public hearing to June 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on June 10, 2025, the Planning Commission continued its Public Hearing, wherein the Planning Commission received an updated density and height table of density based on recommendations and suggestions from the Planning Commission, received the updated Housing Element inventory zoning scenarios with corresponding Zoning Maps, received updated development standards table prepared by the Subcommittee and staff; resumed its discussion and provided preliminary recommendations to Staff in preparation for a community meeting to be held on June 16, 2025. Thereafter, the Planning Commission continued the public hearing to June 24, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on June 16, 2025, the Planning Commission held a community meeting to received input from the community and stakeholders regarding the Planning Commission's preliminary recommendations related to density, height and development standards in order to implement the Housing Element programs; and

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2025, the Planning Commission continued its Public Hearing, wherein the Planning Commission received a staff presentation and staff report on the amendments to the General Plan, Housing Element, Downtown Specific Plan, the City's Zoning Code and the City's Zoning Map based on the Planning Commission's previous discussion and direction; received a summary of the comments received at the June 16, 2025 community meeting; received public testimony; and held Planning Commission discussion and provided further direction to staff. Thereafter, the Planning Commission adopted a Resolution to recommend

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that the City Council adopt a General Plan Amendment to implement the Housing Element; and

WHEREAS, on July 16, 2025, the City Council noticed a public hearing on this matter and subsequently opened the public hearing and continued the public hearing to the next regular meeting of the City Council to be held on August 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, on August 20, 2025, the City Council held a duly noticed continued Public Hearing, wherein the City Council received a staff presentation and staff report on the proposed General Plan Amendment, as well as amendments to the Housing Element and Downtown Specific Plan and a Zoning Text Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment, as it relates to height, density and development standards in the City's zoning and overlay districts in order to implement the Housing Element. The City Council received public testimony and all interested persons had an opportunity to, and did, testify in this matter. Thereafter, the City Council asked questions and deliberated; and

WHEREAS, all legal prerequisites to the adoption of this Resolution have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE, DECLARE, DETERMINE, AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Recitals. The above recitals are hereby declared to be true and correct and are incorporated herein as if set forth in full.

SECTION 2. Findings. Based upon substantial evidence presented to the City Council during the Public Hearing, including public testimony and written and oral staff reports, along with the environmental documentation, the City Council finds:

A. All necessary Public Hearings and opportunities for public testimony and comment have been conducted in compliance with applicable law; and

B. That the proposed General Plan Amendment (GPA) is consistent with the Housing Goals and residential densities prescribed in the 2021-2029 (6th Cycle) Housing Element and other General Plan elements.

SECTION 3. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The policies and implementation documents that were adopted and now proposed for the amendment were analyzed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the Housing Element, and adopted by the City Council on May 30, 2023, and the changes are

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within the scope of that analysis. Further, the policies and implementation documents that were adopted and now proposed for amendment were analyzed in the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan Update and 2021-2029 Housing Element Implementation Programs, which was certified by the Council on September 27, 2023. Section 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that an Addendum to an earlier Mitigated Negative Declaration or EIR shall be prepared if some changes or additions are necessary to the previously adopted document, but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration or EIR have occurred. Based on the analysis and information contained in the Addendum to the PEIR, there is no evidence that the proposed project requires major changes to the PEIR. Comparison of the previous project with the proposed amendments indicates that there are no new significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of height, density and development standards to support housing development. In addition, there is no substantial evidence that the circumstances under which the project is undertaken have substantially changed, and there is no evidence of new or more severe environmental impacts arising out of the proposed changes to the policy documents. The amendments to these policy documents, are considered in the same context of compliance with the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), as it has been allocated to require planning for additional housing development amid a statewide housing shortage, as reflected in the Housing Element.

Therefore, the City Council adopts the July 2025 addendum to the PEIR. Further, on a separate and independent basis, the City Council finds that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to recently enacted Public Resources Code Section 21080.085, which provides that CEQA does not apply to a rezoning that implements the schedule of actions contained in an approved housing element pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 65583 of the Government Code. Section 65583(c) implementation actions, although referred to in the exemption as rezoning, are broadly defined to include, but are not limited to: making make sites available during the planning period with appropriate zoning and development standards to accommodate RHNA needs for all income levels that could not be accommodated on sites identified in the sites inventory; assisting in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of extremely low, very low, low-, and moderate-income households; removing governmental and nongovernmental constraints for development of housing for all income levels. The project includes consistency amendments among the various interrelated documents (General Plan, Housing Element, Downtown Specific Plan, and Zoning) that are within the scope of, and contemplated by programs under Section 65583 (c). Also, the actions included in the project reflect implementation of the Housing Element in light of Measure SP, and implementation of other Housing Element programs contemplated under Section 65583(c).

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SECTION 4. General Plan Amendment Findings. South Pasadena Municipal Code Section 36.620.070(A) provides that a General Plan Amendment may be approved only if certain findings are met. Accordingly, based upon substantial evidence, including public testimony and written and oral staff reports, along with the environmental documentation, the City Council makes the following findings:

A. The General Plan Amendment is internally consistent with the actions, goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan as well as programs contained in the 2021-2029 (6th Cycle) Housing Element with the amendments of July 16, 2025. Specifically, the project is consistent with the following:

Housing Element Program 2.n: Citywide Height Limit Ballot Initiative.

Housing Element Program 3.n: Zoning Changes.

General Plan Policy P5.8: Support the reduction of governmental and regulatory constraints, and advocate for the production of affordable housing.

Given that the General Plan Amendment would implement changes to support heights and building standards in support of, and consistent with, the Housing Element as amended on August 20, 2025, the City Council makes this finding.

B. The General Plan Amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience or general welfare of the City because it would further implement the adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element as amended on August 20, 2025, specifically the rezoning necessary to implement new building heights enabled by the voter approval of Measure SP in November 2024. This supports Housing Element Programs 2.n (Citywide Height Limit Ballot Initiative) and 3.n (Zoning Changes). Therefore, the City Council can make this finding.

Furthermore, the General Plan Land Use Map would be amended to reduce the area covered by the Housing Opportunity (HO) Overlay by removing the overlay from applying to RM zoning districts identified on the current Zoning Map except for certain RM zoned parcels along Huntington Drive, and adding a new CF-50 designation to applicable properties to allow higher intensity multifamily housing on certain religious congregation or private school sites that are larger than two acres. Such revisions would not impact the development suitability of the affected areas, and would not impact the physical constraints, access, the provision of utilities, or the compatibility of adjacent land uses in the affected areas, and, in conjunction with related Housing Element Amendment of August


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20, 2025, would ensure internal consistency related to land use densities. Therefore, the City Council makes this finding.


SECTION 5. Based upon the foregoing, the City Council hereby adopts the General Plan Amendment, including updating the General Plan Land Use Map, as set forth in Exhibit A and Exhibit B to this Resolution, to implement the necessary changes to the General Plan consistent with the Housing Element Amendment of August 20, 2025 and the Housing Element Housing Programs as permitted by Measure SP.

SECTION 6. This Resolution shall be effective on the date that the Ordinance entitled "An Ordinance of the City of South Pasadena Amending Chapter 36 (Zoning) of the South Pasadena Municipal Code as it Related to Height, Density and Development Standards in the City's Zoning and Overlay Districts and Amending the City's Zoning Map to Implement the City's 2021-2029 (6th Cycle) Housing Element" becomes effective.

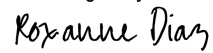
PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED on this 20th day of August, 2025.

Signed by:

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Janet Braun, Mayor

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

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Mark Perez, Acting Chief City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Roxanne Diaz, City Attorney

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I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of South Pasadena, California, at a regular meeting held on the 20th day of August, by the following vote:

AYES: Cacciotti, Primuth, Rossi, Mayor Braun

NOES: None.

ABSENT: Ferguson

ABSTAINED: None.

DocuSigned by:

Mark Perez

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Mark Perez, Acting Chief City Clerk

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EXHIBIT A

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

In Chapter 3, Sub-section C (Urban Form), 2. Corridors, Mission Street and Fair Oaks (Downtown Specific Plan), the following shall be amended:

6. Infills along Mission Street—New infill along Mission will be up to 50 feet in height calculated using average building height along Mission Street west of Orange Grove Avenue or up to 55 feet in height calculated using average building height in the Mixed Use Core Zone east of Orange Grove Avenue, keeping the pedestrian scale of Mission Street. To enable buildings to create a fabric that is contrasting to the one on Fair Oaks, building frontage along Mission will allow the creation of courts and yards directly facing the sidewalk, enabling a more porous fabric.
7. Infills along Fair Oaks Avenue—The plan envisions various mixed-use infill developments along Fair Oaks Avenue. These infills will be up to 70 feet in height calculated using average building height, with active ground floors lining the sidewalks. In order to ensure that the form and character of these new buildings is not monolithic, a number of standards and guidelines are provided as part of this vision to enable contextually sensitive development.

In Chapter 3, Sub-section C (Urban Form), 3. Neighborhood Centers, the following shall be amended:

C. Huntington Drive and Fremont Avenue

This center has a mix of one, two, and three-story office, retail, and residential buildings. These buildings are placed next to each other along the edge of a wide sidewalk, many with active storefronts that engage the pedestrian, with the one exception of a supermarket store. The parking lot for the supermarket store interrupts the walking experience along Huntington Drive. The supermarket stores and parking area offer redevelopment opportunity for an appropriately scaled mixed use project with active neighborhood serving retail or cafes at street level. Parking should be located away from the streets edge.

Streetscape and lighting improvements would enhance the comfort and safety, of the walking experience. Portions of the neighborhood lack access to a park within a 10-minute walk. The islands and turn lanes make crossing the intersection at Huntington Drive and Fair

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Oaks Avenue confusing. The City should examine the feasibility of consolidating and repurposing the excess traffic islands at the corner of Fair Oaks Avenue and Huntington Drive as one large public open space, which would also simplify the traffic flow and pedestrian crossing experience. Public views to the San Gabriel Mountains to the north should be protected by careful massing setbacks at street corners that open up the vistas. The proposed protected bike lane along Fair Oaks in the Downtown area, could be extended south to Huntington Drive.

In Chapter 3, Sub-section D (Planning Designations), the following shall be amended:

D. Planning Designations

Neighborhood

The physical size of the neighborhood is defined by a five-minute walk from its center to edge, with primarily residential uses with the basic needs of daily life met by uses in close proximity. Streets form a connected network, providing alternate routes that help to disperse traffic, and are equitable for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Diversity in the type, size, and disposition of buildings, streets, and open spaces creates many options in environments, experiences, functions, uses, prices, and populations.

Very Low Intensity: This land use classification permits detached single-family homes and is characterized by lots over 10,000 square feet.

Scale: House-scale.

Intensity: Max 3 units/acre.

Height: 1-2 stories.

Low Intensity: This land use classification permits detached single-family-homes and is characterized by lots of 5,000 to 10,000 square feet.

Scale: House-scale.

Intensity: Max 5 units/acre.

Height: 1-2 stories.

Medium Intensity: This land use classification permits attached housing types, such as courtyard housing, townhomes, bungalow court, and multiplexes, including single-family homes on smaller lots.

Scale: House-scale. Attached, semi-detached, and detached buildings.

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Intensity: Max 30 units/acre and up to 70 units/acre in the Housing Opportunity Overlay (HOO).

Height: Up to 45 feet in height or up to 55 feet in height in the HOO calculated using average building height.

High Intensity: This land use classification permits multi-family residential development. It is intended to identity and conserve existing concentrations of such development in the city. These areas are characterized by multi-story apartments and condominiums.

Scale: House-scale and some block-scale buildings. Attached, semi-detached, and detached buildings.

Intensity: Max 45 units/acre and up to 70 units/acre in the Housing Opportunity Overlay (HOO).

Height: Up to 45 feet in height or up to 55 feet in height in the HOO calculated using average building height.

Housing Opportunity Overlay

This land use classification permits multi-family residential development and is applied to higher-density corridors and community centers where higher density projects are appropriate. Multi-story apartment and condominium developments are appropriate for this land use designation.

Scale: Medium to large scale multi-family buildings.

Intensity: Max 70 units/acre.

Height: 55 feet calculated using average building height

Mixed Use Core

Encourages a wide range of building types based on neighborhood characteristics that house a mix of functions, including commercial, entertainment, office, and housing. South Pasadena's mixed-use areas are distinctive with varying context and building types.

Downtown is a Citywide destination where people work, live, shop, and play. It is accessible from across the city by multiple forms of transportation. Downtown is characterized by mid-rise mixed-use buildings placed close to the sidewalk to create a thriving pedestrian environment which is supported by high quality streetscapes and public spaces. The downtown area supports continued reinvestment and context sensitive intensification that enhance housing choices and promotes local businesses. Range of open spaces and walkable streets and alleys weave together the various downtown assets.

Community centers along Huntington Drive are located at key intersections and serve daily needs of multiple neighborhoods. Some

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larger sites can be developed with urban residential mixed-uses in a walkable environment. The massing of new development should respect the adjacent stable residential neighborhood.

The Ostrich Farm area is along the western edge of the city and faces the Arroyo Park. Ostrich Farm area currently has a mix of stable office, industrial, and urban residential uses. Many of the commercial uses support the local creative industry. Redevelopment of these sites should maintain and enhance the creative industries and businesses while allowing for residential development on upper floors.

Scale: House-scale and some block-scale buildings. Attached, semi-detached, and detached buildings.

Intensity: Max 70 units/acre, or 50 units/acre on Mission Street west of Orange Grove Avenue

Height: 55 feet calculated using average building height, or 50 feet calculated using average building height on Mission Street west of Orange Grove Avenue

Fair Oaks Corridor

The Fair Oaks Corridor is the major north-south connector with direct drop-off from the 110 freeway. The corridor is a gateway into the City and downtown area. The 100 feet wide corridor has a collection of medium and large sized parcels and has large 3 and 4 story buildings that form continuous street frontage. The corridor is home to several significant retail anchors. The larger parcels are developed with auto-oriented uses and present a significant opportunity for reinforcing historic development patterns while allowing much needed affordable housing in the city. The typical lot depths are around 165 feet and the frontage parcels on the east side back on to an established single-family neighborhood.

Scale: Block-scale buildings with house scale buildings providing contextual response to established residential neighborhoods.

Intensity: Max 90 units/acre.

Height: 70 feet calculated using average building height.

Civic

Public or quasi-public in operation, civic buildings and spaces are the cornerstone of neighborhoods and a symbolic reflection of South Pasadena's values and aspirations. The civic buildings may operate in the fields of the arts, culture, education, recreation, government, transit, security, health, and safety. Since public buildings represent a collective identity, their design should set them apart from more conventional private buildings. Civic building sites should be located within or adjacent to a civic space, or at the terminated vista of a

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significant thoroughfare. These places are easily accessible by foot or automobile and have formal access points that address the street.

Within the Civic land use designation, certain large properties are designated for residential uses, such as multi-family residential development. When residential uses are permitted through the implementing zoning, the following applies:

Scale: House-scale and some block-scale buildings. Attached, semi-detached, and detached buildings.

Intensity: Max 50 units/acre.

Height: 50 feet.

Except for the residential uses on the designated parcels set forth in the zoning code and zoning map, residential uses are not typically permitted or encouraged unless specifically allowed by state law.

Parks & Open Space

Lands designated for public recreation and leisure and visual resources and can range from neighborhood tot lots and pocket parks, to urban squares and plazas, and from playgrounds to large regional parks.

Preserves

Undeveloped areas within the hills adjacent to existing established single-family residences. The Preserves are natural areas designated for preservation of flora, fauna, geological, natural, historical, or similar features of scientific or educational value, and/or outstanding scenic beauty.

In Chapter 8, Sub-section D (Standards), the following shall be amended:

The 1998 General Plan recommended 4 acres of park and recreational facilities per 1,000 residents. Currently, the City provides 4.7 acres per 1,000 residents, exceeding the 1998 General Plan's recommendation. South Pasadena has no development requirement to provide public open space. Park fees are collected when land is subdivided. However, as South Pasadena is generally built out, there are few opportunities for land subdivision, so park fees are not a reliable source of revenue.

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While South Pasadena does not require public open space in new development, the City does require private open space in new residential projects. This private open space is provided in the form of balconies, patios, and minimum yards, or setbacks (front, side, and rear), and a limitation on the percentage of a lot that can be covered by a building. Open space requirements are set forth in the Zoning Code and in the Downtown Specific Plan.

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EXHIBIT B

JULY 2025 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP

Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

- Very Low Density Neighborhood
- Low Density Neighborhood
- Medium Density Neighborhood
- High-density Neighborhood
- Mixed-use Core
- Fair Oaks Corridor
- Civic
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Preserves
- Housing Opportunity Overlay

06/24/2025

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 Feet

