

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the North Business Park Specific Plan

1. *What is a Specific Plan?*

- A Specific Plan is a planning tool for refining a community's vision for a particular area. Communities use Specific Plans for areas that are to be master planned for new zoning in developed areas which need clarity about their direction for the future. A community can use a Specific Plan to guide land use activity, development, and reinvestment in the planning area. Per State Law, a Specific Plan must be consistent with the General Plan.

- Per State Law, a Specific Plan must include the following information:
 - i. Text and diagrams showing the distribution, location and extent of all land uses, including open space;

 - ii. Proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy and other essential facilities needed to support the land uses;

 - iii. Standards and guidelines for development, and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, where applicable;

 - iv. Program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures; and

 - v. Statement of the Specific Plan's relationship to the General Plan.

2. *Why are we doing the North Business Park Specific Plan?*

- The North Business Park Specific Plan (NBPSP) is an effort to guide the inevitable redevelopment of the aging business park area on the north side of the 101 Freeway, west of Lindero Canyon Road. Rather than responding to individual property owner requests for changes to zoning, the City views the NBPSP as a tool to provide a framework within which redevelopment can take place that will allow property owners to see some economic benefit for reinvesting in their properties, while enabling the City to ensure that development that is approved can be accommodated by the existing or planned infrastructure. The City maintains much more control, and can better anticipate and avoid problems, if the redevelopment of the area is looked at as a whole, rather than as individual lots without any context.

- While the state housing mandates do identify a need for new housing in the City of Westlake Village, the NBPSP is NOT being put forward in response to those mandates. The study in advance of the Plan was begun in response to increased pressure to redevelop some of the larger parcels within the Plan area in 2007-08, and an acknowledgement that the City would be better served responding to that pressure with an adopted plan in place. There are residential components included in the plan as proposed, and they will be adequate to meet our past state mandated shortfalls and our current state mandated allocation.

3. Can the North Business Park Specific Plan be modified from what is in the plan as currently drafted?

- The Draft Specific Plan is just that: a Draft. The City Council is free to make any changes to the Draft Plan that it deems appropriate. However, the Draft Plan, as currently drafted, has been arrived at after several years of study and analysis, and has been designed to achieve the goal of providing incentives to property owners to avoid the development of blight, while minimizing impacts to nearby properties (and the region in general), particularly as they relate to traffic and congestion north of the 101 Freeway.
- Significant changes to the Draft Plan will necessitate revisions to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), which will entail new studies and analysis.

4. Will land use zoning change?

- In many parts of the Specific Plan area, zoning will change. These changes may be minor and include new commercial or industrial uses or new development standards, or they may be more significant and involve a major change in use (such as from industrial to residential).
- In other areas of the NBPSP, zoning will remain the same. These are areas which appear to remain economically viable in the coming years, and for which no intensification was deemed necessary.
- Property owners, as well as interested residents, should review the NBPSP for potential changes to areas of concern, and direct any questions to the Planning Department.

5. Who are the consultants working on the North Business Park Specific Plan?

- The lead consultant on the NBPSP is Civic Solutions. The project manager for Civic Solutions is Jean Ward, who was the project manager for the Arroyo Group which prepared the original plan. Jean has led a team of consultants to work on completing this plan, which includes engineers, economists, architects, landscape architects, and environmental assessors.
- The consultant for the preparation of the DEIR is Psomas. They have incorporated the work done by the consultant team that designed the plan with further studies and analysis to prepare the DEIR, which is the required environmental review documentation for this Specific Plan. The project manager for Psomas is Kent Norton.

6. What has changed from the 2014 version of the North Business Park Specific Plan?

- There have been substantial changes to the 2014 draft of the NBPSP. The most significant changes have been the deletion of significant amounts of commercial development, the relocation and intensification of the residential components, and an overall reduction in development intensity across the entire NBPSP area.
- Overall, the intensity of development proposed in the new plan has been reduced about 32% from the previous plan. The main goal of this reduction of intensity was to reduce traffic impacts. Traffic impact analysis as part of the Environmental Impact Report shows that the reduction of intensity and the change in the mix of land uses has greatly reduced the traffic impacts.
- These changes were made in order to reflect new economic realities in real estate and development, as well as to minimize impacts (primarily traffic impacts) to areas in the vicinity of the NBPSP area.

7. What is changing from the Draft version of the North Business Park Specific Plan released in 2019?

- Staff and the plan team have made substantial changes to the Draft NBPSP which was released in early 2019. The changes centered largely on feedback received from the public and City Council following the release of the Draft NBPSP and DEIR. The most significant change relates to the number of housing units permitted throughout the NBPSP area; the 2020 revised alternative includes a more than 40% reduction in housing density from what was released in 2019. Other minor changes have been made in order to better address current conditions in the NBPSP area and to better align with current State laws.

8. How does the North Business Park Specific Plan relate to the State mandated housing laws?

- As mentioned in #2 (above), while not prepared with the intent of responding to State regulations, the development scenario proposed in the Draft NBPSP is sufficient to meet the current (2013-2021) State housing allocation and likely the next (2022-2030) housing allocation as well. Approval of the NBPSP would enable the City to gain compliance with State housing law and avoid the penalties and potential legal action that may arise from non-compliance.
- Failure to identify locations for housing development will result in penalties and potential legal action, which could result in court mandated rezoning of City owned properties to allow the development of housing. The residential component of the NBPSP allows the City to retain as much control as possible over factors like location, design, and type to name a few.

9. Once the North Business Park Specific Plan is adopted by Council, what happens then?

- If the NBPSP is adopted by the City Council, the impetus of redevelopment will then shift to the property owners in the Plan area. The City will not be compelling changes to existing properties. Redevelopment of the Plan area is expected to take a considerable amount of time, perhaps as much as 25 years but may also happen shortly after the Plan's approval.

- As a comparison, the Westlake North Specific Plan area, began as a single ownership holding of vacant land and took over 20 years to completely develop in a period of high economic growth and relatively lax regulatory environment. The NBPSP is a completely developed area consisting of 54 parcels owned by a large number of property owners, in a much more restrictive regulatory environment. While this does not mean that redevelopment won't begin shortly after the adoption of a plan, the obstacles to large-scale development projects are substantial and will likely take considerable time to work out. Many property owners may find that more modest expansions of their existing properties will be preferable given the considerable investment of time and money to coordinate a more ambitious project.

10. How can I provide feedback on the North Business Park Specific Plan?

- Written comments and feedback on the NBPSP may be sent to the City at any time between now and the public hearing date. Please direct these to Philippe Eskandar, Deputy City Manager, at 31200 Oak Crest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361, or via email at Philippe@wlv.org.
- Verbal comments and feedback may be presented to the City Council during discussion of the Plan to be held at a City Council Study Session tentatively scheduled for March 11th at 4pm, and the final Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for March 25th at 6:30pm at City Hall.

11. How can the community be kept informed and participate in the process?

- Interested persons should visit the City's website, download the Plan and the DEIR, and sign up for North Business Park Specific Plan updates on the Notify Me page. Email or text messages will be sent with updates notifying subscribers of upcoming meetings, new information, other news about the NBPSP process.
- In addition to staying informed, interested persons should attend meetings of the Community Advisory Committee, the upcoming second Open House on February 20th from 6-8pm at the Westlake Village Civic Center Community Rooms, a City Council Study Session tentatively scheduled for March 11th at 4pm at City Hall, and the final Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for March 25th at 6:30pm at City Hall. As always, questions can be directed to the Planning Department at (818) 706-1613.

This document may be updated in the future. Check in periodically to view any new updates.